



GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2019



“Shaping the Mediterranean from Cooperation to Integration”

PRESS RELEASE

Under the patronage of

*Commissioner Johannes Hahn
Member of the European Commission*



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UNIMED General Assembly took place last 12th and 13th December in Rome at the premises of the Link Campus University and the University of International Studies of Rome (UNINT). The yearly main event of the Association is the occasion where the Rectors, Presidents and their representatives of UNIMED Associated universities meet to exchange views and to determine policy for UNIMED, setting the stage for a full and rich year of initiatives, activities and conferences which shape the academic calendar around the Mediterranean.

In the event organised under the patronage of Commissioner Johannes Hahn, member of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Anna Lindh Foundation, around 150 attendees took part from almost 20 countries of both shores of the Mediterranean.

After the opening messages and greetings provided by Prof. Francisco Matte Bon, UNIMED President and Rector of University of International Studies of Rome, Prof. Hmaid Ben Aziza, UNIMED Secretary General, Mrs. Rima Mattar, Vice President of Holy Spirit University of Kaslik and Mr. Vincenzo Scotti, President of Link Campus University, political representatives, Mr. Andrea Cozzolino and Mr. Enrico Granara addressed the audience their institutional greetings.

During the morning of the first day, after the presentation of UNIMED current activities and future plans showed by Mr. Marcello Scalisi, UNIMED Director, Mr. Besnik Mustafaj ,Writer and former Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania, in his keynote speech underlined the important role of the universities in the cooperation and integration between the two shores of the Mediterranean "People need to understand each other in order to cooperate together. South Mediterranean countries are only partially known as only partial truths are displayed. Universities are in first line to remedy this."

The first day mainly focused on the new challenges for the Euro-Med cooperation, perspectives for the higher education world in the next future, the role of higher education for employability and entrepreneurship and the new opportunities for the academic cooperation in the region. The screening of the documentary "When you can't go back", by the Italian filmmaker, Mr. Leonardo Cinieri Lombroso, concluded this day of work.

The second day offered the opportunity to attend parallel workshops on e-Learning and Open Education and student's mobility experiences and impacts: two among the thematic UNIMED is focusing on. Fruitful sessions were also dedicated to the Euro-Med cooperation in Research and Innovation as well as to the topic of Universities' Social Responsibility and the consequent contribution of academics to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Moreover, the General Assembly was the occasion to nominate Prof. Wail Benjelloun, former UNIMED President, UNIMED honorary President. He has distinguished himself during his term for his commitment and internationalist vocation which guaranteed important opportunities for exchange and discussion nourishing the positive aspects of the Mediterranean region.

The translations during the two-day event in Italian, English and French were provided by the students of the University of International Studies of Rome (UNINT).

To find out more on the programme of the whole event, please click [here](#)

About UNIMED

UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union, founded in October 1991, is an association of Universities from the Mediterranean basin countries (www.uni-med.net). It counts 127 associated Universities coming from 23 countries of both shores of the Mediterranean (data updated in December 2019). During the UNIMED General Assembly 2019 the adhesion of seven new universities was ratified: Aix-Marseille University (France), Isra University (Jordan), Libyan International Medical University and University of Zawia (Libya), University of Murcia (Spain), Al-Furat University (Syria), and Manisa Celal Bayar University (Turkey).

UNIMED's aim is to develop university research and education in the Euro-Mediterranean area in order to contribute to scientific, cultural, social and economic cooperation.

The Universities in UNIMED's network operate in many different fields and thus UNIMED operates on many different fronts.

During the last few years, UNIMED has also supported the establishment of a second-level network, constituted by SubNetworks focused on specific sectors. The SubNetworks

intend to create a database of research centres, university departments, ongoing projects and research line, including existing partnership in the selected fields. The SubNetworks structure allows an intensive exchange of information among the participating actors of the two Mediterranean shores for the creation of partnerships, collaborations and projects. The aim of these projects is to strengthen the economic and social cohesion, in order to promote, on the one side, cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation and, on the other side, local sustainable development. In order to discover the SubNetworks on which UNIMED is concentrating its efforts please click [here](#).

UNIMED has been developing and carrying on partnerships and cooperation agreements with several important institutions, associations and actors of the Mediterranean area and beyond. The full list of partnerships and collaborations is available [here](#).

Website

www.uni-med.net

Contact

unimed@uni-med.net