



The Peace Cruise
La Croisière pour la Paix

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Athens, 23 September

THE PEACE CRUISE ORGANISED A ROUND-TABLE ON THE ROLE OF YOUTH ORGANISATIONS IN
THE PEACE AND RECONCILIATION PROCESS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

For its final journey, the World Organisation of the Scout Movement, which organised the Peace Cruise, organised a Round-table in Athens on Wednesday 22 September on the role of youth organisations in the peace and reconciliation process and humanitarian emergency situations in the Mediterranean. Young people who feel concerned by the situation in their country had a chance to discuss with political leaders and representatives of international institutions on the current problems in their region.

The Round-table which was held in the Greek capital was attended by the President of the Greek Parliament, Mr Kaklamanis, the Secretary General of Youth, Mr Sfikakis, representatives of the partners taking part in the Peace Cruise (UNESCO, European Union, North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, European Youth Forum) as well as by the twenty-three Peace Sailors of the final session, all representatives of Mediterranean and European youth organisations.

At the very moment when the Arab-Israel dialogue is being given a new impetus and when the situations of humanitarian emergency that Turkey and Greece have faced have enabled the relations between these two countries to improve, the organisation of the Round-table showed that a real dialogue could take place between decision-makers and young people on current political and social issues. And peace is certainly a major challenge in the Mediterranean region. The representatives of youth organisations called for a better recognition of their active contribution at different levels of this process. They recalled the importance of the role of youth organisations in decision-making at political, social and educational level within civil society in their respective countries.

The Peace Sailors, aware that they are now expected to act as multipliers of the experience gained during the Peace Cruise, stressed the importance, as they experienced it on board of the Zawisza Carny, of extended communication between youth organisations, decision-makers and institutions. Such a dialogue

was seen as essential for the implementation of more original types of action which respond to the expectations and hopes of the different categories of the population and which show the efficiency of youth organisations and their capacity to anticipate changes.

Mr Petros Sfikakis declared : "The role of the younger generation is to open new paths. The experience of the Peace Cruise was a chance to think about new forms of co-operation and to contribute to peace. We know now, thanks to this experience, that it is possible to work and live together despite our differences."

The success of this meeting and of the Peace Cruise was another step in the recognition of youth as an indispensable partner in trying to build a better and peaceful future in the Mediterranean.