

European Communities

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

1983 - 1984

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1 March 1984

DOCUMENT 1-1480/83

REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Youth,  
Culture, Education, Information and Sport

on the foundation of a Euro-Arab University for  
post-graduate students at one of the traditional  
meeting places of Islamic and European culture on  
Spanish soil

Rapporteur: Mr J. van AERSEN

At its sitting of 13 September 1982 the European Parliament referred the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr VAN AERSSSEN and 265 other Members on the foundation of a Euro-Arab University for post-graduate students at one of the traditional meeting places of Islamic and European culture on Spanish soil (Doc. 1-515/82/rev.) to the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport as the committee responsible and to the Political Affairs Committee and the Committee on Budgets for an opinion.

At its meeting of 18/19 October 1982 the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport appointed Mr VAN AERSSSEN rapporteur.

The committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 26/27 May, 29/30 September, 1/2 December 1983 and 25/26 January 1984. At the last meeting it adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole by 11 votes to 1.

The following took part in the vote: Mr Beumer, chairman; Mr Hahn, vice-chairman; Mr van Aerssen, rapporteur; Mr Alexiadis, Mr Arfé, Mr Board (deputizing for Mr Rolland), Mrs Buchan, Mrs Cinciari Rodano (deputizing for Mr Fanti), Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, Mr Gerokostopoulos, Mrs Pery and Mrs Viehoff.

The opinion of the Political Affairs Committee is attached. The Committee on Budgets has decided not to deliver an opinion.

The report was submitted on 24 February 1984.

The deadline for tabling amendments to this report will appear in the draft agenda for the part-session at which the report is considered.

The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the foundation of a Euro-Arab University for post-graduate students at one of the traditional meeting places of Islamic and European culture on Spanish soil

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution on the foundation of a Euro-Arab University (Doc. 1-515/82/rev.) tabled by 265 Members,
  - having regard to the 1984 general budget of the European Communities adopted on 15 December 1983 and in particular Item 9451 thereof which includes a token entry in respect of the foundation of a Euro-Arab University,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport and the opinion of the Political Affairs Committee on this matter (Doc. 1-1480/83),
- A. having regard to the need for the Community to provide tangible evidence of its willingness to accept Spain as one of its Member States,
- B. conscious of the importance of the exchange of academic knowledge and cultural values as part of the Euro-Arab dialogue,
- C. taking the view that, as the historical meeting place of Islamic and European culture, Spain should act as mediator and is the ideal country for the seat for a Euro-Arab University,
- D. aware that both Spain and various Arab States expressly welcome this proposal and are prepared to support it,

- E. believing that a Euro-Arab University of this kind should foster understanding between the Arab and European nations and be a tangible product of cooperation between the Community, Spain and Arab countries,
1. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the governments of Member States to take such measures as are necessary to found a Euro-Arab University on Spanish soil and to enable it to operate;
  2. Invites the Spanish Government to make known its views on the project, to propose a suitable seat for the University and to suggest how the negotiations prior to the foundation should be conducted;
  3. Invites on the governments of Arab countries to give their views on this proposal and to make proposals of their own on this matter;
  4. Wishes to be kept informed of progress made in this matter and demands to send a Parliament delegation to attend the negotiations;
  5. Recommends that the University should be organized in accordance with the following basic principles and objectives:
    - (a) The Euro-Arab University shall be independent, non-governmental, international institution located in Spain and without any political or religious basis. The University shall be set up and operated by an independent foundation financed by the Community, by Spain and Arab States and by private individuals.

The Euro-Arab University shall be governed by Spanish law. If at some-time in future the Community provides a suitable legal framework, for the institution, this shall be adopted.
    - (b) The directors of the foundation shall be independent public figures from the three interested parties. These directors shall be responsible for founding the University, adopting statutes, appointing a governing body and providing the necessary financial resources. They shall take particular care to prevent the University falling under influences which might endanger its autonomy.

- (c) The governing body of the University shall consist of an equal proportion of Europeans and Arabs.

For the first two years the University shall be run by a Spanish rector. The rector shall be the head of the organ responsible for administrative and financial matters and shall also preside over the board of faculties responsible for teaching and research. The rector shall be elected by the directors of the foundation.

The members of the teaching staff shall be appointed initially by the founding rector and subsequently by the rector on a proposal from the board of faculties.

- (d) The principal aim of the University shall be to promote academic and cultural exchanges between Europe and the Arab world by means of suitable teaching and research programmes.
- (e) The University shall be a post-graduate institute. No diplomas for professional qualifications shall be awarded.
- (f) The University shall concentrate primarily on the humanities. Apart from specialization, inter-disciplinary and comparative courses shall be offered.
- (g) Members of the teaching staff shall be engaged primarily in teaching or research. The head of each faculty shall coordinate the research programmes devoted to the transfer of knowledge.

Research for military purposes shall be forbidden.

- (h) The University shall be available to students of all nationalities; it should, however, comprise mostly nationals of European and Arab States in approximately the same proportion.

In order to be admitted students must have completed a first degree course; exceptions may be permitted according to the provisions of the statute.

- (i) Students shall be obliged to pay the appropriate fees; exceptions may be made according to the statute. Scholarships may also be offered from the University funds.
  - (j) The University should finally serve as a connecting link for the European institutes of Arabic studies.
6. Instructs its President to forward **this** resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of Member States, the Government of the Kingdom of Spain and the governments of Arab States with which the Community is associated.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT1. Starting point of the initiative

Spain is eager to join the European Community. Seven years have elapsed since the application for accession was made and yet major issues still remain unresolved. One sector which has evidently not been mentioned during the accession negotiations is that of cultural relations.

Mr MARCK, the draftsman of an opinion for our committee on the DOURO report on enlargement, expressed his regret at this state of affairs on behalf of the committee<sup>1</sup>.

On the same occasion he pointed out that the accession of Spain and Portugal would form a gateway to the cultures of the Maghreb and Mashreq countries as their cultural heritage is very much in evidence in the applicant countries.

There is general recognition of the need to revive cultural, scientific and technological exchanges with the Islamo-Arab countries, particularly the Mediterranean countries. This is in keeping with a historical tradition and also with the political and economic requirements of both the Community and the Islamo-Arab states.

The Memorandum of 1975 on the aims of the Euro-Arab dialogue<sup>2</sup> makes specific reference to scientific and technical cooperation and cultural exchanges and working parties are being set up for that purpose.

This work included discussions on the founding of a Euro-Arab centre for technology transfer.

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<sup>1</sup> EP Debates of 17 November 1982, page 103

<sup>2</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council of 11 June 1975 on the future of the dialogue begun at the Paris preparatory meeting (COM(75) 293 final

It would seem that this work has ground to a halt following the political difficulties caused by the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. At all events, no tangible results have been achieved, although both sides in the dialogue continue to show a particular interest in practical achievements in this area.

It was therefore a natural consequence to combine the two issues, i.e. to support Spain's future membership and acknowledge its pre-eminent role in Euro-Arab relations and to provide fresh impetus for the resumption of the Euro-Arab dialogue.

The Political Affairs Committee made its support for this course of action quite clear in its opinion<sup>1</sup>.

All the circumstances seem to suggest that the Euro-Arab University should be set up in Spain.

Since, in addition to this, the Spanish Government has shown a lively interest in this project, setting up an inter-ministerial working party to make preparations and indicating its willingness to provide appropriate historic buildings, and since senior Arab authorities have welcomed the initiative and declared their willingness to help put it into effect and to include this matter in the Euro-Arab dialogue, the conditions were right for an initiative of this kind.

The rapporteur was also encouraged by massive support from colleagues of all political persuasions in the European Parliament itself (266 signatures).

## 2. The historical background

The pervasion in Central Europe at least, of Arabian intellectual ideas and 'courtly manners' is a unique process in the history of civilization.

The campaign of military occupation and expansion which was brought to a halt before Constantinople in 717 and before Tours and Poitiers in 732 was quickly followed by a campaign of civilization, based on Spanish soil,

<sup>1</sup> Opinion drawn up by Mr SEGRE of 15 February 1983, PE 83.073



in the period of the independent emirates (718 - 930), caliphates (930 - 110) and taiphas (110 - 1492) ending with the recapture of Granada by Ferdinand II, the Catholic.

This made a very deep impression on the development of Spanish civilization and culture and its effects are still in evidence today. Spain became a melting pot of Hispano-Roman, Arab, Jewish and Germanic (Visigoths) elements, particularly in the south as far as Castile. Traces of the Moors, who grew increasingly independent of their countries of origin, both culturally and politically, are to be found not only in its architecture (Mudejar style), language, agriculture (irrigation), literature, horse-breeding and music (cante hondo) but also in the sciences. There is further evidence of this influence in other regions (Sicily) where the cultures merged.

The conditions for this merging of cultures were provided by the Muslims' tolerance of and respect for the culture of the people they conquered; only in this way could the roots of their culture strike so deep.

At that time, the Muslims' level of scientific knowledge in various fields was higher than that of their European counterparts and this created an awareness of the need for exchanges. The University and Library of Cordoba, for example, had a teaching and classification system which was unparalleled in the Europe of the day. This was achieved as a result of exchanges with Byzantium - it formed the focal point for the dissemination of medical knowledge and the distribution of the Dios curides, one of the first medical textbooks.

The works of Arab philosophers from both the East and the West were translated into Latin and distributed in the 12th century by the translators' school in Toledo, a multinational body founded by Archbishop Raymond. The process was also applied in reverse with the translation into Arabic of the works of classical philosophers.

It was also the seminal point of scientific work, carried out by the Arabs in the fields of medicine, mathematics, astronomy, etc. The translators' school in Toledo can, in some ways be seen as the precursor of the Community's multinational translation services.

### 3. Organization and objectives of the Euro-Arab university

The Euro-Arab University should primarily be a centre for the exchange of ideas that will foster understanding and compare cultural developments that stem from so many common roots.

If these tasks are to be fulfilled in a spirit of tolerance it is vital to safeguard the university's autonomy and keep it free from political and religious influences. European and Arab cultures can be brought together far more easily in their historical meeting place than at the conference table.

The direct result of such an institution would be the cross-fertilization of science and research, but greater mutual understanding would also give rise to indirect political benefits that should not be underestimated. The very fact of Arabs and Europeans teaching alongside one another and learning with and from each other should not be without its effects.

The Euro-Arab cultural symposium held in Hamburg from 11-15 April 1983 formulated a series of recommendations on how to promote cultural cooperation; the majority of these recommendations could best be translated into practice by the projected Euro-Arab university.

Detailed proposals regarding the organization and aims of the Euro-Arab university have been made in paragraphs 5(a) to (h) of the motion for a resolution. These are not intended to establish an inflexible organizational framework, nor is it Parliament's place to do so. The same applies to the range of specialist subjects and research topics to be offered. Parliament's concern is to map out the basic principles that might form guidelines for the bodies referred to in paragraphs 1-3 of the motion for a resolution.

Realization of the project essentially depends on the political determination of the government bodies in the cultural sector that would be the university's users, i.e. the Spanish Government, Community institutions and the governments of the Community Member States as well as those of the Arab countries.

In the rapporteur's view, the Spanish Government should approach the Council and Commission as soon as possible with a formal proposal. Contacts with the Commission of the European Communities have indicated that such an approach would receive sympathetic consideration.

The European Parliament itself has already indicated its support for the project by entering an item in the 1984 budget to cover the costs of setting up the university.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOCUMENT 1-515/82/rev.)

tabled by the following Members: van AERSSSEN, ADONNINO, AIGNER, ALBER, ALBERS, von ALEMANN, ALMIRANTE, ANSQUER, ANTONIOZZI, ARNDT, BADUEL-GLIORIOSO, BANGEMANN, BARBAGLI, BARRI, BATTERSBY, BAUDIS, BERKHOUWER, BERSANI, Lord BETHELL, BETTIZA, BEUMER, BEYER de RYKE, von BISMARCK, BOCKLET, BOMBARD, BONACCINI, BOOT, BORD, BOURNIAS, BOYES, BROK, CALVEZ, CARETTONI ROMAGNOLI, CASANMAGNANO-CERRETTI, Sir Fred CATHERWOOD, CECOVINI, CHANTERIE, CLINTON, COLLESELLI, COLLINS, COLLOMB, COSTANZO, COUSTE, CRONIN, CROUX, CURRY, DALSSASS, D'ANGELOSANTE, DAVERN, DE GUCHT, DELATTE, DEL DUCA, DELEAU, DELOROZOY, DESCHAMPS, DIANA, DILIGENT, Lord DOURO, DURY, EISMA, Lady ELLES, ENRIGHT, ESTGEN, EWING, FELLERMAIER, FERGUSSON, de FERRANTI, FERRERO, FERRI, FICH, FILIPPI, FISCHBACH, FLANAGAN, FOCKE, FRANZ, Ingo FRIEDRICH, FRÜH, Karl FUCHS, FUILLET, GABERT, GAIOTTI DE BIASE, GALLACHER, GAWRONSKI, GEROKOSTOPOULOS, GEURTSSEN, GHERGO, GIACAZZI, GLINNE, de GOEDE, GONTIKAS, GOPPEI, GOUTHIER, GREDAL, HAAGLUF, HAHSBURG, HANSCH, HAIN, Lord HARMAR-NICHOLLS, von HASSEL, HELMS, HERKLOTZ, HERMAN, van den HEUVEL, HOFF, K.H. HOFFMANN, HOOPER, HOPPLER, HORD, HUME, IPPOLITO, IRMER, ISRAEL, Robert JACKSON, JAKOBSEN, JANSSEN van RAAY, JOHNSON, JONKER, JURGENS, KALLIAS, KALOYANNIS, KATZER, KAZAZIS, KELLETT-BOWMAN, M. Elaine KELLETT-BOWMAN, KEY, KLEPSCH, KLINKENBORG, KUHN, LAGAKOS, LANGES, LECANUET, LEGA, LEMMER, LENTZ-CORNETTE, LENZ, LEONARDI, LIGIOS, LOUWES, LUCKER, LUSTER, MACARIO, MCCARTIN, MAHER, MAIJ-WEGGEN, MAJONICA, MALANGRE, de la MALENE, MARCK, MART, Simone MARTIN, MERTENS, MICHEL, van MINNEN, MODIANO, MÖLLER, MONNERSTEEG, MOORHOUSE, Jacques MOREAU, MORELAND, MOUCHEL, MÜLLER-HERMANN, MONTINGH, NARDUCCI, NEWTON DUNN, J.B. NIELSEN, Calliopi NIKOLAOU, Konstantinos NIKOLAOU, NORD, NORMANTON, NOTENBOOM, NYBORG, O'DONNELL, Lord O'HAGAN, d'ORMESSON, PAISLEY, PANNELLA, PAPAESTRATICU PATTERSON, PAULHAN, PAUWELYN DECAESTECKER, PEARCE, PEDINI, PELIKAN, PENDERS, PERY, PESMAZOGLOU, PETERS, PFENNIG, PFLIMLIN, PHLIX, PLASKOVITIS, POTTERING, PONIATOWSKI, PRICE, PROTOPAPADAKIS, PRUVOT, PURVIS, RABETHGE, Sir Brandon RHYS WILLIAMS, RIEGER, RINSCHÉ, RIPA di MEANA, ROBERTS, ROGALLA, ROGERS, RUFFOLO, RUMOR, RYAN, SALZER, SASSANO, Prinz SAYN WITIGENSTEIN-BERLEBURG, SCHALL, SCHIELER, SCHINZEL, SCHLEICHER, SCHMID, SCHMITKER, Karl SCHON, Konrad SCHON, SCHWENCKE, Sir James SCOTT-HOPKINS, SCRIVENER, SEAL, SEEFELD, SEELER, SEGRE, SEIBEL-EMMERLING, SEITLINGER, SELIGMAN, SHERLOCK, SIEGLERSCHMIDT, SIMMONDS, SIMONET, SIMPSON, SPENCER, SPICER, SPINELLI, SQUARCIALUPI, STELLA, Sir John STEWART-CLARK, SUTRA, TOLMAN, TRAVAGLINI, TUCKMAN, TURNER, TYRRELL, VANDEWIELE, Sir Peter VANNECK, VAN ROMPUY, VERGEER, VERONESI, VERROKEN, VETTER, von der VRING, WALZ, Sir Fred WARNER, WAWRZIK, WEBER, WEDEKIND, WELSH, WIECZOREK-ZEUL, von WOGAU and ZECCHINO

pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

on the foundation of a Euro-Arab University for postgraduate students at one of the traditional meeting places of Islamic and European culture on Spanish soil

The European Parliament,

- A - having regard to the need for the Community to provide tangible evidence of its willingness to accept Spain as one of its Member States;
- B - conscious of the importance of the exchange of academic knowledge and cultural values as part of the Euro-Arab dialogue,
- C - taking the view that, as the historical meeting place of Islamic and European culture, Spain is the ideal country for the seat of a Euro-Arab University,

D - believing that an institution of this kind would foster understanding of both the Arab and the European nations while emphasizing Spain's role as mediator and that the costs should be jointly borne by these three,

E - aware that both Spain and various Arab States are receptive to this proposal,

1. Calls on the Council and the Commission to cooperate with all those directly concerned in the planning and implementation of this project and in the provision of financial resources;
2. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States and the prospective partners.

#### JUSTIFICATION

The Euro-Arab University should be available for postgraduate studies in linguistics, the natural sciences and humanities and should offer a recognized final certificate. As well as teaching it should, in particular, conduct forward-looking research under contract but independently of industry. The University must in principle be open to students and academic staff of all nationalities, its specific task being, however, to foster Euro-Arab exchanges of knowledge.

It should be an autonomous entity governed by public law, with parity of membership of its organs and so financed as to be free from political influence.

It should be set up with the participation of all the partner countries which seek a peaceful balance of interests and growing mutual understanding for the good of all.

OPINION OF THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Letter from the chairman of the committee to Mr BEUMER, chairman of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport

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Luxembourg, 3 March 1983

Dear Mr Chairman,

At its meeting of 22-24 February 1983 in Brussels, the Political Affairs Committee considered the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr van Aerssen and others on the foundation of a Euro-Arab university for post-graduate students at one of the traditional meeting places of Islamic and European culture on Spanish soil (Doc. 1-515/82), on which your committee is the committee responsible.

After a statement by Mr SEGRE, the draftsman of the opinion, and an exchange of views, the committee unanimously adopted<sup>1</sup> the attached document.

Yours sincerely,

(s-ld) Mariano RUMOR

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<sup>1</sup> Present: Mr Rumor, chairman; Mr Haøgerup, first vice-chairman; Mr Segre, draftsman of the opinion; Mr Beyer de Ryke (deputizing for Mr Berkhouwer), Mr Bournias, Lord Douro (deputizing for Lady Elles), Mr B. Friedrich, Mrs Gaiotti de Biase (deputizing for Mr Antoniozzi), Mr Gawronski (deputizing for Mr Bettiza), Mrs Gredal, Mr Habsburg, Mr Hänsch, Mrs Macciocchi (deputizing for Mr Cariglia), Mr Majonica (deputizing for Mr Klepsch), Mr van Minnen (deputizing for Mrs van den Heuvel), Mr Newton Dunn, Mr Piquet, Mr Prag (deputizing for Mr Fergusson), Mr Romualdi and Mr Schall.

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8 March 1983