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Ladies and Gentlemen representatives of the European Union, Distinguished representatives of the State of Cyprus, Ladies and Gentlemen politicians, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great honor for me to be here today to participate in these discussions on maritime security and therefore the preservation of ecosystems and economies of our coastal areas.

I'm here in quality of Vice President of the Region Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur which has 900 km of coastline where 80% of the inhabitants and activities in our region are concentrated, but also and especially as the MAREMED project leader. MAREMED project includes the District of Larnaca and brings together 11 Mediterranean regions from 5 countries and the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions (CRPM).

The objective of MAREMED project is to promote the idea of integrated management of our marine policies in our government, between regions, but also with our States and the European Union, and study the implementation of key European and Mediterranean legislations that affect our coasts.

We want to evaluate our realities on the ground and, through a multilevel sharing of our results, help refine the relevance of regional and transnational European funding for the next programming period 2014-2020.

There are more than 34 million inhabitants in the coastal regions partners of MAREMED, and the CPMR, with its 160 regions, represents 700 million inhabitants. That is why we are fully aware of the wealth of the seas of Europe but also of our coastal areas as it was pointed out yesterday by Mr Barroso and EU Member States Ministers in Limassol.

Of course, the topic of natural and accidental hazards faced by our coasts is a particularly important subject for us, politicians and managers on a daily basis of these sensitive areas characterized by many conflicts of use.

Depending on the country, our diagnosis phase that we conducted in the framework of MAREMED showed quite different governance realities regarding the prevention and the fight against accidental pollution.

Regions can have the management skills of civil security, or simply the realization of control plans, or spatial planning development schemes.



Management of large-scale pollution is often under the control of the State but with the participation of local governments. But whether the pollution is high, medium or low, we, as elected representatives, are always solicited.

And though of course, it is imperative for us to drastically reduce the risk of occurrence of such accidents, improve and better enforce laws punishing degassing, predict in the best possible way through models when events occur, it should not be ignored the importance of preparation and training for local authorities, alongside the relevant Departments of the States, aimed at the restoration of our coasts where, unfortunately, the pollution affects the earth.

Misconduct of coastal cleanup can cause significant costs to the health of the participants who are in danger, ruin even more our coastal economies, and worsen the situation of the marine fauna and flora.

The realization of such training and exercises that we will carry on the beaches of Voroklini, nearby the port that receives the fuel for the State of Cyprus, is the only way to effectively prepare the authorities to repair the damage cause by such pollution.

I want to thank the European Union and the Directorate of Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (DG ECHO) for the POSOW initiative, which will be described today and will provide common analysis tools for the Mediterranean authorities.

But we must go further in our training, exercises and support capabilities.

The European Union has enabled, in the context of cross-border program "ALCOTRA" between my Region and the Region of Liguria, that we can train civil servants teams in an area that covers the bay of Menton and Bordighera, an area hit repeatedly by pollution.

Joint training, exercises, common vocabulary in both languages, alert chains, compatible hardware, could be implemented.

Therefore, MAREMED regions want to attract the attention of the European Union on the importance and necessity of :

- Taking into consideration also the preparation needs of the terrestrial component of the fight against accidental pollution within the next European financial programming period 2014-2020;
- Allowing mutual assistance between Mediterranean territories by organizing training and exercises on logical areas for the distribution of pollution as the North-western



Mediterranean zone, the Adriatic basin, the area of Gibraltar, it is ... of course only a couple of examples.

I will end my remarks by thanking the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union which kindly allows us to place under its patronage today's debates but also the training and the coastal defense exercise that we will organize tomorrow with our partner, the District of Larnaca.

This demonstrates how this subject is strategic for countries of the European Union.

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you.