

Background note and purpose of the Conference “Mediterranean Energy Highways: an urgent need”

In 2010, PAM decided to create a Panel on External Trade and Investments in the Mediterranean, with the aim to stimulate the economy of our region, to work towards the establishment of a Mediterranean Free Trade Zone and a dedicated regional Investments / Development Bank. The initiative falls under the 2nd PAM Standing Committee, chaired by PAM Vice President, Senator Francesco Maria Amoruso (Italy). The Panel gathers Parliamentarians and representatives of the institutional, economic and academic sectors.

The structure of the conference is built on three sessions, two in the morning, dedicated to the “Integration of the electricity networks and of the gas networks in the Mediterranean”, and one in the afternoon, which will focus on issues of coordination and cooperation among all the relevant parties. Each session will include an open discussion among all participants.

A large part of investments in energy infrastructure, foreseen in the Mediterranean area for the mid and long term, will be localized in the Eastern and Southern regions, and will take also into account the connection with the Northern shore.

Therefore PAM, the most effective instrument of parliamentary diplomacy in the region, is strongly conscious of the necessity to promote the appropriate stimulus for the realization of infrastructures, and in particular energy infrastructures, as basic instruments for the economic progress at a Mediterranean level, as recommended at the second operational meeting of the PAM Panel on External Trade and Investments in the Mediterranean, held at the UN HQ in Geneva on 4-5 May 2011.

The conference “Development and integration of energy networks in the Mediterranean basin”, is a pivotal opportunity to foster an active dialogue among the institutional, economic and industrial actors to support investments in the sector.

The active participation of MEDREG (PAM’s observer), under whose auspices the meeting will be held, shows the critical need of strengthening a stable regulation, a pre-requisite for the much needed infrastructure investments in the region.

The new energy scenario in the Mediterranean region, characterized by a sharp rising energy demand on the Southern shore, and the need for sustainable development, requires close cooperation among regional energy regulators and system operators, with the aim to promoting North-South and South-South energy market integration through interconnections and regulatory convergence.