



Guidelines for Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Declaration Writing¹

General Research and Advisory Delegate Information

Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean

The Union for the Mediterranean had been institutionalized by the Ministerial Summit, held in Marseille, France in 2008. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs decided to establish a Co-Presidency, a Joint Permanent Committee (comprised of diplomats from all member states) and a Secretariat. There is also a group of Senior Officials (mandated by the Foreign Ministers), who prepare the Ministerial Summits. The Ministerial Summits, along with the Senior Officials, undertake the necessary preparations for the bi-annual Summits of Heads of State and Government.

Co-Presidency: The member states of UfM have created the *Co-Presidency* institution, in order to strengthen the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. From the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the Co-Presidency from the side of the EU is held by the President of the EU and the President of the Commission (at the level of Heads of State and Government), and the High Representative / Vice President of the Commission, at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The Mediterranean Partner Countries (non-EU) elect unanimously their representative for the Co-Presidency, for a period of two years.

Joint Permanent Committee: The Joint Permanent Committee is steered by the representatives of the Co-Presidents and its main task is to prepare the Senior Officials and Euro-Mediterranean Committee meetings. The JPC assists also the Co-Presidencies

¹ This document was inspired by and based on the "Guideline for Communique Writing" of ThessISMUN (www.thessismun.org).

and the Secretariat in the preparation of the Summits and Foreign Affairs and thematic Ministerial meetings.

Secretariat: "The Secretariat should gather project initiatives (from various sources such as sector ministerial meetings, national or regional authorities, regional groupings, private sector, civil society), examine them, and suggest projects to the Euro-Mediterranean Committee that will act as a clearing house. Once the projects are accepted by the Euro-Mediterranean Committee they will be submitted for approval, through the Foreign Affairs Ministers conferences, to the Summit. If endorsed, the Summit will instruct the Secretariat to give the necessary follow-up in terms of initiating the promotion of the projects, and the search for partners for their implementation. The funding and implementation of projects will be pursued on a case-by-case basis by the various interested partners and according to their own procedures. The secretariat will report to the Euromed Committee"² The Secretariat is headed by a Secretary General and a Deputy Secretary General, who are responsible for appointing the staff of the Secretariat.

In a Ministerial Summit, each member state has one representative and one vote. The Council formed by the Ministers is being moderated by an Honorary President and the two Co-Presidents. Apart from the Ministers, the Council join observers (with debating and not voting rights) from neighboring states and IGOs and NGOs, depending on the issue at hand; Libya being a permanent observer.

In the Ministerial Summit simulation in RhodesMRC the 51 participants are the following:

<u>Moderators</u>				
CO-PRESIDENT ³		PRESIDENT		CO-PRESIDENT ⁴
<u>Members with Voting Rights</u>				
AUSTRIA (EU)	GERMANY (EU)	NETHERLANDS (EU)	ALBANIA	ALGERIA
BELGIUM (EU)	GREECE (EU)	POLAND (EU)	BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA	CROATIA

² "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council", Brussels, 20/05/2008, (COM2008) 319.

³ The High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission.

⁴ Elected for two (2) years from the Mediterranean Partner Countries.

BULGARIA (EU)	HUNGARY (EU)	PORTUGAL (EU)	EGYPT	ISRAEL
CYPRUS (EU)	IRELAND (EU)	ROMANIA (EU)	JORDAN	LEBANON
CZECH REP. (EU)	ITALY (EU)	SLOVAKIA (EU)	MAURITANIA	MONACO
DENMARK (EU)	LATVIA (EU)	SLOVENIA (EU)	MONTENEGRO	MOROCCO
ESTONIA (EU)	LITHUANIA (EU)	SPAIN (EU)	PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY	SYRIA
FINLAND (EU)	LUXEMBOURG (EU)	SWEDEN (EU)	TUNISIA	TURKEY
FRANCE (EU)	MALTA (EU)	UNITED KINGDOM (EU)		

Observers - Members without Voting Rights (5)

Summit Meetings are summoned whenever issues of vital importance have to be addressed. Items discussed and decisions taken at meetings of the Council cover all aspects of the Union's activities and are frequently based on reports and recommendations prepared by subordinate committees at the Council's request. Equally, subjects may be raised by any one of the national representatives or by the Co-Presidents. Ministers inform and explain the views and policy decisions of their governments to their colleagues round the table. Conversely they report back to their governments on the views expressed and positions taken by other governments, informing them of new developments and keeping them abreast of movement towards consensus on important issues or areas where national positions diverge. **Decisions are being made under Unanimity and Common Accord.**

The UfM Ministerial Summit Simulation in RhodesMRC

As soon as you receive your country assignment, you should begin your research. You may divide your research into four categories:

- **Research on the history of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, on the structure and functioning of its bodies, on the role the Partnership plays in International and Regional Politics.**

- **Research on the history and functional purpose of the Union for the Mediterranean.**
- **Research on your assigned country's background, its political and economic system, political structure and current political affairs, its culture and values.**
- **Research on your assigned country's policies with regard to the certain topic, on country's viewpoints in all relevant issues.**

Bear in mind that many of your sources may be biased. If possible, try to find independent confirmation of the information you have obtained, from more than one source. Moreover, when gathering information it is important to distinguish between opinions and facts. Facts are used to support opinions. Whenever possible use facts to support your arguments. Eventually, you will be presenting an opinion and must defend it against other opinions, thus it is crucial for you to be familiar with different viewpoints and opinions on your topic. Become familiar with arguments that are different from the one your country is likely to take on your topic. Remember, it is up to you to decide which particular points you want to focus on in your own arguments and this decision needs to be guided by your country's position. Bear in mind that you should speak in the name of the country that you are representing. Study already adopted decisions on your topic to find out what issues tend to be discussed when your topic is debated.

Here are some common Internet resources to help you get started:

- The European Union site for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/index_en.htm
- The Permanent Missions of the United Nations member states. <http://www.un.org/en/members/index.shtml>
- The USA Department of State as well as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office websites contain *country profiles* sections. www.state.gov and www.fco.gov.uk
- The Central Intelligence Agency (World Factbook) website, contains reports on

economic, political and social conditions of most of the countries in the world.
www.cia.gov

- The International Crisis Group website. www.icg.org
- The Brookings Institution website. www.brookings.edu
- The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (english site).
<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/>

Finally, if you have tried these different resources and still face difficulties finding information, you may ask for help from the **RhodesMRC Board**.

Furthermore it is of critical importance to:

- Review the RhodesMRC Rules of Procedures for the Council of Ministers for the Ministerial Summit of the Union for the Mediterranean. These rules are intended to create a level playing field allowing each delegate/country to accomplish their individual goals in speaking about their policies while maximizing opportunities for the group to reach consensus on the issue.
- Remember it is not your opinion you are illustrating and defending, but the country's you are representing. The Co-Presidents of the Council, will be responsible for the implementation of the official policy of each state by its representative in the Council. Delegates that diverge from their assigned country's official policy, will be advised towards the correction of their policy and provided with the appropriate material on this extent by the Co-Presidents of the Council.
- Be aware of different political perspectives.
- Attain a good knowledge of your allies and your opposition. In order to adequately represent your country during the model, you will need to interact with delegates from other countries. Knowing their positions on your topic will help you predict their arguments during debate. This will be very useful in helping you decide in advance where it might be useful to seek cooperation or compromise.
- Congratulate the members of your delegation (and fellow delegates representing

different countries and viewpoints) on their contributions to the council sessions.

Ministerial Declaration Writing and Submission

Ministerial Declarations are official documents that have been passed by the Council of Ministers aiming to address a particular problem or issue. Ministerial Declarations are actions of the Union for the Mediterranean submitted in draft form under the sponsorship of the delegations working in a council. Primarily, declarations address the general concern, as well as particular worries, to a given situation and recommended action to be taken by the members of the Union. UfM Ministerial Declarations are (only) considered to be binding for the member states, since they are adopted by consensus based on good faith and a strong concern for the common good.

Draft Ministerial Declarations are Ministerial Declarations as they are drafted and passed in Council sessions that are taking place during the RhodesMRC Conference. The UfM Ministerial Declarations have to be adopted in absolute consensus.

It is important to acknowledge that in drafting a Ministerial Declaration wording will influence its acceptance among fellow delegates. The draft Ministerial Declarations should be clear and concise. Consequently, the better the substance of a Draft Ministerial Declaration is the higher the success of achieving consensus in the council session. The main aim of Ministerial Declaration writing is to put down ideas in a clear and concise manner in accordance with the provided format.

A regular UfM Declaration has the following pattern:

Draft Declaration

The Heading, identifying the type of the meeting (Ministerial or Heads of State and Government Summit) in which the Declaration is introduced.

Numbering: the sequel number of each Draft Declaration, presented by the President along with the submission of the Declaration by the Sponsor, i.e. UfM Draft Ministerial Declaration. **UfM/MD/A/08-Dec-2010/1**, which indicates the **first** Draft **Ministerial** Declaration submitted in **UfM** Council of Ministers, on topic Area **A**, on the **8th of December 2010**.

Sample of a Draft Ministerial Declaration

Draft Ministerial Declaration

Ministerial Summit of the Union for the Mediterranean

held at,

Rhodes, October 21st, 2011

- 1. Today the Council of Ministers of the Union for the Mediterranean met in Foreign Ministers Session, in Rhodes, to advance the ...*
- 2. At our meeting today...*
- 3. We are committed to the continuing success of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership...*
- 4. We welcome the adoption...*
- 5. We fully support the negotiations...*

6. *We strongly condemn terrorism...*
7. *In response to the call by the government of ...*
8. *UfM will continue to play an essential role in regional security and stability...*
9. *We welcome the initiative...*
10. *We express our concerns about ...*
11. *We express / our deep appreciation...*
12. *We fully agree with the statements...*
13. *We recognize the need/ the importance...*
14. *We reaffirm our determination...*
15. *We reiterate our commitment to the...*

Each clause is numbered (1-...). All the clauses end with dot. Each clause may contain more than one sentence.

Amendments

After Draft Ministerial Declarations have been submitted to the Council for discussion, they may be modified through changes known as amendments, suggested by the delegates of the Council, representing adjusted perspectives or proposals on the topic under discussion. Phrasing and purpose of the amendment should complement the Draft Ministerial Declaration. There are two types of amendments as outlined in the **Rules of Procedure** as well:

1. **Non Substantive Amendments**, correcting grammatical, spelling or formatting mistakes will be automatically adopted without vote from the Council, at the discretion of the President.
2. **Substantive Amendments**, which are due to change the substantial meaning of the Ministerial Declaration shall be unanimously adopted by the Council.