

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ATLANTIC ARC CITIES

RENNES - 6 & 7 July 2000

FINAL DECLARATION

Gathered in Rennes on July 6th and 7th 2000, the representatives of the Atlantic Front cities, eager to develop a space of solidarity and projects, have decided to promote their synergies and to develop a series of new co-operative programmes in fields of mutual interest. They constitute a network of Atlantic cities named "*Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities*".

This Conference,

Considering that there can be no common urban development strategy without prior sharing of knowledge and measurement of the importance of links established between its members in the context of twinning operations and partnerships,

Having observed the risks of marginalisation faced by the Atlantic space, due, in particular, to the European Union's expansion prospects to the east of the continent and wishing to position the Atlantic space in the ongoing internationalisation dynamics,

Intending to serve, at the sides of the Atlantic Arc Commission and by complementarity with other local players, the cohesion, competitiveness, European anchorage, valorisation of the maritime dimension and international influence of the Atlantic Arc,

Basing itself on the accepted objectives of the European Union - "harmonious, balanced and sustainable development" - and upon the principle of subsidiarity,

Wishing to support and valorise the specificity of Atlantic urban dynamics,

Being aware of the dynamism of the Atlantic space's economic, cultural and territorial players and of their ability to contribute strongly to the development of a multi-pole European space,

Intending to be an actor in the establishment of territorial development policies of interest to the Atlantic Arc, particularly in the context of the European Spatial Development Perspective, and wishing to fit its initiatives into the new programmes of the European Union, such as INTERREG III,

Underlines the shared destiny of the Atlantic Arc Cities,

Undertakes to defend as unquestionable values of its policy : the defence of human rights and democracy, the values of a multi-ethnic cultural plurality and the promotion of the minorities of their own regions,

.../...

Intends to support exchanges amongst citizens of the Atlantic front and to reinforce co-operation amongst its members in the following fields :

- Ease of town access;
- Urban management;
- Sustainable urban development;
- Economic co-operation;
- Maritime economy and activities, along with maritime transports;
- Cultural and scientific co-operation;
- Social cohesion within towns.

Proposes to promote to the European Union institutions :

- The Atlantic urban model;
- The balanced and multi-centric development of community space;
- The external city promotion and international co-operation - in particular through the development of relations with South American, Mediterranean basin and African Atlantic Arc cities.

Suggests that the Intergovernmental Conference, in charge of reviewing the treaties of the European Community and of the European Union, accepts to alter the EC treaty, through the addition of :

- "Territorial cohesion" to economic and social cohesion, in view of the principles and goals of the European Community (article 2 of the EC treaty);
- "The territorial development project, and in particular an urban development strategy", in view of the "EC initiatives" (article 3 of the EC treaty);
- A specific title bearing a new policy : "the territorial development policy", comprising an article pertaining to a European urban development support strategy.

So, the members here present,

Decide to adopt a permanent form and to take on a co-ordination and representation structure. In addition to a plenary session to be held every year, the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities introduces a series of topical commissions in charge of drawing up initiative programmes in the above-mentioned fields;

Wish initiative proposals, along with the statutes of these bodies, to be presented during the second meeting of the members of the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities.