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TECHNICAL NOTE FROM THE CPMR GENERAL SECRETARIAT

THE NEXT STEPS FOR THE FORUM OF NETWORKS OF WORLD REGIONS

A. OBJECTIVES OF THE NETWORK

1. When ten pioneering regional networks from all the continents of the world came together in Marseille, they signed the "*Declaration of the Regions on their Participation in the Governance of Globalisation*" and decided to create a Forum of Networks of World Regions, referred to in this document as "the Forum".

2. The objectives of the Forum, as stated in the Declaration, are threefold.

- *To ensure that the voice of the Regions is heard in globalisation:* to become the correspondent of the new international bodies in charge of global governance, and more particularly, to ultimately obtain the status of a **United Nations approved Intergovernmental Organisation** to voice the views of the Regions.
- *To organise new rules for strategic governance including infra-State tiers of government:* to decentralise globalisation so that in the areas they live in, citizens, supported by their regional authorities, can become stakeholders in **equity-based globalisation**. Global integration with persistent or increasing levels of inequality between the different territories within each State as well as at continent and world levels is unacceptable. Only a **territorial development approach** will make it possible to achieve sustainable peace and global development.
- *Working together among Regions:* to accompany and promote working together among the various Regions of the world, whether they do so on cooperation for development, to exchange best practices or on tangible joint projects that are of interest at territorial level.

B. PROPOSALS FOR THE NEXT STEPS

3. The 2nd Forum of World Regions will be held in Tangiers-Tetouan (Morocco) in April 2008; until then, it is important to further the ideas of the Forum and its recognition by its partners, to ensure that its members share the same understanding of it and to tangibly implement the first joint projects.

Four main lines of work, requiring the approval of the members of the Forum are proposed:

- Recognition of the Forum by international bodies (United Nations and European Union) and seeking new members;
- Furthering consideration on the role of the Regions in globalisation to sustain the network's policy positions;
- Joint efforts on cooperation for development and support to regional networks;
- Discussion on the content of the articles of association of the future World Regions Organisation.

Since efficiency is a prime concern, considering the geographic spread of the members, it is important to make the meetings of the Forum members coincide to the greatest extent possible with events that are of interest to them.

B.1 – RECOGNITION OF THE FORUM

4. Given the new world situation, decisions affecting the territories can no longer be made without the authorities of the very territories themselves having their say in decision-making. It is therefore necessary to introduce a governance process that includes the regional authorities. More than anything else, this assumes prior recognition by the States, but also by supra-national bodies such as the European Union, the other continental authorities (MERCOSUR, ASEAN, etc.) and the United Nations.

The CPMR proposes that different meetings with European Union and United Nations representatives be organised to present the Forum and its objectives to them. Meetings with representatives of the General Directorates for Development and External Relations are to be held in Brussels in May and June 2007. A meeting between the Forum representatives and UNDP leaders could also be organised in New York in October or November 2007 when the United Nations General Assembly takes place, so that it is also possible to meet the President of the Assembly, who supported the first convention in Marseille.

The CPMR invites the other members of the Forum to propose similar meetings within their own geographic areas. Among others, it would be interesting in this respect to meet the leaders of the Andean Pact and MERCOSUR.

5. It is equally important to rapidly propose communication tools for the Forum so that everyone has access to presentations of the Forum's objectives, its members and the actions it undertakes. A web site needs to be set up in this framework. The modalities for doing so will be discussed during the first Interim Steering Committee Meeting in South Africa.

B.2 – NEW MEMBERS

6. Since the convention in Marseille, the CPMR General Secretary has met with the Chinese Minister Plenipotentiary at the Chinese Embassy in Paris. The minister announced the will of the Chinese authorities for their Regions to become members of the Forum.

Furthermore, the AER (Assembly of European Regions) will be holding its Executive Committee meeting in May. The question of becoming a member of the Forum is on the agenda.

Once again, the members of the Forum are invited to present the Forum to their Regions so that a large number of recognised regional networks can be involved as soon as possible. Africa, for instance, has little representation within the Forum and some Latin-American networks could also join, such as CRECENEA or CODESUL.

B.3 – FURTHERING CONSIDERATION ON THE ROLE OF THE REGIONS

7. The members of the Forum advocate equity-based globalisation offering the same chances to all territories so that none are left on the fringe of development. If the territorial approach to development is to be embodied beyond the frontiers of the European Union – where the message must nevertheless be emphasised – this forceful vision must be put forward and supported by the appropriate, properly justified policy positions.

The CPMR General Secretariat is currently preparing a first strategic document on regional development and globalisation, to be presented and discussed during the next Forum meeting in August. The document will be fundamental to convince partners of the existence and the consolidation of the network as it makes its way forwards. What is needed is a shared "doctrine" concerning the long term vision and the objectives of the network in a global framework.

8. A joint CPMR-UNDP scientific council meeting is to be held in Lisbon on 3 and 4 December 2007 on "Territories and globalisation". It will be an opportunity for the members of the Forum to further their joint strategic thought on the role of the Regions in equitable globalisation and in what conditions it can be achieved. On 1st and 2nd December, there will also be an E.U. / ASEAN meeting in Lisbon. It would be useful if the members of the Forum could attend it in order to arouse the interest of the Regions of Asia.

B.4 - WORKING TOGETHER ON COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

9. If the voice of the Regions is to be successfully heard, the Regions themselves need to know one another, to know about the respective powers, modes of functioning and roles and above all, they need to be able to make changes in these areas. To do so, among others, the Regions need to train territorial executives. There is a lot of interest, especially from Latin America and Africa, in how to make the best possible use of European experience and how to replicate it on their own continents using the mechanisms of European Union neighbourhood policies and external cooperation.

European regions are the "furthest ahead" in the fields of governance and the recognition of the regional tier of government by supra-national authorities because they already genuinely work together on joint projects and defend joint points of view. This experience, especially that of the CPMR and AEBR, should be put to use.

10. Cooperation mechanisms exist and they should be made available to all the Regions as a whole, whether they belong to the various United Nations agencies, in particular the UNDP with its ART (*Appui aux Réseaux Territoriaux et Thématiques*) Programme for support to territorial networks, local governance and development, and also European Union programmes.

11. The Forum should provide its members with a *Vade mecum* of existing and future programmes to which the Regions can subscribe in order to develop joint cooperation, whether it is support to development or not, as well as programmes for the exchange of good practices.

12. The AIRF has already done part of the work by seeking international funding the Regions could rely on and it is willing to supply the network with the corresponding information. The CPMR proposes to complete the work already done by compiling fact sheets on European Union programmes for 2007-2013 and by supplying information about United Nations programmes and funding possibilities. The AIRF is continuing to work on this and preparing a second volume of its international funding guide for the Regions.

B.5 - DISCUSSION ON THE ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION FOR THE FUTURE REGIONS ORGANISATION

13. The objective at long term is to found a World Regions Organisation recognised by its members and by international bodies as being the voice of the Regions on the world scene. This will be a very long job and it must be conducted, among others, in conjunction with the targeted international bodies. Until this organisation comes into being, it would be best to keep the structure of the Forum as flexible as possible so that its members can make headway without too many administrative formalities, which would only slow down the steps to be taken and the actions to be carried out.

C. MEETINGS OF THE FORUM AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES

14. For information, below is a list of meetings (to be completed by Forum members) scheduled between April 2007 and April 2008:

- 2 April 2007: CPMR / AIRF meeting to present the two networks and hold informal discussions on the Forum
- April / May 2007: CPMR and DG Relex meeting on cooperation programmes in developing countries
- 11 May 2007: CPMR, UNDP and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region meeting with Tangiers-Tetouan Region to prepare the 2008 Forum

- 24 May 2007: Presentation of the UNDP ART (*Appui aux Réseaux Territoriaux et Thématiques*) programme for cooperation and development and of the EU's European Union Neighbourhood Policy at the General Assembly of the CPMR Balkans-Black Sea Commission at Çanakkale in Turkey
- 28-31 May 2007: General Assembly of Nrg4SD at Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia
- June 2007: CPMR meeting with Directorate General for Development to present the Forum
- 5 July 2007: Presentation of UNDP ART (*Appui aux Réseaux Territoriaux et Thématiques*) programme to the CPMR Inter-Mediterranean Commission.
- 24/25 August 2007: First meeting of the Forum's Interim Steering Committee, Cape Town, South Africa
- 28-30 September 2007: General Assembly of the Northern Forum at Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia
- 17-19 October 2007: CPMR General Assembly, Italy
- 8-9 November 2007: OLAGI General Assembly at Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia
- November 2007: Meeting with UNDP representatives in New York during the United Nations General Assembly
- 3-4 December 2007: CPMR-UNDP Scientific Council on Territories and Globalisation in Lisbon, if possible preceded by a meeting with ASEAN representatives in Lisbon on 1st and 2nd December.