

MID-TERM EURO-MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CRETE, 26-27 MAY 2003

PRESIDENCY CONCLUSIONS

EXTRACT

Environment

37. The Ministers also welcomed the outcome of the Ministerial Conference on the Environment that took place in Athens in July 2002. By adopting the Athens Declaration the 27 participants to the Conference provided a significant impetus to the mainstreaming of sustainability in all activities of the Partnership. A Sustainability Impact Assessment of the free trade area is to be launched this year fulfilling the commitment agreed at Valencia. Besides, the contribution of the Ministerial Conference on the Environment in Helsinki in 1997 on cooperation between the Mediterranean and the Baltic and the launching in Athens of the cooperation initiative on sustainable development between the Mediterranean and the Baltic, enable the two regions to benefit from each other's experience.
38. The Ministers recognised that work should continue with a view to identifying what more can be done to enhance the sustainability of the Partnership and to assist the partners in raising the standards of norms of environmental protection.
39. The Ministers noted with interest the initiatives undertaken by the Greek Presidency on the issue of sustainable development such as the convening of the International Conference on Sustainable Development and Lasting Peace (Athens, 6/7 May 2003), co-hosted by the World Bank, as well as the presentation by the Presidency of the EU Water Initiative.