



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 4.10.2021
C(2021) 7285 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera dei Deputati for its Opinion on the Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood – A new Agenda for the Mediterranean {JOIN(2021) 2 final}, as well as for the special Hearing of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Camera dei Deputati on the matter on 17 March 2021, which allowed the Commission to present the Communication and have an in-depth debate on the matter with Honourable members.

The new agenda for the Mediterranean aims to relaunch and strengthen the strategic partnership between the European Union and its Southern Neighbourhood partners. It is based on the conviction that, by working together and in a spirit of partnership, common challenges can be turned into opportunities, in the mutual interest of the EU and its Southern neighbours.

The Commission confirms that it will use all instruments at its disposal to contribute to ensuring the new agenda's efficient, effective and swift implementation. It will take into account the region's diversity and needs. It will be important for the EU to continue carrying out policy dialogue with relevant stakeholders, engaging with EU Member States on issues of strategic interest.

The Commission values the interest of the Camera dei Deputati and will take its Opinion and other contributions received into account in the development of political and programming priorities at the bilateral and the regional level for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027.

In response to the more technical comments in the Opinions, the Commission would like to refer to the attached annex.

*Mr Roberto FICO
President of the Camera dei Deputati
Piazza Montecitorio
IT – 00100 ROMA*

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Camera dei Deputati and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

*Olivér Várhelyi
Member of the Commission*

Annex

The Commission has carefully considered each of the issues raised by the Camera dei Deputati in its Opinion and is pleased to offer the following clarifications.

- a) Taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing crisis, both the EU's political and policy dialogue, as well as the EU's financial support under the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe –, will support actions that will contribute to the region's political and socio-economic stabilisation.*
- b) As envisaged in the Economic and Investment Plan, support to strengthening health systems will benefit from available instruments in the EU toolbox. To support the fight against COVID-19, 17 503 920 doses had been delivered to the Southern Neighbourhood via the COVAX facility by 10 September 2021.*
- c) The Commission confirms that it will ensure coherence between the new agenda for the Mediterranean and the comprehensive Strategy with Africa¹. Synergies with Sub-Saharan Africa will be explored actively in different areas, including trade, private sector development, the green transition, and migration.*
- d) The Commission notes that progress on the implementation of the Economic and Investment Plan will be monitored and assessed to follow up on progress and to inform the policy dialogue with relevant partners.*

¹ JOIN(2020) 4 final.