



Mr. Erkki Tuomioja
Minister for Foreign Affairs
EU Presidency
Finland

30 October, 2006



RE: VIIIth Conference of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Tampere 27-28 November 2006

Your Excellency,



I am writing to you on behalf of the *Comité de Suivi*¹ (CdS), the platform of EuroMed environmental NGO networks, regarding trade liberalisation under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (with a view to establishing the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by 2010).



While the EU claims that trade liberalisation could relieve tensions in the region and bring wealth and stability, preliminary findings of the Sustainability Impact Assessment² of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area (SIA-EMFTA) contracted by the European Commission to a consortium led by Manchester University, have already predicted widespread negative social and environmental impacts for Mediterranean partner countries, with no significant economic welfare benefits foreseen for either these countries or the EU. These findings supported earlier research work into the economic, social and environmental impacts of the EMFTA.



While we fully understand the needed significant changes in trade as part of the efforts for cohesion and social progress we are deeply concerned by the divergence between the intended benefits and the predicted by the SIA EMFTA problems.

The NGO *Comité de Suivi* does not reject trade liberalisation *per se*. We are however critical of trading regimes that are likely to harm the environment and local communities and thereby undermine the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable



¹ Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), Environment and Development Action in the Third World (ENDA), European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Friends of the Earth (FoE/MedNet Programme), Mediterranean NGO Network for Ecology and Sustainable Development (MEDForum), Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSD), WWF Mediterranean Programme (WWF MedPO)

² See <http://www.sia-trade.org/emfta>



Comité de Suivi (CdS)

Promoting Sustainable Development within the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership



Development which the 10th Anniversary Summit of the Partnership endorsed last November in Barcelona. The rights of people and long-term sustainability must come first.

We therefore call on the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs to guarantee that they will fully consider and mainstream the outcomes and recommendations of the SIA EMFTA, when issued next spring, into the relevant activities of the Partnership. We also urge them to fully share the results of the SIA with the South Mediterranean Partner States.



We call upon the EU to assist South Mediterranean Partner States to develop fair and sustainable economies promoting education, employment, health, participatory governance and social welfare for everyone. Public participation must be guaranteed, meaning that strengthening trading links must go hand in hand with developing democracy in the region.



Furthermore, we call on the European Commission to publish how it intends to incorporate the recommendations of the SIA of the EMFTA into the negotiating positions it adopts with Euro-Mediterranean Partner Countries.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emad Adly'.



**Friends of
the Earth
MedNet**

Dr. Emad Adly
President of RAED and current coordinator of the CdS



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