

Brussels, 27 September 2004

**82nd EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE
REGIONS**

- 21 OCTOBER 2004 -

ITEM 10

COOPERATION WITH EUROPEAN REGIONAL AND LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

Submitted by the Secretary-General

FOR INFORMATION

MEMO FOR MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

82nd EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

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Item 10

Cooperation with European regional and local associations:

- a) Report on the implementation of the action plans 2003/2004**
- b) Report of the state of play of the "Dialogue with associations of regional and local authorities on the formulation of European Union policy"**

- a) Report on the implementation of the action plans 2003/2004**

Following the Bureau decision on 14 May 2002 on "Cooperation with European associations representing local and regional authorities" (R/CdR 106/2002 item 11) and the discussion the Bureau held on 19 March 2004 on the secretary-general's report on "Cooperation with European regional and local associations – programme for 2004" (CdR 380/2003 Part I), this document presents the members of the Bureau an update on the Committee's activities in this area.

1. Measures to know, monitor and coordinate with the associations

Information about associations

In 2004 the secretariat general has continued to identify the most important European-wide and national associations of regional and local authorities in the EU 25 and has started to constantly monitor their activity.

This has led to the establishment of :

- a regularly updated list of some 130 European-wide and national associations including a description of their structures and main representatives (CdR 27/2004); a regular update of this information is made available to the secretariats of the commissions and political groups as well as to the services of the European Commission;

- a database recording the objectives, structures, and activities of the 20 main European-wide associations representing regional and local authorities; twice a year an update of this information is distributed to CoR members as well as to the services of the European Commission (last update in June 2004)¹.

This information as well as the links to the web sites of the concerned associations will be made available on the Committee's website under the heading "Regional and local associations".

As regards the 7 major European-wide associations² the CoR secretariat is monitoring their work as well as their common activities and informs the commission secretariats about their strategies, initiatives and upcoming events.

Cooperation with European-wide associations

In accordance with the Bureau decision of 14 May 2002, the Secretary General has arranged regular meetings with the Secretaries General of the 7 major European-wide associations³ taking place at the CoR headquarters three times a year. Two meetings have so far been held in 2004, the last one taking place on the 11 June.

The purpose of this meeting was to update the associations on the evolution of the debate regarding the European Draft Constitution, to inform the associations on the creation of the network for subsidiarity monitoring, to organise the participation of the associations in CoR activities and to hold an exchange of views on the outcome of the inaugural meeting of the Dialogue between the European Commission and the Associations on 10 May 2004 (see item 3 below), and the 3rd Cohesion Forum. The next meeting will be held on 18 October 2004.

Cooperation with national associations

Since March 2004 the Committee also started cooperation with national associations representing regional and local authorities.

On the 14-15 October 2004, the CoR hosted the inaugural meeting of the coordinators of associations of national and regional authorities at the CoR headquarters in the Belliard Building, Brussels. This meeting, entitled "From similar problems to different solutions", brought together around 150 coordinators from associations of national and regional authorities from throughout the EU 25 giving them the opportunity to exchange experiences, analyse concrete cases of collaboration, network and build on the possibilities for further cooperation. The Secretary General presided the debate scheduled on "The roles of the European Institutions and other European Actors".

¹ Fact sheets on the activities, representatives and work schedules of European organisations representing local and regional authorities, updated for the second half of 2004 (CdR 178/2004)

² AEBR, AER, CALRE, CEMR, CPMR, EUROCIITIES, REGLEG

³ AEBR, AER, CALRE, CEMR, CPMR, EUROCIITIES, REGLEG

Participation in Annual Conferences of Associations

The President of the Committee has been invited by most of the major European-wide and national associations to address their 2004 annual conferences⁴. In cases where the President will not be able to attend these conferences a member nominated by the President will represent the Committee and communicate its political priorities to the inviting association.

Administrative arrangements

The administrative support of the commissions and the President in the execution of the listed tasks in this document are ensured by the Unit for Subsidiarity Monitoring and Relations with Associations established by the Bureau on 15 June 2004.

2. Operational measures to implement the joint action plans 2003/2004

In addition to the 4 joint action plans with associations the Secretary General presented to the Bureau in March 2004 (with CEMR for 2003, with CALRE for 2003/2004, with ARFE for 2004, and with EUROCITIES for 2004, CdR 380/2003 Part I, appendices 1-4), two further joint action plans with CPMR and CEMR have been signed since March 2004 (see appendices 2 and 3). An action plan with REGLEG focusing on the subject of subsidiarity monitoring will be most likely signed at the occasion of REGLEG's annual conference on 29 November 2004 in Edinburgh.

Following measures have been taken to implement these action plans.

2.1 Preparation of CoR opinions and reports

Following the work programme presented to the Bureau in March 2004 and on the basis of the joint action plans, the CoR secretariat has established a number of task forces in which the associations contributed with their specific expertise in assisting the rapporteurs in the drawing up of opinions. Contributions take the form of written position papers and/or preparatory meetings with the rapporteur and/or their experts.

During the last 6 months such task forces have been established for the following subjects and with the participation of the listed associations:

COTER Commission

- A New Legal Instrument for Cross-border Cooperation (CdR 62/2004, Rapporteur: Mr Niessl (AT-PES))

⁴

for example CPMR, CALRE;, REGLEG, ARE, ARFE, Eurocities as well as several other European and national associations

- ARFE participation in debate at COTER Commission meeting **5 May 2004**
- ARFE paper addressed to the CoR rapporteur "Comments of the AEBR on the proposal of the European Commission for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a European Grouping of Cross-border Co-operation (EGCC)".

ECOS Commission

- Draft Commission Directive on the transparency of financial relations between Member States and public undertakings and the Draft of the Commission decision on the application of Article 86 of the Treaty to State aid in the form of public service compensation granted to certain undertakings entrusted with the operation of services of general economic interest COM(2004) final, CdR 155/2004, Rapporteur: Mr Martini (IT, PES)
 - Participation of Eurocities and CEMR in meetings with the rapporteur's expert, Mr Giannarelli, **30 April and 19 July 2004**:
 - Position papers of CEMR and Eurocities on Services of General Interest addressed to the CoR rapporteur
- Commission Green Paper on *Public private partnerships and Community Law on public contracts and concessions* COM(2004) 327 final, CdR 239/2004, Rapporteur: Ms Catarina Segersten Larsson (SE, EPP).
 - Participation of Eurocities and CEMR in a meeting with the rapporteur and her expert on 28 July 2004

EDUC Commission

- Communication from the Commission on *Science and Technology: the key to Europe's future. Guidelines for future European policy to support research* COM(2004) 353 final, CdR 194/2004 Rapporteur: Mr Jyrki Myllyvirta (FI/EPP)
 - Participation of Eurocities in a meeting with the rapporteur on **9 July 2004**
- Communication from the Commission on *Connecting Europe at High Speed: National Broadband Strategies* COM(2004) 369 final, CdR 257/2004, Rapporteur: Mr Tomaz Stebe (SL/EPP)
 - Participation of Eurocities in telephone conferences with the CoR rapporteur on **2-6 August 2004**

RELEX Commission

- Outlook opinion on *Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and local and regional authorities: the need for coordination and a specific instrument for decentralised cooperation*, Rapporteurs: Mr Jacques Blanc, (FR/EPP) Mr Gianfranco Lamberti, (IT/PES)
- Eurocities adhered to the CoR opinion and distributed it throughout its EURO-MED network

2.2. Hearings of the CoR commissions

Associations had always been invited on an ad-hoc basis to participate in CoR hearings and to attend CoR commission meetings. Following the Bureau decision in May 2002 these invitations have been issued on a regular basis, which has increased the participation rate of associations in CoR hearings.

Since February 2004, associations have actively participated in the following meetings:

COTER Commission

- Hearing on the Reform of the European Cohesion Policy, **18 February 2004**, with the participation of CPMR, CEMR, AER, AEBR, Eurocities
- Hearing on "A new legal instrument for cross-border cooperation", **5 May 2004**, with the participation of AEBR and CLRAE

DEVE Commission

- Discussion on the EC Communication "Towards a thematic strategy on the urban environment" organised during the DEVE Commission meeting of **3 May 2004** with the participation of CEMR, Eurocities and the European Environment Bureau
- Seminar on "*Sustainable Development at the Local Level*", **10 September**, in Varkaus, Sweden. Representatives of Eurocities and CEMR contributed to the debate.

2.3. Participation of associations in CoR conferences/forums

As a result of the systematic initiative to include speakers from the associations in CoR organised conferences and forums, the CoR has seen considerably increased participation of associations in CoR organised events in 2004.

CONST Commission

On **27 May 2004** the CONST Commission held the "First Conference on Subsidiarity" in the Bundesrat in Berlin. During the seminar speakers from CEMR, CALRE and REGLEG took the floor

to present their point of view and reasserted their readiness to cooperate closely with the CoR in establishing an efficient monitoring system of the application of the principle of subsidiarity within the Union.

On **21 September** the CONST Commission organised a Round Table debate on the theme of "Towards the introduction of a system of legal guarantees for European local and regional authorities" during a joint meeting with CLRAE, in Prague. Representatives of CEMR, Eurocities and CALRE participated in the debate.

EDUC Commission

On **29 November** the EDUC Commission and the City of Genoa will hold a conference entitled, "*Community Actions in Favour of Culture: Local and Regional Perspectives.*" in Genoa, Italy. The conference will deal with the role of culture as a factor of regional development, EC action to enhance such a role and the work of regional and local networks in the promotion of cultural diversity. ARE and the National Association of Romanian Authorities as well as CLRAE will contribute to the debate.

FORUMS/OPEN DAYS

On **16 June 2004**, the CoR organised a **Forum** debate entitled "**Financing Regional and Local Policies**" with the participation of representatives from the OECE, the European Bank for Reconstruction Development and Mr Martin Jahn, Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic. High level representatives of the three associations Eurocities, CALRE and CEMR actively took part in the debate.

From **27–30 September 2004**, the CoR/EC was organising the "**Open Days**" which took place at the CoR headquarters and the Brussels offices of many regions and cities. Eurocities, CPMR, REGLEG, ARE, and AEBR were closely cooperating with the CoR and the regional offices in the organisation of the following seminars on themes of shared interest:

- EUROCITIES together with Capital Cities, Cities for Cohesion: "European Cities and Large Urban areas and Regional Policy"
- REGLEG together with the Scottish Executive (Rond Point Schuman 6): "EU Governance and Subsidiarity"
- ARE together with Lower Austria Region: "Structural Funds Management"
- AEBR together with Baden Wurttemberg: "Cross-Border Cooperation"
- CPMR together with the Valencia Region: "Reform of the Cohesion Policy: the position of Natural Effect Regions"

2.4. Specific actions

2.4.1. Participation of CoR members in association conferences

On **10 September** CoR co-organised a conference entitled “Urban Renewal in degraded Urban Areas,” in conjunction with the City of Warsaw and Eurocities. The conference brought together City Mayors, members of regional and national governments, town planners and other experts from the EU 25. Mr Gordon Keymer, member of the COTER *Commission* represented the CoR.

On **17 and 18 September** CoR gave its patronage to the “*1st Conference of Euro and African regional Assemblies*”, organised by CALRE and the Region of Tuscany, in Florence. Sir Ron Watson of the RELEX Commission addressed the conference in the name of CoR, and presided the debate on “decentralisation and peace”

2.4.2. Press coverage of the CoR in association journals

Building on past efforts in a more systematic way and in cooperation with the associations the CoR has placed articles promoting CoR activities in the following association journals:

- Demokratische Gemeinde 05/2004, Monatszeitschrift für Kommunalpolitik, Deutschland
- Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation Newsletter No 3, 2004
- Maires et Présidents de Communautés de France, Magazine of the Association des Mairies de France, AMF, September/October 2004
- Europe locale, Journal of the Association Française du Conseil des Communes et Régions d'Europe (AFCCRA) – October 2004

b) Report on the state of play of the "Dialogue with associations of regional and local authorities on the formulation of European Union policy"⁵

Following the communication of the European Commission, and in accordance with the Bureau decision of 19 March 2004, (CdR 380/2003 item 2) the Committee of the Regions plays a key role in the articulation of this dialogue, working with the associations to establish the selection criteria for participation, proposing lists of participants to the Commission and coordinating the preparation of the different meetings of the dialogue in close cooperation with the Commission and the associations.

The first meeting of the dialogue between the European Commission and the European and national associations representing regional and local authorities took place on 10 May 2004 between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. in the presence of President Prodi, Commissioner Barrot, Commissioner Balasz and President Straub and more than 100 representatives of national and European associations. The subjects of this inaugural meeting chosen by European Commission's President Prodi were the annual work programme of the Commission for 2004, the Strategic Priorities of the Commission for 2005 and

⁵ COM (2003) 811 final, from 19/12/2003

the future potential of the dialogue. In his speech the Commission President also hailed the “vital” role that the CoR was to play in organising the dialogue.

The associations invited to participate were drawn from the CoR list transmitted to the European Commission, in accordance with the EC's communication on the dialogue. This list had been established in close cooperation and with the authorization of the Committee's national delegations.

Preparation was characterized by constant contact with the EC's secretariat general and DG Regio, and liaison with the large European-wide associations (ARE, ARFE, CALRE, CEMR, CPMR, EUROCITIES, REGLEG). A measure of the success of this preparation was the agreement that President Straub should chair the meeting, and the high turnout at the post-dialogue press conference.

In its meeting of 2 July the Commission for Constitutional Affairs and European Governance evaluated the dialogue held on 10 May and expressed the opinion that the meeting was enriching but that it needed to allow more space for a true dialogue in the future.

On 11 June 2004 the Secretary general organised a meeting with the Secretaries-General of the 7 European-wide associations in order to discuss the outcome and future of the dialogue. He also presented an evaluation of the dialogue before a number of regional and national associations at the representation office of Baden Württemberg on 14 July.

On 8 June 2004 the five associations AEBR, ARE, CEMR, CRPM and EUROCITIES addressed a letter to President Prodi in which they presented their reactions to the Dialogue on 10 May 2004. In this letter they expressed their concern that "the dialogue must allow for genuine two way communication and a real exchange of views". They also suggest that a general meeting of the dialogue with the Commission President should take place in November-December every year and that this meeting should be followed by meetings with individual Commissioners.

The subjects of the dialogue could be:

- European cohesion policy
- Social integration
- Services of general interest
- Interregional and cross-border cooperation
- Environment

As regards the future of the dialogue it seems that the current European Commission will not convene any meetings anymore even if Commissioner Barnier and his successor Commissioner Balasz had announced that a structured dialogue could be organized regarding the Commission's proposal for a regulation on the legal instrument for trans-European cooperation of regional and local authorities.

For the moment it is still unclear if and if yes when President Baroso will take the initiative to organise a meeting in the framework of the dialogue.

In view of a possible re-launch of the dialogue the Committee secretariat has however proceeded to the necessary preparation work as regards the update of the lists of associations to be invited and the preparation of a information and consultation to be made available on the new CoR website. This space could be made operational as soon as the organisation of a meeting in the framework of the dialogue should be requested by the European Commission.

In the preparation for the renegotiation of the cooperation agreement between the European Commission and the Committee of the Regions the CoR secretariat insisted that the future cooperation agreement will also have to deal with the CoR-EC relations as far as the organisation of the dialogue is concerned.

Proposal

The members of the Bureau are asked to take note of the information contained in the present memo.

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Appendix 1

Cooperation between CoR and Associations of Local and Regional Authorities 2004 - Table

Date	Event	Associations Involved	Comments
18 February 2004	COTER Commission hearing on “Reform of the European Cohesion policy.”	CPMR, CEMR, AER, AEER, Eurocities	during commission meeting
5–6 April 2004	Conference “Knowledge-based regions in the information society,” organised by EDUC Commission	ARE	
3 May 2004	Discussion on the EC Communication “Towards a thematic strategy on the urban environment” organised by the DEVE Commission.	CEMR, Eurocities, EEB	during commission meeting
5 May 2004	COTER Commission hearing on “A new legal instrument for cross-border cooperation.”	AEER and CLRAE	during commission meeting
10 May 2004	Dialogue between EC and associations	Over 60 associations represented, including all the major European associations and many national and specific interest associations.	CoR President Straub presided and moderated the session, facilitating dialogue between the EC and the associations
27 May 2004	First Conference on Subsidiarity, organised by CONST Commission	CEMR, CALRE, REGLEG	In conjunction with the Bundesrat, Berlin, Germany.
16 June 2004	CoR Forum debate “Financing Regional and Local Policies”	Eurocities, CALRE and CEMR	Key speaker Mr Martin Jahn, now deputy PM of Czech Republic
10 September	Seminar on sustainable development at the local level, organised by DEVE Commission	Eurocities CEMR	Varkaus, Sweden
10–11 September 2004	Seminar on Urban Renewal, CoR Patronage (COTER Commission)	Eurocities	Co-organised by CoR, Eurocities and the City of Warsaw
17–18 September	1 st conference of Euro and African regional assemblies – CoR patronage (RELEX Commission)	CALRE	Co-organised by CALRE and the Region of Tuscany

21 September 2004	Round table on “Towards the introduction of a system of legal guarantees for European local and regional authorities.”	Associations of Czech Regions, Association of Czech Municipalities, CLRAE, Eurocities, CEMR, CALRE	During the external meeting of CONST commission, Prague.
27–30 September 2004	Open Days	CALRE, Eurocities, CPMR, REGLEG, ARE, and AEBR	Associations collaborating closely with respective regional offices in Brussels, CoR acts as facilitator and coordinator
4 October 2004	Conference on “Strategies to promote effective employment and integration” organised by ECOS Commission	Eurocities	The Hague (Netherlands), followed by an external meeting of the ECOS Commission
29 November 2004	Seminar on “The cultural activities of the European Union: the local and regional perspective” organised by EDUC Commission	CLRAE ARE “Rencontres”	Co-organised with the City of Genoa, Italy
1 December 2004	Symposium on the CoR’s contribution to European Governance, organised by CONST Commission	REGLEG, CALRE, CEMR, CRPM, ARFE, ARE	During external meeting of the CONST Commission, Maastricht, Netherlands.

EUROPEAN UNION



**COMMITTEE OF THE
REGIONS**

Secretary-general



CoR-CEMR Action Plan 2004

Having Regard to

- the decision of the Bureau of the Committee of the Regions on 14 May 2002 to increase the cooperation between the Committee and the European associations representing local and regional authorities by establishing common structural activities (R/CdR 106/2002 item 11) and
- the decision of the Executive Bureau of CEMR on 7 July 2003, authorizing the Secretary General to enter into a cooperation agreement with the Committee of the Regions

**the Secretary General of the Committee of the Regions (COR),
Mr Gerhard STAHL**

and

**the Secretary General of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR),
Mr Jeremy SMITH,**

agree to further enhance cooperation between the Committee and the Council by establishing a common action plan for the period between June 2004 and June 2005. In 2005 a report on implementation of the action plan will be presented to the Committee's and the Council's Bureaux.

The action plan 2004/2005 contains the following priorities:

1. **Close cooperation on the issue of Subsidiarity in the light of the European draft Constitution**

Following the successful CoR/CEMR cooperation on formulation of priorities for the European Convention since 2002 and in the light of the CoR seminar on subsidiarity in Berlin on 27 May 2004,

further cooperation should be undertaken in order to prepare local and regional authorities for the entry into force of the European Constitution. This cooperation should aim to prepare an efficient implementation of the new subsidiarity-monitoring mechanism foreseen in the Protocol on subsidiarity and proportionality in which the CoR has a key role to play to safeguard regional and local interests within the European Union. The parties will cooperate in relation to the proposed network to be set up by CoR for this purpose.

2. Dialogue between the European Commission and the Associations of Regional and Local Authorities.

CoR and CEMR will cooperate to promote the effective implementation of the dialogue between the European Commission and the Associations of Regional and Local Authorities as established by the EC's Communication (COM (2003) 811 final).

3. Involvement of expertise in selected task forces set up by the Committee of the Regions in order to support its rapporteurs

Drawing on the expertise of its members and secretariat, CEMR will be invited to contribute actively to the work carried out in the task forces set up by the CoR on specific topics, in order to support the appointed rapporteurs or to organize the follow-up of specific projects.

In accordance with CEMR expertise, participation in the CoR task forces should focus on the fields of:

- Local self-government
- Cohesion Policy and Rural Development
- Internal Market (and its impact on public services)
- Environment
- Transport
- Energy
- Employment and Social Affairs
- Neighbourhood Policy.

In general, CEMR participation in the work of the CoR should be fostered wherever this provides a political added value for both parties. The Secretariat of the CoR will facilitate the involvement of CEMR in this task whenever a mutual agreement on common interests has been established.

4. Participation in conferences organised respectively

The CoR will endeavour to include CEMR in the realisation of its conferences where there is a clearly defined role and added value for such participation. CEMR will similarly invite CoR participation in its conferences where a common interest has been identified. Respective officers will draw up a schedule of relevant events, which should include the following:

The participation of a speaker from CEMR at the seminar organised by the DEVE Commission of the CoR in Varkaus, Finland in September 2004 on the theme of “Sustainable Development at the Local Level”; the seminar on “Preparing Candidate Countries for Accession to the EU” organised by the RELEX Commission of CoR in Essex, UK in November 2004; the CoR’s 10th Anniversary celebrations, and the CoR Summit of Regions and Cities planned for May 2005, focusing on cohesion policy.

Reciprocally CEMR will endeavour to invite CoR members to address CEMR-organised events. CEMR will invite CoR to be represented at meetings of CEMR’s forum on sustainable development, cohesion and the Lisbon agenda.

Moreover, the CoR and CEMR foresee the organisation of a common conference in 2005, on a theme of shared concern, such as, for example, new concepts and modernisation in local self-government or the EU neighbourhood policy.

5. Joint activities in the field of communication and the mutual publicity of key events

The CoR and the CEMR will establish a common strategy in the field of communication. The mutual use of the tools of communication of both organisations should be enhanced. (Newsletters, Websites, mutual presence of information stands at CoR or CEMR events, exchange of documents, reception of groups of visitors etc.)

6. Working lunches with opinion formers

CEMR and CoR reaffirm the importance of this initiative foreseen in the common action plan 2003. In order to raise awareness in the European Commission, the European Parliament, Council of Ministers and of other key actors in EU domain, the CoR and the CEMR will organise working lunches with European opinion formers on the issues of this action plan.

During these lunches, representatives of the CoR and the CEMR will meet members of the European Parliament, Commission and Council officials or other stakeholders in Brussels in order to participate in the decision shaping process.

Brussels, 29 July 2003

Gerhard Stahl

Jeremy Smith



CoR-CPMR Action Plan 2004

Having Regard to

- the decision of the Bureau of the Committee of the Regions on 14 May 2002 to step up cooperation between the Committee and the European associations representing local and regional authorities by organising common structural activities (R/CdR 106/2002 item 11),
- the decision taken by the Political Bureau of the CPMR on 9 July 2004,
- the good cooperation between the Committee of the Regions and the European associations representing local and regional authorities which has been established, in particular in the context of the European Convention on the Future of Europe, the reform of the Cohesion Policy in the light of the 3rd Cohesion report and with regard to the emerging systematic policy dialogue,

the Secretary General of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), **Mr Gerhard Stahl**

and

the General Secretary of CPMR, **Mr Xavier Gizard**

agree to further enhance cooperation between the Committee and CPMR by establishing a common action plan for 2004/2005. In 2005 a report on the implementation of the action plan will be submitted to the Bureau of the Committee of Regions, as well as to the Bureau of CPMR.

The common action plan 2004/2005 contains the following priorities:

1. Involvement of expertise in selected task forces set up by the Committee of the Regions in order to support its rapporteurs.

Drawing on the expertise of its members and secretariat, CPMR will contribute actively to the work carried out in the task forces set up by the Committee of the Regions on specific topics, in order to support the appointed rapporteurs or to organize the follow-up of specific projects.

In accordance with CPMR expertise, participation in the CoR task forces should focus on the fields of:

- Regional policy and territorial cooperation, taking into particular account aspects relating to peripheral and maritime regions;
- Regional and local governance, particularly on issues relating to subsidiarity and Services of General Interest;
- The Lisbon Agenda, in the area of research and innovation;
- Neighbourhood policy with specific focus on the Mediterranean basin and the Balkans on one hand and the eastern part of Europe on the other hand;
- Enlargement;
- Maritime dimensions of EU policy (transport, maritime safety, fishing policy, integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) and sustainable development).

In general, CPMR participation in the work of the CoR should be fostered wherever this provides a political added value for both parties. The Secretariat of the CoR will facilitate the involvement of CPMR in this task whenever a mutual agreement on common interests has been established.

2. Organisation of common conferences, seminars and events and enhanced communications

The secretariats of the CoR and CPMR will explore how to improve the coordination of their communication channels to increase the visibility and impact of their joint actions. Specifically, the CPMR and the CoR should aim to maximise possibilities for mutual participation in conferences organised by each party.

The CoR and CPMR are happy to cooperate on the successful organisation of the first meeting of the Structured Dialogue with the Associations.

Another activity will be the involvement of the CoR in the Seminar co-organised by AEBR and CPMR in Sicily in October 2004 on the issue of territorial cooperation.

Furthermore, CPMR will participate in the CoR-EC organised Open Days in September 2004 working in close collaboration with the Valencia Region in the organisation of events relating to Cohesion policy and the “Natural Effect” Regions.

In the spirit of partnership that this document embodies, the President of the Committee of Regions will be invited to the Annual General Assembly of CPMR to be held in Norway, in September 2004.

Brussels, 1 June 2004

(signed)
Gerhard Stahl

(signed)
Xavier Gizard
