

*Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean  
Turkey, 23-25 October 2009*

*Message from H.E. Mr. Mehmet Ali ŞAHİN, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey*



*On behalf of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, I would like to welcome all distinguished guests to Istanbul, 2010 European Capital of Culture, which brings the civilizations together.*

*It gives us great pleasure to host the “4<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean” where colleagues from around the region gather to finalize the activities of the previous years and determine the schedule for 2010.*

*The Grand National Assembly of Turkey aims at creating an international atmosphere in which countries of the world enjoy peace and prosperity based on good relations, stability, and cooperation.*

*For this purpose, our Parliament gives utmost importance to enhance relations at all levels with parliaments that represent nations and strives for conducting an efficient parliamentary diplomacy.*

*The Grand National Assembly of Turkey which believes in the importance of the contribution of the parliaments in providing solutions to problems and preserving peace and stability, actively contributes to organizations formed to this end.*

*The Mediterranean Region hosted many civilizations throughout the history of mankind and played a unique role in the improvement of the democratic system. The most obvious sign of this is that the world’s oldest democratic parliament is located in Patara, a small town affiliated to Kaş district of the city of Antalya.*

*As the parliaments of the Mediterranean Region with such a longstanding democratic history, I strongly believe that the work we will perform together for our common future is of great importance.*

*In today’s world where all local and global components are more and more interrelated, Mediterranean parliamentary diplomacy offers a fresh approach to international diplomacy, by the help of its historical heritage.*

*Turkey has always supported and will continue to support the initiatives towards enhancing cooperation and dialogue in the region.*

*Distinguished Colleagues, I wish you will enjoy your time in Istanbul, 2010 European Capital of Culture, which serves as a bridge among different faiths and cultures with its history of thousands of years.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive script that reads 'Mehmet Ali ŞAHİN'.

*Mehmet Ali ŞAHİN*