



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA OKOLJE IN PROSTOR

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**THE SPEECH OF MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SPATIAL
PLANNING OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA, DR JANEZ PODOBNIK,
AT THE MINISTERIAL PART OF THE 14th ORDINARY MEETING OF
THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION
(Wednesday, 9 November 2005, 9.00h)**

Dear Excellencies, Heads of Delegations and Delegates, Representatives of international governmental and non-governmental organisations,

Dear Mr Mifsud and other UNEP/MAP Representatives, Distinguished Guests and Journalists,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you here in the northernmost part of the Mediterranean Gulf, in the Adriatic ecoregion where the Alps and the Dinarides meet. This region represents a cross-roads of cultures, economies and states, as the renown Fernand Braudel once wrote:

"The Mediterranean is a thousand things together. Not a landscape but many landscapes. Not one sea but many seas. Not a civilization, but a series of civilizations one after the other. The Mediterranean is an ancient cross-road, for thousands of years everything has met into its waters, confusing but also enriching its history."

The visionary initiative to establish the Mediterranean Action Plan and its thirty-year tradition no doubt represent a bright and important segment of the history we share. All the coastal states of the Mediterranean have united in the concern to preserve the healthy marine sources which are the foundation of regional economy and bear significant cultural implications (in the material, social and intellectual sense).



Morje potrebuje naš glas
The sea deserves our voice

30 let
Sredozemskega akcijskega načrta
14. redno zasedanje pogodbenic Konvencije
o varstvu morskega okolja in obalnih
območij Sredozemlja in njenih protokolov
Portorož, Slovenija, 8. - 11. november 2005

30 years
Mediterranean Action Plan
14th Ordinary Meeting of the
Contracting Parties to the Convention
for the Protection of the Marine
Environment and the Coastal Regions of
the Mediterranean and its Protocols
Portorož, Slovenia, 8 - 11 November 2005



Regrettably, the maritime and coastal regions are more and more exposed to extensive changes due to increasing pressures and influences of the sector-oriented development. The quality of life is decreasing to the detriment of all who live there.

The above trends lead to the conclusion that the actual role which the Mediterranean Action Plan plays in the implementation of the Mediterranean states development policy is weak and could definitely be stronger. Nevertheless, without the Mediterranean action plan the state of marine environment and the coastal regions would surely be poor, if not much more degraded.

The fact is that the role of MAP is actually determined by the actions of its members, the contracting parties to the Barcelona Convention. It is us, gathered here at the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Portoroz, who are responsible for improving the previous approaches and practices.

Slovenia believes that consultation, co-operation and harmonisation of development plans are the only way to achieve sustainable development paying attention to the use of common marine resources. Co-operation and comprehensive development plans at the sub-regional level are of key importance for the general development and progress of the region.

During its biennial presidency, Slovenia will therefore strive to strengthen co-operation at all levels in order to achieve sustainable development in the Mediterranean. We see great opportunities in looking for the synergies in the field of comprehensive marine resource management. The quality of work done so far and the materials drafted in the framework of the UNEP/MAP process as well as the European Union programmes enable us to achieve those goals. Therefore, I believe that the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention taking place upon the 30th anniversary of UNEP/MAP and the EU summit coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which is taking place at the end of November in Barcelona could be more than a mere coincidence. It is us, gathered here in Portoroz, who are responsible for the development breakthrough which will improve the quality of life at the Mediterranean coasts for us and for the

future generations. I hope that the Portoroz Declaration will reflect the spirit for the necessary action.

I wish you successful work.

Thank you