

 <p>PA-UfM AP-UpM</p>	<p>PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY – UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN</p> <p>ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE – UNION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE</p> <p>الجمعية البرلمانية للاتحاد من أجل المتوسط</p>
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<Commission>Presidency of the European Parliament</Commission>

Draft Minutes

Meeting of the Bureau Strasbourg, 13 February, 2019 (08h00 – 09h00)

- The Bureau adopted the agenda (AP102.772) and approved the minutes of the last Bureau meeting held in Strasbourg on 12 December, 2018 (AP102.771).
- EP Vice-President SASSOLI welcomed the Members of the Bureau and recalled that the European Parliament was getting closer to the end of its current mandate and that European Elections would be held in May.
- The outgoing PA-UfM Presidency had built on the work of the Italian and Egyptian Presidencies which preceded it to establish the assembly's secretariat. VP SASSOLI recalled the Bureau's decision taken in Brussels on 13 July, 2018 to establish the Permanent Secretariat of the PA-UfM in Rome after the candidacies of Marseille, Istanbul and Rome had been considered.
- The decision had been followed by the establishment of the Secretariat in collaboration with the Working Group on Rules chaired by MEP Tiziana BEGHIN, which included a change in the provision of Article 15 of the Rules of Procedure to allow for the nomination of one or more secretaries-general ad interim and the drawing up of a draft mandate.
- The European Parliament, in collaboration with the Italian Parliament, had nominated Dr Fabrizia Bientinesi, official from the Italian House of Representatives, and Dr Luigi Gianniti, official from the Senate of the Italian Republic, as co-secretaries general ad interim.
- VP SASSOLI welcomed Dr BIENTINESI and Dr GIANNITI to the Bureau meeting, and invited them to present their working programme aimed at the rapid and efficient establishment of the PA-UfM secretariat. Their mandate foresees the preparation of a draft budget, the drafting of statute for the new organisation including a staff organigram, the effective takeover of the premises in Rome, and the selection of staff. The PA-UfM Assembly would need to approve the proposed modification of Article 15 that foresees that the mandate would be extend for the time needed to set up the secretariat. After that, the secretary general of the PA-UfM would be nominated on a plurennial basis.
- VP Sassoli recalled that EP President TAJANI, in his capacity as President of the Assembly, had signed off a seat agreement with the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs,

thus ensuring that smooth and steady progress was being made to establish the new institution.

- Taking the floor, Dr BIENTINESI thanked the Presidency for her appointment as co-secretary general ad interim. She had been an official of the Italian Parliament since 2008, and had witnessed several changes in the Mediterranean, having lived through the world financial crisis, the uprisings of 2011 which were followed by conflicts in Libya and Syria, as well as the challenges of terrorism and migration. The PA-UfM has continued to work through these challenging times and this highlighted the importance of the assembly and the need to strengthen it further. She expressed determination to carry out the tasks under Article 15 which should be adopted during the upcoming plenary session, to work closely with the incoming Turkish Presidency and to create synergies with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). The latter would include a system of formal information exchange including concerning projects that the UfM was working on.
- Dr GIANNITI said he has been involved with the Assembly since 2004 when we had started working within the Committee on Culture, and had established good relations with officials from all over the Mediterranean which would serve him well in his new role. He thanked the Presidency for having been entrusted with his new responsibility, expressed determination to see through the planned changes that would complete the establishment of the PA-UfM Secretariat, and said he looked forward to work closely with the incoming Turkish Presidency.
- Maria-Edera SPADONI, Vice-President of the Italian House of Representatives, wished the best of luck to the new secretaries-general, and explained that ratification of the seat agreement by both the House and the Senate would follow. The ratification would give the PA-UfM Secretariat proper legal status as an international body. Work on a budget was also crucial, and this depended on the approval of the changes to Article 15 of the Rules of Procedure by the Plenary.
- Italy was presenting a proposal for the Bureau to seek the Assembly's authorisation for a provisional financial regulation to be established based on Italian legislation. This would create a simplified procedure through which the Bureau could, under the Turkish Presidency, make a new call for contributions from Members of the Assembly. This would expedite matters and make it possible for the co-secretaries general to present a draft budget for approval during the next Bureau meeting. Speakers of Parliaments will be informed about the amounts to be paid into an account opened in the name of the general following the ratification of the seat agreement
- Ms SPADONI said the administration of the Italian Parliament would take **care of the accounting procedures** of the PA-UfM for the time being. The last PA-UfM budget had been adopted in 2016. In the meantime, Italy had covered EUR45,000 in expenses while Egypt and covered EUR100,000.
- Going forward, Members of the Bureau were encouraged to contact their diplomatic representations in Rome concerning the possible seconding of staff to new Secretariat. A similar request could be made to all Speakers of National Parliaments.
- Karim DARWISH, representing Dr Ali Abdel Aal Sayyed Ahmed (Speaker of the Egyptian House of Representatives), wished the best of luck to the co-secretaries general ad interim. Egypt supported the PA-UfM's focus on fostering dialogue in the Mediterranean, and would stand behind the practical efforts to make the new Secretariat start its work effectively and rapidly. The establishment of the new headquarters, as well as its statute and procedures, were very important. It made sense for the secretaries general ad interim to remain in office until such procedures are established, and suggested that a timing and timeline be determined for the permanent arrangements to come into effect.

- Şamil AYRIM, representing Binali YILDIRIM the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, recalled that Turkey will be taking over the PA-UfM Presidency and reiterated his country's longtime support to Mediterranean dialogue. He expressed agreement with the Egyptian position to stand behind the initiatives that would ensure that channels of dialogue be kept open. He also thanked the co-secretaries general ad interim and said their know-how would contribute to the establishment of the new secretariat in the shortest possible time. It would be important to establish a clear timeframe for the appointment of a Secretary General and practical issues on the payment of staff. Each delegation should discuss such issues within their own Parliament.
- VP SASSOLI said the ideas put forward would be taken up. A combination of political commitment and good organisation would drive forward the initiative under the Turkish Presidency. Dialogue and open-mindedness were the central feature of the PA-UfM's work, and Parliaments played a significant role to come up with shared solutions to shared problems.
- Ms SPADONI said the co-secretaries general would be working closed to plan the next Bureau meeting under the Turkish Presidency on reforming the working procedure. Ratification of the Seat Agreement by the Italian Parliament was necessary before bank accounts could be opened, she said, pledging to exercise positive pressure on the Italian Foreign Ministry so that the Italian government does its part.
- VP SASSOLI said he regretted that the EP Presidency could not organise a joint signing of the Seat Agreement and explained that it had been difficult to find a date that worked both for President Tajani and the Italian Foreign Minister.
- Mr AYRIM recalled that in view of local elections in Turkey foreseen on 31 March, Turksih Speaker YILDIRIM was running for mayor of Istanbul. This meant that he would be resigning from his current post during the week, and an interim Speaker would be announced.
- Turkey would be holding the first PA-UfM Bureau meeting in April 2019.