The Economic and Social Council,


Referring to resolution 912 (1989) adopted on 1 February 1989 by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe regarding measures to encourage the construction of a major traffic artery in south-western Europe and to study thoroughly the possibility of a fixed link through the Strait of Gibraltar,

Referring also to the Barcelona Declaration adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, held in Barcelona, Spain, in November 1995, and to the work programme annexed thereto, aimed at connecting the Mediterranean transport networks to the trans-European transport network so as to ensure their interoperability,

Referring further to the Lisbon Declaration adopted at the Conference on Transport in the Mediterranean, held in Lisbon in January 1997, and to the conclusions of the Pan-European Transport Conference, held in Helsinki in June 1997, on corridors in the Mediterranean incorporating the fixed link,

Taking note of the follow-up report prepared jointly by the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Africa pursuant to resolution 2003/52 of 24 July 2003,
Taking note also of the conclusions of the second and third meetings of the Western Mediterranean Transport Group, held respectively in Rabat in September 1995 and in Madrid in January 1997, and of the conclusions of the meeting held in Brussels in 2000 by the Euro-Mediterranean Forum on Transport, which constitutes a framework for coordination among the countries of the Mediterranean basin, for the development of integrated transport networks,

Taking note further of the conclusions of the studies launched by the European Commission (INFRAMED, MED TEN-T and DESTIN) for the development of an integrated transport network in the Mediterranean basin,

Taking note of the progress of the high-level committee on extension of the main trans-European transport arteries to neighbouring countries and regions, set up by the European Commission, which considers the France-Iberian peninsula-Morocco artery to be a corridor constituting a continuation of the trans-European network,

1. Welcomes the cooperation on the project for the link through the Strait of Gibraltar between the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Governments of Morocco and Spain and specialized international organizations;

2. Also welcomes the progress made in deep-sea drilling project studies, and especially the work carried out, which have given a decisive impetus to geological and geotechnical explorations of undersea formations;

3. Commends the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Africa for the work done in preparing the project follow-up report requested by the Council in its resolution 2003/52 of 24 July 2003;

4. Notes with appreciation the holding in Madrid in January 2005 by the International Tunnelling Association, under the aegis of the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Africa, of a seminar on “soundings and treatments”;

5. Renews its invitation to the competent organizations of the United Nations system and to specialized governmental and non-governmental organizations to participate in the studies and work on the fixed link through the Strait of Gibraltar;

6. Requests the Executive Secretaries of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Europe to continue to take an active part in the follow-up to the project and to report to the Council at its substantive session of 2007;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to provide formal support and, to the extent that priorities permit, the resources necessary, within the regular budget, to the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Africa, to enable them to carry out the activities mentioned above.