



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EXTERNAL RELATIONS DIRECTORATE GENERAL
DIRECTORATE Middle East, South Mediterranean
Horizontal matters

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Committee/Final

Draft

Commission Decision

Concerning (MEDA) guidelines on the specific arrangements for on-the-spot coordination in the field of external assistance to Mediterranean partner countries.

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,
Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) N° 1488/96, of 23 July 1996, on financial and technical measures to accompany (MEDA) the reform of economic and social structures in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, as amended by Council Regulation (EC) N° 2698/2000, of 27 November 2000, and in particular its Article 4 and 11, hereinafter referred to as the "Regulation",

Whereas:

1. The Council adopted in the conclusions of its General Affairs Council session of 22-23 January 2001, the "Guidelines for strengthening operational co-ordination between the Community, represented by the Commission, and the Member States in the field of external assistance"(Council document No 5431/01), which apply to all countries and regions that receive EU assistance and therefore constitute the common frame of reference,
2. The guidelines on specific arrangements for on-the-spot coordination covered by this Decision have received the favourable opinion of the MED Committee,

DECIDES:

1. The Commission delegation, in liaison with the Member states, organises an **annual review meeting** covering substantive issues in the conduct of co-operation including in particular:

- an analysis of the political, social and economic context of the MED partner, making use of already existing reports whenever possible;
- an assessment of the existing priorities of the European Community and its Member States of their respective co-operation with the MED partner, on-going aid programmes and their individual programming;
- an exchange of experiences and lessons learnt, particularly with regard to the commitment of the beneficiary and project implementation proper;
- possible modifications in the future co-operation strategy and priorities of the European Commission and the Member States, including the reasons for this;
- the functioning of co-ordination mechanisms including other donors and the performance of the MED partner in aid absorption.

The annual review meeting will give rise to a concise report prepared by the Commission delegation, working closely with the Presidency. It will be shared with all Member States. The report will, taking into account the actual stage of advancement in the programming cycle, (1) present the results of the co-ordination process and identify common positions; (2) identify areas where the potential for complementarity and synergy exists and should be exploited.

Bearing in mind that it is in the first place the responsibility of each Mediterranean partner country to identify the efforts needed to reform its economic, social and administrative structures, and given the partner country's leading role in the overall co-ordination process, the annual review meeting will be scheduled with a view to offer a maximum possible value-added for the authorities of the partner country as well as for the regular up-dating by the European Commission and Member states of their respective strategy documents and financing plans.

Moreover, the Commission delegation, in liaison with the Member states, will inform the authorities of the partner country about the relevant conclusions of the annual review meeting, and will ensure that the partner's reactions are taken into account.

The European Investment Bank will be invited by the Commission delegation to participate in and contribute to the annual review meeting.

2. **Regular co-ordination meetings** will be organised at the initiative of the Commission delegation, working closely with the Presidency. The following modalities shall apply to these meetings:

- As regards the frequency of meetings: monthly meeting will be held unless decided otherwise by local representatives;

- As regards the annual workplan: local representatives will agree on an annual workplan for the co-ordination process.
- The Commission delegation will invite the EIB to participate in, and /or contribute to, these regular meetings.

3. Every other year, the Commission delegation, in liaison with the Member States, shall establish **a joint report on the strengthening of operational co-ordination** that may contain specific recommendations towards better coherence and complementarity of EC and Member States co-operation programmes.
