MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
Brussels, 30 November 2010
(10.30 – 15.30)

- MINUTES -

Attendees:

Jean-Yves LE DRIAN, President of the CPMR, President of Brittany Region (France), accompanied by Martine ALLAIS, Permanent delegate of Brittany in Brussels

Gunn-Marit HELGESEN, 1st Vice-President of the CPMR, President of the North Sea Commission - Mayor of Telemark (Norway)

Giovanna DEBONO, Vice-President of the CPMR, Minister of Gozo (Malta), accompanied by Rita CUTAJAR, Director EU Affairs

Annelie STARK, Vice-President of the CPMR, Councillor - Region Västra Götaland (Sweden), accompanied by Magnus ENGELBREKTSSON, Head of International Coordination

Victor TARHON, Vice-President of the CPMR, President of County Council - Tulcea (Romania), accompanied by Mihaela OBOROCEANU, Public Manager, Tulcea County Council

Ramón Luis VALCARCEL SISO, Vice-President of the CPMR, President of Murcia (Spain), accompanied by Lucia HUERTAS SUANCES, Executive Director of Murcia Region in Bruxelles and Miguel Angel PEREZ HEREDIA, General Director of Communication, Murcia Region

Eleni MARIANOU, Secretary General of the CPMR
Enrico MAYRHOFER, CPMR Director
Marie-Ange ORIHUELA, CPMR Director
Damien PERISSE, CPMR Director
Jean-Yves Le Drian recalled that the Executive Board was set up with the aim of calling more easily, where necessary, on the regional leaders that have been appointed as CPMR Vice-Presidents, in order to:

- Ensure a good internal cohesion of the CPMR, its geographical commissions and its working groups, so that it is able to express views at a political level more easily and at an early stage during the interval between meetings of its Political Bureau and General Assembly;
- Continue to stimulate the direct participation of regional leaders in CPMR activities. The main task of the President and members of the Executive Board will be to stimulate this participation which has been identified as a priority for the CPMR;
- Represent the CPMR at a political level, especially at political meetings with European Commissioners or other European and national political dignitaries.
- Notify the CPMR Political Bureau of policy initiatives taken in the period between meetings and the development of policy areas in which the CPMR is active;
- Promote the specific interests of the CPMR in relations with other organisations including the Committee of the Regions.

It was noted that the Executive Board aimed to facilitate the continuity of the CPMR’s policy work but that it should not substitute the Political Bureau or the General Assembly. These bodies were to remain the political decision-making arenas within the CPMR. Similarly, the setting up of the Executive Board should not impair relations with the CPMR’s Geographical Commissions.

Jean-Yves Le Drian presented the specific duties proposed to the members of the Executive Board, as follows:

- Jean-Yves Le Drian: issues related to territorial cohesion, integrated maritime policy and accessibility;
- Gunn-Marit Helgesen: issues related to internal cohesion (work of the Commissions), the macro-regional concept and work on neighbourhood policy;
- Ramón Luis Valcarcel Siso: issues related to the Committee of the Regions and European Associations, the Territorial Pact together with the President, the InterMed Area (IMC), cooperation and development aid;
- Annelie Stark: issues related to canvassing for new CPMR members in the EU and Russia, the EU budget and Europe 2020;
- Victor Tarhon: issues related to canvassing for new members (non-EU and candidate countries) and the Black Sea macro-region;
- Giovanna Debono: issues related to islands and specific geographic features (with the President and the Islands Commission) and indicators (GDP and others).

Eleni Marianou pointed out that the Executive Board was well-balanced from a geographic point of view.

The members of the Executive Board accepted these responsibilities and expressed their willingness to assume them to the full. A number of members underlined that the direct participation of leaders and politicians from the Regions in CPMR activities was especially important in the current political and economic context.

The Executive Board would meet formally twice a year in around November and April. Outside of these meetings, exchanges with its members could be organised where necessary. The next meeting would be held on 29 April 2011 in Tulcea (Romania) at the invitation of Victor Tarhon.

The question was raised of financial difficulties facing certain member Regions. Ramón Luis Valcarcel Siso stressed that the Regions needed to be aware that the CPMR was, in the medium and long-term, an instrument that was necessary in order to give them a voice in Europe and in this way address current difficulties while guaranteeing a political footing and securing funding for Europe’s Regions.
It was proposed that a document promoting the political benefits of the CPMR’s action should be prepared as soon as possible to attract new Regions and to remind those Regions required to make important decisions of the relevance and advantages of being a member.

FOLLOW-UP TO DECISIONS TAKEN IN ABERDEEN

The draft call for candidatures for the post of Treasurer was accepted. The call had been launched and the Treasurer would be appointed at the next Political Bureau meeting in Caen on 11 February 2011. It was specified that in accordance with the CPMR’s new statutes adopted at the General Assembly in Aberdeen, the Treasurer would be assisted by a Financial Committee made up of four people – two of these being representatives of Member Regions and two being competent figures from Brittany, the location of association’s head office where the CPMR’s accounts are managed.

CPMR’S POLITICAL AGENDA

Jean-Yves Le Drian informed members of the discussions that had taken place at the informal Council meeting in Liege that he had attended together with Eleni Marianou on behalf of the CPMR. He underlined the following points:

• Confirmation of the desire to have a cohesion policy for all Regions;
• Strong opposition from a number of Member States to the European Commission’s proposals on macro-economic conditionality. It was likely that the Commission would amend its proposals;
• Setting-up of a task force on conditionality in which the CPMR would try to play an active part;
• Numerous references to the Regions in the debates and in the final conclusions. In particular there were references to the Regions and the regional dimension in the parts related to the urban dimension, the risk here being that it would be proposed that this should develop separately from the regional dimension;
• The Territorial Pact requested by the CPMR might partly be materialised in the development contracts related to regional policy, subject to the role the Regions play in drafting and delivering them.

Jean-Yves Le Drian also underlined that on the occasion of the meeting organised on 3rd November 2010, Laszlo Andor, Commissioner in charge of employment, social affairs and inclusion, indicated that he was against separating the ESF from regional policy.

Finally, he indicated that Mr Hervé Jouanjean, Director General of the DG Budget of the European Commission had asked the CPMR to send him its analyses on the future of the financial instruments related to cohesion policy. Mr Hervé Jouanjean would be attending the CPMR Political Bureau meeting in Caen.

The draft letter to Commissioner Dacian Ciolos, in charge of agriculture and rural development was presented.

Issues related to regional policy were addressed in the CPMR’s draft reaction to the European Commission’s Communication on the budget and on the 5th Cohesion Report. These draft responses were presented by Marie-Ange Orihuela and Damien Périssé.

The members of the Executive Board expressed their agreement on the principles put forward in these documents. Gunn Marit Helgesen suggested taking greater account of some of the criticisms expressed together with the CPMR’s proposals, and not necessarily indicating the number of priorities on which the Regions should concentrate investments with regard to regional policy.

Giovanna Debono considered that the level of support for Regions with permanent handicaps under regional policy should also take into account the level of development of these Regions.

Annelie Stark stressed the importance of the regional dimension in cohesion policy.
Victor TARHON highlighted the interest of the macro-regional approach and the need for the Balkan and Black Sea Commission to be more engaged in the issues related to the Danube and Black Sea macro-regions. He asked for support in this area.

Jean-Yves Le Drian pointed to the very high likelihood that 3 categories of Regions would be distinguished and considered that this option would be acceptable provided it did not lead to a drastic reduction in the budget allocated to the Regions concerned by the Competitiveness Objective. He also indicated the uncertainty as to the date that would be taken into consideration for assessing the competitiveness of the Regions.

It was agreed that the CPMR’s draft reactions to the European Commission’s Communication on the Budget and to the 5th Cohesion Report would be addressed to members of the Executive Board with a view to collecting written comments, and that they would also be sent for opinion to the members of the CPMR Political Bureau (including Presidents of the CPMR’s Geographical Commissions).

**CPMR TIMETABLE**

Jean-Yves Le Drian recalled the main dates of the CPMR’s timetable for the coming months. These are:

- PB Caen, 11 February 2011 (Basse-Normandie, France)
- GA Islands Commission (19-20 May 2011) (Saaremaa, Estonia)
- GA Atlantic Arc Commission (June 2011) (La Rochelle, Poitou-Charentes, France)
- PB Azores, 3 June 2011 (Portugal)
- GA IMC (17 June 2011) (Qalyubiya, Egypt)
- GA North Sea Commission (22-24 June 2011) (Bruges, Belgium)
- GA Balkan/Black Sea Commission (8 July 2011) (Varna, Bulgaria)
- CPMR AGM, 28 / 30 September 2011 (Aarhus, Midtjylland-Denmark)
CPMR EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT
Jean-Yves LE DRIAN

Overall Strategy

1st Vice-President
Gunn Marit HELGESEN

- Territorial Cohesion
- Integrated Maritime Policy
- Accessibility

- Internal cohesion (work of the Commissions)
- Macro-regional concept
- Neighbourhood

Ramón Luis VALCARCEL SISO
- Relations with the Committee of the Regions and European Associations
- Territorial Pact with the President
- InterMed Area (IMC)
- Cooperation
- Development aid

Annelie STARK
- Canvassing for new CPMR members in the EU and Russia
- EU Budget
- Europe 2020

Victor TARHON
- Canvassing for new CPMR members in non-EU and candidate countries
- Black Sea Macro Region

Giovanna DEBONO
- Islands and specific geographic features (with the President of the Islands Commission)
- Beyond GDP (Indicators)

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