

**MESSAGE ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE EGYPTIAN RADIO AND
TELEVISION UNION DR. AMIN BASSIOUNI, IN HIS QUALITY OF PRESIDENT OF
THE III CONFERENCE ON "TELEVISIONS AND AUDIO-VISUAL IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN",
BY H. E. MRS. SUSANNA AGNELLI, MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY**

On the occasion of the opening of the third conference on "television and audio-visual in the Mediterranean", I would like to express to you, on behalf of the European union, of the Italian Government and mine personally, the deepest appreciation for the initiative you undertook together with the wish that the conference will achieve positive results, in order to give a first and concrete answer to the expectation originated by the Euro-Mediterranean conference of Barcelona.

I would like in particular to point out that the primary engagement undertaken by the European union and by the third Mediterranean countries in that occasion, was to develop common initiatives in order to overcome the traditional framework of the bilateral cooperation, which has been prevailing so far between the two shores of the Mediterranean.

In Barcelona, the European union and the third Mediterranean countries have decided to expand the spectrum of the initiatives to be jointly undertaken in order to proceed, as intensively and rapidly as possible, towards a Mediterranean integration with global character that could be taken as an example for the growing number of regional agreements which are recently taking shape in the framework of international relations.

In this prospective, particular emphasis has been given to the necessity of improving life conditions of the populations in the Mediterranean region, of developing the knowledge of the respective cultures for a better comprehension and closeness among the peoples.

To this aim, the contribution that can be given by the audio-visual instrument in general and the television in particular, is essential. It can contribute in the most effective way in supporting the professional training, the technological development and the cooperation among research institutes, the dialogue between associations and labour unions as well as among the public and private enterprises.

The European union is fully aware of the important role that the audio-visual instrument can play in the civil society and the European union intends to examine thoroughly together with the third Mediterranean countries, all possible developments that could be achieved through it in the framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

In this respect it is my intention, under the Italian presidency, to hold in Rome during the coming month of May, a meeting of the ministers of scientific research of the countries participating to the in Barcelona conference in order to discuss the issue of telecom transfers of know-how, with particular reference to the distance learning, establishment of information networks between universities and research institutes, the "telemedicine" and "telecomwork".

We wish therefore that the conclusions of this third conference on "television and audio-visual in the Mediterranean" could find in the discussions that will take place in Rome a good opportunity for a significant operational development.