



Symposium « Le rôle des Educateurs dans la diffusion de la culture de tolérance et de solidarité » Speech of the AEDE European President Prof.Silvano Marseglia

Dear Minister,
Mr President of the Association Forum des Educateurs,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,



I am here as the European president of the AEDE, the Association which unites European teachers who wish to contribute to the political union of Europe by means of education, and to sign a cooperation protocol with the Association Forum des Educateurs (AFE) from Tunisia, with the purpose of improving the intercultural dialogue, as an instrument of peace in the world, in a specific area, the Mediterranean area, where cultures and populations have always cohabited. The relations between Europe and the countries of the Mediterranean area are deeply rooted in their history and culture.

Europe and the Mediterranean are genetically connected; they need one another to give a new life to the possibilities of union among populations. They are regions linked by countless and ancient cultural threads which need to be enhanced and increased in order to give life to an age of prosperity and peace in an area which is crucial for the harmony of the whole international community and above all of the community overlooking the Mediterranean sea.

Throughout a thousand-year history Europe and the Mediterranean have been a main support of human civilization. All the people living in the area benefited from it for their mutual progress, especially during those historical phases when, all the conquests, the abuses of power and the crusades excepted, they were able to cohabit peacefully, to meet each other freely, to trade mutual benefits, to exchange knowledge and to behave with understanding and tolerance towards different races and religions.

This precious heritage of history, culture, human experience, which made the Euro-Mediterranean region an example of civilization, is, still today a legacy to refer to and on which to draw if we want to take into consideration and to face the big regional challenges which are essential for the future of the populations living along the two shores. That's why, the date 2010, year of the institution of a free market zone in the Mediterranean area, is extremely important.

It demands of the whole community a sustained dialog which must not be shirked, in order to facilitate a major integration process, by rediscovering a strong historical unity which goes back over solid values and ancient vocations of a peaceful and supporting sea.

The new historic phase invites cultural initiatives to compare disciplinary and intellectual specialties of different cultural origins. For this reason the AEDE and the A.F.E. aim to activate a lasting partnership involving the European Countries from the AEDE and the Countries from the Southern Mediterranean region in a constant dialogue and careful cooperation. Euro-Mediterranean collaboration in dialogue

among the cultures and the Countries of the Mediterranean will involve schools, universities, social institutions and private individuals: this is the base on which we intend to build our cooperation.

We will promote, between our countries and Tunisia, a project for the building of a net of cultural heritages to give value to the influences which, the Mediterranean Sea, our common sea, has brought to our civilization, to our architecture, to our landscape.

We will give hospitality reciprocally, to intellectuals, artists, scholars, writers and many others, to contribute from their own cultures and knowledge, in order to build an ever stronger link between our countries. We will offer them space for dialogue, publications, conferences, hospitality but above all we'll give publicity to all the several experiences.

We'll carry out numerous cultural comparative initiatives (seminars, lectures, and Round Tables), we'll have dialogues with schools and the universities. During this activity, we will give priority to the political and cultural perspective of considering the Mediterranean area as a basin united to Europe and oriented towards a process of sustainable development and the foreshadowing of a solid building of Mediterranean integration, having as its basis a peaceful and civil coexistence respecting shared values. This intercultural exchange will allow our mutual partners and our community to learn the peculiarities of nearby countries, making us more aware of being "citizens of the Mediterranean".

The realization of this protocol between the AEDE and the A.F.E. surely represents a very important moment. From Italy Tunisia is that part of the African coast closest to Europe, and the strait, which separates Tunisia from Sicily has always been a linking and uniting factor. Besides, now it is a very important moment for Tunisia since "The era of change" has meant twenty years of peace, of development and of great prosperity. In the Northern-African setting, Tunisia is an example of moderation and realism. Whilst respecting traditions, Tunisia is an Arab country, which has made a secular choice and a western-oriented choice which have never been questioned. We look with a great sense of satisfaction at the willingness of the Association Forum des Educateurs to open out to Europe with this treaty of cooperation with the AEDE. We'll face the challenges we will encounter so that they will mean progress for us all. We hope to set out from this axis of friendship and of cooperation between the AEDE and the A.F.E. to involve other Mediterranean countries later. Our aims are:

- o To pursue an ideal of friendship and brotherhood
- o To promote increasingly shared values by means of an enhanced dialogue among cultures which may contribute to the coming together of societies and populations, being fully aware of common challenges and pursuing our common responsibility in promoting peaceful activity and shared prosperity.
- o To promote the value and the coexistence of diverse linguistic-cultural groups focusing on human rights and the Civil Society central in the Euro-Mediterranean area.
- o To promote and strengthen knowledge, communication, understanding, cooperation and respect among the populations, also by means of research and the development of different traditions and cultures, environmental protection, the valuing and the preservation of the past and present Euro-Mediterranean cultural heritage.
- o Valuing a "Mediterranean culture" in order to state, also, within the different cultures, a common identity promoting peace and cooperation
- o To promote and to develop constant actions of partnership between the two Associations by giving pride of place to a frank and constructive dialogue which promotes meetings,

exchanges, mutual respect, cooperation and solidarity between the members of the two associations.

- o To plan, to develop and to activate data-banks, specialized in various subjects as well as a documentation and research centre, having as its role technical and scientific support for the projects and the activities carried out by the Cooperation Protocol.
- o To set up relationships with the European Union and other international institutions to pursue the aims of the cooperation protocol.
- o To grasp every opportunity to provide reference points and to promote the activities of the cooperation protocol, with the aim of connecting the A.F.E. to the AEDE.
- o To encourage initiatives aiming to award prizes for peace, culture, science, and art. The Europe, for which we can call upon the work of culture and of schools, is a Europe open and varied in its unity, it is a Europe having as its sole ambition to be a striking example of populations closely and irreversibly associated and working for mutual friendship and peace. The AEDE is the expression of this Europe. Historically European integration coincides with a hugely important phenomenon: the start of a new age: the age of global history. Indeed, for the first time since its creation, mankind is aware or if you prefer, is undergoing a common destiny. Wars are worldwide, ideological conflicts trouble every continent at the same time and the dangers of wars torment men everywhere in the world, regardless of their geographical latitude. Mankind, becoming aware of its common destiny, is starting to desire unity. The only unity possible seems to be that which would link civilizations or continents, which are themselves already organized. This then is the aim of our cooperation protocol: to create a supranational entity fully aware that it is representing true values within a common culture and which feels the need to rectify any shortcomings which can hinder the positive development of all those involved. Definitely our two Associations work in different fields, but we have a single aim, harmony among our peoples.

The only aim is one that will be able to ensure a harmonious, untroubled and gradual progress towards peace for our countries.

Tunis, December 20th, 2008

Silvano MARSEGLIA

President of the AEDE/EAT