



17th Annual Session
ASTANA, 29 June - 03 July 2008

OSCE PA
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

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SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM

DRAFT RESOLUTION

ON

A MEDITERRANEAN FREE TRADE AREA

**Principal Sponsor
Senator Jerahmiel Grafstein
Canada**

ASTANA, 29 JUNE - 3 JULY 2008

RESOLUTION ON A MEDITERRANEAN FREE TRADE AREA

1. Reiterating the fundamental importance of the economic and environmental aspects of the OSCE concept of security,
2. Recognizing that without economic growth there can be no peace or stability,
3. Recalling the importance that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly accords to the development of international trade, as underlined by the Assembly's fifth economic conference on the theme of *Strengthening Stability and Co-operation through International Trade*, which was held in Andorra, in May 2007,
4. Expressing solidarity with the economic hardship experienced by the people of the Middle East since September 11, 2001,
5. Maintaining that the best way to achieve peace in this region is to focus efforts on creating a free-trade area,
6. Recalling that the European Union itself was made possible by the establishment of free-trade areas, first the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and then the European Economic Community in 1957,
7. Recalling the Helsinki Final Act, in which OSCE participating states expressed their intention "to encourage with the non-participating Mediterranean States the development of mutually beneficial co-operation in the various fields of economic activity" and to "contribute to a diversified development of the economies of the non-participating Mediterranean countries,"
8. Recalling the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, in which OSCE participating states recognized "the importance of bilateral and multilateral intergovernmental and other agreements for the long-term development of trade" and undertook "to reduce or progressively eliminate all kinds of obstacles to the development of trade,"

9. Celebrating the decision made at the OSCE Summit in Budapest in 1994 to create a Contact Group with Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation,
10. Expressing support for the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 regarding the establishment of a free trade area between the members of the European Union and all Mediterranean states by 2010,
11. Saluting the American Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative launched in 2003,
12. Concerned by the slow pace of economic development in the Middle East, especially in the agriculture sector and the knowledge-based economy, where two-thirds of the population is under the age of 35,
13. Considering the obstacles to economic growth posed by agricultural trade and tariff barriers, as discussed at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly meeting in Rhodes in 2004,
14. Considering the lack of direct foreign investment in Middle Eastern Arab countries and the concentration of such investment in a small number of these countries,
15. Noting that despite the efforts made in the Middle East to stimulate free trade, economic growth in Mediterranean countries is markedly stronger in the Israel-Europe-North America axis than among countries in the region; and
16. Encouraged by the increased literacy rate and the increased participation of women in the domestic economies of countries in the Mediterranean basin.

THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE OSCE

17. Recommends the creation of a Mediterranean Economic Commission whose objective would be to quickly reduce trade barriers and facilitate the transition to a knowledge-based economy in countries in the region;
18. Recommends the creation of a Mediterranean Agricultural Marketing Board whose objective would be to create jobs in the agriculture sector for young people in the region; and
19. Invites OSCE participating countries and partner states for cooperation to intensify their efforts under the Barcelona Process and to more fully benefit from the MEFTA Initiative in order to expedite the establishment of a free-trade area among all Mediterranean countries.

AMENDMENT TO SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM

on

A MEDITERRANEAN FREE TRADE AREA

[Set out text of Amendment here:]

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