

## **EuroMeSCo Steering Committee Meeting**

Barcelona, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 16h - 18.30h

### **Agenda**

1. Statement and news from the Academic Secretariat (IEMed)
  - 1.1. Latest developments regarding EuroMeSCo
  - 1.2. Steps taken by the Academic Secretariat
2. Financial perspectives and new funding opportunities
3. Any other business

### **Attending members**

ACPSS, Egypt (Amal Mukhtar)  
Chatham House, United Kingdom (Claire Spencer)  
CEMI, Tunisia (Ahmed Driss)  
CSS, Jordan (Musa Shteivi)  
FIIA, Finland (Teemu Sinkkonen)  
HIIA, Hungary (Erzsébet Rózsa)  
IAI, Italy (Ettore Greco)  
IEMed, Spain (Senén Florensa)  
INESG, Algeria (Lotfi Boumghar)  
TEPSA, Belgium (Gunilla Herolf)

The Meeting was chaired by Senén Florensa, Executive President of the IEMed and Chair of the Steering Committee, and was also attended by Bichara Khader, Chair of the General Assembly, and Josep Ferré, Pol Morillas, Xavier Aragall and Aleksandra Chmielewska from the IEMed.

### **1. Statement and news from the Academic Secretariat (IEMed)**

The President of the Steering Committee opened the meeting and announced that EuroMeSCo has been ranked as the 7<sup>th</sup> best think tank network in the world according to the University of Pennsylvania's 2013 "Global Go-To Think Tanks Ranking". He highlighted the importance of this accomplishment for the work of EuroMeSCo and thanked all members for contributing to it. Senén Florensa went on to present the main activities of EuroMeSCo since the last General Assembly, held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 in Paris. The Chair of the Steering Committee informed that 7 EuroMeSCo Papers were commissioned to first-class researchers, two of which have already been submitted.

In accordance with the decision taken during the meeting of the Steering Committee in Cairo, which states that the final drafts of the papers should be subject to a peer-review, the revision of the four next papers was attributed as follows: the paper by Ibrahim El Houdaiby will be reviewed by Ettore Greco (IAI); the paper by Tarek Kahlaoui, by Ahmed Driss (CEMI); the paper by Eduard Soler, by Erzsébet Rózsa (HIIA); and the paper by Mohamed Elhachimi will be reviewed by Claire Spencer (Chatham House).

Subsequently, the President of the Steering Committee referred to the research project "The Arab Spring in Comparative Perspective". Under this programme, a Working Group will start its proceedings on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of the Strategic Studies Network (SSN), which will be held in Bangkok from 22 to 25 February 2014. It will be chaired by Senén Florensa, Executive President of the IEMed, and its final results will be presented at the Annual Conference of the SSN in 2015. The activities of the group will be funded by the SSN.

The Chair of the Steering Committee informed that the IEMed has received 19 applications from EuroMeSCo researchers, who expressed their interest in joining the working group. The activities of the group will be divided into two Working Packages: "Internal changes in transition processes: what priorities?" and "External actors and regional integration". Every package will consist of smaller groups, each of which will tackle a different subject and will be lead by two researchers. Senén Florensa informed that the participation to the Working Group had been opened to all members of EuroMeSCo and encouraged the members of the Steering Committee to send their expressions of interest to join the Working Group.

## 2. Financial perspectives and new funding opportunities

Regarding the financial information of the network, the Chair of the Steering Committee informed that the IEMed will maintain its commitment and will continue to finance the whole program of the network as during the last years.

He also referred to the payment requested by the European Commission to the Instituto de Estudios Estrategicos e Internacionales (IEEI) for the reimbursement of the funds provided under the Contract for EuroMeSCo. He informed that the European Commission has received the largest part of the refund requested through the execution of the guarantee. However, a small amount of money is still to be reimbursed, arousing from the delays of the reimbursement.

Senén Florensa also made reference to the possible launch of a Call for Proposals by the European Commission. The Chair of the Steering Committee explained the legal problems which could arise at the moment of submitting an application for funding on behalf of EuroMeSCo. In order to be eligible, the use of EuroMeSCo's legal structure should be avoided. Instead, the application should be submitted by an ad-hoc consortium. The members of the Steering Committee agreed to act as co-applicants of this Call for Proposals –pending the formal agreement of the leadership of their institutes. IEMed would act as the main applicant and all other members of EuroMeSCo would be invited to join in the form stipulated in the terms of reference of the Call.

The discussion was followed by an exchange of views about whether the name of the network should be kept or changed in light of the recent developments. The Steering Committee agreed that the acronym "EuroMeSCo" should be kept as a trade mark as far as possible, as it is widely recognised and demonstrates a track record of achievements of the network. However, the words from which the acronym is composed could be modified.

In the later part of the meeting, the Chair of the Steering Committee referred to the organisation of the EuroMeSCo Annual Conference 2014. He informed that the Academic Secretariat has started discussions with possible co-organisers within the network. The Steering Committee discussed the possible topics of the Conference, which could be held under the title "Managing Diversity in the Euro-Mediterranean region". The topics proposed by the members of the Steering Committee were:

- Islam and the challenge of diversity
- The role of media in shaping public opinion in Europe and the South Mediterranean
- Models of success and failure in the coexistence of cultures and religions in the region

Other topics proposed were the role of the EU in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, the impact of the Gulf investments in the Maghreb and the impact of the economic crisis on Euro-Mediterranean policies. The Steering Committee agreed that the Conference should be structured around plenary sessions and workshops, where some of these topics could be discussed.

### **3. Any other business**

No other business raised, the meeting was closed at 18.30h on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014.