



5+5 DIALOGUE

FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION

NOUAKCHOTT, OCTOBER 11, 2022

**Partnership in Scientific Research, Innovation and Higher
Education to promote cooperation, social cohesion, youth
employment and sustainable development in the Western
Mediterranean Region**

FIFTH MINISTERIAL DECLARATION, OCTOBER 2022

1

NOUAKCHOTT MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

The Ministers in charge of Research, Innovation and Higher Education of the Western Mediterranean Forum (5+5 Dialogue) met on the occasion of the **Fifth Ministerial Conference on Research, Innovation and Higher Education in Nouakchott** on 11th October 2022 in presence of the Forum's observers: the European Commission (EC), the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

Acknowledging

- The recommendations of the previous Conferences of Ministers in charge of Research, Innovation and Higher Education of the 5+5 Dialogue, Western Mediterranean Forum on Research, Innovation and Higher Education;
- The Sixteenth meeting of Foreign Ministers of the "5+5 Dialogue", hosted in digital format by the Tunisian and Maltese Co-Presidencies on the 22nd October 2020;
- The UfM Ministerial Conference on Research and Innovation that took place on the 27th June 2022.

Being aware of the challenges and opportunities facing the 5+5 Dialogue Member Countries and convinced of the importance of strengthening cooperation in research, innovation and higher education for peace, promoting economic growth, social inclusion and facilitating skills' development and circulation of talents in the Western Mediterranean Region;

Recognising the role of Research and Innovation contributing to overcome the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on public health, national economies and the wellbeing of citizens across the 5+5 Dialogue Member Countries;

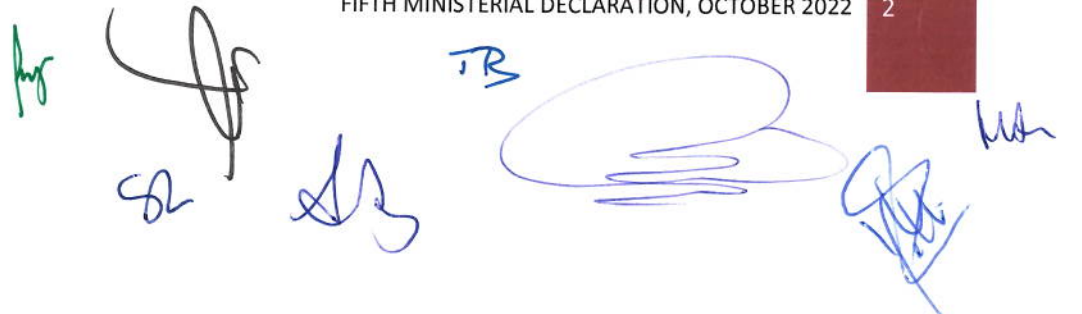
Underlining the importance of the UfM Roadmaps on Research and Innovation and its future implementation addressing challenges on the agreed priorities of Health, Renewable Energies and Climate Change and horizontal integration and priorities for a future crisis management concept, part of the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Research and Innovation and its future implementation through several instruments, including PRIMA;

Recalling the commitment of the 5+5 Dialogue Member Countries for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations;

Taking note of various inputs and exchange of information amongst the 5+5 Dialogue Member Countries, the European Commission, the Arab Maghreb Union and the Union for the Mediterranean;

Emphasising the common determination to strengthen collaboration for reinforcing the potential of youth and women and the access to higher education as fundamental to the development and prosperity in the Mediterranean Region.

Calling to fostering linkages on research, innovation, education and skills in the Mediterranean region, fully utilising available tools, promoting a level-playing field in researchers' career, skills and mobility, supporting capacity building, coordination and



joint actions, including on innovation and employability of Mediterranean students, graduates and researchers;

REAFFIRM

The consensus that all 5+5 Dialogue Member Countries are to remain closely networked and maintain regular contacts through the **Group of Senior Officials (GSO)**, and to ensure the implementation of the agreed conclusions, monitoring and evaluating launched initiatives, and the leveraging of synergies between different sectors for peace, promoting dialogue, social cohesion, youth employment and sustainable development in the Western Mediterranean Region through Research, Innovation and Higher Education.

RECALL

The agreement during the First, the Second, the Third and the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the Western Mediterranean Forum on Research, Innovation and Higher Education held respectively in Rabat (September 2013), Madrid (March 2015), Tunis (March 2017) and Rome (June 2019) to organise the **Fifth Ministerial Conference** on 11th of October 2022 in Nouakchott, Mauritania and to pursue the cooperation within the Western Mediterranean Region.

WELCOME

The Commission's communication on Global Approach and the European Council Conclusions on principles and values for international cooperation in research and innovation and the endorsement of the Marseille Declaration on international cooperation in research and innovation under the French presidency of the EU.

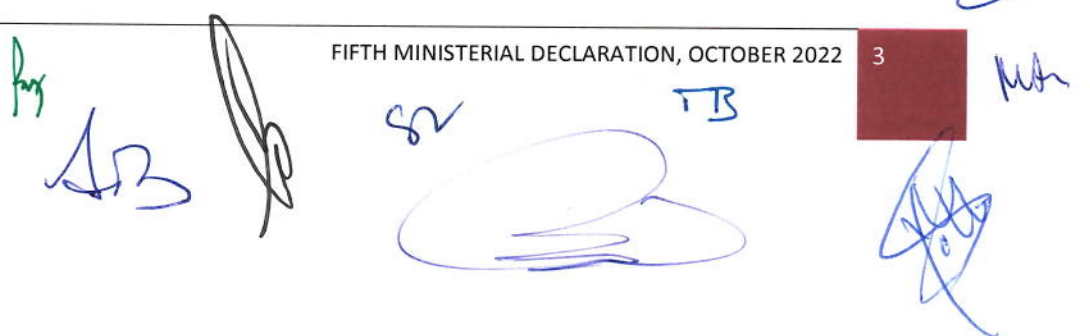
The existing complementary and forthcoming initiatives and programmes within the Mediterranean Region.

REITERATE

The importance of establishing new and strengthening existing multilateral research and innovation partnerships to deliver effective solutions to green, digital, health, social and innovation challenges in the Mediterranean, via arrangements between Member Countries to coordinate their independent investments in key fields or through partnerships providing for the pooling of resources in joint initiatives.

The support to the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) as a research and innovation platform attracting a critical mass of key actors and funds enabling to address complex challenges in the UfM Region contributing to the integration, resilience and prosperity of the Mediterranean. Likewise, the BLUEMED initiative for growth and jobs in the Mediterranean and the WESTMED Initiative.

The importance of the Horizon Europe Framework Program for Research and Innovation (including PRIMA and BLUEMED) as well as of the Erasmus+, and of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) - Global Europe for supporting a prosperous, healthy, sustainable, and peaceful Mediterranean Region, the



importance of the instruments 2021-2027 of the European Union and recognise the need to facilitate the setup of collaborative Western Mediterranean networks under the funding framework such as Horizon Europe (HORIZON); Erasmus+ Programme (ERASMUS); the EU4Health Programme (EU4H); the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF); the Innovation Fund (INNOVFUND); the Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE); **ENI CBC MED** amongst others, contributing to promote science diplomacy, interinstitutional cooperation and transnational mobility.

Support to cooperation programmes and projects between institutions of the 5+5 Dialogue Member Countries, including infrastructure projects such as the setting up of Centres of Excellence aiming at increasing research and innovation cooperation, competitiveness and entrepreneurship amongst others.

Support to **Horizon Europe Mission "Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030"** and its Mediterranean zero pollution lighthouse, in particular by joining forces to prevent and eliminate pollution of the Mediterranean Sea and its main river catchment areas, in particular litter and plastic, nutrients, chemical pollution and other forms of pollution including noise pollution. Sharing of good practices between basins: Mediterranean and Atlantic.

ENCOURAGE

The need to facilitate the setup of collaborative Western Mediterranean networks under the new funding programmes of the European Commission (2021-2027) in order to submit common proposals to build capacities for enhanced Western Mediterranean collaboration for research and innovation.

EXPRESS

Political support to the **Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)** labelled projects on research, innovation, higher education, employability, advanced training and capacity building.

AGREE

To implement the annex **Work Plan** prepared by the Group of Senior Officials during the preparatory meetings with the aim of strengthening policy dialogue and cooperation in research, innovation and higher education for promoting dialogue, social cohesion, youth employment and sustainable development in the Western Mediterranean Region through Research, Innovation and Higher Education. Synergies will be seek with the activities of the UfM R&I Regional Dialogue Implementation Plan, since the actions of the Work Plan are particularly in line with some of the actions expected to be carried out for the implementation of the UfM Roadmaps on Climate change, Health, Renewable Energies.

THE MINISTERS

Congratulate the **Islamic Republic of Mauritania** for the work accomplished during its presidency of the 5+5 Dialogue under unexpected pandemic circumstances and congratulate **Italy** for its role as co-president.



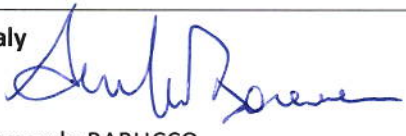







Acknowledge the intention expressed by **Portugal** to chair the next biennium of the Western Mediterranean Forum (5+5 Dialogue) for years **2022-2024**.

Approve the forthcoming **Work Plan (2022-2024)** and call the next **Ministerial Conference** in 2024 in Portugal, which will be organized by Portugal as President and Co-chaired by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

Express their deep appreciation to the Government of the **Islamic Republic of Mauritania** for the hospitality and all arrangements that contributed to the success of this Ministerial Conference.

Acknowledge the intention expressed by **Libya** to chair the next turn of the Western Mediterranean Forum and organize the next 5+5 Dialogue Ministerial Conference after the Portuguese Presidency.

Signatures:

<p>Algeria</p>  <p>Kamel BADDARI Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research</p>	<p>France</p>  <p>Manuel BOUARD Deputy Delegate for Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education and Research</p>
<p>Italy</p>  <p>Armando BARUCCO Ambassador of Italy in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania</p>	<p>Libya</p>  <p>Omran M. ALGEEP Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research</p>
<p>Malta</p>  <p>Keith AZZOPARDI TANTI Parliamentary Secretary for Youth, Research and Innovation Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation</p>	<p>Mauritania</p>  <p>Mohamed Lemine Aboye CHEIKH EL HADRAMI Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research</p>
<p>Morocco</p>  <p>For the Minister and by delegation Sanaa ZEBAKH Director of Cooperation and Partnership, Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation</p>	<p>Portugal</p>  <p>Maria Madalena dos Santos ALVES President of the Board of Directors, Foundation for Science and Technology</p>
<p>Spain</p>  <p>Raquel YOTTI Secretary General of Research, Ministry of Science and Innovation</p>	<p>Tunisia</p>  <p>Moncef BOUKTHIR Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research</p>

This declaration is originally written in English, French and Arabic. In case of discrepancies in interpretation, the English version will prevail.