

# ETUDES HELLENIQUES

# HELLENIC STUDIES

**L' Union pour la Méditerranée:  
Perspectives nationales et régionales**

**Union for the Mediterranean:  
National and Regional Perspectives**

*Edited by / Sous la direction de*  
**Dimitris Xenakis and Panayotis Tsakonas**

*Contributors / Contributions de*

<b>Roberto Aliboni</b>	<b>Dorothee Schmid</b>
<b>Esther Barbé</b>	<b>Tobias Schumacher</b>
<b>Donatella Cugliandro</b>	<b>Stelios Stavridis</b>
<b>Atila Eralp</b>	<b>Alfred Tovias</b>
<b>Petek Karatekelioğlu</b>	<b>Panayotis Tsakonas</b>
<b>Eduard Soler i Lecha</b>	<b>Charalambos Tsardanidis</b>
<b>Gema Martín Muñoz</b>	<b>George Tzogopoulos</b>
<b>Roderick Pace</b>	<b>Dimitris Xenakis</b>

# **ÉTUDES HELLÉNIQUES / HELLENIC STUDIES**

# Études Helléniques / Hellenic Studies

## DIRECTEURS / EDITORS

### Stephanos CONSTANTINIDES

Centre for Hellenic Studies and Research Canada-KEEK

**Michael DAMANAKIS**

University of Crete - Greece

**Panayotis TSAKONAS**

University of the Aegean - Greece

## ÉDITEUR EXTERNE / EXTERNAL EDITOR

Kathryn RADFORD

McGill University - Canada

## COMITÉ DE RÉDACTION / EDITORIAL BOARD

Ioannis ARMAKOLAS  
Paris ARNOPOULOS  
Jacques BOUCHARD  
Jean CATSIAPIS  
Georgia CATSIMALI  
Peter CHIMBOS  
Van COUFOUDAKIS  
Marios EVRIVIADES  
Kostas GOULIAMOS  
Maria HERODOTOU  
Antonios HOURDAKIS  
Kostas IFANTIS  
Joseph JOSEPH  
George KANARAKIS  
Dimitrios KARAGEORGOS  
Alexander KITROEFF  
George KOURVETARIS  
Konstantinos MAGLIVERAS  
George PAGOULATOS  
Theodoros PELAGIDES  
Ioannis PYRGOTAKIS  
Ioannis PHILIPPOUSSIS  
Athanassios PLATIAS  
Nicholas SAMBANIS  
Ioannis SEIMENIS  
Dimitris XENAKIS

University of Macedonia (Greece)  
Concordia University (Canada)  
Université de Montréal (Canada)  
Université de Paris X (France)  
University of Crete (Greece)  
University of Western Ontario (Canada)  
University of Nicosia (Cyprus)  
Panteion University (Greece)  
European University (Cyprus)  
La Trobe University, (Australia)  
University of Crete (Greece)  
University of Athens (Greece)  
University of Cyprus (Cyprus)  
Charles Sturt University - Bathurst (Australia)  
University of Crete (Greece)  
Haverford College (U.S.A.)  
Northern Illinois University (U.S.A.)  
University of the Aegean (Greece)  
Athens University of Economics and Business (Greece)  
University of Piraeus (Greece)  
University of Crete (Greece)  
Dawson College (Canada)  
University of Piraeus (Greece)  
Yale University (U.S.A.)  
University of the Aegean (Greece)  
University of Crete (Greece)

Published twice a year (Spring - Autumn) by the **Centre for Hellenic Studies and Research Canada, -KEEK, the University of Crete, Centre of Intercultural and Migration Studies-EDIAMME, Department of Primary Education and the University of the Aegean Post-Graduate Program in «Political, Economic and International Relations in the Mediterranean», Department of Mediterranean Studies.**

Articles for publication, books for review and general correspondence should be addressed to **Études helléniques/ Hellenic Studies:**

**Centre for Hellenic Studies  
and Research Canada-KEEK  
C.P. 48571  
1495 Van Horne  
Outremont, (Québec), Canada  
H2V 4T3  
Tel: (514)276-7333  
Fax: (514)4953072  
E-mail: K12414@er.uqam.ca**

**University of Crete  
Department of Primary Education  
Centre of Intercultural and Migration  
Studies (EDIAMME)  
Rethymno University Campus  
Rethymno, 74100, Greece  
Tel: +28310-77605, Fax: +28310-77636  
E-mail: ediamme@edc.uoc.gr  
<http://www.ediamme.edc.uoc.gr>**

Subscription orders, inquiries, single orders and back issues should be addressed / could be obtained from this address also. *Études helléniques/ Hellenic Studies* is an interdisciplinary, bilingual (French - English) journal devoted to the study of issues prevailing among Greeks in both Greece proper and the numerous Greek communities abroad.

Subscription Rates/Frais d'abonnement	One year/Un an	Europe (par virement)*
Individuals/Particuliers	\$35.00	35 €
Institutions	\$45.00	40 €
Support/Soutien	\$50.00	50 €

\*Compte chèques postaux à Paris: CCP n° 2846134E020

IBAN FR72 2004 1000 0128 4613 4E02 057

BIC PSSTFRPPPAR

Revue publiée deux fois par an (Printemps-Automne) par le Centre de recherches helléniques Canada-KEEK, l'Université de Crète(Centre d'études interculturelles et de l'immigration-EDIAMME du Département d'Education Primaire) et l'Université de la Mer Egée (Programme d'études supérieures de deuxième et troisième cycle, «Sciences politiques, économiques, et relations internationales dans la Méditerranée»,Département d'études méditerranéennes).

Tous les articles, les recensions et la correspondance générale doivent être adressés aux **ÉTUDES HELLÉNIQUES/HELLENIC STUDIES**, C.P. 48571, 1495 Van Horne, Outremont, (Québec), Canada, H2V 4T3, Tel: (514) 276-7333, Télécopieur: (514) 495-3072 (E-mail: k12414@er.uqam.ca). Pour les abonnements, les informations, pour tout numéro courant ou ancien de la revue, prière de vous adresser aux **ÉTUDES HELLÉNIQUES/ HELLENIC STUDIES** à l'adresse ci dessus.

**ÉTUDES HELLÉNIQUES/HELLENIC STUDIES** est une revue interdisciplinaire bilingue (français-anglais) consacrée à la recherche: elle a pour objet l'étude de l'hellénisme tant de la Grèce que de la diaspora.

**Gutenberg Publishing**

**Didodou 37**

**Athens 10680**

**Tel.: 210-3808334**

**Fax: 210-3642030**

**e-mail: info@dardanosnet.gr**

Dépôt légal / Legal Deposit

National Library of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale du Québec

2e trimestre 2007

ISSN: 0824-8621

## Table des matières / Table of Contents

### **L'Union pour la Méditerranée:**

#### **Perspectives nationales et régionales**

Dimitris K. Xenakis et Panayotis J. Tsakonas ..... 7

### **Union for the Mediterranean:**

#### **National and Regional Perspectives**

Dimitris K. Xenakis and Panayotis J. Tsakonas .....25

#### **The Barcelona Process and its Prospects after the Union for the Mediterranean**

Roberto Aliboni .....41

#### **From the Euromed to the Union for the Mediterranean: Challenges and Answers**

Gema Martín Muñoz .....55

#### **French Ambitions through the Union for the Mediterranean: Changing the Name or Changing the Game?**

Dorothee Schmid .....67

#### **What Role for Spain in the Union for the Mediterranean? Europeanising through Continuity and Adaptation**

Esther Barbé and Eduard Soler i Lecha .....85

#### **Italian "Mediterraneanness": A new Path in Italy's foreign policy?**

Donatella Cugliandro .....103

#### **Greece's Mediterranean perspective and the French Initiative**

Dimitris K. Xenakis and Charalampos Tsardanidis .....123

#### **The Mediterranean Union from the Perspective of the Mediterranean Island States**

Roderick Pace .....147

#### **Turkey's Perspective on European Union's Mediterranean Policy and the Union for the Mediterranean**

Atila Eralp and Petek Karatekelioglu .....171

#### **Current Israeli Perspectives on EU-Mediterranean Relations**

Alfred Tovias .....191

#### **Explaining Foreign Policy: Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom in Times of French-Inspired Euro-Mediterranean Initiatives**

Tobias Schumacher .....205

**The European Parliament and the Debate over Sarkozy's Mediterranean Initiative: A Preliminary Assessment**

Stelios Stavridis and George Tzogopoulos .....239

**Chronologies** ..... 261

# **L'Union pour la Méditerranée: Perspectives nationales et régionales**

**Dimitris K. Xenakis\* et Panayotis J. Tsakonas \*\***

## **La problématique de la coopération méditerranéenne**

La Méditerranée a toujours été un espace de concurrence et de contestation, en grande partie en raison de sa géographie fragmentée et de ses structures politico-économiques, produites à divers moments historiques<sup>1</sup>. Aujourd'hui, aucune autre partie du globe n'illustre mieux les tendances post-bipolaires à la fragmentation et la renaissance des "vieilles haines" que la Méditerranée, les questions de sécurité devenant de plus en plus indissociables, indépendamment de diverses sous-caractéristiques régionales<sup>2</sup>. Comme les "régions de la Méditerranée" ne partagent pas les caractéristiques que l'on trouve traditionnellement dans le régionalisme international, à savoir «un espace commun de coopération»<sup>3</sup>, cela signifie que la coopération et la sécurité dans la Méditerranée sont possibles, mais ne peuvent pas être tenues pour acquises, car elles nécessitent un effort de volonté et de «gestion spécifique»<sup>4</sup>.

Pendant l'après-guerre froide l'espace euro-méditerranéen se caractérise par un dynamisme pluricausal poussant vers une nouvelle cartographie de ses composantes, reformulée dans ses structures naissantes de gouvernance régionale<sup>5</sup>. Mais avec de vastes disproportions politiques, économiques et démographiques et des lignes de division religieuses et culturelles, le changement de 1989 dans les relations internationales a progressivement transformé la Méditerranée dans l'une des sources les plus critiques d'instabilité pour l'Europe<sup>6</sup>. Depuis lors, la tension systémique n'a cessé d'augmenter avec la reprise de l'islam radical<sup>7</sup>, les événements qui ont suivi le 11 septembre, ainsi que l'importance attachée aux menaces à la sécurité transnationale, telles que des vagues massives d'immigrants clandestins, la criminalité transfrontalière organisée et la prolifération des armes de destruction massive et des missiles balistiques<sup>8</sup>.

\* Université de Crète

\*\* Université de la Mer Egée

En même temps, les indicateurs économiques de la région ne sont pas positifs. La région a perdu de son attractivité relative, avec l'investissement direct étranger (IDE) en recul constant depuis de nombreuses années, avec une augmentation significative seulement depuis 2005, en raison d'importantes privatisations et l'expansion des activités pétrolières en Égypte<sup>9</sup>. Les disparités économiques Nord-Sud se traduisent par un «rideau de pauvreté» permanent à travers la Méditerranée, alors que les économies du Sud sont en stagnation et que la bombe à retardement démographique devient plus menaçante, tandis que le chômage continue d'augmenter et l'analphabétisme demeure à des niveaux alarmants. La vulnérabilité économique et l'insécurité reflètent le fait que plusieurs indicateurs de la sécurité humaine dans les pays méditerranéens sont statiques, voire en aggravation, se fendant en deux mondes très différents et éloignés l'un d'opulence et d'ordre, et l'autre de pauvreté, de besoins et de désordre<sup>10</sup>. Sans doute, les lignes de faille de la région deviennent plus profondes et les obstacles au développement humain sont tenaces en raison de la fragilité des structures politiques, économiques et sociales de la région, du manque des politiques de développement centrées sur l'homme et de la vulnérabilité à l'intervention extérieure<sup>11</sup>.

L'élargissement «big bang» de l'Europe à vingt-sept pays n'était pas un accord gagnant-gagnant pour tous. Il est devenu évident qu'après la chute du mur de Berlin, la plus grande attention politique et économique de l'Union européenne a été dirigée sur le passage rapide à l'Europe post-communiste. Depuis le début des années 1990, les membres de l'UE du Sud essaient d'équilibrer l'importance accordée par la communauté internationale à l'Europe de l'Est. En particulier, la France, l'Espagne et l'Italie en 1995 et 1996 avec leurs présidences consécutives de l'UE ont révélé des préoccupations de politique étrangère communes en montrant une attitude plus homogène au sein des organisations internationales comme l'OTAN, l'UE, l'OSCE et l'UEO, parallèlement au lancement des forces terrestres et maritimes - l'Eurofor et l'Euromarfor -, compensant en partie la position prédominante de la sixième flotte américaine<sup>12</sup>. Malgré le fait que leurs objectifs économiques ont été harmonisés dans le cadre de leur participation à l'UE et même si une «solidarité de la Méditerranée» se manifeste dans leurs interactions, ceci n'est pas suffisant pour se traduire en solidarité politique permanente et structurée de manière à arriver à des stratégies communes et des moyens pour la Méditerranée. Les membres de l'UE du Sud n'ont pas encore formé un bloc cohérent par rapport à l'élargissement vers l'Est de l'UE et, plus encore, en ce qui concerne l'avenir de l'Union Européenne elle-même<sup>13</sup>. Et pourtant, toute



confrontation de leurs politiques révèle des différences marquées en ce qui concerne la hiérarchisation des domaines d'intérêt. L'un des plus frappants est celui entre les deux voisins ibériques, l'Espagne et le Portugal: tandis que les intérêts de l'Espagne dans la Méditerranée sont profondément enracinés dans l'histoire et ont fait l'objet d'un engagement considérable depuis la fin des années 1970<sup>14</sup>, le Portugal n'a commencé à développer une politique méditerranéenne que lorsqu'il a adhéré à la Communauté au milieu des années 1980<sup>15</sup>. Ceci est dans la même ligne que Veremis qui a affirmé que, «la proximité du Portugal, de l'Espagne et de l'Italie avec l'Afrique du Nord et les frontières communes de la Grèce et de l'Italie avec les pays des Balkans en difficulté, expliquent la ligne régionale de travail de chaque pays»<sup>16</sup>.

Fait intéressant de souligner qu'au moins la plus grande impulsion, pendant la période après la guerre froide, vient de la France, pays qui veut continuer de projeter de l'influence en Méditerranée, en partie en réponse à la croissance de l'influence allemande en Europe<sup>17</sup>. Le manque relatif d'intérêt américain pour la Méditerranée occidentale<sup>18</sup>, a permis à la France d'avoir l'initiative d'organiser le Forum sur la Méditerranée occidentale (initiative Cinq + Cinq) en 1990<sup>19</sup>. Cependant, il y avait un décalage avec l'initiative italo-espagnole pour une «plus large» Conférence sur la Sécurité et la Coopération en Méditerranée (CSCM) le long des lignes du processus d'Helsinki, comprenant tous les Etats méditerranéens et les États-Unis<sup>20</sup>. La France a considéré cet élargissement «immature» et presque comme un compromis dans le cadre de sa tentative géographiquement limitée de renforcer la coopération dans le secteur ouest de la Méditerranée. Bien que l'ambitieuse CSCM n'a pas réussi à prendre son envol<sup>21</sup>, son existence a exprimé des réserves espagnoles et italiennes sur le projet français. D'autre part, l'initiative Cinq + Cinq a été suspendue en raison de la crise en Algérie et l'affaire Lockerbie, qui a placé une charge sur les perspectives d'un partenariat UE-Maghreb<sup>22</sup>. Parallèlement à ces initiatives, le Forum Méditerranéen a également été inauguré à Alexandrie en 1994 - un rare exemple d'une initiative régionale évaluée comme pleinement opérationnelle, conduisant à la coopération dans les domaines des affaires politiques, économiques, sociales et culturelles sur la base des directives orientées vers une grande efficacité<sup>23</sup>. Ainsi, depuis la signature de la Déclaration de Barcelone en novembre 1995, les considérations pour la Méditerranée ont été principalement formulées grâce au nouveau cadre multilatéral de l'UE, avec le Forum Méditerranéen existant de façon plus informelle, qui regroupe 11 pays par rapport au Processus d'adhésion de Barcelone des 27, et fonctionnant comme un corps d'encadrement des politiques<sup>24</sup>.

Malgré le fait que la dimension méditerranéenne de sa politique étrangère a été considérablement réduite ces dernières décennies, la participation de la France dans toute structure liée à la Méditerranée est indispensable; ce qui est évident avec l'intérêt accru pour la région depuis l'annonce de l'initiative de Nicolas Sarkozy<sup>25</sup>. Au-delà des réserves traditionnelles allemandes et britanniques, et bien que la France soit généralement considérée comme le chef de file dans la promotion des questions méditerranéennes, des pays comme l'Espagne ne sont pas disposés à accepter un leadership français dans les relations de l'UE avec la Méditerranée<sup>26</sup>. Mais alors que ces pays jouent un rôle plus actif dans la création de l'ordre du jour de l'Union européenne pour la Méditerranée, les petits pays comme la Grèce, Malte et Chypre font face d'une manière plus directe aux vagues potentielles et réelles de l'instabilité régionale. Malgré leur manque relatif d'influence au sein du cadre multilatéral de l'UE, ceux-ci ont tous apprécié le processus de Barcelone comme la réponse la plus complète et prometteuse aux défis régionaux, en dépit des mauvais résultats depuis 1995. Ils semblent tous oublier les nombreux problèmes qui assaillent l'initiative française récente, mais la perspective de deux Etats insulaires de la Méditerranée, avec un intérêt traditionnellement fort dans les initiatives régionales est d'un ordre différent; Chypre, portant un accent particulier sur la résolution des conflits régionaux, tandis que Malte tenant une approche plus fonctionnaliste en soulignant la protection des ressources halieutiques et la question de la dépollution<sup>27</sup>.

Bien que les plans d'élargissement ont assuré le succès des politiques de l'UE vers l'Est, l'impact perçu des efforts collectifs d'Europe de renforcer les relations avec la Méditerranée a été beaucoup plus faible. Car les membres du sud de l'UE n'ont pas encore formé un bloc cohérent par rapport à l'avenir de la Méditerranée et l'implication de l'UE. Il ne fait aucun doute, cependant, que les perspectives économiques de la Méditerranée seront considérablement augmentées, si on arrive à régler les différends régionaux et à favoriser la stabilité régionale. Ceci est devenu d'autant plus pressant que les différences et les disparités économiques entre le nord et le sud de l'Europe ont entraîné une fracture dans la zone euro: une scission entre ceux qui ont tiré parti de la mondialisation et ceux qui n'en ont pas. Il est largement admis que, dans le cadre de la récession économique actuelle, les pays à risque plus élevé en Europe sont le Portugal, l'Italie, la Grèce et l'Espagne, qui sont restés coincés tandis que leurs concurrents plus agiles ont ravivé l'exportation et la croissance des emplois en s'aventurant à l'étranger. Les tendances économiques actuelles ont entraîné des taux supérieurs, visant à ralentir l'inflation dans les économies

fortes comme l'Allemagne, ce qui pourrait étouffer le peu de croissance qui reste dans le sud de l'Europe<sup>28</sup>. Cette tension politique exacerbe davantage les divergences entre les euro-économies. Pourtant, l'ancien consensus selon lequel le Sud a été freiné par une attitude plus protectrice envers la politique sociale, a été remplacé par une nouvelle vue qui veut que les pays précités ont «manqué le bateau» sur le travail flexible, l'externalisation et la vente vers des marchés émergents. Des dirigeants de l'Europe du Sud sont convaincus que les marchés émergent lentement du sud de la Méditerranée; c'est ce dont ceux-ci ont besoin pour rattraper leur retard, en espérant que le Maroc, l'Algérie, la Tunisie, l'Egypte et le Liban peuvent faire pour eux ce que l'Europe de l'Est a fait pour le Nord de l'Europe<sup>29</sup>.

### **Le lancement du projet de l'UPM à Toulon à Gaza et au-delà**

Le projet d'une Union méditerranéenne a été annoncé avant l'élection de Nicolas Sarkozy dans son discours de Toulon en mai 2007 et depuis lors, il a été constamment développé<sup>30</sup>. Cette idée de créer un nouveau bloc au pouvoir en Europe méridionale, en Afrique du Nord et au Moyen-Orient n'est pas nouvelle. Déjà en 1997, Brzezinski avait reconnu que «la France ne cherche pas seulement un rôle politique central dans une Europe unifiée, mais se voit aussi comme le noyau du groupe d'Etats de la Méditerranée-Afrique du Nord qui partagent des préoccupations communes»<sup>31</sup>. Toutefois, dès le début, ce projet a souffert de l'absence de création d'une coalition - comme beaucoup le craignaient - qui favoriserait une redistribution des rôles non officiels dans la région, en facilitant l'émergence d'un puissant groupe des pays méditerranéens de l'UE. Bien que la majorité de ceux-ci ont vu l'initiative d'une manière positive, en raison de son contenu imprécis et incertain, ils ont hésité à l'approuver pleinement<sup>32</sup>. Des incohérences, des improvisations et des annonces trop nombreuses ont miné la valeur de l'initiative française<sup>33</sup>. D'autre part, malgré le soutien de la Grèce, de l'Italie et de l'Espagne<sup>34</sup>, ce projet a rencontré une forte résistance de la Commission; avec le soutien tacite d'autres membres de l'UE un compromis a été trouvé, permettant la participation de tous les Etats de l'UE.

Dans un discours prononcé dans la ville marocaine de Tanger en octobre 2007, le président Sarkozy a commencé à préciser la nature de l'Union de la Méditerranée, considérée comme une «Union de projets» et a invité les chefs d'Etats riverains de la Méditerranée à un sommet qui devait avoir lieu le 13 juillet 2008 à Paris. L'Union était censée inclure uniquement des Etats

riverains et fonctionner comme les réunions du G8 des chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement, avec un Conseil de la Méditerranée sur le modèle du Conseil de l'Europe. Avant que cette Union ne soit vidée dans une large mesure de sa conception initiale, par des négociations inter-européennes en décembre 2007 et au premier trimestre de 2008<sup>35</sup>, entre la France, l'Italie et l'Espagne, il a été finalement décidé que l'idée initiale d'une «Union méditerranéenne» sera transformée en une «Union *pour* la Méditerranée». Au-delà de la continuité possible entre le Partenariat euro-méditerranéen (PEM) et la proposition française, au cours de cette réunion, les lignes directrices de l'initiative ont été clarifiées en précisant que celle-ci ne remplacerait pas les structures existantes mais au contraire, les compléterait et les renforcerait. Ainsi l'UMP ne serait pas utilisée comme une proposition alternative pour le processus d'adhésion de la Turquie, ou d'entrave à l'Accord pour la stabilisation et l'association croate.

En mars 2008, après des pressions coordonnées par l'Allemagne qui ne voulait pas que l'UPM soit détachée de mécanismes de l'UE et du rôle moteur de la Commission<sup>36</sup>, la France a dû faire marche arrière et intégrer l'UPM dans les mécanismes plus larges de la région euro-méditerranéenne, permettant ainsi la participation de tous les membres de l'UE<sup>37</sup>. Avec ce changement majeur, les préoccupations initiales, concernant les tentatives de la France à étendre son influence stratégique régionale au détriment de ses partenaires européens, ont été apaisées. Les tensions entre l'inclusion et l'exclusion, l'approche technocratique de l'UE contre la rhétorique politique officielle de Sarkozy, la question des institutions de l'UE et ses processus par rapport à la vision audacieuse de certains dirigeants européens ont été réglés uniquement lorsque la nouvelle initiative a été totalement intégrée dans le cadre plus large de l'UE - sans compromettre les *acquis* de Barcelone - dans les attentes tant procédurales que réglementaires. En mettant l'accent sur les possibilités (et non pas les limites) d'une coopération plus ciblée et efficace dans la Méditerranée, l'UPM devrait avoir une valeur ajoutée en mettant en œuvre des projets spécifiques avec des avantages immédiats et tangibles pour les peuples de la Méditerranée, ainsi qu'en contribuant positivement au développement global économique et social de la région.

Malgré les critiques, les dirigeants de la Méditerranée du sud, comme le président tunisien, ont insisté sur l'importance de ne pas détacher le nouveau projet de l'Union du PEM, estimant que cette dernière «serait appelée à contribuer à une relance du PEM, en travaillant pour assurer une synergie avec les instruments existants Euro Méditerranéens»<sup>38</sup>. Au-delà de l'attitude

négative adoptée par la mendicité de la Turquie<sup>39</sup>, l'ouverture du Président Sarkozy envers Israël<sup>40</sup> a créé des difficultés pour de nombreux dirigeants arabes à participer au Sommet de fondation à Paris en juillet 2008, et certainement ne les a pas empêchés d'accuser Israël pour sa politique de colonisation. La seule grande nation méditerranéenne qui n'a pas participé a été la Libye, dont le leader, Mouammar Kadhafi, a décliné l'invitation d'y assister<sup>41</sup>. Les rois du Maroc et de la Jordanie n'ont pas participé, invoquant d'autres engagements, mais ils ont envoyé de hauts fonctionnaires à leur place.

Parfois, au nom de la diplomatie, de grands chefs jouent parfois de petits trucs. Lors du sommet de Paris, après avoir présenté un rapport brillant sur les négociations israélo-palestiniennes, M. Sarkozy a serré la main en même temps du Premier ministre israélien Olmert et du président palestinien Mahmoud Abbas, quand les caméras se sont éloignées. Puis il a retiré sournoisement ses propres mains ensemble, et les leurs de la sienne - conduisant à une riche symbolique, three-way handshake serrer la main à trois. Au-delà de cela, le Sommet a été un réel succès diplomatique, comme il a effectivement mis fin à l'isolement politique du président syrien, Bashar al-Assad, qui a longtemps été considéré comme un paria politique par la précédente administration américaine. Dans un événement largement médiatisé, M. Assad s'est assis à la même table de négociation avec le Premier ministre d'Israël. Ce fut la première occasion où les chefs respectifs des deux Etats ont occupé la même salle, suite aux trois séries des négociations de ces derniers mois entre eux, sous la médiation turque. Un autre succès du Sommet a été un accord conclu entre Assad et le nouveau président du Liban, Michel Suleiman, pour ouvrir des ambassades dans leurs capitales respectives<sup>42</sup>.

Le sommet fondateur de Paris a laissé de nombreuses questions concernant les structures, les fonctions et l'efficacité de l'UPM qui ont été résolues à la réunion euro-méditerranéenne à Marseille en novembre 2008. Lors de cette réunion les ministres des Affaires étrangères ont décidé la création d'une Commission permanente des États membres de l'UE et des partenaires du Sud afin de renforcer la co-propriété. Il a également été décidé que les chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement des États membres, ainsi que des hauts fonctionnaires auront le contrôle politique de l'initiative. Un secrétariat, petit et flexible, essentiellement de nature technique, sera également établi pour l'examen / évaluation des projets; il a été décidé que son siège sera établi à Barcelone et que le Secrétaire général sera toujours originaire d'un pays partenaire. Le Secrétaire sera assisté de cinq sous-secrétaires provenant de la Grèce, de l'Italie, de Malte, de l'Autorité palestinienne et d'Israël. Il a également été décidé que

la Ligue arabe participera à tous les sommets et à tous les niveaux de l'UPM - une décision qui a toutefois augmenté le nombre d'acteurs ayant le pouvoir de bloquer les décisions<sup>43</sup>.

Après que la Conférence de Marseille ait adopté une série des dispositions en détail destinées à rendre le travail de l'UPM efficace, l'intervention militaire d'Israël de décembre 2008-janvier 2009 dans la bande de Gaza a convaincu les partenaires arabes de l'UPM à suspendre clairement la mise en œuvre de la nouvelle politique et toutes les réunions connexes. Ainsi que le ministre français Bernard Kouchner l'a déclaré: «[i]l sera vraiment difficile de voir tout progrès à moins que la situation au Moyen-Orient soit clarifiée. Le sommet qui devait avoir lieu à Monaco a été reporté. Ce n'est pas encourageant»<sup>44</sup>. Néanmoins, à la fin juin, le ministre français de l'environnement a tenté de renouveler l'intérêt pour l'UPM avec une conférence pour l'évaluation de nouveaux projets. Même si il y a eu un signe positif avec les Etats arabes qui ont rejoint l'UPM «gelée» et en dépit des réserves au sujet de s'asseoir à nouveau avec Israël<sup>45</sup> à la même table de négociations, de nombreux experts euro-Med s'interrogent sur les perspectives de l'Union et sur la question de savoir comment celle-ci pourrait évoluer dans le long terme, et se révéler un cadre plus durable que le très critiqué PEM. Le point de vue partagé par la majorité d'entre eux et, de manière informelle, même par certains diplomates français, est que les perspectives sont plutôt sombres<sup>46</sup>. Mais même si l'UPM surmonte l'impasse actuelle à Gaza, elle sera inévitablement pourrie dans une série de programmes de développement, qui ne seront même pas placés dans un contexte politique de fond. Comme le temps presse, les interactions dans l'UPM ont fait une rechute de nouveau dans les mêmes modèles d'anciens comportements et donc l'UPM est destinée à mourir à moins que des mesures correctives ne soient prises rapidement. «Il ne va pas s'écouler beaucoup de temps avant que l'UPM se joigne à l'appel des politiques mortes pour la Méditerranée, méconnues et sans être pleurées»<sup>47</sup>.

### **Quel avenir pour l'UPM? Perspectives nationales et régionales**

Le cadre nouvellement créé de la coopération régionale, cependant controversée, a offert plus d'attention politique pour la Méditerranée et les énormes défis auxquels sont confrontés les États du littoral. En rassemblant une gamme exceptionnelle d'experts euro-méditerranéens, ce numéro spécial tente de donner un aperçu actualisé des points de vue des membres européens du sud, des objectifs et des stratégies vis-à-vis de l'initiative française, d'évaluer

les changements dans leurs perspectives au cours de la nouvellement instituée UPM; d'expliquer le soutien ou la prudence de certains pays de l'UE et / ou méditerranéens vis-à-vis l'UPM, et d'évaluer la capacité de l'UPM pour faire face aux problèmes liés à l'instabilité de la Méditerranée de façon plus efficace que son prédécesseur, à savoir le «Processus de Barcelone», et / ou d'autres cadres actuels et politiques de l'UE, comme par exemple la «Politique européenne de voisinage».

La transformation du plan français et le processus de création de l'UPM au sein de l'approche élargie de l'UE ont en effet joué un rôle central dans toutes les contributions de ce numéro spécial. Dans son analyse sur le Processus de Barcelone et de ses perspectives après l'UPM, *Roberto Aliboni* illustre l'architecture émergente Euro-Med après le Sommet de Paris et la Conférence des ministres des affaires étrangères à Marseille, qui ont configuré un «Processus de Barcelone» multi-couches, dans lequel l'UPM travaille côte à côte avec la «Politique de Voisinage» et l'éventail des politiques de la Commission envers la Méditerranée qui, en fait, sont tenues de remplacer l'accord «Le partenariat euro-méditerranéen». En fournissant une évaluation des transformations politiques et institutionnelles, cet auteur soutient que, ce que nous avons aujourd'hui est une organisation internationale des pairs, l'UPM, d'un côté, et les deux cadres de la politique européenne de l'autre côté. Il doute également de la capacité du nouveau cadre à répondre aux défis régionaux plus efficacement que le couple politique, en concluant avec des pensées critiques quant à la viabilité institutionnelle et les perspectives globales de l'Union à contribuer au règlement des conflits régionaux, ainsi que de faire face aux réformes nationales, sauf si elle devient plus souple à l'intérieur du bassin méditerranéen et plus ouverte sur le Moyen-Orient.

Pour relever les défis de la transition de l'accord Partenariat euro-méditerranéen à l'UPM à partir d'un point de vue arabe, *Gema Martín Muñoz* fait valoir que la proposition française doit partir de l'acquis du Processus de Barcelone et renforcer cette initiative dans divers aspects que celui-ci n'a pas encore été en mesure de réaliser et que la déclaration de Barcelone exprime de manière explicite. Bien qu'il soit difficile d'améliorer cette Déclaration de principes, il est possible de l'appliquer de meilleure façon. Martin-Munoz fait valoir que, pour que l'UPM soit un succès, il est important qu'elle prenne en considération aussi bien les résultats du processus de Barcelone et les causes de ses lacunes. La tendance à réinventer à partir de zéro peut être très coûteuse.

En examinant la question de savoir si la nouvelle initiative représente

seulement un changement de nom ou un changement réel sur les règles du jeu dans la Méditerranée sous contrôle français, *Dorothee Schmid* soutient que l'UPM est compatible avec les options diplomatiques traditionnelles de la France. Alors que les Français ont en partie invoqué au cours des 15 dernières années les capacités européennes pour défendre une perspective de développement de la Méditerranée, leur relation quelque peu trouble avec l'UE et la désillusion provoquée par la Politique européenne de voisinage, les a finalement conduits à rechercher de nouvelles options géopolitiques qui pourraient correspondre mieux à leurs intérêts nationaux, ainsi qu'aux nouvelles ambitions diplomatiques et au style de Nicolas Sarkozy.

*Esther Barbé et Eduard Soler i Lecha* dans leur évaluation de l'attitude de l'Espagne envers l'UPM affirment que la réaction du gouvernement espagnol aux agissements de Sarkozy est cohérente avec la logique espagnole plaçant la politique méditerranéenne dans le cadre de l'UE, d'abord en insistant pour continuer d'appliquer les principes du Processus de Barcelone et plus tard, en adaptant la poursuite de ses propres intérêts dans le cadre de l'UPM. Barbé et Soler i Lecha examinent la façon dont l'Union méditerranéenne de Nicolas Sarkozy a permis à l'Espagne de poursuivre, grâce à une stratégie d'eupéanisation douce, la plus grande continuité entre le Processus euro-méditerranéen et la proposition française, concluant, sur la présidence espagnole de l'UE en 2010, dans laquelle l'Espagne tentera de récupérer son caractère central dans les affaires euro-méditerranéens, notamment via le Secrétariat de l'UPM à Barcelone.

La politique méditerranéenne de l'Italie, est entravée par les mêmes échecs qui ont incité ce pays à ne pas agir de façon positive dans le contexte plus large de la politique internationale jusque-là. En examinant la «méditerranéité» italienne, *Donatella Cugliandro* soutient qu'elle ne laisse aucune possibilité à la mise en place d'une politique italienne plus importante dans la région. Cugliandro fait valoir que l'équilibre entre les accords régionaux et bilatéraux risque de miner la crédibilité de l'Italie dans le bassin. En l'absence d'une stratégie claire, la valeur ajoutée que l'Italie peut fournir à la région demeure une approche ascendante de politique étrangère culturelle.

Dans leur article sur la perspective méditerranéenne de la Grèce et l'UPM, *M. Dimitris Xenakis* et *Charalambos Tsardanidis*, font valoir qu'après l'eupéanisation des relations gréco-turques dans le milieu des années 1990, la Méditerranée est devenue peu à peu une terre retrouvée d'opportunité pour les décideurs de la politique grecque. Initialement, en s'appuyant sur l'approche régionale de l'UE et, plus récemment, en soutenant l'initiative



française, de nombreuses opportunités sont apparues pour la Grèce d'améliorer son profil régional, y compris un nouveau paramètre dans les relations gréco-turques. Xenakis et Tsardanidis examinent la participation accrue de la Grèce afin de changer l'ordre du jour euro-méditerranéen, en évaluant les défis et les opportunités que cette nouvelle initiative génère pour les intérêts stratégiques et économiques du pays ainsi que, pour aborder les questions controversées dans la Méditerranée orientale, y compris, la délimitation des eaux territoriales, la migration et le terrorisme. Ils concluent avec des réflexions sur l'action future dans le cadre institutionnel, nouvellement institué, tant en ce qui concerne les projets de coopération de plus grande valeur pour la Grèce et en vue de contribuer davantage au processus plus large de systématiser les relations régionales.

*Roderick Pace* a examiné l'UPM dans la perspective des États-îles méditerranéens de Chypre et Malte, comme les deux pays ont un fort intérêt dans les initiatives de la Méditerranée qui améliorent la stabilité et la sécurité régionales; ces pays ont soutenu le lancement de l'UPM. Cependant, l'analyse de Pace révèle que ceux-ci ont une conception différente de ce que l'UPM devrait atteindre, avec Chypre, portant un accent particulier sur la résolution des conflits régionaux, tandis que Malte adopte une approche plus fonctionnaliste en mettant l'accent sur la protection des ressources halieutiques et la dépollution. Les deux États semblent toutefois ignorer les nombreux problèmes qui assaillent l'initiative. Enfin, l'auteur se demande également si les deux États insulaires peuvent influencer sur les processus internes ou les rivalités internes entre les grands États de l'UE et, si ces petits États pourraient jouer le rôle d'«honnêtes courtiers», normalement associés à des États faibles et neutres.

Dans une perspective historique, la conceptualisation que la Turquie a de la Méditerranée s'écarte fortement de celle de l'UE. En examinant dans une perspective historique les modèles de changement et de continuité dans l'approche de la Turquie à la création de l'UPM, *Atila Eralp* et *Petek Karatekelioğlu* font valoir que 2008 a été un tournant important tant en termes de restructuration de la politique méditerranéenne de l'UE que pour repenser le rôle de la Turquie dans ce domaine spécifique. Eralp et Karatekelioğlu analysent la perspective de la Turquie sur la politique méditerranéenne de l'UE en général et plus particulièrement sur l'UPM. La dynamique des relations Turquie-UE et la crédibilité des membres, des inquiétudes géopolitiques et l'image de la Méditerranée, les objectifs et l'efficacité du processus de Barcelone, sont tous des facteurs importants dans l'élaboration de la perspective turque sur la politique méditerranéenne de l'UE.

Dans son analyse du point de vue israélien sur la politique méditerranéenne de l'UE et de l'UPM, Alfred Tovas souligne la déception d'Israël envers le processus de Barcelone, en faisant valoir qu'aux yeux des Israéliens, c'était un programme de développement Nord-Sud à travers le commerce, qui a échoué pour deux raisons: d'abord et avant tout, parce que l'UE avait exclu des accords d'association les biens agricoles et les services intensifs de main-d'œuvre alors que le cumul des règles d'origine ont pris beaucoup de temps à être mis en place et, deuxièmement, parce que les partenaires arabes n'ont pas su mettre en œuvre d'importantes réformes politiques et économiques. En ce qui concerne le nouveau projet de l'UPM, Israël a adopté une attitude positive, quand il est devenu clair que la Politique européenne de voisinage n'allait pas être remplacée. Dans le cadre de l'UPM, Israël va probablement avoir tendance à privilégier de nombreux projets - plutôt que quelques projets - les micro «projets» étant les moins susceptibles d'être politisés.

En cette période d'initiatives euro-méditerranéennes d'inspiration française, *Tobias Schumacher* a fait valoir que l'accord conclu sur la création de l'UPM n'est pas le résultat d'une évaluation collective et d'une véritable évaluation des besoins. Au lieu de cela, il a été la conséquence d'un réseau complexe de processus d'interaction entre les États et de l'opposition conjointe, orchestrée de manière informelle par des gouvernements non-méditerranéens de l'UE aux efforts unilatéraux français d'établir un cadre de coopération exclusif. En allant au-delà de la notion statique de l'analyse traditionnelle de la politique étrangère et en s'appuyant sur une théorie de l'information, Schumacher analyse les politiques étrangères de l'Allemagne, de la Pologne et du Royaume-Uni vis-à-vis de la région méditerranéenne en général et le plan initial du président français Nicolas Sarkozy en particulier, en faisant valoir que leur lutte avec la France a généré des résultats contre-productifs et a considérablement érodé les fondements des relations euro-méditerranéennes.

Enfin, *Stelios Stavridis* et *George Tzogopoulos* présentent le débat sur l'initiative méditerranéenne de Nicolas Sarkozy au Parlement européen. Comme ce dernier est un acteur de plus en plus important à la fois de la politique européenne et des relations internationales, les auteurs se demandent s'il existe des preuves d'une vision européenne sur ce sujet parmi les membres du Parlement européen, ou si au contraire les préférences nationales prévalent toujours. Après avoir montré combien l'initiative de Sarkozy a été controversée et conflictuelle, en particulier chez les États du nord de l'UE et la Commission européenne - mais sans surprise en Espagne - ces auteurs soutiennent que même au sein du Parlement européen, l'initiative de Sarkozy a été traitée d'une

manière qui avait manifestement plus à voir avec la politique nationale interne que tout débat politique européenisé.

## NOTES

1. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, Vols. I & II, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, London, Fontana Press, 1987.
2. See Stephen C. Calleya, *Navigating Regional Dynamics in the Post-Cold War World. Patterns of Relations in the Mediterranean Area*, Aldershot, Dartmouth, 1997, pp. 89-140.
3. Fulvio Attinà, "Regional Cooperation in Global Perspective. The Case of the Mediterranean Regions", *Jean Monnet Working Papers in Comparative and International Politics*, No. 4, Euro-Med Centre of Excellence, Department of Political Studies, University of Catania, 1996.
4. Roberto Aliboni, "European Security Across the Mediterranean", *Chaillot Papers*, No. 2, WEU Institute, Paris, 1991.
5. Dimitris K. Xenakis and Dimitris N. Chryssochoou, *The emerging Euro-Mediterranean system*, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2001.
6. See for example Peter Ludlow (ed.), *Europe and the Mediterranean*, London - CEPS for Brassey's, 1994 and Roberto Aliboni, George Joffe and Tim Niblock (eds.), *Security Challenges in the Mediterranean Region*, London, Frank Cass, 1996.
7. La fin de la Guerre Froide a marqué la réorganisation de l'ordre mondial, la réduction des antagonismes Est-Ouest à un minimum, tout en insistant à nouveau sur les clivages Orient-Occident et Nord-Sud, et offrant des munitions utiles pour ceux qui faisaient valoir que le conflit dominant de l'après Guerre Froide se situait entre les valeurs occidentales et orientales, ou entre un monde technologique 'post-historique' et un monde 'historique'. Voir Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press, 1992 and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Touchstone, 1996.
8. Thanos Dokos, "Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Mediterranean", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2000, pp. 95-116.
9. See UNCTAD, *The World Investment Report*, Geneva, 2006 and World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, Washington DC, 2006.

10. United Nations Development Program, *Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries*, New York, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, 2009, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/contents/index.aspx?rid=5>
11. Rami G. Khouri, "The Seven Pillars of Arab Vulnerability and Fragility", *Agence Global*, 27 July 2009, <http://www.agenceglobal.com/Article.asp?Id=2080>
12. See Calleya, *Navigating Regional Dynamics in the Post-Cold War World*, *op.cit.*, pp. 103-107.
13. Dimitris Conostas, "Southern European countries in the European Community" in John W. Holmes (ed.), *Maelstrom: The United States Southern Europe and the Challenges in the Mediterranean*, Cambridge Mass., World Peace Foundation, 1995, p. 127.
14. Richard Gillespie, *Spain and the Mediterranean: Developing a European Policy toward the South*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000. See also Alfred Tovias, *Foreign Economic Relations of the European Community-The Impact of Spain and Portugal*, Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 1990.
15. Les intérêts directs du Portugal en Méditerranée sont petits et concentrés dans certains pays du Maghreb, essentiellement au Maroc et dans une moindre mesure en Tunisie. Alvaro de Vasconcelos, "Portugal: Pressing for an Open Europe" in Christopher Hill (ed.), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*, London, Routledge, 1996, pp. 268-287 and "Portugal: The European Way" in Alvaro de Vasconcelos and Maria Joao Seabra (eds.), *Portugal: A European Story*, IEEL, Cascais, Principia, 2000, pp. 11-38.
16. Thanos Veremis, "International Relations in Southern Europe" in John Loughlin (ed.), *Southern European Studies Guide*, London, Bauker-Saur, 1993, p. 210.
17. Laurent Meyrede, "France's Foreign Policy in the Mediterranean" in Stavridis et.al., *op.cit.*, p. 56.
18. Gareth M. Winrow, *Dialogue with the Mediterranean: The Role of NATO's Mediterranean Initiative*, New York, Garland, 2000. See also Ian O. Lesser, *Mediterranean Security: New Perspectives and Implications for US Policy*, Santa Monica, RAND Co., 1992.
19. Cinq pays du sud européen - France, Italie, Malte, le Portugal et l'Espagne - et les pays de l'Union du Maghreb arabe (UMA) - l'Algérie, la Libye, la Mauritanie, le Maroc et la Tunisie ont participé à la création d'un forum sur la sécurité en Méditerranée reposant sur une structure souple de dialogue, de concertation et de coopération. Des réunions ministérielles devraient se tenir une fois par an et des groupes de travail ont été mis en place pour s'attaquer à des questions de préoccupation commune, telles que la désertification, les flux migratoires et la préservation du patrimoine culturel.

20. Christophe Carle, "France, the Mediterranean and Southern European Security" in Roberto Aliboni (ed.), *Southern European Security*, London, Pinter, 1992, p. 48.
21. Bien que le Processus d'Helsinki ait dû faire face à des problèmes essentiellement de nature idéologique et avait été créé pour surmonter la division artificielle d'un continent culturellement homogène, une CSCM aurait à faire face aux disparités économiques et culturelles. Victor Yves Ghebal, "Toward a Mediterranean Helsinki-Type Process", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1993, p. 95.
22. Richard Gillespie, "Regionalism and Globalism in the EMP: The Limits to Western Mediterranean Co-operation", Conference on *The Convergence of Civilizations? Constructing a Mediterranean Region*, Fundação Oriente, Lisboa, at the Convento da Arrábida, Setúbal, June 6-9, 2002, p. 3.
23. Roberto Aliboni, "The Role of International Organisations in the Mediterranean", *ELIAMEP Occasional Papers*, No. 1, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, Athens, 2002.
24. Lors d'un atelier organisé par la Direction de l'Office italien des Affaires étrangères pour les pays de la Méditerranée et le Moyen-Orient sur les «Mesures de prévention des conflits dans le Cadre MED Forum» à Rome les 21-22 Juin 2002, concernant la justification et les objectifs du Forum méditerranéen, tous étaient d'accord sur le rôle particulier que les pays du Forum peuvent jouer comme précurseurs dans le cadre plus large de l'Euromed, en avançant des idées et en mettant en avant des actions communes qui pourraient ne pas être matures dans le contexte de ce dernier.
25. Stephen C. Calleya and Dimitris K. Xenakis, "France's New Mediterranean Initiative: Lessons from Post-Cold War Regional Cooperation", *Karamanlis Working Papers*, No. 4, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, April 2008, p. 6.
26. Gillespie, "Regionalism and Globalism in the EMP", *op.cit.*, p. 13.
27. Voir de façon plus analytique, dans Roderick Pace, "The Mediterranean Union: from the Perspective of the Mediterranean Island States", *Hellenic Studies*, Special EuroMed Issue, Autumn 2009, forthcoming.
28. Theodore Pelagidis, "Europe's Structural Problems in the Spotlight" [Τα Διαρθρωτικά Προβλήματα της Ευρώπης στο Προσκήνιο] in Dimitris K. Xenakis and Theodore Pelagidis (eds.) *Interventions for Europe* [Παρεμβάσεις για την Ευρώπη], Athens, Centre for Progressive Policy Research - Centre for Institutional Reforms - Papazisis, 2009 (forthcoming).
29. Juliane von Reppert-Bismarck, "Why PIGS Can't Fly", *Newsweek*, July 7, 2008, <http://www.newsweek.com/id/143665>
30. Nicolas Sarkozy, Toulon presidential campaign discourse, December 7, 2007,

[http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/s\\_informer/discours/nicolas\\_sarkozy\\_a\\_toulon](http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/s_informer/discours/nicolas_sarkozy_a_toulon)

31. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostategic Imperatives*, New York, HarperCollins, 1997, p. 42.
32. Maria Ganniou, "Sarkozy's Proposal for a Mediterranean Union", *Policy Papers*, No. 3, Institute of International Relations, 2008, p. 11.
33. Jean Robert Henry, "French Initiative in the Mediterranean Region: Back to Square One?" in *Mediterranean Yearbook 2008*, IeMed, p. 5, <http://www.iemed.org/anuari/2008/asumari.php>
34. Bien que l'Espagne était initialement en accord avec l'initiative de la France, par la suite, dans un geste inattendu elle a mis de l'avant ses propres idées sur une "Union méditerranéenne". "Le temps est venu ... de reconstruire un espace géopolitique réel, en établissant une Union méditerranéenne" a déclaré le ministre des Affaires Étrangères Miguel Moratinos à *El Pais*. Il a proposé des institutions comme le Conseil des chefs d'Etats et de Gouvernements de l'Euro-Med, le Comité des représentants permanents, le Comité permanent (secrétariat) et l'amélioration du partenariat euro-méditerranéen existant, l'Assemblée parlementaire et la Fondation Anna Lindh pour le dialogue entre les cultures.
35. Voir de façon plus analytique, dans Rosa Balfour and Dorothée Schmid, "Union for the Mediterranean, disunity for the EU?", Policy Briefs, Brussels, European Policy Centre, 2008.
36. Francis Dubois, "Tensions between France and Germany intensify over foreign and economic policy", *WSWS*, 13 March 2008, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2008/mar2008/fran-m13.shtml>
37. Le mécanisme et la structure établies par l'extension de l'UE en Méditerranée permettront de déterminer le niveau d'influence anglo-américaine en Méditerranée. Si l'Union européenne crée un mécanisme qui se chevauche dans le bassin méditerranéen où les nations méditerranéennes sont uniquement liées directement avec les membres de l'UE riverains de la Méditerranée et, indirectement, avec les autres membres de l'UE, alors l'influence anglo-américaine sera beaucoup plus faible que ce qu'elle serait dans le cas d'une intégration complète entre l'UE et la Méditerranée. Ce type de relation renforcerait grandement Paris et Berlin au sein de la Méditerranée.
38. Driss, "Southern Perceptions of the Union for the Mediterranean", *op.cit.*, p. 2.
39. La Turquie s'est dérobée car elle a considéré l'UPM comme rien de plus qu'un mécanisme pour maintenir la Turquie hors de l'UE. Cette crainte n'est pas sans fondement puisque garder la porte de l'UE fermée à la Turquie, faisait partie du programme électoral de Sarkozy. Ce dernier a fait valoir dans le passé que la

Turquie a toujours fait partie de l'Asie Mineure et non pas de l'Europe. Le Premier ministre Recep Tayip Erdogan a publié une déclaration avant son départ pour le sommet fondateur de l'UPM à Paris dans laquelle il a vivement critiqué la France pour son opposition à l'adhésion à l'UE de la Turquie, soulignant que la coopération dans la région méditerranéenne et les négociations UE-Turquie sont deux projets différents. Beaucoup croient que la seule raison de la présence de M. Erdogan lors du sommet de Paris était d'utiliser la possibilité de solliciter le soutien des dirigeants des États européens et du Moyen Orient pour sa propre bataille contre la Cour suprême de Turquie, qui a tenté d'interdire son parti.

40. C'est peut être une approche prudente, mais elle est aussi risquée. "Sarkozy en Israël a agi comme un intermédiaire qui pourrait être entendu par les deux côtés, et il est plus écouté en Israël que ses prédécesseurs», explique Gilles Kepel. Cité dans Eric Pape, "Mediterranean Bridge Building", *Newsweek*, 19 July 2006, <http://www.newsweek.com/id/147680>
41. Le général Kadhafi a fait valoir que la Libye ne va pas participer à l'initiative de Nicolas Sarkozy, qui "divisera les nations arabes et africaines. ... [et] ... déclenchera des actes terroristes perpétrés par des groupes islamiques », qui « vont considérer cette réunion comme un plan de croisade ". À son avis, l'initiative française est «vague» et est en fait une ruse "pour forcer les Arabes à s'asseoir à la même table avec les Israéliens». Cité par Ira Feloukatzi, "L'Union pour la Méditerranée» [Η Ένωση Βουτάει στη Μεσόγειο], *Eleftherotypia* (quotidien grec), 12 Juillet 2008. Voir aussi "Kadhafi menace de tourner le dos à l'Afrique", *Agence France-Presse*, 29/2/2008 et "Kadhafi déclare qu'il peut pousser des investissements en Afrique", *Reuters*, 31 Janvier 2008.
42. Stefan Steinberg, "France bids to extend its influence through founding of Mediterranean Union", *WSWS*, 16 July 2008, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2008/jul2008/medu-j16.shtml>
43. Tobias Schumacher, "A fading Mediterranean dream", *European Voice*, 16 July 2009, p. 7.
44. See *Kathimerini* (Greek daily), 20 May 2009, [http://portal.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/\\_w\\_articles\\_kathbreak\\_1\\_20/05/2009\\_280559](http://portal.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_kathbreak_1_20/05/2009_280559)
45. Le groupe arabe tout entier participera aux prochaines réunions. Nous ne voulons pas être ceux qui vont bloquer le processus », a déclaré à l'AFP Mohammed al-Nasseri, chef du Département de la coopération euro-arabe à la Ligue arabe. Les membres arabes, y compris les Palestiniens, assisteront à la séance du 7 Juillet à Bruxelles à laquelle sera officiellement annoncée la fondation de l'UPM. Voir "DJ Arabs Back on Board for Mediterranean Union", *Cairo (AFP)*, 24 June 2009, <http://english.capital.gr/News.asp?id=762796>
46. Schumacher, "A fading Mediterranean dream", *op.cit.*

47. Roderick Pace, “The Mediterranean Union risks being stillborn”, *Europe’s World*, Summer 2009, p. 148.



# Union for the Mediterranean

## National and Regional Perspectives

Dimitris K. Xenakis\* and Panayotis J. Tsakonas\*\*

### The Mediterranean Cooperation *Problématique*

The Mediterranean has always been a space of competition and contestation, reflecting, in no small part, its fragmented geography and the politico-economic structures it produced in various historical times.<sup>1</sup> Today no other part of the globe exemplifies better the post-bipolar trends towards fragmentation and revival of “ancient feuds” than the Mediterranean, with security questions becoming increasingly indivisible, regardless of diverse sub-regional features.<sup>2</sup> As “Mediterranean regions” do not share the features traditionally found in international regionalism (i.e. a “common co-operation space”<sup>3</sup>), this means that co-operation and security across the Mediterranean are possible but cannot be taken for granted, as they require an effort of will and “specific management”.<sup>4</sup>

The Post-Cold War wider Euro-Mediterranean system is characterized by a pluri-causal dynamism pushing towards a new mapping of its component parts, reformulated in its emerging inter-regional governance structures.<sup>5</sup> But with vast political economic and demographic disproportions and dividing religious and cultural fault lines, the 1989 shift in international relations has gradually transformed the Mediterranean in one of the most critical sources of instability for Europe.<sup>6</sup> Since then, systemic tension has been steadily increasing with the revival of radical Islam,<sup>7</sup> the events that followed September 11<sup>th</sup>, as well as the importance attached to transnational security threats, such as massive waves of illegal immigrants, cross-border organized crime and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time, the region's economic indicators are not positive. The region has lost in its relative attractiveness, with Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) backsliding for many years, with a significant increase only since 2005,

\* University of Crete.

\*\*University of the Aegean

due to large privatizations and the expansion of oil activities in Egypt.<sup>9</sup> North-South economic disparities are resulting in a permanent “poverty curtain” across the Mediterranean, as southern economies are stagnating and the demographic time-bomb continues to escalate, while unemployment continues to increase and illiteracy remains at alarmingly high levels. Economic vulnerability and insecurity reflect the fact many human security indicators in the Mediterranean countries are static or even worsening, cleaving into two very different and distant worlds of affluence and order, and of poverty, need and disorder.<sup>10</sup> No doubt, the region’s fault lines are getting deeper and obstacles to human development are stubborn because of the fragility of the region’s political, economic and social structures, the lack of people-centered development policies, and the vulnerability to outside intervention.<sup>11</sup>

Europe’s “big bang” enlargement to twenty-seven countries was not a win-win deal for all. It has become clear that after the fall of the Berlin Wall, most of the European Union’s (EU) political and economic attention has been directed for the swift transition of post-communist Europe. From the early 1990s, southern EU members are trying to balance the focus of international community in eastern Europe. Particularly, France, Spain and Italy during 1995 and 1996 with their consecutive EU presidencies revealed common foreign policy concerns pointing to a more homogenous stance within international organizations such as NATO, EU, OSCE, and WEU, parallel to the launching of land and maritime forces - Eurofor and Euromarfor-, partly offsetting the predominant position of the American Sixth Fleet.<sup>12</sup> Despite the fact that their economic objectives have been harmonised in the context of their participation in the EU and although a “Mediterranean solidarity” is evident in their interactions, these are not enough to be reflected in permanent and structured political solidarity to arrive in common strategies and means for the Mediterranean. Southern EU members have not yet formed a cohesive block in relation to the EU’s eastwards enlargement and, even more so, with regards to the future of the EU itself.<sup>13</sup> Yet any comparison of their policies reveals marked contrasts regarding the prioritization of areas of interest. One of the starkest contrasts is that between the two Iberian neighbours Spain and Portugal: while Spain’s interest in the Mediterranean is deeply rooted in history and has been the subject of considerable engagement since the late 1970s,<sup>14</sup> Portugal only began to develop a Mediterranean policy when entered the Community in mid 1980s.<sup>15</sup> In the same line, Veremis asserted that, “the proximity of Portugal, Spain and Italy to North Africa and the common

borders of Greece and Italy with the troubled Balkans, helps explain each country's regional line of work".<sup>16</sup>

Interestingly, at least most of the impetus has come from France, seeking to continue project influence in the Mediterranean, partly as a response to the growth of German influence within Europe.<sup>17</sup> The relative lack of US interest in the western Mediterranean<sup>18</sup> allowed France to undertake the initiative to organize the Forum on the West Mediterranean (Five + Five initiative) in 1990.<sup>19</sup> However, there was a disjuncture with the Italian-Spanish initiative for a "wider" Conference on the Security and the Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) along the lines of the Helsinki Process, including all the Mediterranean states and the US. France considered this enlargement "immature" and hardly compromising in the context of its geographically restricted attempt to enhance co-operation in the west Mediterranean sector.<sup>20</sup> Although the ambitious CSCM failed to get off the ground,<sup>21</sup> its existence indicated Spanish and Italian reservations about the French project. On the other hand, the Five + Five initiative was suspended as a result of the crisis in Algeria and the Lockerbie affair, which placed a strain on the prospects of an EU-Maghreb Partnership.<sup>22</sup> Parallel to these initiatives, the Mediterranean Forum was also inaugurated in Alexandria in 1994 - a rare example of a regional initiative assessed as fully working, co-operating in the fields of political, economic, social and cultural affairs on the basis of very efficiency-oriented guidelines.<sup>23</sup> Hence, since the signing of Barcelona Declaration in November 1995, considerations for the Mediterranean have primarily been through the EU's new multilateral framework, with the Mediterranean Forum existing more informally, grouping 11 countries compared with Barcelona Process' membership of 27, and operating as a policy-framing body.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the fact that the Mediterranean dimension in its foreign policy has significantly been reduced in recent decades, France's participation in any Mediterranean related structure is indispensable, something also evident in the increased interest for the region after the announcement of Sarkozy's initiative.<sup>25</sup> Beyond German and British traditional reservations, although France is generally considered as the leader in promoting Mediterranean issues, countries like Spain are not willing to accept a French leadership in the EU's relations with the Mediterranean.<sup>26</sup> But while those countries play a more active role in setting the EU's Mediterranean agenda, smaller countries like Greece, Malta and Cyprus face in a more direct manner the potential and real waves of regional instability. Despite their relative lack of influence within the EU's multilateral framework they all valued the Barcelona Process as the most

comprehensive and promising response to regional challenges despite the poor results since 1995. They all seem to overlook the many problems which beset the recent French initiative, hence, the perspective of the two Mediterranean Island States with a traditionally strong interest in regional initiatives is different; Cyprus is laying special emphasis on the resolution of regional conflicts while Malta is taking a more functionalist approach emphasising the protection of fish resources and de-pollution.<sup>27</sup>

While enlargement plans have secured the success of EU's policies in the eastern neighborhood, the perceived impact of collective European efforts to strengthen relations with the Mediterranean has been much lower. But southern EU members have not yet formed a cohesive block in relation to the future of the Mediterranean and the EU's involvement. There is no doubt, however, that Mediterranean economic prospects will be significantly increased, if a way is found to address regional disputes and enhance regional stability. This has become more urging as differences and economic disparities between North and South of Europe have resulted in a divide in the Euro zone: a split between those who have capitalized on globalization, and those who have not. It is widely acknowledged that in the framework of current economic recession, those at higher risk in Europe are Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain, who stayed stuck as their nimbler competitors revived export and job growth by venturing abroad. Current economic trends have brought higher rates, designed to slow inflation in strong economies like Germany and could choke what little growth is left in southern Europe.<sup>28</sup> This stoking political tension is further exacerbating the divergence between Euro-economies. Yet, the old consensus that the South was held back by a more protective attitude toward social policy, has been replaced by a new view that wants the above mentioned countries to have "missed the boat" on flexible labor, outsourcing and selling to emerging markets. Leaders from Southern Europe are convinced that the slowly emerging southern Mediterranean markets is what they need to catch up, hoping that Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Lebanon can do for them what Eastern Europe has done for the North of Europe.<sup>29</sup>

### **From the Launch of the UfM Project in Toulon to Gaza and Beyond**

The plan for a Mediterranean Union was announced by Sarkozy, before his election, in his speech in Toulon in May 2007 and since then it has been consistently developed.<sup>30</sup> This idea of creating a new power bloc in Southern

Europe, North Africa and the Middle East is not new. Already in 1997 Brzezinski acknowledged that “France not only seeks a central political role in a unified Europe but also sees itself as the nucleus of a Mediterranean-North African cluster of states that share common concerns”.<sup>31</sup> However, from the outset the plan suffered from the absence of coalition building, as many feared that it will favor an unofficial redistribution of roles in the region, facilitating the emergence of a powerful group of the EU Mediterranean countries. Although the majority of the latter viewed the initiative in a positive way, because of its vague and uncertain content, they hesitated to fully endorse it.<sup>32</sup> Too many incoherencies, improvisations and announcements undermined the value of the French initiative.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, despite support from Greece, Italy and Spain,<sup>34</sup> this project has met the Commission’s strong resistance and, with the tacit support of other EU members a compromise was struck, allowing for the participation of all EU states.

In a speech in the Moroccan city of Tangier in October 2007, President Sarkozy started to spell out the nature of the Mediterranean Union, seen as a “Union of Projects” and invited Heads of Mediterranean riparian states to a summit scheduled to take place on July 13th 2008 in Paris. The Union was supposed to include only littoral states and function like the G8 meetings of Heads of States and governments, with a Council of the Mediterranean modeled on the Council of Europe. Before it was emptied to a large degree from its initial inception by inter-European negotiations in the first quarter of 2008,<sup>35</sup> at the December 2007 meeting between France, Italy and Spain, after the latter’s proposal it was decided that the initial idea of a “Mediterranean Union” will be transformed to a “Union *for* the Mediterranean”. Beyond the utmost continuity between the EMP and the French proposal, during this meeting the guidelines of the initiative were made more explicit making clear that it will not replace existing structures, but instead complement and enhance them, as well as that it will not be used as an alternative proposal for the Turkish accession process or an impediment in the Croatian Stabilization and Association Agreement.

By March 2008, after coordinated pressures by Germany who wanted the UfM not to be detached from the EU mechanisms and the Commission’s leading role,<sup>36</sup> France had to pull back and incorporate the UfM in the wider Euro-Mediterranean mechanism, thus allowing for the participation of all EU members.<sup>37</sup> With this major change, initial concerns, regarding France’s attempts to expand its regional strategic influence to the detriment of its European partners have been appeased. Tensions between inclusion and

exclusion, the technocratic approach of the EU vs. the grand political rhetoric of Sarkozy, and the question of EU institutions and processes vs. the bold visions of individual European leaders were only settled when the new initiative was fully integrated in the wider EU framework, thus expected not to jeopardize the Barcelona *acquis*, in both procedural and regulatory expectations. Focusing on the possibilities (and not the limits) of a more targeted and efficient cooperation in the Mediterranean, the UfM is expected to have an added value by implementing specific projects with immediate and tangible benefits for Mediterranean peoples, as well as, by contributing positively to the region's overall economic and societal development.

Despite criticisms, the southern Mediterranean leaders, as in the case of the Tunisian President, insisted on the importance of not detaching the new Union project from the EMP, believing that this “will be called on to contribute towards a re-launching of the EMP, by working to assure a synergy with the existing Euro-Mediterranean instruments”.<sup>38</sup> Beyond the negative attitude adopted from the begging by Turkey,<sup>39</sup> President Sarkozy's opening to Israel<sup>40</sup> created difficulties for many Arab leaders to participate in the founding Summit in Paris in July 2008, and certainly didn't prevent them from accusing Israeli for its settlements policy. The only major Mediterranean nation that did not participate was Libya, whose leader, Muammar Gaddafi, turned down an invitation to attend.<sup>41</sup> The Kings of Morocco and Jordan also did not attend, pleading other engagements, but sent high-ranking officials in their stead.

Sometimes, in the name of diplomacy, great leaders sometimes play little tricks. At the Summit in Paris, after offering a glowing report on Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, Sarkozy simultaneously shook hands with Israeli Prime Minister Olmert and Palestinian President Abbas, as cameras snapped away. Then he slyly drew his own hands together, and theirs with his - leading to a richly symbolic three-way handshake. Beyond that, the Summit was a real diplomatic success, as it effectively ended the political isolation of the Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad, who has long been regarded as a political pariah by the US previous administration. In a heavily publicized event, Assad sat down at the same negotiating table with Israel's prime minister. This was the first occasion when the respective heads of the two states occupied the same room, following three rounds in recent months of negotiations between them, under Turkish mediation. Another success of the Summit was Assad's and the new Lebanese president, Michel Suleiman, agreement to open embassies in each other's capitals.<sup>42</sup>

The founding Summit in Paris left many issues regarding the UfM structures, functions and effectiveness to be decided at the Euro-Mediterranean meeting in Marseille in November 2008. At this meeting Ministers of Foreign Affairs decided that a Permanent Commission of the EU member states and the southern partners to be established in order to strengthen co-ownership. It was also decided that the Heads of Governments of the member states, as well as senior officials will have the initiative's political control. A small and flexible, mainly of technical nature, Secretariat will also be established for the examination/evaluation of the projects; Headquarters will be in Barcelona and the General Secretary will always be from a partner country. The Secretary will be assisted by five under-secretaries, from Greece, Italy, Malta, the Palestinian Authority and Israel. It was also decided that the Arab League will participate in all Summits and at all levels of the UfM – a decision that however increased the number of actors with the power to block decisions.<sup>43</sup>

After the Marseille Conference had arranged for the array of details bound to make the UFM actually work, Israel's December 2008-January 2009 military intervention in Gaza convinced UFM Arab partners to plainly suspend the implementation of the new policy and all related meetings. As the French Minister Bernard Kouchner stated: "[i]t will be really difficult to see any progress unless the situation in the Middle East is clarified. The Summit supposed to take place in Monaco has been postponed. This is not encouraging."<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, in late June, the French Minister of Environment attempted to renew interest for the UfM with a conference for the evaluation of new projects. Although a positive sign arrived that Arab states will rejoin the "frozen" UfM, despite reservations about sitting down again with Israel,<sup>45</sup> many Euro-Med experts wonder about the prospects of the Union and how it might evolve in the long term, and whether it will prove a more sustainable framework to the widely criticized EMP. The view shared by the majority of them and, informally, even by some French diplomats, is that the prospects are rather bleak.<sup>46</sup> But even if the UfM overcomes the current stalemate in Gaza, it will inevitably be decayed in a series of development programs, which will not even be placed in a substantive political backdrop. As Pace urges, interactions in the UfM have relapsed back into the same old patterns of behaviour and therefore the UfM is meant to end unless remedial action is taken quickly. "It may not be long before the UfM joins the roll call of dead, unsung and unlamented Mediterranean policies".<sup>47</sup>

## What future for UfM? National and regional perspectives

The newly established framework of regional co-operation, however controversial, offered more political attention for the Mediterranean and the vast challenges littoral states are facing. By bringing together an outstanding line-up of Euro-Mediterranean experts, this special issue attempts to provide an updated overview of the southern EU members' views, goals and strategies vis-à-vis the French initiative; to assess the shifts in their perspectives over the newly instituted UfM; to explain certain EU and/or Mediterranean countries' support or caution vis-à-vis UfM; and to assess the UfM ability to deal with the issues related to Mediterranean instability more effectively than its predecessor, namely the "Barcelona Process", and/or other current EU frameworks and policies, i.e. the "European Neighborhood Policy".

The transformation of the French plan and the process of establishing the UfM within the wider EU approach have indeed been central in all contributions of this special issue. In his analysis on the Barcelona Process and its prospects after the UfM, *Roberto Aliboni* illustrates the emerging Euro-Med architecture after the Paris Summit and the Conference of Foreign Ministers in Marseille, which configured a multi-layered "Barcelona Process" in which the UfM is working side by side with the Neighborhood Policy and the array of Commission's policies towards the Mediterranean which, in fact, are bound to replace the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Providing an evaluation of political and institutional alterations, he argues that, what we have today is an international organisation of peers, the UfM, on one side, and the two EU policy frameworks on the other side. He also doubts the ability of the new framework to respond to regional challenges more effectively than the policy couple, concluding with critical thoughts for the institutional viability and the overall prospects of the Union to contribute to regional conflict resolution as well as to deal with domestic reforms, unless it becomes more flexible inside the Mediterranean basin and more open to the Middle East.

Addressing the challenges of transition from the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to the UfM from an arab perspective, *Gema Martín Muñoz* argues that the French proposal must start from the achievements of the Barcelona Process and strengthen that initiative in aspects it has not yet been able to achieve, and which the Barcelona Declaration explicitly expresses. Although difficult to improve this Declaration of Principles it is possible to apply it better. Martín-Munoz argues that for the UfM to be a success, it is important that it takes into consideration both the results of the Barcelona process and



the causes of its lacunae. The tendency to re-invent from scratch could be very costly.

In examining the question whether the new initiative represents only a change in the name or a real change on the rules of game in the Mediterranean under French supervision, *Dorothee Schmid* argues that the UfM is consistent with France's traditional diplomatic options. While the French have partly relied for the last 15 years on European capacities to uphold a Mediterranean development perspective, their somewhat troubled relationship with the EU and disillusionment with the European Neighborhood Policy finally led them to search for new geopolitical options which would match better their national interests, as well as, Nicolas Sarkozy's new diplomatic ambitions and style.

*Esther Barbé* and *Eduard Soler i Lecha* in their assessment on Spain's attitude towards the UfM argue that the Spanish government's reaction to Sarkozy's moves is consistent with the Spanish logic placing the Mediterranean policy within EU's framework, first by insisting to carry on the Barcelona Process principles and later, by adapting the pursuit of its own interests in the framework of the UfM. Barbé and Soler i Lecha examine how Sarkozy's Mediterranean Union has enabled Spain to pursue, through a strategy of soft Europeanization, the utmost continuity between the Euro-Mediterranean Process and the French proposal, concluding on Spain's EU presidency in 2010, in which Spain will try to recuperate its centrality in Euro-Mediterranean affairs, notably via the Barcelona UfM Secretariat.

Italy's Mediterranean policy is hindered by the same setbacks which have prompted the country not to positively act in the wider context of international politics hitherto. In examining Italian "Mediterraneanness", *Donatella Cugliandro* claims that its notorious "politics-of-the-chair-attitude" meets the so-called "catering diplomacy", leaving no room for a more substantial policy to be implemented in the region. Cugliandro argues that the balance between regional arrangements and bilateral relations risks undermining Italy's credibility in the basin. With lack of a clear strategy the added value Italy may provide to the area remains a bottom-up cultural foreign policy.

In their article on Greece's Mediterranean perspective and the UfM, *Dimitris Xenakis* and *Charalambos Tsardanidis*, argue that after the europeanization of Greco-Turkish relations in the mid-1990s, the Mediterranean gradually became a rediscovered land of opportunity for Greek policy-makers. Initially, by building on the EU's regional approach and, more recently, by supporting

the French initiative, numerous opportunities have arisen for Greece to upgrade its regional profile, including a new parameter in Greco-Turkish relations. Xenakis and Tsardanidis examine Greece's increased involvement in changing Euro-Mediterranean agenda by assessing both the challenges and the opportunities that the new initiative generates for the country's strategic and economic interests as well as, to address controversial issues in the eastern Mediterranean, including, delimitation, migration and terrorism. They conclude with thoughts on future action in the newly instituted framework, both regarding cooperative projects of higher value for Greece and in view of further contributing to the wider process of systematizing regional relations.

*Roderick Pace* examined the UfM from the Perspective of the Mediterranean Island States of Cyprus and Malta, as both countries have a strong interest in Mediterranean initiatives that enhance regional stability and security they supported the launching of the UfM. However, Pace's analysis reveals that they have a different conception of what the UfM should achieve, with Cyprus laying special emphasis on resolution of regional conflicts while Malta taking a more functionalist approach emphasising the protection of fish resources and de-pollution. Both states seem however to overlook the many problems which beset the initiative. Finally it is also questioned whether the two island states can influence the internal processes or internal rivalries between the larger EU states could see them side-lined and if these small states could play the role of 'honest brokers' normally associated with weak and neutral states.

From a historical perspective, Turkey's conceptualization of the Mediterranean diverges considerably from that of the EU. Examining in historical perspective the patterns of change and continuity in Turkey's approach to the establishment of the UfM, *Atila Eralp* and *Petek Karatekelioğlu* argue that 2008 was an important turning point both in terms of restructuring the EU's Mediterranean policy and rethinking Turkey's role within this specific area. Eralp and Karatekelioğlu analyze Turkey's perspective on EU's Mediterranean policy in general and specifically on the UfM. Turkey-EU relations dynamics and the credibility of membership, geopolitical concerns and the image of the Mediterranean, the objectives and efficiency of the Barcelona Process, are all major factors in the shaping of Turkish perspective on the EU's Mediterranean policy.

In his analysis of the Israeli perspective on the EU's Mediterranean policies and the UfM, *Alfred Tovias* stresses the disappointment of Israel, from the Barcelona Process, arguing that in the eyes of Israelis, it was a North-South

development-through-trade program and failed for two reasons: first and foremost, because the EU had excluded from the association agreements agricultural goods and labour-intensive services and the cumulation of origin rules have taken a lot of time to be introduced; and second, because the Arab partners failed to implement substantial political and economic reforms. Regarding the new UfM project, Israel adopted a positive attitude, once it became clear that the European Neighbourhood Policy was not going to be replaced. In the context of the UfM, Israel will probably have a tendency to privilege many, rather than only a few projects, as more “micro” projects are the less likely to be politicized.

In times of French-inspired Euro-Mediterranean initiatives, *Tobias Schumacher* claims that the agreement reached to establish the UfM was not the result of a collective evaluation and a true needs assessment. Instead, it was the consequence of a complex web of interstate interaction processes and of the joint, informally orchestrated opposition of non-Mediterranean EU governments to unilateral French efforts to establish an exclusive cooperation framework. By going beyond the static concept of traditional foreign policy analysis and drawing on a theory-informed angle, Schumacher analyzes the foreign policies of Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom vis-à-vis the Mediterranean region in general and French President Nicolas Sarkozy's original plan in particular, arguing that their struggle with France generated counter-productive results and considerably eroded the foundations of Euro-Mediterranean relations.

Finally, *Stelios Stavridis* and *George Tzogopoulos* address the debate over Sarkozy's Mediterranean initiative at the European Parliament. As the latter is a growing actor in both European politics and international relations, the authors question if there is evidence of a Europeanized view on the subject among Members of the European Parliament, or whether instead national preferences still prevail. After showing how controversial and divisive the Sarkozy Initiative has been, especially among Northern EU states and the European Commission but, not surprisingly, in Spain they argue that that even within the European Parliament, the Sarkozy Initiative was dealt with in a way that clearly had more to do with internal domestic politics than any Europeanised political debate.

## NOTES

1. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, Vols. I & II, 5th edition, London, Fontana Press, 1987.
2. See Stephen C. Calleya, *Navigating Regional Dynamics in the Post-Cold War World. Patterns of Relations in the Mediterranean Area*, Aldershot, Dartmouth, 1997, pp. 89-140.
3. Fulvio Attinà, "Regional Cooperation in Global Perspective. The Case of the Mediterranean Regions", *Jean Monnet Working Papers in Comparative and International Politics*, No. 4, Euro-Med Centre of Excellence, Department of Political Studies, University of Catania, 1996.
4. Roberto Aliboni, "European Security Across the Mediterranean", *Chaillot Papers*, No 2, WEU Institute, Paris, 1991.
5. Dimitris K. Xenakis and Dimitris N. Chrysoschoou, *The emerging Euro-Mediterranean system*, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2001.
6. See for example Peter Ludlow (ed.), *Europe and the Mediterranean*, London - CEPS for Brassey's, 1994 and Roberto Aliboni, George Joffe and Tim Niblock (eds.), *Security Challenges in the Mediterranean Region*, London, Frank Cass, 1996.
7. The end of the Cold War signalled the re-arrangement of world order, reducing East-West antagonism to a minimum, while re-emphasising the Orient-Occident and North-South divides, offering useful ammunition to those arguing that the dominant conflict post-Cold War is between Occidental and Oriental values, or between a technological 'post-historical' world and a 'historical' one. See Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press, 1992 and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Touchstone, 1996.
8. Thanos Dokos, "Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Mediterranean", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2000, pp. 95-116.
9. See UNCTAD, *The World Investment Report*, Geneva, 2006 and World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, Washington DC, 2006.
10. United Nations Development Program, *Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries*, New York, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, 2009, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/contents/index.aspx?rid=5>
11. Rami G. Khouri, "The Seven Pillars of Arab Vulnerability and Fragility", *Agence Global*, 27 July 2009, <http://www.agenceglobal.com/Article.asp?Id=2080>
12. See Calleya, *Navigating Regional Dynamics in the Post-Cold War World*, *op.cit.*, pp. 103-107.

13. Dimitris Conostas, "Southern European countries in the European Community" in John W. Holmes (ed.), *Maelstrom: The United States Southern Europe and the Challenges in the Mediterranean*, Cambridge Mass., World Peace Foundation, 1995, p. 127.
14. Richard Gillespie, *Spain and the Mediterranean: Developing a European Policy toward the South*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000. See also Alfred Tovas, *Foreign Economic Relations of the European Community- The Impact of Spain and Portugal*, Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 1990.
15. Portugal's direct interests in the Mediterranean are small and concentrated in just certain countries of the Maghreb, mainly Morocco and to a lesser extent Tunisia. Alvaro de Vasconcelos, "Portugal: Pressing for an Open Europe" in Christopher Hill (ed.), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*, London, Routledge, 1996, pp. 268-287 and "Portugal: The European Way" in Alvaro de Vasconcelos and Maria Joao Seabra (eds.), *Portugal: A European Story*, IEEI, Cascais, Principia, 2000, pp. 11-38.
16. Thanos Veremis, "International Relations in Southern Europe" in John Loughlin (ed.), *Southern European Studies Guide*, London, Bauker-Saur, 1993, p. 210.
17. Laurent Meyrede, "France's Foreign Policy in the Mediterranean" in Stavridis et al., *op.cit.*, p. 56.
18. Gareth M. Winrow, *Dialogue with the Mediterranean: The Role of NATO's Mediterranean Initiative*, New York, Garland, 2000. See also Ian O. Lesser, *Mediterranean Security: New Perspectives and Implications for US Policy*, Santa Monica, RAND Co., 1992.
19. Five southern European countries – France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain – and the give Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) countries – Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia participated to create a security forum in the Mediterranean based on a flexible structure of dialogue, consultation, and cooperation. Ministerial meetings were to be held once a year and working groups were set up to tackle issues of concern, such as desertification, migration flows, and the preservation of cultural heritage.
20. Christophe Carle, "France, the Mediterranean and Southern European Security" in Roberto Aliboni (ed.), *Southern European Security*, London, Pinter, 1992, p. 48.
21. While the Helsinki Process had to deal with problems essentially ideological in nature and had been created to overcome the artificial division of a culturally homogeneous continent, a CSCM would have to cope with economic and cultural disparities. Victor Yves Ghebali, "Toward a Mediterranean Helsinki-Type Process", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1993, p. 95.

22. Richard Gillespie, "Regionalism and Globalism in the EMP: The Limits to Western Mediterranean Co-operation", Conference on *The Convergence of Civilizations? Constructing a Mediterranean Region*, Fundação Oriente, Lisboa, at the Convento da Arr\_bida, Set\_bal, 6-9 June 2002, p. 3.
23. Roberto Aliboni, "The Role of International Organisations in the Mediterranean", *ELIAMEP Occasional Papers*, No. 1, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, Athens, 2002.
24. In a workshop organised by the Italian Foreign Office's Directorate for the Countries of the Mediterranean and the Middle East on "Measures for Conflict Prevention in the MedForum Framework" in Rome on 21-22 June 2002 regarding the rationale and the goals of the Mediterranean Forum (MedForum), all agreed on the special role MedForum countries can play as a precursor to the wider Euro-Med framework, anticipating ideas and joint actions that might not be mature within the context of the latter.
25. Stephen C. Calleya and Dimitris K. Xenakis, "France's New Mediterranean Initiative: Lessons from Post-Cold War Regional Cooperation", *Karamanlis Working Papers*, No. 4, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, April 2008, p. 6.
26. Gillespie, "Regionalism and Globalism in the EMP", *op.cit.*, p. 13.
27. See more analytically in Roderick Pace, "The Mediterranean Union: from the Perspective of the Mediterranean Island States", *Hellenic Studies*, Special EuroMed Issue, Autumn 2009, forthcoming.
28. Theodore Pelagidis, "Europe's Structural Problems in the Spotlight" [Τα Διαρθρωτικά Προβλήματα της Ευρώπης στο Προσκήνιο] in Dimitris K. Xenakis and Theodore Pelagidis (eds.) *Interventions for Europe* [Παρεμβάσεις για την Ευρώπη], Athens, Centre for Progressive Policy Research - Centre for Institutional Reforms - Papazisis, 2009 (forthcoming).
29. Juliane von Reppert-Bismarck, "Why PIGS Can't Fly", *Newsweek*, 7 July 2008, <http://www.newsweek.com/id/143665>
30. Nicolas Sarkozy, Toulon presidential campaign discourse, 7 December 2007, [http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/s\\_informer/discours/nicolas\\_sarkozy\\_a\\_toulon](http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/s_informer/discours/nicolas_sarkozy_a_toulon)
31. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York, HarperCollins, 1997, p. 42.
32. Maria Ganniou, "Sarkozy's Proposal for a Mediterranean Union", *Policy Papers*, No. 3, Institute of International Relations, 2008, p. 11.
33. Jean Robert Henry, "French Initiative in the Mediterranean Region: Back to Square One?" in *Mediterranean Yearbook 2008*, IeMed, p. 5, <http://www.iemed.org/anuari/2008/asumari.php>

34. Spain, although initially agreed with France's initiative, later Moratinos made an unexpected gesture of expressing its own idea about a "Mediterranean Union". "Time has come ... to reconstruct a real geopolitical space, by establishing a Mediterranean Union" Minister of Foreign Affairs Miguel Moratinos reported to *El País*. He proposed institutions like Euro-Med Council of heads of states and governments, Committee of permanent representatives, Standing committee (secretariat) and enhancement of the existent Euro-Med Parliamentary Assembly and the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between cultures.
35. See more analytically in Rosa Balfour and Dorothée Schmid, "Union for the Mediterranean, disunity for the EU?", Policy Briefs, Brussels, European Policy Centre, 2008.
36. Francis Dubois, "Tensions between France and Germany intensify over foreign and economic policy", *WSWS*, 13 March 2008, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2008/mar2008/fran-m13.shtml>
37. The mechanism and structure established by the extension of the EU in the Mediterranean will determine the level of Anglo-American influence in the Mediterranean. If the EU creates an overlapping mechanism in the Mediterranean where the Mediterranean nations are linked only directly with EU members bordering the Mediterranean and indirectly with other EU members, then Anglo-American influence will be much weaker than it would be in the case of full integration between the EU and Mediterranean. This type of relationship would greatly empower Paris and Berlin within the Mediterranean. Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, "The Mediterranean Union: Dividing the Middle East and North Africa", *Global Research*, Centre for Research on Globalization, 10 February 2008, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/PrintArticle.php?articleId=6879>
38. Driss, "Southern Perceptions of the Union for the Mediterranean", *op.cit.*, p. 2.
39. Turkey has balked as it viewed the UfM as nothing more than a mechanism to keep Turkey out of the EU. This fear is not misplaced as keeping the EU closed to Turkey was part of Sarkozy's campaign platform. In fact, he has argued in the past that Turkey has always been part of Asia Minor and not Europe. Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan issued a statement before leaving for the UfM founding summit in Paris in which he sharply criticized France for its opposition to Turkey's EU membership, stressing that cooperation in the Mediterranean region and EU-Turkey negotiations are two different projects. Many believe that the only reason for Erdogan's attendance at the Summit in Paris was to use the opportunity to solicit support from the leaders of European and Middle Eastern states for his own battle against the Turkish Supreme Court, which was attempting to ban his party.
40. It may be a canny approach, but it's also a risky one. "Sarkozy in Israel acted as

an intermediary who could be heard by both sides, and he is more listened to in Israel than his predecessors”, says Gilles Kepel. Quoted in Eric Pape, “Mediterranean Bridge Building”, *Newsweek*, 19 July 2006, <http://www.newsweek.com/id/147680>

41. General Gaddafi argued that Libya is not going to participate in Sarkozy’s initiative, which “will divide the Arab and African nations . . . [and] . . . will touch off terrorist acts by Islamic groups”, which “will consider it as a Crusade plan”. In his view, the French initiative is “vague” and is actually a trick “to force Arabs to sit at the same table with Israelis”. Quoted in Ira Feloukatzi, “The Union for the Mediterranean” [Η Ένωση Βουτάει στη Μεσόγειο], *Eleftherotypia* (Greek Daily), 12 July 2008. See also “Kadhafi threatens to turn back on Africa”, *Agence France-Presse*, 29/2/2008 and “Libya’s Gaddafi says may pull Africa investments”, *Reuters*, 31 January 2008.
42. Stefan Steinberg, “France bids to extend its influence through founding of Mediterranean Union”, *WSWS*, 16 July 2008, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2008/jul2008/medu-j16.shtml>
43. Tobias Schumacher, “A fading Mediterranean dream”, *European Voice*, 16 July 2009, p. 7.
44. See *Kathimerini* (Greek daily), 20 May 2009, [http://portal.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/\\_w\\_articles\\_kathbreak\\_1\\_20/05/2009\\_280559](http://portal.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_kathbreak_1_20/05/2009_280559)
45. “The whole Arab group will participate in the next meetings. We will not be the ones to block the process”, Mohammed al-Nasseri, head of the Euro-Arab cooperation department at the Arab League, reported to AFP. Arab members, including the Palestinians, would attend the July 7 meeting in Brussels to formally announce the UfM’s relaunch. See “DJ Arabs Back on Board for Mediterranean Union”, Cairo (AFP), 24 June 2009, <http://english.capital.gr/News.asp?id=762796>
46. Schumacher, “A fading Mediterranean dream”, *op.cit.*
47. Roderick Pace, “The Mediterranean Union risks being stillborn”, *Europe’s World*, Summer 2009, p. 148.



# **The Barcelona Process and its Prospects after the Union for the Mediterranean**

**Roberto Aliboni\***

## **RÉSUMÉ**

Cet article illustre la nouvelle architecture euro- méditerranéenne émergente après les importants changements entrepris lors du Sommet de Juillet 2008 à Paris et la Conférence des Ministres des Affaires Étrangères tenue à Marseille, qui ont élaboré le «Processus multi-couches de Barcelone» au sein duquel l'Union pour la Méditerranée travaille en collaboration étroite avec la Politique Européenne de Voisinage et la gamme des politiques de la Commission en faveur de la Méditerranée visant à remplacer le Partenariat Euro-Méditerranéen. En faisant une évaluation des transformations politiques et institutionnelles, du point de vue tant des relations euro-méditerranéennes que de la politique étrangère et de sécurité de l'Union Européenne, cet article fait valoir que ce que nous avons aujourd'hui est une organisation internationale paritaire, l'Union pour la Méditerranée, d'un côté et les deux cadres d'élaboration de la politique de l'Union Européenne de l'autre côté. L'article met en doute la capacité du nouveau cadre à répondre aux défis régionaux de manière plus efficace que la politique du couple actuel d'organismes élaborant des politiques. L'auteur conclut en formulant des pensées critiques quant à la viabilité institutionnelle et les perspectives globales de l'Union à contribuer à la résolution des conflits régionaux ainsi que d'aborder des réformes internes. Il souligne que l'orientation stratégique actuelle tournée de plus en plus sur le Golfe et l'Asie Centrale et la fragmentation qui en découle dans la Méditerranée requiert une organisation euro-méditerranéenne qui serait à la fois plus souple à l'intérieur du bassin méditerranéen et plus ouverte à l'égard du Moyen Orient.

## **ABSTRACT**

This article, illustrates the emerging Euro-Med architecture after the important changes undertaken with the July 2008 Paris Summit and the Conference of Foreign Ministers in Marseille, which configured a multi-layered "Barcelona Process" in which the Union for the Mediterranean is working side by side with the European Neighbourhood Policy and the array of Commission's policies towards the Mediterranean which, in fact, are bound to replace the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

\* Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), Rome.

Providing an evaluation of political and institutional alterations, from the point of view of both Euro-Mediterranean relations and EU foreign and security policy, this article claims that, what we have today is an international organisation of peers, the Union for the Mediterranean, on one side, and the two EU policy frameworks on the other side. The article doubts the ability of the new framework to respond to regional challenges more effectively than the policy couple. It concludes with critical thoughts for the institutional viability and the overall prospects of the Union to contribute to regional conflict resolution as well as to deal with domestic reforms, pointing out that current growing strategic focus on the Gulf and Central Asia and the consequent fragmentation in the Mediterranean requires a Euro-Mediterranean organisation being, at the same time, more flexible inside the Mediterranean basin and more open to the Middle East.

## Introduction

The launch of the Union for the Mediterranean-UFM by the July 13, 2008 Paris Summit of 43 heads of State and Government from the Mediterranean basin plus the European Union-EU has radically changed the long standing EU policy towards that area and the nature of relations between EU and non-EU nations in the Euro-Mediterranean framework. Since 2000 – when attempts at agreeing upon a Charter supposed to enshrine a Mediterranean common ground did fail – many proposals for reforming the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership-EMP were put forward with a view to reviving and giving substance to the Barcelona Process.<sup>1</sup> None of them succeeded, though. Somehow unexpectedly, a 2007 French national initiative to form a “Union Méditerranéenne” limited to Mediterranean coastal countries turned into a French-German proposal for an EU initiative to institute a UFM, which was submitted to the March 13, 2008 EU Council. This proposal, rather than reforming the EMP, has initiated a new Euro-Mediterranean policy, based on a new framework and new criteria for political action and cooperation.<sup>2</sup>

The UFM has replaced the EMP as the framework of Euro-Mediterranean relations. This replacement should not risk to be misunderstood, though. For, if the EMP's format - the Euro-Mediterranean policy framework shared by the EU and its Southern partners - has been replaced by the UFM, EMP's substance - EU policy towards the Mediterranean - remains. The final documents issued by the July Paris Summit and the 3-4 November 2008 Conference of Foreign Ministers in Marseille<sup>3</sup> have configured a multi-layered “Barcelona Process” in which the UFM is working side by side with the

European Neighbourhood Policy- ENP and the policy which, in fact, is bound to replace the EMP by bringing together the variety of regional policies the EU is still conducting towards the Mediterranean regional dimension (bilateral relations being dealt by the ENP). In sum, what we have today is an international organisation of peers, the UFM, on one side. On the other side, we have two EU policy frameworks - the ENP, and the Mediterranean regional dimension – which, taken together, form today's EU overall Mediterranean policy. Thus, the UFM has replaced the EMP, yet the latter, while disappearing in name, is staying in its substance as EU policy towards the Mediterranean region. In next section, we delve into the complexities of this emerging Euro-Mediterranean architecture.

While this article is being written, the UFM revolution, announced for the beginning of 2009, seems far from being implemented, though. In fact, immediately after the November 2008 Marseille Conference had arranged for the array of details bound to make the UFM actually work, Israel's December 2008-January 2009 military intervention in Gaza convinced UFM Arab partners to plainly suspend the implementation of the new policy. Unless this incident will turn into a break – which seems highly improbable - and will bring further changes in the Euro-Mediterranean picture, it is very likely that the necessary actions to implement the UFM will be resumed soon. However, as we will argue in the following, this is more than an incident. It looks like a negative test regarding the viability of the new policy framework. In any case, it will certainly be uneasy to get out of this incident by simply saying “heri dicebamus”.

However that may be, this article, first of all, illustrates the emerging Euro-Med architecture after the important changes undertaken in Paris. Second, it provides an evaluation of political and institutional alterations in the current Euro-Med context, from the point of view of both Euro-Mediterranean relations and EU foreign and security policy. Third it comments on Euro-Mediterranean perspectives after the introduction of the UFM.

## **A Multi-layered Euro-Med Framework**

This section illustrates the Euro-Mediterranean framework of organised relations as it is today, after the establishment of the UFM and the changes it entailed.

To begin with, the UFM is a biennial summit of head of States and Governments which appoints for the next two years a Co-Presidency

composed by one Co-President from the North and one from the South. The agenda of the summit meetings is prepared and implemented by an annual conference of Ministers whose deliberations are prepared and implemented by a conference of Senior Officials (which in turn is supported, on a daily basis, by a Joint Permanent Committee of national officials). In preparing the agenda, the Senior Officials receive inputs from their respective governments and from the Secretariat of the UFM. The European Commission-EC, as pointed out, is a member of the UFM. As such, it can take initiatives and submit proposals to the Senior Officials with a view to have them incorporated in the agenda of the Ministers and the heads of State and Government. Thus, inputs can come from the EC as well. On the other hand, both the EC and the other components of the UFM organisation can be requested by the UFM leadership to contribute to the implementation of the UFM's decisions and actions.

The daily life of the organisation will have to be steered and harmonised by the biennial Co-Presidency, which will contribute to shape the agenda, ask for contributions to implementation and take political initiatives within the limits of the top leadership's broad mandates.

The Secretariat is in charge of implementing the big regional projects decided by the head of States and Governments and the Ministers in their conferences, conceiving of new ones, and raising funds in order to achieve them. The Paris summit conference decided to launch six main projects.<sup>4</sup> The Secretariat has to be headed by a Secretary coming from a non-EU country. The rather reduced staff of the Secretary will be formed by seconded officials from both the South and the North.

Apparently, there are three basic ideas behind the UFM. First, setting up a Euro-Mediterranean decision-making body at the highest level so as to engage governments to generate political agreements and common actions in a framework which has proved impervious to both so far. Second, setting up a body of peers to stimulate Southern ownership and cooperation. Third, providing Mediterranean governments with the opportunity to select big regional projects that would be able to bring tangible and visible benefits to citizens and, thus, visibility to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

All these three ideas sound as responses to criticisms addressed to the EMP all along its fifteen years of life. In fact, the more visible and more visibly beneficial projects are expected to be a response to the allegedly far from light-footed activity of the EC and its technocratic style. The inter-governmental

structure of peers wishes to be a response to the ineffective political dialogue conducted in the EMP - i. e. in the unequal framework of what used to be a EU policy rather than a truly equal partnership. The highest level of the UFM is expected to be a response to the weakness of the CFSP, more in general EU political capabilities, as expressed in the EMP by the Senior Official Committee. All that explains the innovative role of the Summit conferences as well as the Co-Presidency (in which framework the agenda will have now to be negotiated, whereas in the EMP was just given by the EU Presidency, albeit after consultations), as well as the Secretariat (in which projects will be selected and implemented in tune with Southern partners' needs and sensitivities rather than EU's only). In sum, the UFM wishes to be, most of all, a response to EMP's unilateral nature, the nearly unilateral role played in it by the EU, and its political ineptitude. Hence a clear "reprise en main" by the governments and the restoration of a more classic mode of international relations.

With the introduction of the UFM in the picture, what is at present EU Mediterranean policy about? Which is its architecture? It includes three layers. The UFM is the first layer of the new EU Mediterranean policy; it is a Euro-Mediterranean multilateral policy framework the EU shares with its Southern partners. The second and the third layers are the policies the EU is carrying out towards these same partners. One such policy is a set of bilateral policies, i.e. the ENP. The other regards the emerging multilateral dimension the EU is trying to foster across ENP bilateral relations.

This third layer, for true, is still undefined and unorganised. It includes multilateral relations eventually not included in the UFM and the multilateral legacy of the EMP (sidelined by the UFM).<sup>5</sup> This framework has not been given an official name, as yet. We can call it "Mediterranean Partnership"-MP, taking advantage of its conceptual symmetry with the "Eastern Partnership" currently being launched in the Eastern sector of the ENP.<sup>6</sup>

While the ENP is by now well structured and, thanks to the implementation of so called "advanced statuses", it is aptly developing the comparative advantage included in the differentiation it brings about, the MP needs still to be somehow invented and re-built up by means of the debris of past experiences as well as the blocks of the newly emerging EU external and foreign policy's architecture.

In conclusion, the Euro-Mediterranean framework has evolved from a space shaped by EU's initiative only to one bound to be shaped by a plurality of

actors - although it is likely that the EU will keep on being the most active with respect to other stakeholders. As we will see in more detail in next section, this diversification of the Euro-Mediterranean setting reflects not only a shift of emphasis from the EU to governments, but also from a model of relations patterned on community-like relations to a more classic model of inter-state and inter-governmental relations. So, the new Euro-Mediterranean framework is multi-layered in many ways: because it includes a plurality of frameworks and because these frameworks are patterned on quite different model of interaction. Will it work? To respond to this questions, we have to delve into the main features of this emerging cluster of Euro-Mediterranean frameworks as well as into changes underway in the Mediterranean context.

### **Political, Institutional and Geopolitical Alterations**

Developments in the 2000s have spurred considerable alterations in the Euro-Mediterranean area's political and institutional balance. These alterations reflect shifts and changes in the Euro-Mediterranean political context, on one hand, and the EU internal institutional balance, on the other.

*Changes in the Euro-Mediterranean political context* - There have been considerable shifts in the Euro-Mediterranean balance of power as a consequence of several factors such as remarkable economic improvements in a number of Southern Mediterranean partners; improved political and economic relations between Mediterranean and Gulf Arab countries; and the ability of Arab regimes to adapt to and/or resist external pressures for political reform. Furthermore, it must be pointed out that, after putting pressure for reforms and political change in the region, Western countries gradually reverted to their preference for stability and so went back to supporting existing regimes no matter their reformist record. This has obviously reinforced the regimes vis-à-vis both the US and Europe. In particular, with regard to Europe and Euro-Mediterranean relations, the EU has gradually changed and downgraded its early confident agenda for broad reforms across the region based on negative conditionality. The agenda, at the end of the day, came to be based on co-ownership and differentiation, which means that partners go forward on the path to reforms only if willing and to the extent they wish for and the EU policy has lost most of its ambitions to shape the regional "milieu" (to use Wolfers' concept)<sup>7</sup>.

It must also be stressed that the American wars in the Middle East have fulfilled the concept of Greater Middle East on which the Bush administration

set its agenda. Those wars have revived old conflicts, spurred new ones and stirred new alignments throughout the whole region, at the same time they have strategically unified the whole region and shifted its centre eastward, i.e. towards the Gulf and Afghanistan. As a consequence, today this region is more compact than before and its Mediterranean flank, the Near East, with its important conflicts, namely the Arab-Israeli ones, is integrated in the whole of the region more than it has ever used to be. This alteration has a divisive impact on the Mediterranean, contributing to weaken the inherently weak EU belief in the geopolitical unity of the area and its effort to get it more homogeneous and coherent.

For sure, relations with Europe and the EU remain pivotal to Southern Mediterranean partners' economic development and foreign relations, yet they look more self-reliant with respect to Europe, with an accentuated division between the Maghreb, which remains broadly tied to Europe, and the Near East, which is, in contrast, deeply involved and attracted in the wider arena of the Greater Middle East. The decision of the Egyptian Co-president to suspend the implementation of the newly-born UFM in retaliation to Israel December 2008-January 2009 intervention on Gaza attest to a new Arab perception of Europe's relative weight in the spectre of their interests and, at the same time, to a more confident and self-reliant approach to foreign policy than in past years.

*Shifting institutional balances in the EU* - The UFM is a EU Mediterranean policy substantially differing from other EU policies such as the former EMP and, today, the ENP (along with the MP currently emerging from the EMP's dissolution). The former EMP, the ENP and the coming up MP are policy frameworks owed and run by the EU, whereas the UFM is an international organisation to which the EU and its member states are participating side by side with other states.

From another point of view, the establishment of the UFM means that EU Mediterranean policy is not uniquely predicated on the transposition to the region of its community-like model any more – according to standard EU foreign policy. Presently, it is predicated partly on this model – thanks to the ENP and the MP – and partly on the UFM conventional model of inter-state relations. Governments, both EU and non-EU, were allowed to play only a secondary role in the community-oriented framework of the EMP: non-EU governments because they were only “hosts” to the framework; the EU governments because they were acting as parties to a wider EU institutional

mechanism. In the new picture, governments play a full and direct role in their inter-state organisation, the UFM, beside EU-based policies and organisations.

All in all, with the UFM, the role of the EU in Euro-Mediterranean relations has been narrowed, whereas the role of governments has been neatly upgraded. Furthermore, the shift from a community-oriented approach to regional relations to a combination of community-oriented and inter-state approaches means that the former approach has been weakened by the sheer introduction of the latter in the picture. In conclusion, the UFM has introduced a completely new pattern of regional relations: from an EU-dominated regional policy to one in which governments and the EU share power and presence; from a regional policy based on a community-oriented model to a region in which this model cohabits with the conventional international model of relations.

The division of labour - as we may call it – will be, more or less, between high politics in the hands of governments and low politics in that of the EU with the risk of hard security, balance of power and state-centred security going back to enfeeble – if not replace – the drive towards soft security, cooperative security and human security that EU Mediterranean policy has tried to strengthen in the region.

In conclusion, for the best or the worst, political and institutional balances in the Mediterranean regions have been altered considerably. The Mediterranean region is fragmented and largely attracted by and involved in the Greater Middle East so that European effort to construe it as a Euro-Mediterranean framework is rather weakened. On the other hand, as the attempts at integrating the Euro-Mediterranean space on the basis of a community-oriented model failed, particularly from the point of view of political relations, governments have acquired a greater role and replaced the EU attempt at building up a community-like Euro-Mediterranean framework with a framework of conventional international relations. All in all, EU political role seems decidedly downgraded and so does EU normative and contractual approach.

### **Barcelona Process' Perspectives**

Let's go back to our question: will this emerging Euro-Mediterranean multi-layered framework work? Will it work better or worse than the previous one?

The most significant feature in the new Euro-Med setting is governments'



upgraded role, the cohabitation of different models of inter-regional relations (community-like vs. conventional international relations), and a high politics vs. low politics division of labour between the UFM and EU policies. In this sense, one can imagine that, while the UFM would act to solve regional crises by means of conventional international instruments, the EU would work with its contractual and normative instruments, on a country-by-country basis, looking forward to introducing political changes in domestic arenas in the longer run. Furthermore, by providing its services and competences,<sup>8</sup> the EU would support the implementation of the big regional projects the UFM is supposed to carry out; by assuring deep economic integration to the area, it would also provide structural coherence to the Euro-Med areas in the longer term.

For sure, one has to look forward to this picture of a working and judicious cooperation between governments and EU with their respective models of relations. The new arrangement may open an era of more effective and fruitful relations. There are doubts and problems that need to be pointed out, though.

The first question regards UFM's effectiveness and viability. The fundamental stumbling block which prevented EMP from working was the web of conflicts and crises in relations between Israel, the Palestinians and Arab countries. The Europeans conceived the EMP as a framework bound to support ongoing international diplomacy in solving Arab-Israeli conflicts and, at the same time, provide an efficient framework for post-conflict reconstruction and cooperation. As international diplomacy failed, the Arab-Israeli, more in particular the Palestinian-Israeli conflict moved from EMP's back stage to its forefront. The EMP was not equipped to cope with the conflict. Its inability to contribute to solve the conflict prevented the whole Partnership from succeeding. Will the UFM succeed where EMP has failed? In other words, will it be able to cope with Arab-Israeli and other conflicts in the area?

The early Sarkozy's project of "Union Méditerranéenne" was based on the perspective of building up a broad Mediterranean political solidarity stemming from the implementation of big regional economic projects rather than regional conflict resolution. It was an openly stated intention of Sarkozy's "Union" to keep aloof from regional conflict, more in particular the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Has the "Europeanisation" of the UFM confirmed or changed this perspective? Will this "Europeanisation" introduce the Arab-Israeli conflict in the UFM? The response is uneasy. The UFM's emphasis on projects may attest

its will to abide by its early project. However, the political activism shown by leaders in the Paris Summit has presented the UFM as an initiative politically-intensive, directed at creating an instrument which would enable Euro-Mediterranean leaders to deal with regional issues the EMP did not succeed to cope with. The “Europeanisation” of the UFM, in other words, may have hybridised the early perspective of the “Union Méditerranéenne” (which was close to sheer stabilization’s aim included in the Italian-Spanish project for a Conference for Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean) and the long-standing EMP’s entanglement with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In this perspective, UFM inter-governmental approach per se has no more chances than EMP approach to solve conflicts, in particular the Israeli-Palestinian one. In fact, whatever the perspective the founders of the UFM may have had in mind in Paris, the Israeli-Palestinian crisis of December 2008-January 2009 has heavily impacted on the UFM bringing about its suspension.

To be honest, this is not that surprising. Regional conflict cannot be held out of the door. At the end of the day, it would not make sense to upgrading political relations and, then, leave political questions aside. As a matter of fact, these questions will be part of the UFM, probably much more so than in the EMP. What was, maybe, a little bit more surprising was UFM inability to control the crisis unleashed in its own circle by developments in Gaza and the decision of its non-EU Co-president – Egypt’s Mubarak – to go on independently of its EU partners. Will the UMF be able to deal with crises in a cooperative way or will it prove even less unable than the EMP to provide solutions? As things stand today, UFM institutions look ineffective. Upgraded political institutions, as the UFM, proving unable to provide solutions would represent a much more serious failure than the EMP and their failure could be more dangerous than previous ones.

A second question regards European aims in the Mediterranean. What should Europeans aim at in the new multi-layered Euro-Mediterranean framework? Would their aims remain the same as in 1995 or would they change? Are they strengthened or weakened by the UFM? As well-known, the EU security doctrine points out that, in order to attain security, the EU has to be surrounded by a ring of well-governed countries.<sup>9</sup> This is why EU policies have been directed towards fostering domestic reforms in partner countries, economic integration and effective multilateralism in the region, and have employed EU contractual and normative instruments with a view to

contributing to regional conflict resolution. With EMP failure and its replacement by the UFM, will the latter be able and willing to pursue these same objectives?

In the Euro-Med context, as of today, reforms, human rights and, more broadly speaking, the aims contemplated by the Copenhagen principles are confined to the ENP, in the framework of its Action Plans. It may well be that the emerging MP will deal with reforms and human rights to some extent. However, in what it is supposed to be the most relevant political dimension in today's Euro-Med relations, i.e. the UFM, reforms and human rights are far from prominent, to say the least. The UFM just does not contemplate to deal with reform, if not in a very general and rhetoric sense.

As a consequence it seems that the EU is less equipped than before to achieve the objective of a ring of well-governed friends in the Mediterranean. At best the UFM will be able to achieve good international relations. In terms of reforms on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea, international good relations will not be that more effective than the (somehow despised) "good socialisation" achieved by the EMP among its members. Thus, the task of promoting reform will rest essentially on EU policies. The aim of establishing a ring of well-governed will depend more on the EU than the UFM. However, EU policies happen to have been weakened by the advent of the UFM and the new Euro-Med multi-layered architecture. In conclusion, the aim of establishing a ring of well-governed countries in the Mediterranean seems getting harder to achieve than in the previous context. European aims remain the same, in words; they look less attainable and clear, in deeds.

In the previous section, we argued about the geopolitical weakening of the already geopolitically weak concept of Mediterranean as a consequence of developments in the 2000s and the advent of a more compact Greater Middle East. In this sense, a third question worth consideration is how a more and more complex Euro-Mediterranean structure of relations can match Middle Eastern polarisation and Mediterranean fragmentation. To cope with change, Euro-Mediterranean organisation needs to be more flexible in the area and more open to adjoining areas in the Middle East. While the ENP is attuned to ongoing geopolitical changes, as it adds flexibility to Euro-Mediterranean relations, the UFM, with its intention to get a more elaborated and strong Mediterranean political framework, is definitely less so, as it focuses on the Mediterranean at the very moment strategic focuses are shifting towards the Middle East. The EU needs to strengthen its relations with the Gulf countries

and Central Asia. This does not mean that the Mediterranean and the neighbourhood has to be set aside. It means that EU must strengthen its policies towards the Middle East and harmonise its Mediterranean policies with the Gulf countries and central Asia. The UFM and the new Euro-Mediterranean architecture not only fail to respond to the emerging strategic and geopolitical challenges, but seem to go against the stream.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, let's try to summarise the main findings in this article. The latter has illustrated the emerging multilayered Euro-Mediterranean architecture after the UFM has replaced the EMP. In this new architecture the community-like model of Euro-Mediterranean relations the EU attempted introducing into the EMP is now cohabiting with the model of conventional international relations introduced by the UFM. The article argues that there are doubts in regard to the ability of the new framework, in particular the UFM, to respond to Euro-Mediterranean challenges more effectively than the EMP/ENP policy couple. These doubts concern UFM's ability to effectively contribute to regional conflict resolution as well as to deal with domestic reforms in Southern Mediterranean countries. Doubts are also raised as for the institutional viability of the UFM. On the other hand, the article points out that current growing strategic focus on the Gulf and Central Asia and the consequent fragmentation in the Mediterranean would require a Euro-Mediterranean organisation being, at the same time, more flexible inside the Mediterranean basin and more open to the Middle East. In contrast, according to the article, while the ENP is providing required flexibility in Euro-Mediterranean relations, the UFM is increasing Euro-Mediterranean political focus on the Mediterranean area and neglecting the Middle East.

## NOTES

1. Dorothee Schmid, *Optimiser le processus de Barcelone*, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Occasional Papers, No. 36, Juillet 2002, p. 52.
2. The UFM's transition gave way to many comments, in general mostly concerned with the need to "Europeanise" the French project rather than its merit in terms of improving EU Mediterranean policy: see the bibliographical references provided in Roberto Aliboni, Fouad Ammor, *Under the Shadow of 'Barcelona': From the EMP to*

- the Union for the Mediterranean*, EuroMeSCo, Paper No. 77, January.2009 (www.euromesco.net).
3. *Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean*, Paris, 13 July 2008; *Final Statement of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference*, Marseille, 3-4 November 2008 (both available on the web site of the EU).
  4. 1. De-pollution of the Mediterranean; 2. Maritime and Land Highways; 3. Civil Protection; 4. Alternative Energies: Mediterranean Solar Plan; 5. Higher Education and Research, Euro-Mediterranean University; 6. The Mediterranean Business Development Initiative. See the *Final Statement of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference*, Marseille, 3-4 November 2008.
  5. In keeping with these developments, the early Unit for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in the Relex has been replaced by a Unit dealing with "Euro-Med and Regional Issues". This Unit will have the task of reconstructing a multilateral dimension in EU policies towards the Mediterranean.
  6. Commission of the European Communities, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Eastern partnership*, COM(2008) 823 final, Brussels, 3.12.2008, and *Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Eastern Partnership*, SEC(2008) 2974/3.
  7. Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962.
  8. See on this point Michael Emerson, *Making Sense of Sarkozy's Union for the Mediterranean*, CEPS Policy Brief No. 155, March 2008.
  9. *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*, Brussels, 12 December 2003. The document which has revisited the European Security Strategy during the second semester 2008 EU French Presidency, confirms that aim; see: *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy. Providing Security in a Changing World*, Brussels 11 December 2008.



# From the Euromed to the Union for the Mediterranean: Challenges and Answers

Gema Martín Muñoz\*

## RÉSUMÉ

Pour relever les défis de la transition de l'accord Partenariat euro-méditerranéen à l'UPM à partir d'un point de vue arabe, cet article fait valoir que la proposition française doit partir de l'acquis du Processus de Barcelone et renforcer les aspects de cette initiative qu'il n'a pas encore été en mesure de réaliser, et qui sont clairement exposés dans la Déclaration de Barcelone. Bien qu'il soit difficile d'améliorer cette Déclaration de principes, il est possible de l'appliquer de meilleure façon. En outre, pour que l'UPM soit un succès, il est important qu'elle prenne en considération aussi bien les résultats du processus de Barcelone et les causes de ses lacunes. La tendance à réinventer à partir de zéro peut être très coûteuse.

## ABSTRACT

Addressing the challenges of transition from the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to the UfM from an Arab perspective, this article argues that the French proposal must start from the achievements of the Barcelona process and strengthen that initiative in aspects it has not yet been able to achieve, and which the Barcelona Declaration explicitly expresses. Although difficult to improve this Declaration of Principles it is possible to apply it better. Moreover, for the UfM to be a success, it is important that it takes into consideration both the results of the Barcelona process and the causes of its lacunae. The tendency to re-invent from scratch could be very costly.

## Introduction

More than thirteen years ago, with the Barcelona Declaration, the ambitious Euromediterranean project was born. It brought together countries of the European Union and all those along the south and east Mediterranean shore (except for Libya)<sup>1</sup>. Up to then, cooperation between Europe and the

\* Casa Árabe-IEAM and Autonomous University of Madrid.

Mediterranean had developed above all within the framework of the western Mediterranean (group 5+5) and centred on the idea – never put into practice – of holding a Conference of Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean, inspired by the European conference of Helsinki. The Mediterranean Forum also constituted a specific framework for the “Mediterranean idea”<sup>2</sup>.

The reasons why the 27 member states succeeded in signing the Barcelona Declaration had to do with the international and regional framework in which the Euromediterranean process was established. In general, the new international framework that followed the collapse of the USSR and the end of bipolarity contained within it the need to restructure alliances and establish new interstate regional frameworks. The transformations experienced by the global system affected the way the principle of security was interpreted; they produced new dynamics, such as a tendency towards fragmentation in relations between states, and a strengthening of economic interdependence. Specifically, the idea had been growing for a while amongst European members, and increasingly since the Gulf War, that the stability and security of the southern Mediterranean affected them directly, and that these matters depended largely on political relations and the intensity of economic links between the two shores. There was a clear political-strategic origin to Europe’s interest, especially of southern Europe, in strengthening cooperation with its Mediterranean neighbours. Thus, the EU’s Mediterranean policy was above all the product of initiatives launched by Spain, Italy and France, similar to the way that central Europe “specialised” in questions relating to eastern European countries. For southern Europe, stability was at stake above all on the southern flank, where socio-economic and political problems that affected all its countries constituted a potentially destabilising risk.

For their part, southern Mediterranean countries hoped to secure economic and financial advantages, in addition to an external guarantee for their vulnerable governments<sup>3</sup>.

From the point of view of the wording, the Barcelona Declaration that formed the basis of the Euromediterranean process of 1995 made an important qualitative leap in tackling relations between Europe and southern Mediterranean countries in a global way, and not just from the economic perspective that had prevailed until then. It seemed that participants had become aware that the best way of stabilising the region was, in addition to supporting liberal economic reform, also advancing the democratic political process, promoting the development of civil societies and opening up areas of



cultural encounter. Europeans aspired to recover presence and leadership in a region where they had been progressively absent since the Second World War in favour of bipolar jockeying between the superpowers. The initiative also coincided with a moment of certain enthusiasm in the light of what was called at the time the Palestine-Israeli “peace process”, so that it seemed likely that closer relations with Europe could produce a momentum for political openness.

Thirteen years later, events in the Middle East region have convulsed the area and revealed a discouraging scenario of crisis and war, in which Europeans have not been able to establish a convincing presence as mediators or as forces of political influence. The Union for the Mediterranean seeks to promote the Euromediterranean dynamic by reformulating the project.

## **The Road Ahead**

The so-called “Oslo peace process” ran into the sand as many had predicted, among them the prestigious Palestinian intellectual Edward W. Said. Not only did it reach a dead end, but subsequent developments revealed a progressive degradation in which Jewish colonisation of occupied Palestinian territories increased to an alarming degree, and the imposition of Israeli unilateralism prevailed.

The appearance of terrorism carried out by Al-Qaeda, following the attacks of September 11, 2001, radically transformed the international picture and provided American neo-conservatives with the pretext they needed to try to transform the Middle East region, which brought chaos, violence and social frustration. The results were soon evident: an acute process of destabilisation in the Middle East, the use and abuse of the fight against terrorism which increased to an alarming degree the violation of human rights and the Geneva Convention, and a strengthening of authoritarianism in Arab regimes allied to Washington. In all this profound transformation of the region, Europeans, divided, could not influence American policy against Iraq, but looked on while the US monopolised political influence and economic interests throughout the Middle East. Even in the Maghreb, a region traditionally an area of European rather than American influence, Washington asserted itself after 11 September. Algerian-American relations, focused on the anti-terrorist struggle and access to hydrocarbons in the face of the privatisation of the Algerian national company Sonatrach, strengthened in recent years. And Morocco signed a free-trade agreement with the US in 2004, which, even though it could have

produced legal incompatibilities with an agreement previously signed with the EU, the Europeans decided not to contest<sup>4</sup>.

From 1995 to the present, the expected processes of democratic reform have in most cases stagnated. In this sense, it should be pointed out that the primary concern of the Euromediterranean Association to stabilise the southern states (as the Barcelona Declaration stipulates: “to create a zone of peace and stability that rests on the fundamental principles of respect for human rights and democracy”), has been interpreted with little concern for the real transformations in political forms of government. The criterion of political pragmatism has been applied to concentrate mainly on promoting economic liberalisation, in accordance with the theory that this will generate profound social changes that will inevitably lead to political liberalisation. However, this theoretical framework has not produced the expected results. The human rights situation has deteriorated in some countries on the southern coast of the Mediterranean, and we could even indicate that the partnership has ended up contributing symbolically and politically to the sustainability of regimes experiencing a great democratising “impasse”. For example, article 2 of the free-trade Accords, which agree respect for human rights and civil liberties, received little attention. And even though some human rights organisations have benefited from EU financial assistance, (especially the Euromediterranean Human Rights Network), the signals have been too timid to rectify the situation.

The economy has not fulfilled all that its transformative role promised, and therefore, the economic liberalisation that was supposed to lead to the independence of economic players from politicians, to competition, transparency and the suppression of unproductive and monopolistic practices, has met with obstacles and obstructions. Privatisations have been unambitious, and there has been insufficient emergence of the expected new players. Nor have the benefits been distributed among the people. The number of people who live on a dollar or two a day, and those who are below the poverty line has grown since the 1990s in the southern Mediterranean and the average income of every social layer has descended notably. Given that this increase in poverty has been accompanied by an increase in GNP per capita, everything seems to indicate that inequalities in the distribution of wealth have increased, and that one section of the population is becoming richer while the other, the majority, gets poorer<sup>5</sup>.

In the commercial sector, trade levels have varied little, and North-South

trade continues to be unbalanced. In general, the unstable political situation throughout the area weakens the practical extent of free trade agreements.

With regard to the hoped-for south-south cooperation, this continues to be embryonic. The historical concept of north-south economic relations, which structured the economies and trade flows of the south in accordance with European needs and not their complementarity, the enormous political distance between regimes, and their resistance to flexible frontiers permitting free movement for their nationals, are significant factors that continue to block south-south cooperation. In large part they are related to the internal problems of these states, which need to exert strict control over their citizenry<sup>6</sup>.

Semi-reforms undertaken have been modest, and privatisations insufficient. An enormous public sector continues to exist, and the private sector has not succeeded in crossing the threshold necessary to launch the momentum of private accumulation and strong sustained growth<sup>7</sup>.

Similarly, the weak level of direct foreign investment in the Mediterranean region is worrying, given that the concept of the Euromed association explicitly lays upon the private sector the responsibility to be the motor or "privileged instrument" of the sought-after convergence between the two shores "in the framework of a free trade zone" (and only 5% of European flows directed at emerging countries are directed at the total of the Mediterranean countries). Why is this region less attractive than others in the world that are no better provided with human and natural resources? Everything seems to indicate that it is due to a problem of poor working practices and lack of confidence: lack of social cohesion, unstable political systems, lack of transparency and juridical security, rigidity of the labour market and illiteracy).<sup>8</sup>

The limited success of the economic transition is perhaps not unrelated to the contradiction on which the concept of putting democratisation at the service of economic liberalisation is based. For this way traditional groups are politically favoured, elites that perpetuate themselves in power and enjoy economic privileges by means of their control of the country's income. These groups are the most likely to be weakened by transparency, the market economy, the institutionalisation of commercial exchange, and the emergence of new autonomous elites. They cannot, therefore, (because it is intrinsically against their interests) be motor of the structural economic change necessary for the European theory to work. That is, they have tried to square the circle by attempting to promote "reforms without reformists".

It should also be added that the social dimension of the Euromediterranean association has not achieved the necessary development (the ministers of employment, social affairs and labour have almost never met). Social matters have received a little more attention through bilateral MEDA cooperation, but that operates rather as a lifeline for those most disadvantaged by structural adjustment. Even so, rationalising and guaranteeing popular access to this aid is made very difficult because of inefficient local management and clientelist distortions.

Simultaneously, it should not be forgotten that in March 2003, the EU introduced its New Neighbour Policy, established on the basis of its enlargement to 25 countries<sup>8</sup>. This new policy, despite integrating the Mediterranean flank, is based on a general view that includes all the areas that the neighbours of the EU comprise, which has not reinforced the Euromediterranean policy<sup>9</sup>.

### A “Selective” Civil Society

The Barcelona Declaration established the principle of “contributing to a better mutual understanding among the peoples of the region, encouraging the emergence of a new active civil society.” Various initiatives have been carried out to create networks (for human rights, trade unions, cultural activities, youth...) and 10 civic forums have been held, together with numerous regional conferences and cooperation programmes. But this interest in developing civil society has favoured, apart from organisations linked to governments, secular or lay sectors. These, without doubt, are a qualitatively important component in these societies, but they are a minority and not very representative of the broad network of associative movements. Faced with this, all the various associative movements of Islamic or Islamist character have remained at the margin of the process, despite having an active presence in the social texture of Arab countries.

In reality, there is an entire world linked to the Islamic movement (*al-Haraka al-Islamiyya*) that is an extremely significant political and social component in today's Arab public arena, and which has not been taken into account by the Euromediterranean partnership.

In political terms, all this leads us to pose two important questions. First, the need to build a credible political process that satisfies the great aspirations for democracy and the rule of law that exist among peoples of the southern

Mediterranean, bearing in mind that their frustrations in this regard open up risks of radicalisation and identification with extremist options, especially amongst the large young population. Secondly, the participation of Islamist parties in these processes of democratisation. In this sense we must make clear that the Islamist tendency, which constitutes a political train of thought present throughout the contemporary history of the Middle East, is represented mainly by reformist parties respectful of the law and explicitly against violence.

The long term problem lies in the dominant view of Islamism in general that is based on the selection and media exaggeration of either the supporters of a fundamentalist discourse, or the most radical and extremist sectors. The predominant application of these criteria of selection of Islamic actors has hidden or silenced the majority of Islamist parties that are situated in reformist currents occupying the enormous central area usually concealed between fundamentalists and the people of violence. On the contrary, they form an important component of the socio-political landscape that cannot be left to one side or excluded, not only because this is contrary to the universal rights that secularised sectors demand, but because, furthermore, history shows that the costs of marginalising them are very high<sup>10</sup>.

In the heat of pondering the need to promote democracy in North African and Middle Eastern countries, the subject has become increasingly significant in international diplomacy: the EU's foreign affairs ministers presented for the first time at an informal meeting in Luxemburg on April 16, 2004, a report for discussion drawn up jointly by Javier Solana, responsible for the EU's foreign policy, and by Luxembourg's EU presidency. The report asked whether the moment had come to open dialogue with moderate Islamist opposition groups to encourage the democratic transition. The report said "up to now the EU has preferred to deal with the secular intelligentsia of Arab civil society at the expense of more representative organisations inspired by Islam," and it asked: "has the moment come for the EU to become more involved in the civil society with an Islamic base in those countries?". The question has without doubt entered the debate and the process of reflection, but has not taken shape at any practical level<sup>11</sup>.

## Cultural Factors

In general the Euromediterranean process has had little repercussion in public opinion, where above all relations between governments hold sway. The well known concern about the "dialogue between civilisations" has taken shape

in various inter-religious encounters in the form of big one-off conferences bringing together ulemas, rabbis and bishops. We have to ask whether these are really the fundamental players in the social and cultural breakdown in communication that exists in the Mediterranean basin.

It is true that positive steps have been taken in some areas, such as the creation of the Euromediterranean Human Rights Network. This has become a laboratory of vigilance that does not fail to denounce abuses and violations, independently from the limited influence it exerts over political authorities on the subject; and the initiative taken in 2003 to carry out a critical reflection within the framework of a “committee of wise men” on the “Dialogue among peoples and cultures in the Mediterranean area”. The report of proceedings offers an interesting analysis of the nature of communication and interchange in the Mediterranean and global political context.

However, the silence that greeted the report converted it into an exercise of good intentions whose demands and proposals were not taken into account by politicians. Subsequently the Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures was created, with its headquarters in Alexandria, whose results have still not been evaluated given its relatively recent establishment, but which, in any case, conflict with the challenge of developing an effort to integrate plural and independent actors, since it is led by political representatives of the respective governments.

But in these times, the current difficult situation, marked by the extension of the terrorist phenomenon and by an exaggeration of the binary view of “us” and “them”, which seems to distance each other more than ever, demands important actions to help eliminate violence and social misunderstanding. This means confronting the real problems and challenges that afflict the region and which are present in the wording of the scarcely applied Barcelona Declaration.

No security apparatus, however efficient, can predict every attack planned by people prepared to die killing. Hence, any security response must be accompanied by a genuine opening of the political system and greater equality of socio-economic opportunities if we want to minimise the risks of terror attacks and instability. There is an enormous new generation of young people (60% of the total Arab population is under 20) alienated from political systems of patronage that exclude them and block possibilities for promotion in society or at work. Amongst this segment of the population the demand for the rule of law is a constant feature<sup>12</sup>.

Similarly, the EU wants to involve itself in solving conflicts and tensions in this part of the world, aware that the proximity of a geo-political complex like the Middle East in acute crisis of stability and with high rates of underdevelopment implies an enormous challenge for the European area itself. But the evident lack of a common foreign policy prevents it from fulfilling this desired role. Meanwhile, the passage of time imposes a worrying situation, because societies with an accumulated sense of being humiliated, punished and subjected to arbitrary behaviour form a bad combination to avoid violent outcomes, and establish stability in a region with explosive contexts (Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran). We must bear in mind, furthermore, the particular framework in which this frustration has taken root and which makes it socially more complex. On the one hand, Arab and Muslim populations are mostly urban, and the extensive new generation of young people has had massive access to education, so we are dealing with societies where a substantial social sector is highly politicised. On the other hand, they have a collective memory acutely attuned to belonging to a specific part of the world (cradle of great civilisations, strategic situation of great geopolitical value, and the accumulation on their soil of the main sources of the world's hydrocarbons) which should give them influence and wellbeing, but whose benefits have remained for more than a century completely outside their control. All these sociological and psychological factors produce the reaction to which the most vulnerable sectors of these societies are exposed.

Another important component to bear in mind is the importance of strengthening the good functioning of structures and institutions, instead of choosing *a priori* players or leaders. We should not try to construct the perfect pro-Western, secular Arab man in the way that has become almost a caricature that often determines the desired aims of political decisions. This kind of intrusion has always produced disastrous and counterproductive results. We should promote transparent mechanisms of government and management, competitive and subject to law, independently of whether those who represent them belong to secular or Islamist circles. The citizens of the countries concerned are those who must plan their own future, choosing their representatives and the movements and political parties in which to place their confidence.

And, which is fundamental, we must break this dichotomy between “us” and “them”, because it represents nothing more than a narrow view of extremes, concealing an entire majority centre in which we are all mixed and interconnected. It is not a question of trying to bring together cultural world

views but establishing the principle that common civilisational values exist, which we have all historically contributed to forging, and which we must jointly share. Barbarism and civilisation exists on both sides. That's why it is necessary to advance towards an ethical and moral reconciliation between the western and the Muslim world, leaving aside feelings of cultural superiority that serve political domination. Culture has been used many times in history to strengthen hegemonic policies. The more that discourses about cultural and religious incompatibility are broadcast, and the supposed existence of monolithic and isolated civilisations, the more politics becomes bare-faced and oppressive: precisely to conceal the second from the first.

In reality, the roots of the misunderstanding lie in the abyss that exists between mutual perceptions. Western societies have been obsessed with the cultural and religious "problem", seeking in Islam the explanation and *raison d'être* for everything that happens in the so-called Muslim world, as if it worked in an exceptional way with regard to the rest of the world, simply because they are Muslims. This is the specifically western "veil" that characterises our societies today, and which prevents them from understanding the profound political, social and economic reasons for what happens in the neighbouring countries of the south. However, what determines the attitude of the Arab and Muslim social majority towards Europe and the western world are its political actions, which are often arbitrary.

Therefore, the French proposal for a Union for the Mediterranean has not only launched the debate about Euromediterranean relations, but must start from the achievements of the Euromediterranean process and strengthen that initiative in aspects it has not yet been able to achieve, and which the Barcelona Declaration explicitly expresses. It is difficult to improve this Declaration of Principles but it is possible to apply it better. That is: "for the Union for the Mediterranean to be a success, it is important that it takes into consideration both the results of the Barcelona process and the causes of its lacunae, given the ambitious programme of the initial process. The tendency to 'start from scratch' could be very costly"<sup>13</sup>.



## NOTES

1. Since the Marseille summit of 16 November 2000, Libya took part as an observer. However, it rejected full membership, as it did with the UfM.
2. The Mediterranean Forum was created as an informal and flexible structure for “selected” Mediterranean countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey, Malta, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal and Greece) to come together to tackle the main questions affecting security and cooperation in the region. It grew from a proposal presented by Egypt to Spain and France in early November 1992 and was finally constituted in Alexandria in 1994. In addition to forming part of this dynamic of Euromediterranean cooperation, it was also, as Egypt’s proposal, linked to changes in foreign policy experienced by Egypt following the end of the bipolar world order. See in this respect Gema Martín Muñoz, “L’Egypte dans l’échiquier arabe face au mouvement islamiste”. *Hérodote. Revue de géographie et géopolitique*, 77, 1995, pp. 142-174.
3. See Gema Martín Muñoz, *El Estado Árabe. Crisis de legitimidad y contestación islamista*. Barcelona, Bellaterra, 2000.
4. G. Clyde & C. Brunel, *Maghreb Regional and Global Integration: A dream to be Fulfilled*. Peterson Institute for International Economics. Policy Analyses in International Economics, No. 86, October 2008.
5. Sophie Bessis, “Où en est le projet euro-méditerranéen dix ans après Barcelone?”. *Revue Internationale et Stratégique*, No. 59, Autumn 2005, pp. 129-137.
6. A schematic but detailed analysis of these shortcomings was presented in the outline paper of Azzam Mahjoub, “Dinamiques bilaterales et multilaterales. Quelles synergies ?”, seminar *Barcelona 2010. Euromediterranean relations*, ISS, París, 26 January 2009.
7. Gérard Kébabdjian, “Réformes économiques sans projet réformateur”. *Confluences Méditerranée*, 35, 2000, pp. 25-40.
8. Juan Badosa, “La cooperación económica desde la perspectiva de los países del Norte del Mediterráneo”. *II Foro Euromediterráneo de Formentor*. Edición de la Fundación Repsol, Madrid, 2001.
8. Comisión Europea, *L’Europe élargie et voisinage: un nouveau cadre pour les relations avec nos voisins de l’Est et du Sud*, March, 2003.
9. Roberto Aliboni, “The Geopolitical Implications of the European Neighbourhood Policy”, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2005, pp. 1-16.
10. Driss al-Yazami, “Ways and Conditions for the Participation of the Civil Society of Religious Inspiration in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership” in *Bringing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Closer to People*, Friederich Ebert Stiftung, 2006.
11. K. Kausch, “Plus ça change: El diálogo directo de Europa con los islamistas moderados”, *Working Paper*, No. 75, FRIDE, January 2009.

12. See surveys conducted since 2003 by *The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press*.
13. “Union pour la Méditerranée. Le potentiel de l’acquis de Barcelone”, *ISS Report*, No. 3, November 2008, p. 6.

# **French Ambitions through the Union for the Mediterranean: Changing the Name or Changing the Game?**

**Dorothee Schmid\***

## **RÉSUMÉ**

Fraîchement élu président, Nicolas Sarkozy a pris tout le monde par surprise lorsqu'il a lancé en avril 2008 une grande initiative visant à rénover la coopération dans la Méditerranée sous contrôle français. Le projet Union pour la Méditerranée (UPM) est effectivement compatible avec les options diplomatiques traditionnelles de la France. Depuis le 19<sup>e</sup> siècle, la Méditerranée a toujours été une pièce maîtresse du système extérieur de l'influence de la France. Alors que les Français ont en partie compté, au cours des 15 dernières années, sur les capacités européennes pour défendre une perspective de développement de la Méditerranée, leur relation quelque peu trouble avec l'UE et la désillusion face à la Politique européenne de voisinage (PEV), les a finalement conduit à rechercher de nouvelles options géopolitiques qui correspondraient mieux à leurs intérêts nationaux. La saga de l'UPM devrait donc d'abord évaluer, comme un coup d'essai, les nouvelles ambitions diplomatiques et le style de Nicolas Sarkozy: en introduisant un changement de nom, sinon un changement complet du jeu, cela permettrait aux Français de détenir le copyright pour le nouveau nom.

## **ABSTRACT**

Freshly elected President Nicolas Sarkozy took everyone by surprise when he launched in April 2008 a grand initiative aimed at renovating co-operation in the Mediterranean under French supervision. The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) project is actually consistent with France's traditional diplomatic options. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Mediterranean has always remained a centre piece of France's external system of influence. While The French have partly relied for the last 15 years on European capacities to uphold a Mediterranean development perspective, their somewhat troubled relationship with the EU and disillusionment with the European neighbourhood Policy (ENP) finally led them to search for new geopolitical options which would match better their national interests. The UfM saga should thus first place be assessed as a test case of

\* IFRI, Turkish Studies Programme.

Nicolas Sarkozy's new diplomatic ambitions and style: introducing a change of name, if not as a complete change of the game, yet ensuring that the French hold the copyright for the new name.

## Introduction

One year after the impressive launching of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), at a brilliant diplomatic summit held in Paris right before the 14<sup>th</sup> of July French national holiday, confusion persists regarding the true objectives and achieved results of the whole operation. Looking back to recent developments of French foreign policy through 2007 and 2008, the story of the UfM seems to take part in a new French national, if not nationalist saga. While the result of its takeover on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) looks as a relative diplomatic failure, one could nonetheless assert that France has in fact advanced its interests in the region through the UfM manoeuvre. The traditional interaction between French diplomacy and EU policies in the Mediterranean has already been analysed as a technique to crystallise at a relatively low cost France's influence and its objective leverage on regional realities. When envisaged in continuity with that historical tradition, the UFM exercise appears as remarkable success, very much illustrative of France's new diplomatic style: the Ufm introduces a change of name, if not as a complete change of the game, and what may be more significant to the French is that they hold the copyright for this new name.

## The Mediterranean as a Background Permanent Theme of French Foreign Policy

Envisaged within a long historical perspective, the UfM project appears as the latest manifestation of France's old, permanent Mediterranean ambition. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, French efforts have indeed been crucial in promoting the Mediterranean as a sustainable political or economic region *per se* and introducing the autonomous concept of a "Mediterranean policy". The obsession to protect French interests and the nation's tireless commitment to make prevail its influence in this area obviously expose the attitude of an intermediate power dedicating energy to keeping control over what it regards as its geopolitical backyard<sup>1</sup>.

*The Mediterranean as a historical legacy: an ambiguous asset*

France's presence in the Mediterranean can be traced back in centuries, but its major imprint dates from the colonial period starting with the conquest of Algeria in 1830. The Maghreb remained France's principal zone of expansion and influence, yet the Near East was also a zone of interest, partly dominated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century after the end of the First World War.

All French Mediterranean colonies became independent in the two decades following Second World War. Since then, France has been trying to reinvent its ties with the new Arab states, maintaining a relationship which constantly hesitates between informal alliance and some kind of patronising proximity. The political legacy of colonialism is indeed mixed and ambiguous. Discussing past French presence in Algeria in serene terms is for example still hardly possible in France, while the Franco-Algerian diplomatic relationship remains partly poisoned by the repeated evocation of the independence war and its consequences<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, some French politicians recently overtly expressed their nostalgia for the times of the Empire. The debate was publicly opened in 2005 with the attempt by some Algerian repatriates to lobby at the Assembly in favour of a law on the benefits of colonisation. Excerpts taken today from some of Nicolas Sarkozy's presidential discourses do confirm this temptation to rehabilitate French colonial memory<sup>3</sup>.

This colonial legacy and the post-colonial complex attached to it still obviously question France's legitimacy to intervene in the region on democratic grounds. Whatever happens, the message conveyed by the French will always be analysed with caution by the Southern shore of the Mediterranean; caution and attention at the same time, as political socialising is still guided in the region by principles inherited from this historical past. A strong tradition of complicity thus remains between some Arab regimes and successive French governments. As recent developments in the near East do show, France also occasionally likes to portray itself as a possible "*deus ex machina*" capable of settling internal or inter-state disputes and showing the way to bigger players<sup>4</sup>.

*Origins and permanence of French "mediterraneism"*

France started early on to develop a geopolitical, comprehensive appraisal of the countries it dominated in the Mediterranean. Three successive historical and political strata can be identified in its appraisal of the region. Until the Second World War, the Quai d'Orsay regularly commented on its "Muslim

policy”<sup>5</sup>; the “Arab policy” (“Politique arabe de la France”) took the relay in the 1960s, after the debacle in Algeria and the six-day war<sup>6</sup>. Finally President François Mitterrand promoted the Mediterranean in the 1990s as a less emotionally loaded framework for regional co-operation<sup>7</sup>. This Mediterranean background theme has been reactivated episodically ever since, always with a view to neutralise the two other perspectives (“muslim”, “arab”), considered as too openly discriminating and inducing conflicts.

In the aftermath of 9/11, Samuel Huntington’s culturalist vision of international affairs widely imposed its mark on the international debate. France under President Jacques Chirac nonetheless resisted quite well this intellectual fashion, its traditionally secularist interpretation of politics standing at odds with the inclination to reinterpret conflicts in the Middle East only in religious terms. Until Nicolas Sarkozy’s recent revisiting of the “politique méditerranéenne”, the French thus continued to defend the centrality and the political utility of the Mediterranean region, as a neutral space where people from different ethnical origins, religion or political beliefs have coexisted for centuries.

One should at that stage bear in mind the highly valuable contribution of several prominent French intellectuals to the “invention” of the Mediterranean as an autonomous concept, from the first works of modern cartography in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, through the Braudelian era, up to present “mediterraneists” working in Aix-en-Provence or Marseille<sup>8</sup>. The Mediterranean could in fact easily be described as a constructivist concept, partly grounded in geography but with a specific political perspective and sometimes a heavy culturalist clothing. Some historians have documented precisely the emergence and consolidation of a unifying vision of the Mediterranean as a world in itself in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a vision implicitly supporting the political project of expansion pursued at the time by the French<sup>9</sup>. Fernand Braudel, in contrast, later accompanied the de-colonisation movement. As a result of these successive trends in interpretation and intellectual manipulation, one can still assign today two different sides to the French political project for the Mediterranean: Between building a community of equal partners and assuming French national leadership.

### *The Mediterranean as a presidential “accessoire”*

From the 1960s on, the institutions of the Vth Republic turned foreign policy into a strictly presidential *accessoire* in France<sup>10</sup>. Within such a system, the Mediterranean appears as a classic of the French diplomatic tradition and a

gift that each president would faithfully transmit to his successor. Taking into account the strong willingness of Nicolas Sarkozy to introduce a clear break with Jacques Chirac's practice of power on every front, the new President's challenge was to appropriate this Mediterranean legacy while renovating it. For Mitterrand, designing a new Mediterranean policy had been a solution to overcome the Arab policy complex; in the case of Sarkozy, there was even more urgency to do so because Jacques Chirac had been an "Arab policy" type of President. Sarkozy's determined interest in the Mediterranean has yet another trivial explanation: he early announced his intention to re-balance France's position vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and therefore many analysts would simply announce him as the gravedigger of the old *Politique arabe*<sup>11</sup>. In practice, Nicolas Sarkozy would also show some remarkable skills in using the Mediterranean as an identity landmark for his electorate.

## A French Appraisal of European Efforts in the Mediterranean

In the 1970s and 80s, France progressively learnt to integrate the European dimension into its own Mediterranean policy scenarios. By the beginning of the 1990s, it was fully admitted that such an adjustment was necessary to work out a more ambitious regional project. Yet after years of low activity within the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership frame, disappointment with the European Neighbourhood Policy probably accounts for France's late attempt to divorce the EU team to offer new Mediterranean initiatives.

### *Europe as an enhancer of French leverage in the Mediterranean*

France historically played a major role in pushing for the institutionalisation of EU Mediterranean policies since the 1970ies. It notably inspired the Mediterranean Global Policy introduced by the Commission in 1972 and fought at the same time to install the Mediterranean on the agenda of European Political Cooperation (EPC). In the 1980s, the Commission headed by Jacques Delors was also very active in promoting a vision of the Mediterranean as a free trade space<sup>12</sup>.

French Mediterranean activism passed on the next gear at the beginning of the 1990s, a period when the French tried to constitute new sub-regional political groupings, somehow overlapping or competing with EU policy efforts. The 5+5 Group (Western Mediterranean) and the Forum of the Mediterranean, activated in 1990, can nonetheless be retrospectively seen as intermediate political steps before the official launch of the Euro-

Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) in Barcelona in 1995. The different sub-regional frames were temporarily put to rest to support the EMP initiative; they became active again after 9/11 and have now recovered a significant role to sustain French autonomous *protagonismo* in the region<sup>13</sup>. Yet from 1994 on, the French decidedly played the EU channel through a Franco-Spanish alliance, merging their national interests under the European banner to broaden their scope of action and reach greater efficiency<sup>14</sup>.

### *Maintaining the Euromed status quo*

Since 1995, France has been an important contributor to the functioning of the EMP, both stimulating the search for new fields of cooperation and moderating its political ambitions. This general line of behaviour, which could be labelled as cautious if not conservative, remains in fashion today, as one can clearly infer from Nicolas Sarkozy's early discourses relating to his new Mediterranean project.

Through the years, France hence systematically defended the importance of the "Southern" perspective vis-à-vis the "Eastern" one in the debate concerning EU's external policies. This Mediterranean preference appeared in a particularly vivid way after the + 10 enlargement which ushered into the EU a cluster of states who were less attached to such a geopolitical viewpoint. The urgency of a series of issues linked to conflicts in the Middle East, such as global terrorism or the debate on exporting democracy, helped the French make their Mediterranean priority prevail after 9/11 – subsequent presidencies of the EU getting now used to keeping a sharp eye on all Mediterranean developments.

France's overall contribution to the reinforcement of the EMP should however be appreciated in a rather nuanced manner, as it undoubtedly helped advancing the Euro-Mediterranean economic design (2<sup>nd</sup> basket), while not supporting too seriously the political and strategic ambition of the Partnership. Disillusioned by the failure of the Security Charta which it heavily sponsored, France always looked uneasy with the democracy promotion agenda that gained momentum after 2004. France also regularly tried to impose its command over the management of the 3<sup>rd</sup> basket of the EMP, or the cultural one, unsuccessfully trying to control the Cultural foundation (Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures, 2005), later launching in parallel its "Atelier culturel méditerranéen" (2006). French ambitions within the EMP framework thus provoked occasional clashes with other competing EU members, such as Spain or Italy. One must acknowledge at that stage that



France's appraisal of EU's internal balance of forces on Mediterranean policies seemed to integrate from the beginning only Mediterranean competitors – probably explaining why Germany was later downplayed as a stakeholder in the UfM adventure.

### *Disenchantment with the Neighbourhood*

The setting up of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was initially received as a shock by defenders of the Mediterranean perspective. The ENP indeed did not seem to offer anything new or consistent to Southern Mediterranean partners when compared with the EMP, while it seemed to seriously jeopardise the comprehensive regional perspective<sup>15</sup>.

When confronted to this new vision promoted by the Commission, a design in fact firstly imagined for Eastern European countries, France immediately stood up in defence of the Mediterranean and fought to have Southern partners included in the picture. It later lobbied to ensure a fair repartition of ENP's financial resources between the East and the South. Yet the mood of the French administration has since remained suspicious vis-à-vis the ENP, considering it more as a German-friendly concept, an abstract invention in any case patently irrelevant to the Mediterranean region.

When envisaged into a recent historical perspective, it is nevertheless manifest that French interest in the Mediterranean as a specific space of action has declined with the second presidential mandate of Jacques Chirac, who we suggested was more a supporter of the "politique arabe" line. While still publicly defending the centrality and absolute political necessity of the Mediterranean, French national diplomacy in fact focused more on a few hot political issues, like the Syria-Lebanon dilemma or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

### **Changing the Game: the «Union for the Mediterranean», Spearhead of the New French Diplomacy**

Nicolas Sarkozy's public speeches during the campaign for the 2007 presidential election were unusually rich in diplomatic references. The future President early affirmed his determined intention to make use of all presidential prerogatives, including playing with France's prestigious diplomatic toolbox. Just as reform becomes a constant domestic obsession, change is the motto on the international stage. In practice, Sarkozy's announcing a grand Mediterranean project in February 2007 in Toulon may have been initially taken as a purely rhetorical motive; more than two years,

after months of hard bargaining with European partners, the UfM initiative can in fact be considered as one of the first significant tests for the President's new diplomatic vision and style.

### *The new diplomacy syndrom*

As a presidential candidate, Nicolas Sarkozy presented himself as the man who would strike a decided rupture in French politics. On the diplomatic front, Sarkozy clearly declared before being elected that he wanted to have a more "doctrinal" foreign policy. Three main influences seemed to shape his discourse at the time<sup>16</sup>. Firstly, an interest in American neo-conservative ideology, combined with a naturally atlanticist inclination, lead him to envisage international relations as a mere power game, where democracies should both focus on the defence of freedom and democracy, and fight the American "war on terrorism". Neo-gaullism is the second specific feature of Sarkozy's national re-appropriation of foreign policy: one of the President's closest counsellor on diplomatic issues, and actually the inspirer of the new Mediterranean project, Henri Guaino, is a rather classical sovereignist, believing in France's special political genius, deprived of any sense of guilt regarding France's colonial past and advising the President to maintain a high profile on the international scene. A last, more controversial thread is woven with these two first influences: Henri Guaino himself partly embodies a kind of neo-leftism, that one would have expected Bernard Kouchner to incarnate also as a socialist Minister of Foreign Affairs in an otherwise very right-winged government. In fact, as a former human rights activist, Kouchner has developed particular skills at socialising and dealing with the media, both qualities that would turn out to be crucial to manage the UfM operation.

Regarding Mediterranean issues, what was essentially known of Sarkozy in 2007 was his overt pro-zionism and spontaneous aversion for France's traditional Arab policy. Therefore, most observers feared that he would turn away from the Mediterranean as a President, in order to distance himself from his predecessor Jacques Chirac. Given such parameters, the candidate Sarkozy finally took everyone by surprise when he first presented his grand Mediterranean design in February 2007.

### *The President's true Mediterranean motives*

The Toulon discourse is a piece of rhetoric worth being analysed in depth, both for its stylistic qualities and because of the avalanche of new ideas that it

brought to the traditionally very politically correct expression of the French on the Mediterranean<sup>17</sup>. Sarkozy basically proposed to establish a new system of co-operation in the region, in the form of a “Mediterranean union” designed on the pattern of the European Union, limited to coastal countries and structured around a set of institutions (a Council of the Mediterranean, a bank for the Mediterranean); a frame that would allow partner countries to work together on “concrete solidarities” in a series of areas: environment, education, energy, migrations and security were mentioned as priority issues on the new common Mediterranean agenda. The project rested on a strong criticism of EU Mediterranean policies and would supposedly be kept separated from the EMP: a parallel and complementary process.

Several rational motives can explain for the very creative mood of the future President on Mediterranean matters. The Mediterranean first appeared as a good campaigning topic for purely domestic reasons. Sarkozy wanted to catch the attention of the French Mediterranean community at large, including both Arab migrants and the offspring of colonial settlers from North Africa. One should indeed not forget that the discourse was pronounced in Toulon in front of an audience largely composed of Algerian repatriates. The Mediterranean is marketed here as a common legacy, a space that unites people from all ethnic types and religious origins. This appealing to a sense of Mediterranean community was even more needed politically speaking as Sarkozy was known to be a hard liner on migration issues.

A series of external considerations also account for Sarkozy’s new Mediterranean enthusiasm. According to us, the main objective of the future President was to re-impose French leadership, to re-affirm the Gaullian “*grandeur de la France*” in a region that still appeared as a natural zone of influence<sup>18</sup>. Sarkozy’s true willingness to restore a common regional dynamic, through building trust and installing a positive mood, should however not be underestimated. The Mediterranean Union project also provided a solution for a specifically French diplomatic difficulty: the Toulon discourse clearly presents the Union as an alternative to EU membership for Turkey – a consolation lot that the Turks would in fact never appreciate in the fashion the Elysée had hoped<sup>19</sup>.

At the same time, Sarkozy introduces in Toulon a proper French vision on what used to be so far a legally European affair. When criticising the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, while proposing another solution to Mediterranean problems, Sarkozy solemnly presents France as the ultimate

rescuer, a potential redeemer of declining EU policies. The same methodology would later apply with the Constitutional treaty, transformed into the “small”, yet more palatable Lisbon Treaty, thanks to the tireless efforts of France – a version of the story widely publicised by the French themselves.

*Changing the Mediterranean game: The French team versus the rest of the World*

The UfM was introduced from the outset as a revolutionary initiative, bound to finally overcome all political blocks met so far in the course of Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. As the brief description given above tells, the list of changes, with respect to the Euro-Mediterranean scheme prevailing until then, was important. First, a change in the institutional ambition of the project: the French announced no less than a political union of Mediterranean states. Second, a change in the selection of players: the EU was considered as no more concerned as such by Mediterranean co-operation, a business that Mediterranean countries should take care of between themselves. A change of methodology as well: no more talking, only action, or “concrete projects”, also to avoid negative political interference that could hinder the good will of new stakeholders, as for instance private businessmen who were supposed to contribute to the financing of the project.

The diplomatic difficulties that the UfM went through have been largely reported by now<sup>20</sup>. In Summer 2007, Nicolas Sarkozy communicated around his Mediterranean initiative without detailing too far the roadmap to reach his objectives. Spain immediately expressed its concern through the voice of minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, questioning the necessity and feasibility of the proposal and emphasising that the French project would compete with the EMP, or “Barcelona process”, framework. In Autumn, Sarkozy established a special team at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, headed by Ambassador Alain Leroy, who would take up the hard task of giving concrete contents to the presidential grand vision. In December the French faced combined Spanish and Italian opposition an official summit in Rome, which ended with the issuing of a common call for reinforced European co-operation with the Mediterranean, in fact severely bringing French ambitions into line with EU realities. The “Mediterranean Union” thus officially became “Union for the Mediterranean”, a “Union of projects” retaining the centrality of the EMP as the backbone of all Mediterranean co-operation efforts, and not interfering with current EU accession processes - Turkey therefore being theoretically protected from French national pretensions to decide on its own on the future borders of Europe.

These first “intra-latin” adjustments were only a pre-taste of a harsher confrontation with Germany that took place at the beginning of 2008. German Chancellor Angela Merkel made her opposition to French ambitions early known on a series of points: no new political union could be superimposed over the EU structure; Euro-Mediterranean co-operation should involve all EU member states, not only Mediterranean ones; ENP’s funding could not be automatically earmarked to back the French project if this one was labelled as a national initiative. After weeks of skirmishes, a Franco-German consensual non-paper was finally delivered, reaffirming again the centrality of EU policies and the common commitment of the French and German governments to work together on the project. The European Council later passed on the responsibility to the Commission to elaborate a communication that would fix guidelines for the development of the “Union for the Mediterranean – Barcelona Process.” Another background battle then started between the French administration and the Commission, in order to ensure that the latter would not denature the substance of the French vision<sup>21</sup>.

The progressive but strict re-framing of initial French intentions could be assessed as a first diplomatic downturn for Nicolas Sarkozy, who was already spectacularly active on several other international fronts. What should strike the observer watching the UfM battle is France’s striking return to a rigorously national understanding of its diplomatic interests in the region, and its very nationalistic attitude as well in dealing with European counterparts, be they the member states or EU institutions like the Commission or the Parliament. Notably, Spain’s reluctance to join the French initiative was immediately interpreted as a defensive stance meant to protect the Barcelona political *acquis* – in other words, to keep the Spanish copyright on Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. A matter of name that actually became the centre of the debate, once admitted that the EMP would remain the overarching structure for Euro-Mediterranean co-operation.

### **Changing the Name: in Search of a new French Copyright on EU’s Mediterranean Policies**

«France is back»: by these words, French Minister of Foreign Affairs Bernard Kouchner expressed in an interview in Fall 2008 his satisfaction to have pushed his country ahead on several crucial international files lines during the hard summer of the French Presidency of the EU<sup>22</sup>. Emphasising the success of the July 13<sup>th</sup> Paris summit on the Mediterranean, Kouchner quotes the UfM

as one major result of French foreign policy efforts. The Minister thus reveals an important new bias in calculating the cost / benefit *ratio* of French diplomatic actions: Visibility is by now held as an autonomous goal of French diplomacy and communication has become an essential tool in order to persuade both the French public and other international partners that the UfM process has not gone out of control. In fact, while the French team was probably never assured that it would be able to overcome or bypass all obstacles on its proposed new Mediterranean way, provide a new impetus and impose its methodology, re-branding the EMP was finally admitted as a minimal objective to reach: since changing the game was impossible, changing the name became a rather satisfactory option.

### *A succession of “Etats d’âme” at the Elysée*

As stated earlier, it is only after three months of presidential talking that a team was established at the Quai d’Orsay, yet under direct supervision of the Elysée, in order to provide contents to the UFM vision and cope with all bilateral and multilateral diplomatic difficulties arising.

Several signals were sent during the first semester of 2008 that dissent was actually growing inside the French administration as about the purpose, style and realistic goals of the Mediterranean project. While the Franco-German dialogue was experiencing growing difficulties, the Secretary of State for European Affairs, Jean-Pierre Jouyet, publicly expressed his disagreement with the presidential strategy, notably arguing that “the UfM will not be done without the EU”<sup>23</sup>. Seen from the inside, the early diplomatic misfortunes of the UfM impacted very negatively the cohesion of the French administrative team. Information later leaked that Alain Leroy threatened to resign several times when being confronted to Henri Guaino’s sovereignist obstination, while Jean-Pierre Jouyet had led a secret mission to Berlin without the approval of the Elysée in order to try and make up for French political miscalculations<sup>24</sup>. In short, the conditions to lead a serene and firm foreign policy, resting on appeased domestic grounds, were not met.

### *Communicating around the UfM*

Under such circumstances, mastering the whole communication channel on the UfM became an essential prerequisite, in order not to give European partners the impression that the French ship missed a pilot or that it was facing rebellion from its own troops.

The importance of communication was in fact obvious from the very beginning of the story – communication actually being one of the most thrilling skills of the new President. Between February (Toulon) and October 2007 (the Tangiers discourse), Nicolas Sarkozy continuously evoked the Mediterranean topic in a rather lyric but growingly undetermined way; enough to popularise it with the French public and the French media, who were rather unanimously supportive of the project, while criticisms were arising everywhere else from Europe. The commenting machine regarding the UfM was set in motion rather late and from the outside; Foreign media and analysts' attention was immediately caught by the topic, but they had to ask for clarification in the first place<sup>25</sup>.

Clarification never really came from the Elysée, as the diplomatic battle over the UfM imposed in fact more and more contradictions to the little substance of the initial dream. The relative absence of transparency in the management of the project by the French administration, combined with its growing complexity, made communicating a more difficult exercise with time. For one thing, the French were never to publicly admit that their initial ambition had been watered down by relentless bargaining with partners and the search for short term diplomatic equilibriums to save the general structure of the UfM. Remarkably, they would globally deny that the final merging of the UfM with the EMP marked the victory of the pro-EU camp – French Prime Minister François Fillon for instance overtly contradicting Angela Merkel's declarations on the subject, after the Franco-German reconciliation in March 2008<sup>26</sup>.

### *The EMP re-branded?*

Once the European turmoil was appeased over the UfM, in the Spring of 2008, all French efforts concentrated on re-marketing the initiative in order to transform it into a diplomatic success. While some French diplomats publicly admitted that the UfM was now reduced to a mere "label"<sup>27</sup>, this re-branding could be presented as a success *per se*. In the interval of time between the European Council of March and the Paris summit, Spain obtained that the official expression to designate Euro-Mediterranean co-operation would be "Union for the Mediterranean – Barcelona Process"; the "Barcelona Process" extension was later dropped in exchange for the new Secretariat to be established precisely in Barcelona. This whole re-branding operation was not neutral, as it introduced in some way a new French copyright on the EMP name – if not on its contents.

As soon as the name was stabilised, the visibility of the UfM became again an objective *per se* for the Elysée; the launching of the not so new system was announced as a highlight to come of the French Presidency of the EU in the second semester of 2008. The high profile summit convoked in Paris, gathering almost all head of States of the new Euromed perimeter (43 countries, 41 acting political leaders attending), effectively performed as a big show of France's short term diplomatic savoir-faire, bringing little result but producing great impression<sup>28</sup>. It then seemed again that France had achieved something in term of foreign policy status.

### **A Return to Pragmatism: the Various Uses of UfM for France**

It is by now widely accepted at least that, despite the weak results of the ongoing restructuring up to now, the UfM project helped fostering the public debate on the Mediterranean, stressed new emergencies for co-operation and helped clarifying priorities. Issues related to climate change, environmental degradation and the need to promote sustainable energies in the region have attracted a good deal of attention and now feature higher the common Euro-Mediterranean agenda<sup>29</sup>. Politically speaking, the balance sheet cannot be drawn yet insofar as the process has slowed down almost to a halt since the beginning of 2009. One could nevertheless argue that beyond the change of name, the new, even shaky, political dynamic and the minor institutional arrangements that were agreed could hearten French activism in the Mediterranean, through a variety of channels.

It is true that Euro-Mediterranean co-operation has been caught since December 2008 in the Gaza deadlock, prompting some observers to suggest that the UfM saga definitively ended with the actual killing of the so much criticised EMP. Since the Paris summit, hard politics had in fact re-imposed its heavy logics on the whole process. The admission of the Arab league as a permanent observer at the Marseilles conference in Fall 2008 politically sealed the fate of the UfM, making it more vulnerable to the hazards of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict than ever. Yet the return of politics to the Euro-Mediterranean game cannot be considered as an entirely negative result for French diplomacy. The Paris summit was an outstanding demonstration that France still has significant bilateral leverage with every single partner country in the region when need be. With that event, the French wanted to show that they can easily socialise and even mediate between Mediterranean countries when it matches their own political objectives; one should remember that



media comments during the summit fostered almost exclusively on the presence of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Paris and the possibility for Sarkozy to advance a deal between Israelis and Syrians<sup>30</sup>. Later on, during the Gaza crisis, the French President, who had passed the relay of the EU Presidency to the Czechs, justified his travelling to the Near East on the grounds that he was still the acting co-president of the UfM.

The new institutional arrangements introduced with the UfM do thus satisfy at least partly French ambitions. While letting slip the Secretariat to the Spaniards, France obtained the two-year long co-presidency with Egypt and is now fighting to maintain this advantage, precisely contested on legal grounds by other partners. More precisely, the French now keep negotiating informal deals with their other EU member states in order to avoid that the presidency of the UfM turn with the passing of the EU presidency from one member state to another. Nicolas Sarkozy apparently persuaded quite easily the Czechs that he was more in a position to exert the authority attached to the function, and would in exchange support their views on Eastern Europe and the Balkans. The Swedes were initially not ready to accept a similar transaction but pragmatism could prevail to ease down the tensions that may arise with the French on other files – Turkey's accession process for instance remains an important bone of contention between the two countries. Allegedly, a kind of comprehensive and preventive pact would in fact have been agreed between France and Spain to ensure that the exercise of the UfM Presidency remain in Mediterranean hands for the next three years<sup>31</sup>.

Another channel of influence could be strengthened with the concrete enforcement of UfM's so far very idealistic and abstract scheme. Henri Guaino's stating in a UfM meeting held in Paris at the end of June 2009 that "the projects are going faster than the political process" – despite the fact that only 5 projects out of the 200 examined could be retained – provides new evidence that the French are not ready to lower their ambitions<sup>32</sup>. Retaining this very pragmatic project-based approach could also open new channels of influence for French private companies doing business in the Mediterranean, if they finally decide to enter the Euro-Med game through a strategic alliance with the French government. Until the concrete execution of the projects, the selection of players remains a rather non-transparent process, where quasi-clientelistic arrangements could be made.

In conclusion, if considered within a longer historical perspective, the UfM added value for French foreign policy is anything but negligible, be it in terms

of visibility or effective political weight. France is definitely back in the Mediterranean, even if it may be consciously playing the same old game of influence, under a new name.

## NOTES

1. Dorothee Schmid, "France and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: The dilemmas of a Power in Transition", in Amirah Fernández, and Richard Young, *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Assessing the First Decade*, Madrid, Real Instituto Elcano/FRIDE, pp. 95-102.
2. Benjamin Stora, *Les guerres sans fin : un historien, la France et l'Algérie*, Paris, Stock, 2008.
3. On the debate about the positive role of colonisation, see Claude Liauzu and Claude Manceron, *La colonisation, la loi et l'histoire*, Paris, Syllepses, 2006; Benjamin Stora, *La guerre des mémoires: la France face à son passé colonial – entretiens avec Thierry Leclère*, La Tour d'Aigues, Editions de l'Aube, 2007. See also for instance President Sarkozy's Tangiers discourse, "Discours du Président de la République sur le thème de l'Union de la Méditerranée", Palais Royal Marshan, Tanger, Mardi 23 Octobre 2007, on [www.elysee.fr](http://www.elysee.fr)
4. Special issue "Que reste-t-il de la France au Moyen-Orient?", *Cahiers de l'Orient*, No. 85, Spring 2007.
5. For a rather bitter account on this period, see David Pryce-Jones, *Betraya: France, the Arabs, and the Jews*, New York, Encounter Books, 2006.
6. "Qu'est-ce que la 'politique arabe' de la France", roundtable organised by the *Revue d'études palestiniennes*, No. 103, Spring 2007, pp. 13-26.
7. Hayète Chérigui, *La politique méditerranéenne de la France, entre diplomatie collective et leadership*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1997.
8. On "mediterraneism" see Dorothee Schmid, "La Méditerranée dans les politiques extérieures de l'Union européenne : quel avenir pour une bonne idée?", *Revue internationale et stratégique* No. 49, Spring 2003, pp. 23-32. Also refer to the collection of books edited by Thierry Fabre and Robert Ilbert, *Les représentations de la Méditerranée*, Paris, Maisonneuve & Larose, 2000.
9. Marie-Noëlle Bourguet, *L'invention scientifique de la Méditerranée, Egypte, Morée, Algérie*, Paris, Editions de l'EHESS, 1998.
10. Serge Sur, "La puissance et le rang revisités", *Annuaire français des relations internationales*, Vol. 1, 2000, pp. 269-290; Maurice Vaisse, *La puissance ou*

*l'influence ? La France dans le monde depuis 1958*, Paris, Fayard, 2009.

11. See Pascal Boniface, interview with Hichem Ben Yaïche in *Le Quotidien d'Oran*, April 12, 2007.
12. Marcel Scotto, "La politique méditerranéenne prend tournure", *Revue du Marché commun* No. 194, March 1976, pp. 123-126; Simon J. Nuttall, *European Political Cooperation*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992, p. 119; Jacques, Delors, interview with *Le Monde*, September 4, 1990.
13. Dorothée Schmid, "France and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", *op. cit.*
14. Ester Barbé, "The Barcelona Conference: Launching Pad of a Process", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Summer 1996, pp. 25-42.
15. Elisabeth Johannsson-Nogués, "A 'Ring of Friends'? The Implication of the European Neighbourhood Policy for the Mediterranean", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 2004, pp. 240-247.
16. Nicolas Sarkozy, "La France, puissance d'avenir", interview with *Politique internationale*, No. 115, Spring 2007, pp. 143-159, simultaneously published as "Making France a power for the future", in *The national Interest*, available on [www.nationalinterest.org](http://www.nationalinterest.org); see also the press conference on foreign policy given on February 28, 2007, hôtel Méridien Montparnasse, Paris, on [www.sarkozy.fr](http://www.sarkozy.fr).
17. Nicolas Sarkozy, Toulon presidential campaign discourse, 7 February 2007, on [www.u-m-p.org](http://www.u-m-p.org)
18. Dorothée Schmid, "Méditerranée: le retour des Français?", *Confluences Méditerranée*, No. 63, Fall 2007, pp. 13-23.
19. Dorothée Schmid, "La Turquie et l'Union pour la Méditerranée: un partenariat calculé", *Politique étrangère*, Vol. 73, No. 1, Spring 2008, pp. 65-76.
20. To follow the different steps of elaboration of the UfM, see notably Rosa Balfour and Dorothée Schmid, "Union for the Mediterranean, Disunity for the EU", *Policy brief*, Brussels, European Policy Center, February 2008; Dorothée Schmid, "L'Union pour la Méditerranée: coup d'essai de la diplomatie sarkozyenne?", *Annuaire français des relations internationales*, 2009 (forthcoming).
21. Through various interviews conducted by the author between December 2007 and June 2008, officials both from the French administration of Foreign Affairs and the EU testified of a highly strained climate.
22. "La France est de retour" is the exact expression used by Bernard Kouchner. Interview published in *Politique internationale*, No. 121, Fall 2008, pp. 11-24. Supporting his Minister's view, Jean-Pierre Jouyet, Secretary of State for European Affairs at the time, affirms that with the French Presidency of the EU "Europe progressed from influence to power"; interview with the daily *Libération*, 21 December 2008.

23. See for instance on his blog, “L’Union pour la Méditerranée ne se fera pas sans l’UE”, <http://www.jpjouyet.eu>, 11 January 2008.
24. Interviews, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Spring 2009.
25. Michael Emerson, and Natalie Tocci, *A little clarification, please, on the ‘Union of the Mediterranean’*, CEPS Commentary, Brussels, CEPS, 8 June 2007.
26. At a press conference, François Fillon presented again the UfM as an autonomous, French inspired project, comparable to the Baltic Union; he soon issued a disclaimer, arguing that he had not been aware of the Sarkozy-Merkel compromise, yet spreading the impression that the sovereignist line inside the French administration was not satisfied with the Franco-German deal.
27. “Sarkozy et Merkel trouvent un compromis sur l’Union pour la Méditerranée”, on [www.Euractiv.fr](http://www.Euractiv.fr), 5 March 2008.
28. Dorothee Schmid, “Le sommet de Paris est un bricolage diplomatique à court terme”, Euractiv, interview, 11 July 2008, [www.Euractiv.fr](http://www.Euractiv.fr).
29. Gaëlle Dupont, “L’Union pour la Méditerranée tente de se relancer grâce au développement durable”, *Le Monde*, 26 June 2009.
30. French efforts to re-engage Syria being widely appreciated as an innovative and productive strategy; see Crisis Group, “Engaging Syria? Lessons from the French Experience”, *Middle East Briefing*, No. 27, 15 January 2009.
31. Under this arrangement, France would hold the job for two years and then hand over the reins to Spain for the next two years; see Tony Barber, “Spanish-Belgian squabble puts EU foreign policy in a poor light”, 29 June 2009, on [blogs.ft.com/brusselsblog](http://blogs.ft.com/brusselsblog), and Fathi B’Chir, “UE/EUROMED: Bruxelles dénonce la mainmise franco-espagnole sur l’UpM”, [www.medafrique.info](http://www.medafrique.info), 29 June 2009.
32. Quoted by *Le Monde*, *op. cit.*

# What Role for Spain in the Union for the Mediterranean? Europeanising through Continuity and Adaptation<sup>1</sup>

Esther Barbé\* and Eduard Soler i Lecha\*\*

## RÉSUMÉ

Ce qui a été appelé initialement proposition pour une Union Méditerranéenne, plus tard «Le Processus de Barcelone: Union pour la Méditerranée» et finalement l'Union pour la Méditerranée (UPM) a considérablement modifié les relations euro-méditerranéennes. De la première formulation de février 2007 jusqu'au sommet de Paris en 2008, l'initiative française a été accueillie avec autant d'intérêt que de suspicion. La Méditerranée est l'un des axes prioritaires de la politique étrangère de l'Espagne et également un des piliers de sa politique européenne. Cet article soutient que la réaction du gouvernement espagnol aux initiatives de Sarkozy est compatible avec la logique espagnole, plaçant la Méditerranée dans un cadre européen. Dès le tout début, l'Espagne s'est efforcée de poursuivre les principes du Processus de Barcelone. Dans un deuxième temps, elle s'est adaptée à la logique de l'Union pour la Méditerranée à travers la poursuite de ses intérêts matériels. Cet article commence avec le rappel de la manière dont l'Espagne a européenisé sa politique étrangère. Par la suite il examine comment l'Union Méditerranéenne de Sarkozy a permis à l'Espagne de poursuivre, à travers une stratégie d'europeanisation souple, la plus grande continuité possible entre le Processus Euro-Méditerranéen et la proposition française. La dernière partie de l'article se concentre sur la présidence de l'Union Européenne par l'Espagne en 2010. Cet événement représente une occasion unique pour le pays de retrouver sa place centrale dans les affaires méditerranéennes, notamment par le biais du Secrétariat de l'Union pour la Méditerranée de Barcelone.

## ABSTRACT

The initially named Mediterranean Union proposal, later “The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean” and finally Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), has significantly changed Euro-Mediterranean relations. From the first formulation of

\* Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and Instituto Barcelona de Estudios Internacionales.

\*\* Coordinator of the Mediterranean Programme at Fundació CIDOB, Barcelona.

February 2007 to the 2008 Paris summit, the French initiative was received with both interest and suspicion. The Mediterranean is one of the priority axes of Spain's foreign policy and it is also one of the pillars of its European policy. This article argues that the Spanish government's reaction to Sarkozy's moves is consistent with the Spanish logic placing the Mediterranean policy within a European framework. From the very start, Spain has endeavoured to carry on the Barcelona Process principles. In a second stage, it has adapted to the rationale of the Union for the Mediterranean through the pursuit of its own material interests. This article begins with a review of how Spain has Europeanised its foreign policy. Next, it examines how Sarkozy's Mediterranean Union has enabled Spain to pursue, through a strategy of soft Europeanisation, the utmost continuity between the Euro-Mediterranean Process and the French proposal. The final part of the article will focus on Spain's EU term presidency in 2010. The latter represents a unique opportunity for the country to recuperate its centrality in Mediterranean affairs, notably via the Barcelona UfM Secretariat.

## Introduction

The initially named Mediterranean Union proposal, later “The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean” and finally Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), has dramatically changed Euro-Mediterranean relations. From the first formulation of February 2007 to the 2008 Paris summit, the French initiative was received with both interest and suspicion. Spain was no exception to the rule.

The Mediterranean is one of the priority axes of Spain's foreign policy and it is also one of the pillars of its European policy. According to the position that prevails in Madrid, Spain will only be able to defend its interest in the region through a strong European policy. Only multilateral actions can bring solutions to the problems that remain beyond the reach of the traditional bilateral policy.

The project of the Mediterranean Union of 2007 led to believe that France was straying away from the priorities and interests defended by Spain. The first speeches of Sarkozy conveyed a strong disappointment in the Barcelona Process and a significant distrust in the European Commission. However, the French proposals softened as months went by, mainly to defuse the suspicions aroused in both rims of the Mediterranean.

This article argues that the Spanish government's reaction to Sarkozy's moves is consistent with the Spanish logic placing the Mediterranean policy within a

European framework. From the very start, Spain has endeavoured to carry on, insofar as possible, the Barcelona Process principles. In a second stage, it has adapted to the rationale of the UfM through the pursuit of its own material interests, whether at the agenda or institutional level.

This article begins with a review of how Spain has Europeanised its foreign policy. The Spanish policy toward the Mediterranean is a good example of the Europeanisation of the Spanish policy understood as, on the one hand, the upload of national concerns (mainly bilateral relations with Morocco) to the EU level and, on the other hand, as the creation of a diplomatic Spanish identity within the EU. Indeed, the Spanish diplomacy has projected itself as a Euro-Mediterranean driving force. This could be noticed in the EU term presidencies of 1995 and 2002, as well as in the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona Process in 2005.

Next the article examines how Sarkozy's Mediterranean Union, a project launched in an atmosphere of Euro-Mediterranean fatigue, has enabled Spain to pursue, through a strategy of soft Europeanisation, the utmost continuity between the Euro-Mediterranean Process and the French proposal. Considering the constraints in Spain's relation with France, the continuity sought by the Spanish diplomacy was only possible because of Germany's decisive intervention to tailor the new proposal to existing European norms and structures (Barcelona Process).

Furthermore, the article emphasises that once the French project was Europeanised, Spain focused on reaching concrete goals such as the agenda setting (Solar Plan, Initiative in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises), or the location of the new secretariat in Barcelona. The article also stresses that despite the substantive achievements of the Spanish diplomacy, there have been both political and academic debates on whether Spain has lost leadership in Mediterranean affairs in favour of France or whether Spanish actions have been in concordance with its capacities and have been able to preserve the core interests of Spain in this domain.

Spain will assume the EU term presidency in 2010 and is expected to put particular emphasis on Mediterranean affairs to consolidate the UfM. This endeavour will be conditioned by the regional context. However, as shown in the final part of the article Spain has already defined some specific priorities that would like to tackle during the first semester of 2010.

## Spanish Foreign Policy: A Dramatic Change

The Spanish foreign policy has dramatically changed since the country joined the European Community (EC) in 1986. The Spanish elite, who has been leading the participation of the country in the European framework and its adaptation to the European Union (EU) requirements, is mostly a convinced Europeanist elite. Two assumptions, ideational and material, underpin the assessment of how and to what extent Spanish foreign policy has been Europeanised. First, it is necessary to take into account that the “Europe is the solution for Spain” idea, as expressed at the beginning of the twentieth century by the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset, has deeply marked the evolution of the Spanish democracy. Second, Spain started to defend its national interest in the European foreign policy domain at the same time that the changing international context had created a fear of Spanish “marginalisation” in the new Europe turning towards the East. In any case, the Spanish governments have considered along the years that Spain’s national interests are better defended if the EU consolidates its role as a global actor. This approach has generated a twin-process whereby Spain has simultaneously acted to facilitate European actorness in the international arena and at the same time, sought greater influence within EU structures.

The Europeanisation of the Spanish foreign policy is a process that combines three dimensions: identity reconstruction, adaptation to EU policies and national projection to the European agenda. There are two issues where the impact of Spain on the European Foreign Policy output is remarkable: the Euro-Mediterranean policy and EU-Latin American relations. In both cases, Spain has worked to transfer its policies to the European level with the intention of upgrading the EU relations with those areas and, at the same time, playing a leading role in the Union concerning those policies and becoming a privileged spokesman for both regions. Since those regions are fundamental to Spanish interests, the result is going to be a dynamic equilibrium between national and collective tendencies. This article stems from the idea defended by Hill that the “CFSP should be seen as a collaborative framework of increasing solidarity, whose strength partly derives from the very fact that it permits national policies to continue in parallel. In the long run, by virtue of the fact that there are few rivals to structuration capability, it may lead to those national positions being so redefined in common terms that they fade almost to nothing. For the present, the national and collective tendencies exist in a condition of more or less dynamic equilibrium.”<sup>2</sup> The redefinition of Spanish interests in common terms is much more advanced in the case of the relations



with the Mediterranean, than with the Latin American countries. The high level of common interests between Spain and other EU partners has played in favour of the Spanish ambition to transfer its Mediterranean objectives to the European framework, whereas the low level of common interests in the case of Latin America has, on the contrary, hindered a successful Spanish bottom-up Europeanisation.

### **Europeanising the Mediterranean Concerns**

The Mediterranean has been traditionally perceived as a risk area in Spain.<sup>3</sup> The main reason is the problematic relationship with Morocco that affects material (fishing sector) and territorial (Spanish enclaves on North African coast) interests of Spain. Diluting the Moroccan problem by uploading it to the European level is one of Spain's main objectives. More than a policy transfer, Spain is looking for a problem transfer.<sup>4</sup> However, the Spanish way to deal in the European arena with this bilateral problem, plagued by tensions and security concerns, was diluting it into a collaborative and regional approach with a large Mediterranean scope.

As a first step, Spain took advantage of the structure of opportunities in the first half of the 1990s (civil war in Algeria, jihadist Islamism, high migration) to press in favour of reinforcing the Union's relations with the Maghreb countries to prevent future security problems for all Europeans. In 1989, at the same time that a Spanish Commissioner, Abel Matutes, helped to define the Community's Renewed Mediterranean Policy, the Twelve defined the Maghreb as one of their geographical priorities. Spain, together with France, Italy and the Commission, formed a Mediterranean lobby in the Union and were responsible for many of the posterior EC/EU initiatives. The 1992 Lisbon European Council endorsed the Spanish promoted idea of a Euro-Maghreb partnership and also defined – as a consequence of the Dezcallar Report put together by a Spanish diplomat – the Western Mediterranean and the Middle East as priority areas for CFSP joint actions.<sup>5</sup> Since then securitisation characterises the development of the European agenda for the Mediterranean.

The Oslo Peace Accords between Israel and the Palestinians, in 1993, also created new opportunities for Spain. Madrid began, as a consequence of the Peace Accords, to press Brussels to expand the project of the Euro-Maghreb partnership into a Euro-Mediterranean partnership, a “genuinely European exercise” according to Moratinos. In short, Madrid switched the Maghreb

approach for a Mediterranean one.<sup>6</sup> This shift in the Spanish foreign policy focus (Maghreb to Mediterranean) enabled the Spanish initiatives to resonate better with its European partners and helped Spain to project its interest at the European level in the sense that the EU had to balance its Eastern (pre-enlargement strategy) and Southern (Euro-Mediterranean partnership) dimensions. The Cannes European Council, in 1995, where Spain negotiated with the other partners (mostly with Germany) to get a balanced treatment between Eastern partners (Phare Programme) and Southern partners (MEDA Programme) is, in this sense, the best example of how Spain has managed to successfully upload its ideas (with financial effects) to the EU level.<sup>7</sup> The Spanish fear of marginalisation in an Eastern-oriented Union thus translated into its pursuit of an upgraded Euro-Mediterranean policy, both as the better approach to face its problems in the Mediterranean as well as a way to win political leverage in Brussels. The organisation of the first ministerial Euro-Mediterranean meeting in Barcelona, during the Spanish presidency in 1995, was a success for Spain in terms of diplomatic capacity. Israel, Syria and Lebanon got together with the Union and other southern Mediterranean partners to adopt a Declaration (Barcelona Declaration) and launch a process involving political, economic and security dimensions. The launch of the process by itself was a success and so is its continuity, in spite of many shortcomings.

At the same time that Spain was acting to dilute a bilateral problem with Morocco, it was also determined to build a new EU policy for the Mediterranean, creating an all-encompassing approach consisting of multiple and interdependent layers of interests (free trade area, MEDA programme) and with a normative bias (exporting norms to the neighbours). The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, that started as a way to dilute the Moroccan problem with European instruments (MEDA Programme), has turned into a priority by itself for the Spanish diplomacy, making the European framework a necessity to deal with Mediterranean matters. Over the years many northern countries in the Union (Germany, Sweden, Finland) have also subscribed to this idea.

### **An Identitarian Construction for the Spanish diplomacy**

The Barcelona Process has become part of the Spanish identity in the diplomatic arena at the same time as it is a European policy. Since 1995, the Spanish diplomacy has developed a substantial commitment to safeguard the

multilateral Euro-Mediterranean Partnership from overly radical reforms, even if the Spanish reasons for doing so are much different today compared to in 1995. Still, Spain shows notable commitment to the Barcelona Process and as it has revived, during the 2002 Spanish EU Presidency, Euro-Mediterranean relations, by celebrating the Euro-Mediterranean conference of Valence in April 2002.<sup>8</sup>

This was a period where a significant impulsion would mark the institutional development of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership with the launching of a foundation for the dialogue of cultures and civilisations along with the creation of a parliamentary assembly. Although the results were less important than expected, the financial and educational dimensions could be emphasised – creation of the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) and extension of the Tempus in the Mediterranean programme –, just as justice and international relations would from then on appear in the Euro-Mediterranean agenda.

It is also at the time that the idea to develop a new policy to solve neighbourhood problems was introduced. The former was first directed to Eastern European countries to eventually extend to the Mediterranean basin. Spain has been scarcely involved in the initial development of this policy as it merely supported propositions coming from other actors such as Italy or the European Commission.<sup>9</sup>

When Zapatero was into office in 2004, his programme announced a willingness “to redefine, retrieve and reinforce the strong lines of Spain’s foreign policy”; facing “the withdrawal and loss of influence of our Euro-Mediterranean policy”; it was “indispensable and urgent to relaunch it and restructure it”. Thus, the commitment was made to organise a summit gathering heads of State and Government for the November 2005 Barcelona Process tenth anniversary.<sup>10</sup>

The new government spared no effort to insure the success of the 2005 Barcelona Summit by attempting to gather all Euro-Mediterranean leaders and partners to sign a set of documents likely to relaunch the Barcelona Process.<sup>11</sup> The first goal was only reached half-through. While the majority of EU member states participated at the top level, the Mediterranean partners acting in concert with them were a very small minority. The second objective was not fully achieved either. Although the ambitious programme including considerable innovations in terms of migration, education and environment was approved, there were no agreed joint conclusions and the code of conduct

on the fight against terrorism did not satisfy the majority of observers.<sup>12</sup> The mixed results of the summit can be explained mainly by the hopes it had generated in Spain and elsewhere. Neither the regional context of the summit nor the United Kingdom's presidency of the EU at the time, favoured a positive result.<sup>13</sup>

Despite its dissatisfaction, Spain kept stressing on the qualities of the Barcelona process, its diplomats arguing that the results of the 2005 summit had been underestimated.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, the Spanish government stayed involved in the development of Euro-Mediterranean relations but did not present, however, any innovating ideas or projects to stimulate the following years. Indeed, one can notice that some of the efforts were focused on the renewal of the relations with southern neighbours, and particularly in the negotiation of an advanced status for Morocco (obtained in October 13<sup>th</sup> 2008), one that would go beyond the simple association, but excluding any perspective of adhesion to the EU.

### **Southern and Eastern Europeans Facing the Neighbours**

It is in an atmosphere of frustration stemming from the Barcelona Process that the project of the Mediterranean Union appeared. Whether in Spain or in the rest of the Mediterranean basin, little attention was given to the electoral promise made in Toulon by candidate Nicolas Sarkozy. Nonetheless, the speech on the electoral night sounded the alarm in Madrid as well as in other capitals. Sarkozy issued a pompous "call to all the people of the Mediterranean to tell them that it is in the Mediterranean that everything is going to be played out" and that the time had come "to build together a Mediterranean Union" that would become "a link between Europe and Africa".<sup>15</sup>

It became quickly noticeable that the Mediterranean was turning into one of the flagship in the French foreign policy renewal promised by Sarkozy. Then how could the suspicion showed by Madrid and other capitals be explained? There are five main explanations. 1) The French proposal was not issued within an EU framework but was rather competing with the former; 2) it was perceived as serving France's interests versus the collective interests; 3) Madrid was neither consulted nor informed; 4) the project was directly led from the Élysée and even though the Quai d'Orsay had more information than Madrid, it was not in charge either, fact that generated a certain degree of uneasiness; 5) the speeches of Sarkozy and his entourage circulated a ferocious critique of the thirteen years of the Barcelona Process, first referring to it as a "failure" and

then mentioning the “shortages” of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and offending, in every instance, a Spanish government and diplomacy very committed to it. The convergence of these five factors can explain the scepticism prevailing among Spanish policy makers.

While Spain did not question France’s willingness to get involved in the Mediterranean policy and to reactivate the traditional framework of cooperation, Spain did forewarn that the initial issues of the Mediterranean Union were not within its immediate priorities. Differently said, the French proposal revealed problems of internal incoherence in the EU. As a matter of fact, coherence is determined, on the one hand, by the level of implication and commitment assumed by the member states and the institutions when formulating a policy. On the other hand, coherence depends on member states and institution’s acceptance of the norms developed by the Union in a given field.<sup>16</sup> The launching of the Mediterranean Union raised problems in both ways: first, the formulation of the French proposal and its transformation into a European policy provoked a strong internal debate; and second, that debate revealed that the norms developed in the relations with neighbouring countries, such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, were not sufficiently accepted among member states, as demonstrated by the French proposal or other proposals presented around the same time such as the Polish-Swedish Eastern Partnership.<sup>17</sup>

The French proposal generated three strategic responses among EU members: first, subregional leadership, such as the Polish-Swedish Eastern Partnership; second, soft Europeanisation, illustrated by Spain and Italy; and last, hard Europeanisation defended by Angela Merkel. The latter had an impact on both French and Polish regional leadership aspirations. The events of the first months of 2008 in relation with the French proposal of a UfM and the Polish one for an Eastern Partnership point to a fundamental problem: the EU lacks cohesion in the strategy determining the leadership of the relations with its neighbours. On that same topic, Michael Emerson explains that “there are two broad options: either the EU takes the lead in these regional neighbourhood initiatives, or its member states closest to the region in question are mandated by the EU to take the lead for it (...) Confusion over this strategic question risks wasted energies in political and bureaucratic competitions and functional inefficiencies within the EU and its member states, and confusions too for the Med partner states”.<sup>18</sup>

## Soft Europeanisation: Other Options for Spain?

In response to unilateralism and to the French decision to adopt a new initiative limited to the countries bordering the Mediterranean, Spain suggested to focus on reinforcing the existing framework, thus increasing the development of its potential. In this sense, Miguel Ángel Moratinos suggested on *El País* the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Union. The Minister of Foreign Affairs opted for a more ambitious update of the Barcelona Process including all EU members as indicated by the concept of “union” which would consolidate the political dimension of the project.<sup>19</sup>

French representatives became gradually aware that the success of the yet called Mediterranean Union depended on the way the proposal would be perceived. It should not seem solely subordinated to French interests. The support of countries unquestionably Mediterranean such as Italy and Spain would be highly beneficial; that is how, in the Rome call (“appel de Rome”) of December 20, 2007, Sarkozy, Prodi and Zapatero agreed to jointly launch the UfM.<sup>20</sup>

Why did Spain decide to support Sarkozy? There are two compatible hypotheses. First, the decision was in concordance with the country and its government’s interests. Also, Spain had incentives to maintain excellent relations with France, whether in an EU context or within a bilateral perspective: terrorism, energy, infrastructures, particularly relevant in this context. In this sense, Zapatero had made the reinforcement of the arrangement with Paris prevail over any other issue. In order to make the project more acceptable, the French diplomacy decided to respect the red lines drawn by Spain, that is: the implication of the Commission, a new architecture, the Mediterranean looking like a counterpart of the Barcelona Process and decoupling the Mediterranean policy from Turkey’s accession process.<sup>21</sup>

However, the “Rome call” did not imply a Spanish enthusiastic commitment to Sarkozy’s project. On one hand, Spain could not consider it as its own initiative; on the other, this took place on the sidelines of parliamentary elections and, consequently, international affairs were less central to the government’s agenda. In the end, these circumstances would leave the necessary space to a non-Mediterranean country, Germany, firmly opposed to Sarkozy’s unilateral weak attempts and led to reorientate the French proposition towards the Barcelona Process. In view of this strategy of soft Europeanisation adopted by Spain, Germany fiercely defended European norms (Euro-Mediterranean

Partnership) and imposed a hard Europeanisation rationale to the French proposal.

From the beginning, Germany was, together with Spain, the EU country where the proposition of a Mediterranean Union had aroused the most suspicion. The malaise was understandable considering that the initial project excluded Berlin, leaving it with an observer role. Besides, it was worrying to see that a country that would preside over the EU in the second semester of 2008 could hold positions that were not very “European” in terms of foreign policy. Yet, Germany was not fully contented with the modification brought about the “Rome call” and it urged that the UfM be in line with a European Union logic, implying the full participation of all EU member states.

At a time where the French-German relation showed signs of fragility, Sarkozy accepted Merkel’s propositions. What was Spain’s stance in that context? It appears in private statements that members of the Spanish diplomatic corps were permanently in touch with Germany and, without an actual joint strategy, Berlin and Madrid would have shared the same objective, each manoeuvring according to their means and limitations. For others, Spain’s discreet actions would have put in peril the prestige of its Mediterranean policy.<sup>22</sup> The situation was not favourable to a Spanish diplomatic activism considering that the electoral period was followed by José Luis Zapatero’s investiture negotiations, the formation of a new government and a reorganisation of the Ministry of foreign affairs.

### **From the Paris Summit to the Barcelona Secretariat**

The Spanish diplomacy collaborated with France to secure the success of the Paris Summit. In the words of the minister Moratinos, after convincing Turkey to attend the summit, Spain also acted as an intermediary between Arabs and Israelis in the draft of conclusions.<sup>23</sup> Besides, Spain together with Italy strove to make the Mediterranean Business Development Initiative, – focusing on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises on both rims of the Mediterranean – one of the projects sponsored by Euro-Mediterranean leaders.<sup>24</sup> In the months following the summit, Spain began competing against Malta, Tunis and Marseilles to make Barcelona the headquarters of the UfM.<sup>25</sup> In the end, the Spanish diplomacy managed to introduce the “Barcelona” brand in the this new phase of Euro-Mediterranean relations thus emphasising the continuity with the 13 year Euro-Mediterranean partnership and the role played by Spain in the process.

After all the changes brought in the UfM project, a summit was convened in the French capital. As opposed to the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean summit of 2005, the majority of leaders from the South and East of the Mediterranean were present. The summit was a diplomatic success as it reinforced the image of the Euro-Mediterranean relations as a pertinent framework for political dialogue. This was illustrated by the bilateral meetings between Syria and Lebanon, Abbas and Olmert and also by the fact that the summit was used to pursue the Turkish-led talks between Syria and Israel.

If the Paris Summit gave a decisive boost to the formation of new institutions (co-presidency, Secretariat, etc.), it could not however resolve the problems likely to jeopardise the continuity of the UfM; for instance the absence of defined functions, the location and composition of the Secretariat, ambiguous phrases regarding the participation of the Arab League, the unsolved problem of the articulation of the EU term Presidency, and the incapacity to define a way to carry out new projects (means, members, operating rules).

From a Spanish perspective, one of the positive results of the Paris Summit was its subscription to the Euro-Mediterranean spirit with the participation of all EU member states, and the confirmation of Madrid's priority projects among which the Mediterranean solar plan and the Business development initiative. While the Spanish took advantage of the Summit to make official their desire to turn Barcelona into the headquarters of the secretariat, the decision would still be postponed to the ministerial conference of Marseilles.

After the Paris Summit, Spain began to worry that the negotiation between the members of the UfM would be blocked by the dissent opposing Israelis to Arabs regarding the participation of the Arab League in the structures of the UfM. Madrid pursued its effort to make Barcelona the headquarters of the Secretariat. From July to November of 2008, Spain used all its assets, including the relations between the royal houses, to achieve this strategic goal. And it was at the ministerial conference of Marseilles that the Catalan capital was chosen to host the Secretariat. Moreover, a series of important decisions were adopted at that meeting: 1) the establishment of five deputy secretary-generals; 2) the participation of the Arab League within all the institutions of the UfM; 3) the simplification of this new phase of Euro-Mediterranean relations<sup>26</sup> – UfM; 4) an agenda confirming the continuity of the priorities and rationale that guided the Euro-Mediterranean partners in the past 14 years.



If Marseille was seen as a success, it is not only for its participation rate but also because it prevented partners' divergences stemming from the Arab-Israeli conflict from undermining the UfM. In that sense, Spain played an active and positive role because of its desire to avoid a new failure in Euro-Mediterranean relations and its hope to see Barcelona host the Secretariat, thus reinforcing its pivotal role in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

### **Loss of Leadership or Discreet Efficiency?**

There was a debate in Spain, on both academic and political levels, on the leadership in terms of Mediterranean matters. Was Spain dispossessed of its leading position by France? Or to the contrary: did the Spanish government adopt a responsible and constructive approach which, in turn, contributed to the success of the Paris Summit and to that of the ministerial conference of Marseilles while conserving its Mediterranean policy prestige?

At the political level, there was unanimous consensus in 1995 – despite the tense atmosphere between the two main political forces of the country – on the positive role played by the government in the creation of the Barcelona Process; the evolution of this process was much more controversial in the following years. Indeed, the Popular Party did not hesitate to criticise the level of participation and the content of the documents approved at the Barcelona Summit of 2005.<sup>27</sup>

The same situation seemed to occur in 2008. Although there was consensus on the fundamental character of the Mediterranean and on Spain's interest to host the headquarters of the secretariat or other Mediterranean institutions, the leaders of the Popular Party vaunted France's diplomacy, contrasting it with the supposed failures of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party's (PSOE) prior projects.<sup>28</sup> The Spanish conservatives got to the point of claiming a certain envy towards the French results in comparison with the Spanish scanty responsibility in the process. Nonetheless, the critiques emanating from the opposition faded away with the choice of Barcelona, a diplomatic victory enthusiastically welcomed by all political forces.<sup>29</sup>

Beyond the political quarrels, the debate is real and should be dealt with in the most objective manner. One ought to recognise the consistent and patient work accomplished by the Spanish government and diplomacy. Nevertheless, it is obvious that Spain did have, up until the Marseilles conference, a problem of visibility and communication. In a way, Madrid left in 2006-2007 a vacant

space for other countries, especially France and its new President, to occupy. This was exacerbated by the fact that the foreign policy played a secondary role in José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero's first term. In contrast, according to political leaders and Spanish diplomats, the conveyed defensive and reactive picture did not reflect the daily implication of the executive.

As a matter of fact, since 2006, the Spanish efforts were mainly channelled into the defence of the Barcelona Process against the criticisms in an attempt to preserve the "Barcelona" brand by establishing Mediterranean organisations in Spain or for instance, in the case of the Anna Lindh Foundation, to promote Spanish candidates for executive positions. Thus, from Sarkozy's first addresses to the ministerial conference of Marseilles, Spain focused on either preserving the "Barcelona" brand or making Barcelona the headquarters of the UfM. However after the Marseilles summit and especially within the perspective of the 2010 Spanish presidency, these actions might come with more concrete proposals together with a high flying strategy.

### **Epilogue: 2010 Spanish Presidency**

Spain has always endeavoured to fully benefit from its EU presidential semesters to renew its European commitment and to promote priorities within the EU, in this case the strengthening of the relations with the Mediterranean countries. Moreover, there are several indicators suggesting that foreign policy will have a more significant part in the agenda and government's priorities throughout the second term. This became visible in Zapatero's conference in Madrid in front of an audience composed of diplomats and international affairs experts.<sup>30</sup> The Mediterranean was an important part of the speech which reminded the audience of the Barcelona Process fifteenth anniversary in 2010 and emphasised that the event was the perfect opportunity to contemplate broader perspectives; and Spain should seize that opportunity to present ambitious proposals. The head of government determined four action axes: first, the joint promotion with Algeria of a "Euro-Mediterranean Chart for energy and climate change"; second, a joint proposition with France and Egypt of a "specific cooperation framework for food security"; third, within the context of illiteracy in some countries in the southern Mediterranean, the commitment with Morocco to a "socio-cultural and pedagogical reform in the Euro-Mediterranean" with a "particular emphasis on women's education"; and last, to admit that the "actual European budget framework cannot take up the challenges and ambitions needed in the region" and consequently stay in

contact with French, Italian, Greek and Portuguese Presidents in order to make the necessary qualitative improvements.

It is clear that the limitations of the common budget in tow with the international financial crisis have eroded one of the biggest incentives of the UfM: obtaining more financial resources (public and private). This is not the sole difficulty that will be seen in the development of the UfM, and therefore, in the 2010 Spanish presidency. The governance of the UfM is between the hands of a new institutional framework co-presided by an EU country and a Mediterranean partner. Unlike the Barcelona Process, the Commission has no horizontal or vertical compartments. Despite the technocratic and economicist character of the UfM, the former will be more vulnerable than its predecessor to the paralysis resulting from the Arab-Israel conflict.

For example, the 2010 summit (during the Spanish presidency semester) should be celebrated in a Southern country. Yet, as the Spanish Secretary of State pointed out, it is very improbable that any country “reaches a consensus to accommodate all delegations –essentially Israel— in which case Barcelona would undertake that task.”<sup>31</sup>

In addition to budget and institutional difficulties, there are the legitimacy problems that the implementation of the UfM can cause to the European Normative power. The UfM economicism neglects the normative dimension of the Euro-Mediterranean *acquis* (human rights, democracy); hence the vehement reaction of some sectors of civil society in Southern countries, strongly committed to values defended by the EU. In this sense, one can wonder to what extent the UfM fits in the EU Mediterranean policy (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, European Neighbourhood Policy). One can also question the EU’s own foreign policy, whether *ad extram* or *ad intram* (internal cohesion).

These questions and a few others, pending, remain fundamental to the strengthening of the Mediterranean policy. Will Spain have the capacity to give that impulse and reposition itself at the vanguard of Euro-Mediterranean relations? Will the regional context help it? Or will the Middle East conflict turn the efforts made by the government and diplomacy unavailing? How will Spain manage the incompatibilities between the development of European foreign policy, with a strong normative base, and the implementation of technical projects inherent in the UfM? These answers will be available to us by mid-2010.

## NOTES

1. This article falls within the project EUPROX - "Europeanisation, Internationalisation and Coordination in the Proximity of the European Union", funded by the National Plan R+D of the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science (SEJ2006-03134/CPOL).
2. Christopher Hill, "The Actors Involved: National Perspectives", in Elfriede Regelsberger, Philippe de Schoutheete and Wolfgang Wessels (eds.), *Foreign Policy of the European Union. From EPC to CFSP and beyond*, Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 1997, p. 96.
3. Esther Barbé, "Spain and CFSP: The Emergence of a Major Player?", in Richard Gillespie and Richard Youngs, *Spain: The European and International Challenges*, London, Frank Cass, 2001, pp. 44-63.
4. José I. Torreblanca, "Ideas, preferences and Institutions: Explaining the Europeanisation of Spanish Foreign Policy", 2001, p. 14, available at [www.arena.uio.no](http://www.arena.uio.no)
5. Juan Baixeras, "España y el Mediterráneo", *Política Exterior*, No. 51, 1996, p. 155.
6. Richard Gillespie, *Spain and the Mediterranean. Developing a European policy towards the South*, London, Macmillan, 2000.
7. Esther Barbé, "Balancing Europe's Eastern and Southern Dimensions" in Jan Zielonka (ed.), *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, Den Haag, Kluwer Law International, 1998, pp. 117-30.
8. For more information on this conference, see Eduard Soler i Lecha, Rina Weltner Puig, "Diálogo Euromediterráneo: ¿ Una segunda oportunidad ?", in Esther Barbé (ed.), *España y la política exterior de la UE. Entre las prioridades españolas y los desafíos del contexto internacional*, *Quadern de Treball*, No. 40, Institut Universitari d'Estudis Europeus, 2002, pp. 53-71.
9. Esther Barbé, Laia Mestres, Eduard Soler i Lecha, "La política mediterránea de España: entre el Proceso de Barcelona y la Política Europea de vecindad", *Revista Cidob d'Affers Internacionals*, No. 79-80, December 2007.
10. PSOE, 2008, *Merecemos una España mayor, Programa Electoral para las elecciones legislativas 2004*, pp. 22-24.
11. Esther Barbé, Eduard Soler i Lecha, "Barcelona +10: Spain's Relaunch of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", *International Spectator*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2005, pp. 85-98.
12. Among which: Richard Gillespie, "Onward but not Upward : The Barcelona Conference of 2005", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 2006, p. 271-278 ; Muriel Asseburg, "Barcelona + 10. No Breakthrough in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", *SWP Comments*, No. 55, 2005.

13. This will be confirmed at the Parliament by Miguel Ángel Moratinos, "Comparecencia del Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación para informar sobre la cumbre Euromediterránea", Comisión of Foreign Affairs, Session No. 4, *Diario de Sesiones de las Cortes Generales*, IX term, No. 61, 23 July 2008, pp. 16-17.
14. Juan Prat, "La Asociación Euromediterránea? Quo vadis Barcelona?", *Monographías CESEDEN*, No. 86, 2006.
15. "Nicolas Sarkozy's address on the night of the results of the second round of the presidential elections", Paris, 6 May 2007.
16. Simon Nutall, "Coherence and Consistency", in Christopher Hill and Michael Smith (eds.), *International Relations and the European Union*, Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2005.
17. The proposal is made at CAGRE in May 2008. See European Union Council, *Comunicado de Prensa. Sesión num. 2870 del Consejo, Asuntos Generales y Relaciones Exteriores. Relaciones Exteriores*, Brussels 26-27 May 2008, 9868/08 (Presse 141), p. 24.
18. Michael Emerson, "Editorial: Sarkozy's Union of the Mediterranean", *CEPS European Neighbourhood Watch*, No. 31, available in [www.ceps.eu](http://www.ceps.eu), (consulted in October 2008).
19. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, "Del Proceso de Barcelona a la Unión Euro-mediterránea", *El País*, 2 August 2007.
20. "Appel de Rome pour la Méditerranée de la France, l'Italie, et l'Espagne", 20 December 2007.
21. See Eduard Soler i Lecha, "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean. Genesis, evolution and implications for Spain's Mediterranean Policy", *OPEX Working Paper*, No. 28, Madrid, *Fundación Alternativas/Fundació CIDOB*, 2008.
22. For the discussion at the Spanish parliament between minister Moratinos and deputy Jordi Xuclà on the role of Spain and Germany "Comparecencia del Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación para informar sobre las líneas generales de la política de su departamento", External Affairs Committee, Session No. 2, *Diario de Sesiones de las Cortes Generales*, IX term, No. 27, 22 May 2008, p. 13.
23. "Comparecencia del Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación para informar sobre la cumbre Euromediterránea", *op. cit.*, p. 16.
24. This initiative can be traced back to the XIV Spanish-Italian Summit of Ibiza, 20 February 2007. Zapatero and Prodi announced the coordination of the policy protecting Spanish and Italian products, and the creation of the Mediterranean Agency for Business Development supporting small and

- medium-sized enterprises on the southern rim with the financing of the European Investment Bank (EIB). The idea to create such agency was part of a long term strategy to create a Euro-Mediterranean Bank.
25. Zapatero announced Barcelona's candidature, see "Zapatero confía en llevar a Barcelona la sede del secretariado de la Unión", *El País*, 14 July 2008.
  26. Spanish diplomacy last minute manoeuvres are believed to be the cause of the change of the wording of the European Council of March 13-14 2008 which consecrated for the first time the "Barcelona Process" expression for the "Union for the Mediterranean". Spain continued defending this new appellation until Barcelona was designated headquarters of the Union for the Mediterranean.
  27. See discussion between Bernardino León and Popular Party deputy Francesc Ricomà, "Comparecencia del señor secretario de Estado de Asuntos Exteriores y para Iberoamérica (León Gross), para informar sobre la cumbre Euro-mediterránea", Foreign Affairs Committee, Session No. 26, *Diario de Sesiones de las Cortes Generales*, IX term, No. 458, 21 December 2005.
  28. See deputy Francesc Ricomà's speech in "Comparecencia del Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación para informar sobre la cumbre Euromediterránea", Foreign Affairs Committee, Session No. 4, *Diario de Sesiones de las Cortes Generales*, IX legislation, No. 61, 23 July 2008, pp. 9-10.
  29. See debate at the Parliament "Comparecencia del señor Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación para tratar de dos reuniones internacionales recientes de relevancia para la política exterior española: la Conferencia de Marsella sobre la Unión para el Mediterráneo y la cumbre iberoamericana de El Salvador" Foreign Affairs Committee, Session No. 26, *Diario de Sesiones de las Cortes Generales*, IX term, No. 170, 10 December 2008.
  30. Conference "En interés de España: una política exterior comprometida", Madrid, Prado Museum, 16 June 2008.
  31. Declarations by Diego López Garrido in "Acuerdo para poder dirigirse al Tribunal de la UE en catalán", *El País*, 10 February 2009.

# Italian “Mediterraneanness”: A New Path in Italy's Foreign Policy?

Donatella Cugliandro\*

## RÉSUMÉ

La politique méditerranéenne de l'Italie, est entravée par les mêmes difficultés qui ont amené le pays de ne pas agir jusque-là de façon positive dans le contexte plus large de la politique internationale. Sa fameuse politique “of-the-chair-attitude” répond à la soi-disant “catering diplomacy”, ne laissant pas de place à la mise en oeuvre d'une politique plus substantielle dans la région. L'équilibre entre les accords régionaux et bilatéraux risque de miner la crédibilité de l'Italie dans le bassin. Il n'est pas surprenant que ce qui émerge de l'analyse de la politique méditerranéenne du pays est l'absence de stratégie claire. L'espoir vient de l'intérêt croissant de la société civile dans le partenariat euro-méditerranéen, en particulier dans le domaine culturel. La valeur ajoutée que l'Italie peut fournir à la région demeure une approche ascendante de politique étrangère culturelle.

## ABSTRACT

Italy's foreign policy in the Mediterranean is hindered by the same setbacks which have prompted the country not to positively act in the wider context of international politics hitherto. Its notorious “politics-of-the-chair-attitude” meets the so-called “catering diplomacy”, leaving no room for a more substantial policy to be implemented in the region. The balance between regional arrangements and bilateral relations risks undermining Italy's credibility in the basin. Not surprisingly, what emerges from the analysis of the country's Mediterranean policy is the lack of any clear strategy, with more heed paid to a political window-dressing approach. Hope stems from civil society's increasing interest in the euro-mediterranean partnership, especially in the cultural field. The added value Italy may provide to the area remains a bottom-up cultural foreign policy.

Since its unification, and more decidedly in the aftermath of Fascism, Italy's foreign policy has been characterised by elements which, *mutatis mutandis*,

\* University of Bologna.

persist to this day. The literature on the argument is wide and well supported by national historical events. Santoro, for instance, identifies five recurrent variables in Fascist Italy's foreign policy: first is the gap between the role Italy aspires to in the international arena and its effective capabilities to pursue it. Second is the oscillatory politics which prevails over stable alliances with other countries, so that some scholars refer to it as a "pendulum" foreign policy.<sup>1</sup> Third is the absence of targeted objectives to be pursued in a foreign policy context – hence the lack of any specific national interest as a clear foreign policy goal. Fourth is the subordination of Italian foreign policy to its domestic dimension and setbacks. Fifth is the peculiar political attitude to merely react – rather than act positively – to other countries' initiatives in the foreign policy domain, being moved by political opportunism.<sup>2</sup>

While discussed in the context of Fascism, such variables seem to perfectly fall within the guidelines of post-war Republican Italy as well. Indeed, many scholars' contributions to the subject take into account the whole period from the country's unification to today, proving that a 150-year *continuum* in Italian foreign policy exists.<sup>3</sup> This becomes more evident when considering the historical period since the 1920s. In this respect, Mussolini's pre-war wavering between the alliance with western democracies and the pact with the Third Reich highlighted the same "pendulum" politics found in today's tendency to balance between Europeanism and Atlanticism. It goes without saying that the respective contexts are profoundly different, not least because Italy does not run the risk to back up a totalitarian regime. But it is nevertheless true that the core attitude remains the same: Rome prefers to "jump on the bandwagon" instead of taking its own initiatives, which would mean, first, choosing its political allies more firmly, and, more importantly, taking greater responsibilities in international affairs. This is one of the reasons why the country adopts a pendulum politics wavering between Europeanism and Atlanticism and taking the side according to political convenience;<sup>4</sup> an attitude, which further strengthens the idea of Italy as a "middle-power" with no strategic and political objectives, whose aim is the consolidation of its rather precarious position in the international arena – the so-called "politics of the chair", according to which the mere presence is more of importance than the substantial participation in any political event.<sup>5</sup> Without having effective instruments for maintaining a foreign policy role, Italian foreign policy is constantly devoted to the achievement of the "honest broker" status, which permits it – or rather gives it the illusion – to become an esteemed player on the international level.<sup>6</sup> Hence the need to act in a multilateral context, where



decisions are taken in common without the risk of being overshadowed by more influential international actors.<sup>7</sup>

Bearing the aforementioned foreign policy attitude in mind, might Rome take a different and more pro-active role in other international scenarios, such as the Mediterranean one? Its geographical location places Italy at the center of the basin, thus allowing the country to be regarded as a leading actor in the region, at least in principle. However, even though geography represents an asset for Rome in this respect, it would be of the essence to implement a distinctive foreign policy in the area. Hitherto, "the Mediterranean has been only a relative foreign policy priority, subordinated to Italy's concerns over its relationships within the European Union and with the United States."<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, new regional dynamics might prompt Italy to take advantage of its privileged position in the area, thus transforming itself into the Mediterranean hub *par excellence*. It goes without saying that such shift in Italian foreign policy might occur only if moving away from the traditional path of bandwagoning and political subordination. Italian "Mediterraneanness" needs the country to be a protagonist, not merely a supporting actor, in the international scene. Towards this shift some politicians have recently stressed the importance of taking into account a third directive in Italian foreign policy, besides Atlanticism and Europeanism, that is "Mediterraneanism".<sup>9</sup>

It is with this framework in mind that this article will endeavour to understand Italian policies and perspectives in the Mediterranean, intending to assess whether or not the country's traditional foreign policy variables remain unchanged even in this domain. The article will first dwell upon the potential role Italy might cover in the recently established regional political framework, the Union for the Mediterranean. With regard to this, some proposals have been made by the government, especially in the field of regional economic development and security issues. The article will then analyse the bilateral relationships Rome has with its Southern partners in the area, concentrating on their economic aspects. Finally, it will take into consideration the cultural ties linking the Mediterranean countries, concluding that a substantial foreign policy in the Mediterranean is far from being effectively implemented by Italy. Indeed, on both a multilateral and a bilateral level, Italy fails to act as a powerful political actor. Multilaterally, it missed the opportunity of being the real protagonist of the Union for the Mediterranean, leaving the role to Sarkozy's France. Bilaterally, it pays much more heed to the economic facets than to the political ones. It ensues that Rome might be able

to carve out a leading role in the region perhaps only by means of the cultural ties with its Mediterranean neighbours. The added value Italy may provide to the area remains its cultural foreign policy.

### **Italy's Mediterranean Policy: Between Regional Arrangements and Bilateral Relations**

Rome's foreign policy in the Mediterranean basin falls within Italian traditional political guidelines, balancing between a multilateral approach and the endeavour to create personal, bilateral relations with the countries of the region. Again, the "oscillatory mechanism" prevails over a more stable foreign policy. In doing so, the government aims at both joining international fora as a reliable partner and establishing more direct and privileged relations with the countries of the Southern Mediterranean flank, the twofold aim of achieving a reputable position on the multilateral level and, simultaneously, strengthening ties on the bilateral one. Without considering, however, that such behaviour risks attaining the opposite goal, undermining the country's credibility in the regional context – where each actor is expected to act through multilateral consultation – and reducing the scope of bilateral relations to the economic sphere in so far as political issues are already dealt with in the context of multilateral frameworks.

This being the general scenario, it is not surprising to see the balancing between nationalistic revivals, which tend to privilege direct and bilateral relations in the Mediterranean, and European-led political behaviours, mostly guided by the awareness of the country's political weakness and need for multilateral frameworks of action. Hesitation among these two opposite attitudes also results as a consequence of the regular change in Italian governments between the center-right and the center-left. In this respect, the two political alignments support dissenting opinions, with Berlusconi's *Popolo della Libertà* being more inclined to the strengthening of the Atlantic alliance and the creation of personal links with leaders of third countries, whereas Franceschini's *Partito Democratico* is more favourable to Europeanism and the achievement of an Italian pro-active role within the EU multilateral framework.<sup>10</sup>

Besides differences between the two main political parties, some ambivalences and contradictions are evident within the two political groupings as well. A critical case in point is, on one hand, the government's resolute support for the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) in

July 2008 alongside its strong commitment to the conclusion of a bilateral – recently ratified – treaty between Italy and Libya.

It is fair to say that the idea of the July 2008 meeting held in France was previously endorsed by the Prodi's government in 2007. The "appeal de Rome", signed on December 20, 2007, by the Italian, French and Spanish governments, was intended to encourage the creation of the UfM and to endorse Sarkozy's proposal for a meeting to be held in Paris seven months later. However, the Italian Prime Minister clarified the government's stance with regard to the UfM's objectives, especially as concerns the controversy over Turkey's participation to the UfM and its subsequent exclusion from the EU. In this respect, Prodi stated: "I ask that this proposal we are elaborating for a grand Mediterranean policy not be thought of as a way of resolving the problem of our relations with Turkey. It's something else."<sup>11</sup> Notwithstanding such clarifications, the overall project has been fully supported by the Italian government, by both the center-left and the center-right in the aftermath of the change in government in April 2008. Few days before the Paris meeting, the current Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Franco Frattini, highlighted the role of the Mediterranean as a "bridge" between the West, the Middle East and the Balkans, stressing the utmost importance of the region for Italy's international image.<sup>12</sup> Leaving aside differences in the historical context, the same rhetoric is found in a 1996 article written by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lamberto Dini, who urged to take advantage of the peculiar position of the peninsula – "*la peninsularità italiana*" – to the benefit of the country.<sup>13</sup> The political rhetoric thus remained unchanged over the years, with more heed being paid to window-dressing politics than to concrete policy proposals. On both sides of the left-right divide, representatives have exhorted to act, yet none illustrated how.

Nevertheless, a number of suggestions have arisen on the part of the Italian government in the framework of the UfM.<sup>14</sup> First is the proposal for the creation of the Mediterranean Business Development Agency (MBDA), which would guarantee financial support to small and medium businesses of the Mediterranean countries. However, the project, jointly presented by the Spanish and Italian Prime Ministers, preceded the establishment of the UfM, going back to the bilateral meeting between Italy and Spain in February 2007. In order to allow the project to fall within the UfM parameters, the Italian government has recently called on both the EU Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) to launch a feasibility study with the intent of verifying whether a joint action, both on the part of the EU and of the

UfM, is going to be efficient or not in this domain. Therefore, such a project will turn out to be successful only if it provides an added value to similar activities already launched by the EIB.<sup>15</sup>

Second, the government has suggested a meeting, to be probably held in Milan in July 2009, among political representatives, business actors and technical experts of the Union's members, and aimed at providing a high-level and all-encompassing consultation on the current financial crisis. According to Foreign Ministry Undersecretary, Stefania Craxi, the economic forum would also represent an occasion for both governments and economic actors to interact and increase investments in the region.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, Italy has proposed a "soft-security" mechanism in the Mediterranean basin, grounded on a joint inspection carried out by the coastal countries of the region. More specifically, this project would allow coastguards to cooperate in fighting illegal fishing, also launching a common program for civil defence and maritime safety. The concept of soft-security applied to the Mediterranean was first introduced by the Italian government, which strongly backed the idea of joint sea inspections in 2001.<sup>17</sup>

Notwithstanding such proposals, Italian institutions, on both the national and local level, find it difficult to carry out their ideas. The first setback stems from the risk of an overlap and duplication of functions between the EU and the UfM. In this respect, the Italian proposal for the establishment of the MBDA is unlikely to achieve its original aim, as its objectives are already on the EIB agenda.

Furthermore, the country aspires to attain some goals which are out of reach. A critical case in point is the stance some Southern Italian regions have taken with regard to their potential role in the UfM. In this respect, the Governor of Sicily, Raffaele Lombardo, has actively promoted a series of initiatives to assure a more pro-active role of the Region within the UfM. In the course of a bilateral meeting with Franco Frattini – the first time ever an Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs has met a Governor in his/her Region – Lombardo confirmed the need for Sicily to regain its place in the Mediterranean.<sup>18</sup> Few days later, he was nominated President of Coppem, the Permanent Committee for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership of Local and Regional Powers. Some projects promoted by the regions have been launched, aimed at rendering Italy a future regional hub in the Mediterranean. Although the ideal geographical position permits Italian Southern regions to bring forward such projects, local and regional leaders seem not to consider the most relevant issue at stake, that

is the deficiency of their territories' basic infrastructure necessary for the effective functioning of the hub they aspire to create.<sup>19</sup> Before being projected abroad, such Regions need large-scale domestic reforms, in terms of transportations, telecommunications and university centers. That is the reason why, for instance, the project for a Euro-Mediterranean University will be implemented in Slovenia rather than in Sicily, although it was originally proposed by the latter's Regional Governor. What remains fundamental is a collective effort on the part of national and local actors aiming at mobilising resources for these areas, which would not otherwise benefit from the establishment of the UfM. The challenge is to move *beyond* mere declarations of intent and *towards* concrete proposals. Unfortunately, the Mediterranean rhetoric often risks damaging Italian politics rather than representing an asset. Italy's discourse on the region remains rooted in its unquestioned and privileged geographical position, without however considering the increasing role other actors are likely to play in the basin.<sup>20</sup> After all, the political dimension of the Mediterranean tends not to overlap with its geographical boundaries, so that "a geographical term does not by itself make for a meaningful political entity".<sup>21</sup> Consequently, the self-centered concept of "geographical Mediterranean" no longer represents the single, least of all the most relevant, definition to be used for the region.

Being aware of this, a two-way policy is expected from Italy: first, the government needs to cooperate on a multilateral level with the ultimate goal of drawing EU attention to the Mediterranean. Considering the relative political weakness of the country, this can be achieved only through consultation with other EU members and states from the Southern flank of the Sea. Second, benefiting from the friendly relations with all its Mediterranean neighbours, Italy might offer its good offices for the resolution of long-standing problems hindering the cooperation among some countries of the area.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the Rome "middle-power" status is unlikely to boost such relations, especially in the absence of a multilateral framework supporting Italian efforts in this endeavour.<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, the balancing behaviour between multilateralism and bilateral relations continues to be at the forefront of Italy's Mediterranean foreign policy. While preferring – or having to privilege – the multilateral framework within the UfM context, on the other hand Italy favours strong bilateral ties with all its Southern neighbours, from the Maghreb countries to the states of the Near East.<sup>24</sup> A critical case in point is the relationship with Gaddafi's Libya, recently strengthened by the ratification of the Friendship, Partnership and

Cooperation Treaty signed between the two countries on 30 August 2008 and ratified in March 2009. The original proposal was first brought forward by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Dini in 1998, who admitted the existence of concentration camps built by the Italian government in Libya during the colonial period.<sup>25</sup> The current Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, has further blamed Italy for crimes committed during the colonial era, offering an apology to the Libyan people and inviting Gaddafi to the coming G8 conference to be held in Italy in July 2009.<sup>26</sup> The Treaty stresses the “privileged and special” relationship the two countries intend to develop in the future and provides for the realisation of infrastructures financed by the Italian government over the next 20 years, for an overall amount of five billion dollars. Furthermore, special privileges will be granted to Italian businesses and compensation is expected for those Italian firms which previously claimed tax refund from the Libyan government. The document becomes “ambitious” concerning the bilateral partnership, which entails cooperation in energy, defence, economics, non-proliferation and disarmament. Particular heed is paid to joint maritime surveillance aimed at tackling the hot immigration issue, which has become increasingly articulated as a “security” problem in Italy in recent years.<sup>27</sup> Doubts and opposition have arisen with regard to the humanitarian consequences deriving from such operations. Of particular concern is the violation of human rights, also considering that Libya has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention. In this respect, some from the Italian parliamentary opposition have expressed criticism over Libya’s political regime.<sup>28</sup> Despite this, the ratification of the Treaty has been welcomed by most of the political establishment, thus allowing the current Prime Minister to conduct a “personal policy” founded on direct relations with other countries’ leaders. It goes without saying that the center-right government favours bilateral relations and encourages personal contacts with its political counterparts, privileging such forms of foreign policy to European or regional frameworks. Broadly speaking, Italy finds it difficult to operate in a multilateral context, where cohesion with other countries and political coherence are of the essence for cooperating.<sup>29</sup>

Bilateral ties in the Mediterranean tend to be strengthened especially in the energy field, which represents a sensitive issue for Italy given its energy needs and dependence. Unlikely other EU Mediterranean countries, such as France, Greece and Spain, Italy is highly dependent on energy imports and this involves closer relations with the Southern flank of the Sea, whose countries are by far the largest energy suppliers of the area. Furthermore, national coasts represent almost half of the EU Mediterranean borders, thus giving a

preeminent position to security-related arguments. Taken together, such reasons contribute to explaining the further development of relations with these countries and the intensification of economic ties between the two sides. Italy is the second EU trade supplier of the region after France, with growing Italian foreign investments both in Egypt and Israel. The country is also the first trade supplier in Lebanon and exports towards Morocco have risen by 115% from 1995 to 2005.<sup>30</sup> Available data strikingly suggest that Italian foreign policy directives in the Mediterranean are mainly determined by economic considerations, also in view of the fact that both Mediterranean and Gulf countries represent crucial areas for the promotion of Italian exports.

There are some apparent exceptions to this tendency to conduct relations purely on the economic and commercial labels. Italian-Lebanese relations are a case in point. In this respect, Italian foreign policy has appeared more incisive than elsewhere. The Italian government has made numerous efforts to guarantee a ceasefire between Israel and the Lebanese Hizbullah in 2007. The most relevant action has been the deployment of UNIFIL II, despite the initial hesitation of other member states. Rome's international image has positively benefited from this political stance, especially after the Italian General Claudio Graziano took over command of the Unifil II mission on February 2, 2007. In this phase, multilateral commitment was regarded as the ultimate solution, as then Prime Minister Romano Prodi stated at the 62th General Assembly of the UN on September 25, 2007: "National approaches to solving the world's problems no longer exist. [...] It is only through multilateralism, by marshalling everyone's energies, that we can hope to do good."<sup>31</sup> The country's undertaking of a preeminent role in Lebanon also signals the credit given by the international community to Italy's role in the region. Long-standing relations between Rome and Beirut have allowed more leeway for Italy, whose freedom of action was officially recognized by both Brussels and Washington. The country focuses on South-Eastern Mediterranean crisis management efforts in the NATO framework as well, in so far as France is a marginal actor and Spain a relative newcomer within the organization.<sup>32</sup> What ensues is that Rome undertakes policy actions abroad according to the leeway granted to the country by the international community. Indeed, "[...] a substantive strategy to bring about change in the region by exerting the newly acquired leverage was never elaborated."<sup>33</sup> Such behaviour perfectly falls within the scheme of the "reactive" rather than "pro-active" policy, in view of which the government tends to align itself to others' directives and policies instead of assuming any personal initiative in the foreign policy domain.

## Italy's Cultural Foreign Policy in the Mediterranean

What emerges from the examination of Italian foreign policy in the Mediterranean is the lack of any clear strategy, which would be instead useful in order to identify the country's national interests in the region. After all, such tendency is not surprising, especially when the analysis is widened to include all Italian foreign policy's domains beyond the Mediterranean. Indeed Italian governments have always paid more heed to the window-dressing approach than to the real content and substance of policy, privileging the so-called "catering diplomacy", that is the hosting and promotion of high-level diplomatic events.<sup>34</sup>

When it comes to the Mediterranean region, the structural weakness of Italian foreign policy becomes striking, highlighted by the wavering balance between the multilateral approach of recent years and long-standing bilateral tendencies. Furthermore, the "declaration-of-intent" style is predominant over "concrete-policy-proposals", with more attention being given to rhetoric than to political projects. Within this framework, for the time being Italy might hope to gain a new proactive role in the Mediterranean by relying on cultural cooperation among the countries of the region. Cultural dialogue represents the third chapter of the ambitious UfM, after the political and economic ones. While Italy seems to get lost in the case of the first two chapters, being unable to find an effective strategy aiming at achieving well-defined objectives in both fields, on the other hand Rome might find it easier to foster cultural ties among Mediterranean countries. This is mainly because culture is a low-politics issue, which does not run the risk of splitting governments and political parties, representing instead the essence of the Italian rhetoric centered on the premise that the "core of culture" resides in Rome. The credibility gap Italy is likely to generate in the case it persists in balancing its policy between multi- and bi-lateralism, might be filled only through the shaping of a clear Mediterranean cultural policy. As in the case of Lebanon, where Italy was given more freedom of action because the international community recognized a privileged role to the country in the area, similarly the field of cultural cooperation might become a frontline issue for Rome. There where the other EU members and Mediterranean countries have reserved to Italy a preeminent position in a specific field, the country has demonstrated its ability to make concrete foreign policy proposals and to work jointly.

In recent years, both national and local institutions endeavoured to strengthen cultural ties in the Mediterranean with the attempt to gain a



leading regional role in this field. In this respect, civil society organizations took a decisive stance in favour of cultural cooperation. Bottom-up pressure has highly contributed to the promotion of multilateral euro-mediterranean partnerships in the cultural field. A critical case in point is the establishment of the Mediterranean Foundation, an Italian organization born in 1994 to foster links through the Mediterranean between the Arab world and Europe. The Foundation gives national civil societies the key role for encouraging communication and information and promoting human rights and culture throughout the basin. As its main goal, the organization endeavours to foster dialogue and interaction among societies, with the intent of highlighting Mediterranean peoples' shared interests while working to promote pluralism and cultural diversity.<sup>35</sup> Through cultural cooperation and contacts among civil societies, national political representatives are gradually tempted to coordinate their efforts in order to cooperate in fields other than culture, emulating the functional spillover typical of the European Community's first steps. Similarly, Italy might focus on the cultural chapter in order to make contacts with its neighbours more frequent and fluid, thus guaranteeing subsequent coordination in other fields as well. Moving away from its "high-level policy" style, which privileges diplomatic and political contacts among high representatives, Rome ought to further take into account national civil society organizations, whose efforts might lead to stronger ties within the Mediterranean. With regard to this, local representatives seem to have better understood civil societies' potential in strengthening regional links, probably in view of their closer proximity to the people. Indeed, some "cultural proposals" have already been made by some local politicians with the intent to renew the awareness of a common Mediterranean identity. Besides the aforementioned proposal of a Sicilian-based Mediterranean University, whose location is instead going to be Slovenia, some low level initiatives seem to be welcomed both by national and local counterparts in the basin. Whereas the establishment of a university hub would require the presence of material infrastructures – from transport to telecommunication – mostly lacking in Southern Italian regions, the establishment of Mediterranean-related organizations might represent a starting point for civil society's involvement in transnational cultural activities, with the final outcome of developing the awareness of a common regional identity. Hence the creation of local cultural centers, such as the *Fondazione Mediterranea*, whose main objective is to promote the shift of the Straits of Messina from a mere geographical navel of the Mediterranean to a cultural center.<sup>36</sup>

It goes without saying that such an ambitious project is hindered by the same obstacles faced by the university's establishment in Sicily. Nevertheless, while the improvised foundation of a Mediterranean University without necessary infrastructures was highly unlikely, the bottom-up process originating from the creation of a civil society organization might bring about positive effects both locally and through the Mediterranean basin. In this respect it is also important to note the competences assigned to Italian Regions in the aftermath of the 2001. Constitutional modification guaranteeing more freedom of action for local representatives in some policy fields, such as cultural cooperation with third countries.<sup>37</sup> In this respect, Sicilian representatives of the Democratic Party have recently signed a bill for the promotion of international cooperation and solidarity among people, in order to give the Region the instruments to cooperate with its Mediterranean counterparts for tackling poverty in the Southern flank of the basin.<sup>38</sup> The bill represents a useful example of how cultural and social dialogue among people in the Mediterranean may lead to other forms of interaction, such as development cooperation initiatives. This also favours the involvement of the national level, which is gradually called to intervene in order to coordinate such forms of transnational cooperation. Indeed, while it is true that Regions are entitled to take transnational initiatives in well-defined fields clearly listed in the Constitution, the overall coordination and final decision over their implementation remains with the national government. Hence, dialogue among local institutions in the Mediterranean countries might foster dialogue among national institutions as well, reversing the usual top-down process in favour of the bottom-up push stemming, first, from Mediterranean civil societies and, then followed through by local government representatives. Only through a two-way process by the national government, which must be committed to both improve ties with its Mediterranean neighbours and tackle the *questione meridionale* in the Southern area of the country, might Italy assume a leading role, culturally speaking, in the Mediterranean basin.<sup>39</sup> It goes without saying that the Southern Regions are not involved in the issue in an exclusive way, in that some other Northern Regions have already launched joint initiatives with their counterparts in other Mediterranean countries. A critical case in point is Lombardy, which has carried out several activities in the Mediterranean region.<sup>40</sup> However, the initiatives taken by Northern Regions in this basin mainly cover the economic field, focusing on the internationalization of trade and the development of local businesses in the Mediterranean. Furthermore, unlike the cultural chapter, trade-related issues rarely raise civil society's attention, thus reducing the

chances of a greater involvement on the part of people in the “Mediterranean discourse”. Hence the lack of the aforementioned bottom-up push, of the essence for mutual interaction in the basin and to further long-term cooperation in more sensitive issues.

For these reasons, Italy’s foreign policy in the Mediterranean proves to be more successful if it pursues cultural, rather than purely economic, goals. And in this respect, Southern Regions have taken a more pro-active stance than their Northern counterparts, first and foremost because they cannot strive to achieve any economic traction given their internal state of economic backwardness and administrative disarray. The cultural variable represents a soft-issue, which can be tackled with few political repercussions and only needs the mutual awareness of a common Mediterranean identity by its advocates. This attitude mostly mirrors Italian foreign policy behaviour, devoted to gain the maximum benefit with the minimum cost. Similarly, through the cultural issue Rome might gain a proactive role in the Mediterranean without necessarily taking any political responsibility alone. By supporting Southern Regions’ cultural initiatives and extending them to the national level, Italy might hope to move beyond its traditional foreign policy directives and follow a new path, which is more realistic and suited to the country’s capabilities. The traditional definition of Italy as a middle-power does not represent a mere clichè, but it must be seriously taken into account in the foreign policy domain, in so far as the recognition of national political limits represents the starting point for any kind of credible initiative on the international level. Coordinated efforts both by local authorities and by national institutions are of the essence for Rome’s gradual advancement in the Mediterranean basin, an advancement that has greatest chances of success if pursued in and launched from the cultural domain.

## Concluding Remarks

Italy’s foreign policy has traditionally wavered between multilateralism and bilateralism, undecidedly balancing between Atlanticism and Europeanism. The long-standing tendency towards bandwagoning prompted the country to position itself as a middle-power, with no clear strategy and no specific national interests to be pursued in the foreign policy arena, beyond economic interests. Hence the only conceivable policy to follow has been that implemented by other international actors. The Mediterranean foreign policy has to be regarded in line with this political behaviour, as seen in the context

of the UfM. The effective status of Italian foreign policy is far from the role Rome aspires to cover on the international level, and the gap between real capabilities and political declarations becomes more and more striking. What remains of the essence is to bring an awareness of reality and start anew, avoiding mere declarations of intent and shaping concrete proposals only there where Rome would be capable to maintain a leading role, that is in the cultural field. A glimmer of hope stems from civil society's increasing interest in the euro-mediterranean partnership. Only if this bottom-up pressure decidedly comes to the fore, thus thrusting cultural and social dialogue into the spotlight, might Italy shift away from its traditional foreign policy's directives. By contrast, current and future governments risk underestimating the "Mediterranean challenge" following the prudent path in the middle between Washington and Brussels and revealing once again not to be ready for a stable and credible position in the international panorama. At the mercy of other countries' initiatives and decisions, and constantly wavering between Atlanticism and Europeanism, Italy might miss the unprecedented opportunity to be at the frontline of Mediterranean policy, even if only limited to the cultural domain. Launching initiatives and taking a positive stance in the social and human fields might be *the* role for Italy, giving the country the chance to find a new dimension in the international realm without necessarily struggling to achieve a position it does not have the capabilities to sustain. Besides Atlanticism and Europeanism, Rome ought to take further into account its forgotten cultural "Mediterraneanism".

## NOTES

1. See also A. Panebianco, *Guerrieri democratici. Le democrazie e la politica di potenza*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1997.
2. See C. M. Santoro, *La politica estera di una media potenza. L'Italia dall'Unità ad oggi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1991.
3. See Santoro, *La politica estera di una media potenza*, op. cit.; G. Mammarella and P. Cacace *La politica estera dell'Italia. Dallo Stato unitario ai giorni nostri*, Roma, Laterza, 2006; L. Saiu, *La politica estera italiana dall'Unità a oggi*, Roma, Laterza, 2006 and S. Romano, *Guida alla politica estera italiana. Da Badoglio a Berlusconi*, Milano, Rizzoli, 2004.
4. On the balancing between Europeanism and Atlantism, see A. Albonetti, "Come opporsi al declassamento dell'Italia", *Affari Esteri*, No. 157, January, 2008, pp. 55-

- 77; Atlanticus, "La politica estera...nazionale", *Aspenia*, No. 34, 2006, pp. 69-78; R. Del Sarto and N. Tocci, "Italy's politics without policy: Balancing Atlanticism and Europeanism in the Middle East", *Modern Italy*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2008, pp. 135-153; E. Greco, "La politica estera del Governo Prodi" in Colombo, A. and N. Ronzitti, *L'Italia e la Politica Internazionale*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2007, pp. 41-56 and P. Ignazi, "Al di là dell'Atlantico, al di qua dell'Europa. Dove va la politica estera italiana", *Il Mulino*, No. 2, 2004, pp. 267-277.
5. The term was coined by the Italian Ambassador Pietro Quaroni.
6. On the origin of the Italian role as an honest broker in the international relations, see P. Kennedy, *Ascesa e declino delle grandi potenze*, Milano, Garzanti 1987.
7. See M. Clementi, "La politica estera italiana", in Colombo, A. and N. Ronzitti, *L'Italia e la Politica Internazionale*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008; E. Greco et al., "Europa oltre la crisi: quindici punti per la politica europea dell'Italia", *La Politica Europea dell'Italia, IAI Quaderni*, Rome, January 2007.
8. R. Balfour, "Italy's Policies in the Mediterranean" in H. A. Fernandez and R. Youngs, *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Assessing the First Decade*, Madrid, Real Instituto Elcano, 2005, p. 122.
9. See interview to the former General Director for the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Riccardo Sessa, in *L'Italia e il dialogo euro-mediterraneo*, Dossier Farnesina, MAE, Ed. VOICES, Milan, September-October 2006; interview to Gaetano Quagliariello (Forza Italia, MP) in J. Laurence, "Renewal and Continuity in Italian Foreign Policy", *l'Occidentale*, 15 September 2008, <http://www.loccidentale.it/articolo/renewal+and+continuity+in+italian+foreign+policy.0057843> .
10. Franceschini recently succeeded Walter Veltroni as Secretary General of the Democratic Party (PD), after the latter's resignation in February 2009. The center-left party is facing internal political changes because of electoral defeats and the absence of a strong political cohesion among its top echelons. For more information about the Europeanist attitude of the center-left and the Atlanticist behaviour of the center-right, see R. Aliboni, "Neo-Nationalism and Neo-Atlanticism in Italian Foreign Policy", *The International Spectator*, Vol. 38, No. 1, January-March 2003, pp. 81-90; F. Frattini, "The Fundamental Directions of Italy's Foreign Policy", *The International Spectator*, Vol. 39, No. 1, January-March 2004, pp. 95-99; E. Greco, *Italy's European vocation: The foreign policy of the new Prodi government*, US-Europe Analysis Series, Washington D.C., Brookings Institution, 2006; S. Romano, "Berlusconi's Foreign Priority: Inverting Traditional Priorities", *The International Spectator*, Vol. LI, No. 2, April-June 2006, pp. 101-107.
11. "France's Sarkozy, Italy's Prodi say they share common goals for EU", *International Herald Tribune Europe*, May 28, 2007, <http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/05/28/europe/EU-GEN-France-Italy.php>.

12. See Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Comunicazioni del Ministro degli affari esteri Frattini sulle linee programmatiche del suo Dicastero alle Commissioni Congiunte 3\_ (Affari esteri, emigrazione) del Senato della Repubblica e III (Affari esteri e comunitari) della Camera dei deputati”, Rome, 2 July 2008, [http://www.esteri.it/MAE/IT/Stampa/Sala\\_Stampa/Interventi/2008/07/20080709\\_Frattini\\_CommCong.htm](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/IT/Stampa/Sala_Stampa/Interventi/2008/07/20080709_Frattini_CommCong.htm) and “Discorso del Ministro Frattini al Laboratorio Euromed”, Rome, 30 June 2008, [http://www.esteri.it/MAE/IT/Stampa/Sala\\_Stampa/Interventi/2008/06/20080808\\_Discorso\\_Frattini.htm](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/IT/Stampa/Sala_Stampa/Interventi/2008/06/20080808_Discorso_Frattini.htm).
13. See L. Dini, “Il Nord Africa e il Medio Oriente: Stabilità e Dialogo”, *Energia*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 1996, pp. 8-11.
14. Interview with the author, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, March 2009. The interviewee, working within the Mediterranean and Middle East directorate, expressly stated his preference for his/her identity not to be revealed.
15. Interview with the author, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, March 2009. On the creation of the Agency, see also F. Zallio, “Da Barcellona a Parigi: un Mediterraneo diverso”, *ISPI Policy Brief*, No. 92, July 2008.
16. See “Unione per il Mediterraneo: la sede sarà a Barcellona”, *Il Sole 24 Ore*, 5 November 2008.
17. The proposal was written in the Marseille Declaration adopted by the Fourth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, 15-16 November 2000, <http://medlab.euromedi.org/page/partenar/Conferenza/Dichiarazione%20di%20Marsiglia.doc>.
18. See “Il Ministro Frattini in Sicilia e la cooperazione rafforzata con l’Isola”, *Unità per il Sistema Paese e le Autonomie Territoriali MAE*, No. 3, January, 2009, <http://www.consmontreal.esteri.it/NR/rdonlyres/71D4D8C7B546415BA96DF7FF81B64FE4/21017/Periscopio20n320Gennaio202009.pdf>; “Mediterraneo: Frattini e Lombardo d’accordo, puntare su Sicilia”, *AGI News*, December, 15, 2008, <http://cooperazione.agi.it/le-altre-news/notizie/200812151447-cro-rt11200-art.html>.
19. See A. Spataro, “Mediterraneo, mare di convegni”, *La Repubblica*, 20/12/2008.
20. Interview with the author, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, March 2009, op. cit.
21. Sentence pronounced by the Austrian Minister Metternich with reference to Italy, found in A. Moulakis, “The Mediterranean Region: Reality, Delusion, or Euro-Mediterranean Project?”, *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 2005, pp. 11-38. See also F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1996.
22. For instance, in the framework of the UfM, problems inevitably arise when considering the Algerian-Moroccan relations, or the Greece-Cyprus-Turkey issue, not to mention the Israeli-Arab conflict.

23. Interview with the author, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, March 2009, op. cit.
24. While France or Spain tend to privilege relations with some countries of the Mediterranean, as Morocco or Algeria, Italy enjoys good relations with all its neighbours, perhaps as a consequence of its “being-anyone’s-friend” politics. On the bilateral relations with these countries, see M. Dassù, and M. Massari (ed.), *Rapporto 2020. Le scelte di politica estera*, Unità di Analisi e Programmazione MAE and Gruppo di Riflessione Strategica, 2008, [http://www.esteri.it/mae/doc/MD\\_COMPLETO.doc](http://www.esteri.it/mae/doc/MD_COMPLETO.doc); Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate for Mediterranean and Middle East, *Italy’s bilateral relations with the Maghreb countries*, 2009, [http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica\\_Estera/Aree\\_Geografiche/Mediterr\\_MO/Rapporti+bilaterali+Paesi+del+Maghreb](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica_Estera/Aree_Geografiche/Mediterr_MO/Rapporti+bilaterali+Paesi+del+Maghreb) (accessed 11.03.2009); Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate for Mediterranean and Middle East, *Italy’s bilateral relations with countries of the Near East*, 2003 [http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica\\_Estera/Aree\\_Geografiche/Mediterr\\_MO/Relazioni+bilaterali+Paesi++Vicino+Oriente](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica_Estera/Aree_Geografiche/Mediterr_MO/Relazioni+bilaterali+Paesi++Vicino+Oriente) (accessed 11.03.2009).
25. See interview to the Italian historian Angelo Del Boca, “Noi e la Libia? Finalmente le parole giuste”, *Corriere della Sera*, 13 March 2009.
26. See M. Slackman, “5 Years After It Halted Weapons Programs, Libya Sees the U.S. as Ungrateful”, *The New York Times*, 10 March 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/11/world/africa/11libya.html?ref=africa>; “Italia-Libia, inizia una nuova era”, *La Stampa*, 2 March 2009, <http://www.lastampa.it/redazione/cmsSezioni/politica/200903articoli/41555girata.asp>.
27. According to the Italian Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), the percentage of immigrants in January 2009 increased by 12,6% with respect to January 2008. Among them, the most numerous come respectively from Romania, Albania and Morocco. See APCOM, “ISTAT: Stranieri residenti in Italia 3,9 milioni a primo gennaio”, February 26, 2009, [http://www.apcom.net/newsronaca/20090226\\_143800\\_4a9cdfb\\_57024.shtml](http://www.apcom.net/newsronaca/20090226_143800_4a9cdfb_57024.shtml). The increasing number of immigrants, together with some episodes of aggression towards Italian citizens, has prompted both the public opinion and the government to consider the immigration issue as one of security concern. This has triggered a diplomatic “crisis” with Romania, when the Romanian Foreign Ministry declared that some Italian political representatives within the government incite xenophobia. See “Romania: Nel governo italiano c’è chi incita alla xenofobia”, *La Repubblica*, 10 February 2009, <http://www.repubblica.it/2009/02/sezioni/politica/dl-sicurezza/romania/romania.html>.
28. For more information about the legal clauses of the Treaty, see N. Ronzitti, “Luci e ombre del Trattato tra Italia e Libia”, *Affarinternazionali.it*, 8 February 2009, <http://www.affarinternazionali.it/articolo.asp?ID=1066>. For the economic aspects, see instead A. Varvelli, “Il Trattato Italia-Libia e il nuovo contesto

- economico libico”, *ISPI Med Brief*, No. 8, 23 September 2008, [http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/Med\\_Brief\\_8\\_2008.pdf](http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/Med_Brief_8_2008.pdf).
29. Interview with the author, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, March 2009, *op.cit.*
30. For further information on economic relations between Italy and other Mediterranean countries, see M. Zupi, (ed.), *La proiezione economica del sistema Italia nel Mediterraneo*, CESPI, Rome, Carocci Editore, 2008; ISPI, “Italian-Egyptian Business Council”, <http://www.ispionline.it/it/ricerca.php?id=88> (accessed 13.03.2009); F. Zallio, “Le economie mediterranee tra Europa e Golfo”, *ISPI Med Brief*, No. 1, 3 March 2008, [http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/Med\\_Brief\\_1\\_2008.pdf](http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/Med_Brief_1_2008.pdf).
31. “Statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Italy Romano Prodi at the 62th General Assembly of the United Nations”, *General Assembly of the UN*, New York, 25 September 2007, <http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/62/2007/pdfs/italy-en.pdf>.
32. Interview with the author, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, March 2009, *op.cit.*
33. See interview made by Nathalie Tocci and Raffaella Del Sarto to Italian officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in R. Del Sarto and N. Tocci “Italy’s politics without policy”, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
34. See R. Del Sarto and N. Tocci “Italy’s politics without policy”, *op. cit.*; V. Coralluzzo, “La politica mediterranea del governo Berlusconi: continuità e cambiamenti”, paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Italian Society for Political Studies, Bologna, 12-14 Sept. 2006; A. Spinelli, “Problemi e prospettive della politica estera italiana”, *La politica estera della Repubblica italiana*, M. Bonanni, Milan, 1967.
35. See Mediterranean Foundation website, <http://www.euromedi.org/inglese/main.asp>.
36. The local-based *Fondazione Mediterranea* is not to be mistaken with the above mentioned Mediterranean Foundation, which is a national organization originally translated as *Fondazione Mediterraneo*. For more information on the *Fondazione Mediterranea*, see <http://www.fondazionemediterranea.eu/>.
37. “Modifiche al titolo V della parte seconda della Costituzione”, Legge costituzionale 18 ottobre 2001, n. 3, *Italian Parliament*, <http://www.senato.it/parlam/leggi/01003lc.htm>. On the potential role of the Regions in the international context, especially in the field of development cooperation, see R. Caso, “Il ruolo internazionale delle Regioni: il contributo della UE”, *ISPI Policy Brief*, No. 68, December 2007, [http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/pb\\_68\\_2007.pdf](http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/pb_68_2007.pdf).



38. See “Sicilia: PD presenta DDL per cooperazione allo sviluppo”, *AGI*, 2 February 2009, <http://cooperazione.agi.it/le-altre-news/notizie/200902021403-pol-r012356-art.html>.
39. See A. Badini, “Mediterraneo, la svolta necessaria”, *Il Mattino*, 7 July 2008.
40. See Regional President of Lombardy R. Formigoni, *Accelerare i tempi dell'integrazione*, Camera di Commercio di Milano, No. 65, October/December 2003, <http://www.mi.camcom.it/upload/file/1460/730306/FILENAME/formigoni.pdf>.



# **Greece's Mediterranean Perspective and the French Initiative**

**Dimitris K. Xenakis\* and Charalambos Tsardanidis\*\***

## **RÉSUMÉ**

Après l'eupéanisation des relations gréco-turques dans le milieu des années 1990, la Méditerranée est devenue peu à peu une terre retrouvée d'opportunité pour les décideurs de la politique grecque, représentant un point de vue établi depuis longtemps que la Grèce doit atteindre un équilibre entre ses priorités de politique étrangère européennes, balkaniques et méditerranéennes. Initialement, en s'appuyant sur l'approche régionale de l'UE et, plus récemment, en soutenant l'initiative française, de nombreuses opportunités sont apparues pour la Grèce d'améliorer son profil régional, y compris un nouveau paramètre dans les relations gréco-turques. Cet article examine la participation accrue de la Grèce afin de changer l'ordre du jour euro-méditerranéen, en évaluant les défis et les opportunités que cette nouvelle initiative génère pour les intérêts stratégiques et économiques du pays. Il conclut avec des réflexions sur l'action future dans le cadre institutionnel, nouvellement institué, tant en ce qui concerne les projets de coopération de plus grande valeur pour la Grèce et en vue de contribuer davantage au processus plus large de systématiser les relations régionales.

## **ABSTRACT**

After the europeanization of Greco-Turkish relations in the mid-1990s, the Mediterranean has gradually become a rediscovered land of opportunity for Greek policy-makers, representing an embodiment of a long-standing view that Greece has to strike a balance between its European, Balkan and Mediterranean foreign policy priorities. Initially, by building on the European Union's regional approach and, more recently, by supporting the French Mediterranean initiative, numerous opportunities have arisen for Greece to upgrade its regional profile, including a new parameter in Greco-Turkish relations. This article examines Greece's increased involvement in changing Euro-Mediterranean agenda by assessing both the challenges and the opportunities that the new initiative generates for the country's strategic and economic interests. It concludes with thoughts on future action in the newly instituted framework,

\* University of Crete.

\*\* Institute of International Economic Relations (Athens).

both regarding cooperative projects of higher value for Greece and in view of further contributing to the wider process of systematizing regional relations.

## **Introduction**

Since antiquity, the Mediterranean has played a pivotal role in the development of Greece's history, politics and society. Since 1981, the country's borders are the limits of European Union's (EU) zone of peace, stability and prosperity with the clashing military, political, religious, and socio-cultural entities of the Middle East and the Balkans. Being an integral part of the Balkan system, sharing a common heritage and culture with Balkan countries (Albania, Bulgaria, and FYROM) but also those approaching the Middle East (Turkey and Cyprus) and North Africa (Egypt and Libya), Greece's complex external relations with these three sets of neighbors typify the difficulties and challenges involved in seeking cooperation in these areas.

Greece's accession in the European Community had a profound impact on its' stability, political, societal and economic development. There is no doubt, however that economic prospects will be significantly increased in the ever-more globalized financial environment, if a way is found to address regional disputes and enhance stability. This is why Greece has been supporting all European policies and regional initiatives promoting peace, stability and development in the Mediterranean. Since the mid-1990s, it has shown strong interest in the formation of a vibrant and viable Euro-Mediterranean space, improving its Mediterranean relations both bilaterally and multilaterally, within the formal framework of the Barcelona Process and in the context of the Mediterranean Forum. More recently, Athens has shown almost unconditional support to Nicola Sarkozy's Mediterranean initiative. The newly established Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), except for new economic opportunities, it also provides for an additional framework to manage relations with Turkey, as well as, to address controversial issues in the eastern Mediterranean, including, delimitation, migration and terrorism.

## **The Shaping of Greece's Mediterranean Policy**

Greece exhibits a firm European orientation, whilst maintaining a number of particular Balkan and Mediterranean concerns, some of them aligned with those of the rest of the EU's southern members. As Veremis put it, "the

proximity of Portugal, Spain and Italy to North Africa and the common borders of Greece and Italy with the troubled Balkans, helps explain each country's regional line of work".<sup>1</sup> Greek foreign policy has been defined along the lines, on the one hand, of its Europeaness and, on the other, its affinity to the Balkans and the Mediterranean, with the latter itself constituting from a Greek perspective a southern European periphery. Greece has good relations with most southern Mediterranean countries not least due to the long-established presence of Greek communities around the Mediterranean basin, although it maintains relatively little politico-economic relations as compared to its Balkan neighbours. Due to new security concerns that the disintegration of the Balkans created at the country's northern borders, as well as, the centrality of religion in Greek identity, Greece's foreign policy has been focusing more on the Balkans than the Mediterranean. Yet, the challenges and the course of events in the southern Mediterranean rim should be followed more closely. A potential rebooting of the conflict in various hotspots of the Middle East could increase violence and terrorism incidents in the region, affecting maritime transportation, the tourism industry and other critical economic activities.

Greece has often been accused by other members of the EU of maintaining a fixed preoccupation over the Aegean and the Cyprus issues with Turkey.<sup>2</sup> Most analysts agree that since the establishment of the modern Greek state, there is a deeply rooted sense of threat in the Greek society, which has been greatly enhanced after the invasion in Cyprus in 1974 and, later, Turkey's revisionism in the Aegean.<sup>3</sup> The Cyprus issue was also the reason that Greece, one of the key bulwarks for the American interests in the region, to temporarily withdraw from the military structure of NATO. Attempting to decrease dependence on US, and while France appeared to be the most sincere supporter of its accession in the Community, the popular logo "Greece-France-Alliance" was not simply a rhetorical scheme, but also reflected the intention to ally with the politically most powerful country in western Europe.<sup>4</sup> But for a small-medium country with the intense threat from Turkey, the problem of dependence on the US remained unresolved despite efforts made by both the "Gaullist" Constantinos Karamanlis in the 1970s and the "non-aligned" Andreas Papandreou in the 1980s.<sup>5</sup> Both administrations did not exceed the bipolar restrictions in the regional system, neither did they question - despite their different rhetoric- the stakes of US in the region.<sup>6</sup> Both remained relatively firm in terms of their objectives, and although differently prioritized they can be summarized as follows:

- To ensure Arab support regarding the Cyprus issue;<sup>7</sup>
- To manage the country's heavy energy dependence on Arab oil;
- To further economic relations with Arab countries;
- To search for regional allies to balance US pressures on sensitive national issues.
- To try to isolate Turkey from the Arab countries and balance strategic co-operation developed between Turkey and Israel ;<sup>8</sup>
- To protect the Greek communities and ensure the privileges of the Orthodox Patriarchates in Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem as well as the St. Catherine Monastery at Sinai;
- The safeguarding of the Greek Diaspora communities and their interests, at least for as long as they were sustained.<sup>9</sup>

Greek foreign policy has been *grosso modo* Arab-friendly – despite minor differentiations depending on the administration, at least until 1990, when Constantine Mistotakis balanced this deficit normalizing relations with Israel. Greece's pro-Arab attitude has been shaped by four discourses: a historical, which emphasizes Greece's special linkage with the region; a geopolitical, which associates Greece's foreign policy with questions about its broader international orientation; a security, which constructs the Middle East as another field where the antagonistic Greek-Turkish relationship evolves; and a discourse on justice, which highlights the ethical dimension of the Arab-Israel conflict. The interaction between these four discourses has traditionally led to a pro-Palestinian inclination, which is still evident, despite the attempts of Greek governments to pursue a more equidistant approach.<sup>10</sup>

Although Greek-Arab relations were one of the most important issues of Andreas Papandreou's foreign policy at least at the beginning of his mandate, his unconditional Arab-friendly attitude mistakenly led to treating the Arab world as a whole, often led to the Greek involvement in the intra-Arab and Muslim disputes.<sup>11</sup> Greek foreign policy has been described as "irrational", "parochial", "aggressive", even "crazy" underlying the absence of a systemic institutional framework. The embargo on FYROM and the threatening to veto the EU-Turkey Customs Union are such examples. Ioakimidis stresses the role of politicians like Constantinos Karamanlis, Constantinos Mitsotakis and Andreas Papandreou, talented but often flamboyant and unpredictable, driving without the brakes because of the virtual absence of a capable and

trusted bureaucracy to check them, has plagued Greek foreign policy, and on occasion has led to isolation in the EU and NATO.<sup>12</sup> Although his analysis ends in 1996, he was right to predict that the technocratic administration of Costas Simitis will provide with a more responsible leadership for the country's national interest. The rise of Simitis' "modernizers" to the leadership of the country has steered Greece away from its nationalist foreign policy to a truly modernist-Europeanist direction<sup>13</sup> and from the so-called strategy of "conditional sanctions" to the one of "conditional rewards" in relation to Turkey's EU candidacy. The new policy of "conditional rewards" was received positively by the Turkish elite, who was now prepared to accept a compromise deal for the resolution of its long-standing conflict with an EU member. L' 'entente' between the two countries was exhibited further after the destructive earthquakes both countries experienced in 2000. But the causes for such an improvement should be explored in relation to the pressures caused by Europe.

With the drastic change in the logic of the conflict between Greece and Turkey and the new era in Turkey's EU relations, new orientations for the country's foreign policy emerged, including the Euro-Mediterranean setting. Although the Greece's participation in the EU has generally advanced regional relations, its Mediterranean policy has been generally reactive, thus letting other actors determine the parameters of the EU's respective policy. This was changed in the mid-1990s (Corfu European Council)<sup>14</sup> and even more in the framework of the latest Hellenic Presidency of the European Council. During her more recent EU Presidency, Greece promoted peace and stability in the region, as part of the European integration project and its regional security building through European Security and Defence Policy's (ESDP) Mediterranean dimension.<sup>15</sup> During a particularly difficult era of escalating crisis in the Middle East and the pending war in Iraq, Greek Presidency set up realistic and substantive objectives for progress to be made. This is reflected in the successful outcome of the Intermediary Euro-Med Ministerial Conference held in Crete on May 26-27, 2003, where the Presidency proposals found their way to the Conclusions and the Declaration of Crete was adopted unanimously by all Ministers.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, during the Presidency, a Parliamentary Assembly was also set up, with the participation of national and European parliamentarians, bestowing the Partnership with higher levels of legitimacy.<sup>17</sup>

Building on the EU's Mediterranean approach, the new regional space has gradually become a rediscovered land of opportunity for Greek policy-makers, representing an embodiment of a long-standing view that Greece has to strike a balance between its European, Balkan and Mediterranean foreign policy

priorities. Greece intensified its efforts to develop diplomatic links and to promote economic and cultural ties with southern Mediterranean states. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been active in promoting Greek business abroad by setting up a department to coordinate between NGOs, private sector organizations and Greek embassies and consulates in the Mediterranean to foster economic and commercial ties. Despite the many complex problems, efforts to foster both multilateral and bilateral links based on historical and cultural ties and affinities, as well as on common economic and commercial experience were intensified. More recently, Costas Karamanlis administration's strong support to Sarkozy's plan after the establishing of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), is presenting with new opportunities to upgrade the country's regional strategic and economic profile.

### **Explaining Greece's Positive Attitude towards the French Initiative**

Greece has supported the French initiative since its early inception, when only littoral countries were supposed to participate. It kept a positive stance towards the French initiative having continuously expressed the intention to contribute actively with its concrete proposals based upon specific principles (see below). The primary reason for this positive attitude lies at the fact that every effort which could enhance European interest for the region and strengthen cooperation ties among Mediterranean states has always been supported by Greece, especially those initiated from south European countries, such as the "Olive Group". Therefore, it was important for Greece to participate in the French initiative from the beginning, in order to be at the core of the countries to shape its' final outcome.

Secondly, that was a French initiative after all. The long-standing bilateral relations between the two countries have their roots in France's role during the Greek dictatorship, when a great number of prominent political figures moved to Paris, but also in the country's accession to the Community in 1981. Another such example is also the Union for the Mediterranean.<sup>18</sup> Hence, the visit of Nicola Sarkozy in Athens in June 2008 –the first visit of a French president since 1982–, undoubtedly helped to gain Karamanlis' support to his Mediterranean project, in addition to the full support he offered at NATO's 2008 Summit in Bucharest, regarding FYROM's accession in the Alliance with its constitutional name.

Thirdly, Athens view largely coincided with that of France on the Barcelona Process, which after more than twelve years of operation it has neither specified



its identity nor met the expectations it raised in the '90s. Indeed, the expectations and ideals advocated in the text of the preamble of the Barcelona Declaration such as to turn the Mediterranean basin into "an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity" has yet to emerge. The whole Barcelona project has been questioned, especially regarding the lack of contributing in the Middle East peace process, as well as, for the absence of any tangible achievements, capable to balance its gaps and failures in offering to the Mediterranean partners a genuine and balanced framework for co-operation.

Fourthly, Greece's good relations with Arab countries and the increased developmental aid that it has generated towards southern Mediterranean countries have not yet led to a consolidation of Greece's regional economic relations, or to increased FDI. Important economic opportunities could arise from the new initiative for Greece. Aiming to implement projects and create new economic opportunities across the Mediterranean, it offers the opportunity for Greece to enlarge its economic ties in the traditionally dominated by the France and Spain markets in western Mediterranean, parallel to the upgrade of existing frameworks of collaboration in the eastern shore, especially that with Egypt.<sup>19</sup>

Fifthly, today the area between northern Africa and southern Europe –the Mediterranean and Aegean seas– is a major transit route and focal point for those attempting migration or seeking asylum. In Greece, as in other southern Mediterranean countries, the chief sources of immigration are overwhelmingly Muslim, something that cultivates racism and these areas are depicted as zones of "endemic terrorism". Associating with Greece's position on the problem of illegal immigration, EU Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security Jacques Barrot warned that the influx of immigrants and refugees threatens to destabilize certain countries, also adding that were their EU partners to leave them on their own, this problem would probably be exploited by extremists.<sup>20</sup> Greek society has been alarmed recently with the issue of increasing illegal migration. Barely a day goes by without a horrific report of desperate groups of migrants stranded or drowning in the attempt to reach Europe, and one of Sarkozy's main priorities is to ensure tighter immigration and police controls to prevent migrants leaving their country of origin in the first place.<sup>21</sup> Due to its complex sea-borders, boats full of refugees arrive in Greece from various Mediterranean places, but mostly departing from Turkey, Libya<sup>22</sup> and Egypt<sup>23</sup> and often remain (illegally) for years. Greece expects that the UfM will have a positive effect on this issue of increased internal interest.

Sixthly, the French initiative provided certain advantages for Greek foreign policy in the management of Greek-Turkish relations, by presenting a realistic alternative for Turkey's stalled prospect of EU full-membership.<sup>24</sup> As the creation of the UfM did not finally obstruct Turkey's accession negotiations, then the Greek strategy to "socialize the enemy"<sup>25</sup> could continue without any obstacles. Greece has adopted from the mid 90s' a comprehensive policy to support Turkey's accession process and if this prospect is to be driven away - either because of increasing opposition in the EU and its member states or due to internal pressures in Turkey-<sup>26</sup>, then this strategy would reach its limits. In such a case, the UfM could be used as an alternative means for Athens in the management of relations with Turkey. Hence, it was important that Sarkozy's initiative (with Chancellor Merkel's support) opened the discussion for a different EU-Turkey future without Greece being at the forefront of this idea. Otherwise, there was the risk of Turkey turning to a different direction, forming exclusive bilateral relations with US, or closer cooperation with the Muslim world,<sup>27</sup> something which would diminish Athens' ability to press Ankara in bilateral negotiations.

Finally there is the issue of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).<sup>28</sup> Greece has not yet claimed an exclusive economic zone in the Aegean, although it is entitled to do so, as per UNCLOS 1982, as well as customary international law. The reason for its inaction is related to Greco-Turkish relations.<sup>29</sup> As Kariotis observes, "[f]or more than thirty years now, Greece has been insisting that its only dispute is of legal nature and is related to the delimitation of the continental shelf of the Aegean. This makes particularly happy Turkish policy makers as Greece does not discuss the issue of EEZ. The main reason for this great elation is that Greece could gain much from the delimitation of the Aegean Sea".<sup>30</sup> Kastelorizo, Greece's south-eastern island is securing contact with the Cypriot EEZ, something that restricts significantly the Turkish EEZ expansion in eastern Mediterranean with Egypt. As Cyprus has moved to the delimitation and now promotes the development of her own EEZ, Turkey is attempting to create a grey area in the Aegean by starting oil-research project south of Cyprus and Kastelorizo.<sup>31</sup> Greece by no means should harden or militarize this dispute. Before that there are political pressures that can do the job, including the friendly framework of the UfM and the alliance with France, who's numerous overseas *départements* and territories scattered on all oceans of the planet, compose the second-largest EEZ in the world, covering 11,035,000 km.

## Dilemmas and Principles

Before it was emptied to a large degree from its initial inception by inter-European negotiations in the first quarter of 2008,<sup>32</sup> the French initiative has generated questions for Greek foreign policy, including first of all, the question of overlapping structures in the Mediterranean. The new Union could overload the already overhauled framework of European policies in the Mediterranean, considering its parallel function with other schemes and regional initiatives. Increased worries were already expressed regarding the Barcelona Process and the ENP co-function in different domains. There is a clear distinction between the region-building logic of the Barcelona Process and the logic of bilateralism and differentiation through conditionality exemplified by the ENP. Greece has a special interest in the ENP's further development, and supports its geographical cohesion to balance between its already working "eastern" dimension and the one still to be functional in the South. The UfM actually draws on the ENP's model: it is an intergovernmental project, democracy and human rights are out, security and stability are paramount, a buffer zone is being created.<sup>33</sup>

A second related question regards the issue of participation. The initial French proposal would consist of sixteen southern European, Middle Eastern and North African countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. That proposal made the new initiative to resemble an upgraded version of the Five plus Five Initiative for western Mediterranean. As several European countries insisted that all EU members should participate and became clear that it was not possible for the non-Mediterranean states to be excluded, Athens adopted the view of the voluntary participation.<sup>34</sup> However, from the beginning of the initiative Greece has supported the need of maintaining the Barcelona Process at the heart of Euro-Mediterranean relations,<sup>35</sup> as well as, the need for the EU to pay more attention to all coastal Mediterranean countries, including those in western Balkans, for which Greece has pressed to be included in the new framework.

Another question relates to the critical issue of financing the UfM projects given that most of the appropriate EU funds are already committed until 2013. France has proposed the establishment of a Mediterranean Investment Bank, as well as, financing from sources, such as local authorities, international investment organizations, private investments from the Gulf countries and even from the creation of a Fund for immigrants from the Mediterranean countries, or the establishment of a non EU financial body. However, Greece considered the EU as the only institution that could finance effectively large-scale regional

projects. The amount of investments for the implementation of different programs will be enormous and for their management an effective bureaucratic mechanism would be required. Hence, European Commission did not seem to agree and made it clear that it is not possible for the budget channeled through the ENP to be used for the implementation of programs from the UfM. In this framework Greece proposed the creation of a unit in the framework of the European Investment Bank (in which mechanisms are already familiar and there is no risk of further bureaucracy or delays), as well as the creation of three Mutual Funds in the form of 'private equities' financed 80% from the private sector and 20% from the public sector of the member states.<sup>36</sup>

Greece's support to the UfM is based on the following principles:

- The principle of co-ownership. This principle, absent from EU's Barcelona project, is meaning equal participation and in the framework of the UfM it was expected to give new impetus in Euro-Mediterranean relations. Establishing a co-presidency has maybe increased and improved the balance of cooperation. However, since the Gaza war in December 2008, "France, in its capacity as co-president and self-proclaimed leader of the Union, has allowed the Arab group to kidnap the entire Union". Moreover, Schumacher notes that "the decision of the EU's Swedish presidency to allow France to continue to co-chair all high-level meetings of the Union for the Mediterranean on the EU's behalf, is a situation that puts it at odds with the EU's system of representation on foreign policy and with stipulations in the Lisbon treaty, ... increasing [at the same time] the risks of poor management and empty promises."<sup>37</sup>
- The principle of complementarity. The UfM should be complementary and not substitute to the wider Barcelona process. As Prime Minister Karamanlis told reporters at the end of the EU spring Summit in Brussels, "the specific proposal should not be a substitute of current forms of cooperation, such as the Barcelona Process or the Union's Neighborhood Policy, but function in a complementary and auxiliary manner"<sup>38</sup>. Complementarity is of great importance for regional integration.
- The principle of horizontal action. Projects should not only benefit specific states but should also be of added value for the wider geographical area. It would be worthless for example for an infrastructure project in the southern shore to take place without considering the relevant infrastructures in the north. As southern partners have often expressed their disappointment for the inherent asymmetry, existing infrastructures in the North should be

expanded in the South, establishing a real network of cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Finding and connecting the missing links between the two shores of the Mediterranean could boost the utilization of regional developmental programs.<sup>39</sup>

- The principle of balanced development in both sectors of the Mediterranean. As the opportunities for economic development and cooperation are more in the western part, a balanced distribution of opportunities is required. Therefore UfM projects should be jointly agreed on a fair basis and the financial instrument to be established should only function effectively but also with high levels of transparency.
- The principle of unanimity in the decisions regarding the UfM projects. These should be implemented according to the principle of variable geometry, as to prevent blocking from other stakeholders. Variable geometry also means that three or more states can implement projects under the existing institutions, without any further political approval. Projects should involve partners both from shores of the Mediterranean and have realistic budgets and explicit timetables. Regarding their financing, they should aim to mobilize additional resources, beyond those already planned in the framework of the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument. The idea is to attract more resources from international and financial organizations and the private sector.

After the Summit in Paris, Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis noted that “it has really been an impressive meeting that marked the peak of the French President Mr. Sarkozy’s initiative” but she mainly referred to existing and anticipated project proposals, pointing out the new economic opportunities for the country.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, the UfM is expected to have an added value by implementing specific projects with immediate and tangible benefits for Mediterranean peoples, as well as, by contributing positively to the region’s overall economic and societal development. The definition of priority sectors was greatly appreciated as Greece has shown special interest for implementing projects on “sea corridors” to improve connections between Mediterranean ports, in developing renewable energy sources, boosting cooperation for illegal immigration, a cleanup of the Mediterranean’s waters and coastal areas and greater cooperation in civil protection and response to natural disasters, such as fires and earthquakes.<sup>41</sup>

Greece, beyond its political commitment, is also expected to play an important role in the implementation of projects due to its institutional role

as an under-secretary for the UfM.<sup>42</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has shown increased interest in coordinating the preparation of proposals in different domains and launched a Public Consultation process for projects to be implemented within the UfM framework.<sup>43</sup> All priority areas of the UfM are important for Greece but, given the magnitude of the country's merchant marine and the extreme length of its' sea frontiers, it naturally places special emphasis on those related to Sea. More specifically, Greece has prepared to submit programs in three areas: the so called "Motorways of the Sea"<sup>44</sup>, the solar air conditioning<sup>45</sup> and the water pro-active management<sup>46</sup>. Moreover, Athens has actively supported the framework for the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI). To that end, an Academic Consortium and a Research Centre on the Eastern Mediterranean were established at the University of the Aegean (Rhodes) to promote research in the areas of conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage, environment, local and regional security and migration and make proposals on the political and economic dimension of Euro-Mediterranean relations.<sup>47</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also promotes a proposal for the construction of a shipyard in Egypt, as well as, the proposal of the University of Piraeus (Department of Maritime Studies) to establish a centre for the study of transportation in the eastern Mediterranean.

As Greece has shown increased interest for the development of "Land and Sea Highways" it will also be important to implement projects relating to increase maritime security in the eastern Mediterranean. Today, all the warning signs indicate the highest states of alert for terrorist attacks against the maritime sector worldwide. The October 2002 suicide bombing of the French tanker *Limburg* in the Gulf of Aden serves as a stark reminder that military and economic vessels, as well as, cruise ships represent targets to terrorist groups. In the Rand report entitled "Maritime and Terrorism: Risk and Liability"<sup>48</sup>, maritime terrorism risk includes cruise ships and ferries. International terrorism is the greatest danger to the maritime sector, both against military and commercial ships of varying sizes navigating Mediterranean waterways, or against ports and related facilities. Ports, indeed, are threatened either as actual targets for attack or as entry points for smuggled weapons, including those of mass destruction. Another potential component in this concept is for terrorist groups to lease ships and boats to transport weapons from a multiplicity of suppliers to their intended recipients in and around the Mediterranean. Acts of sea piracy, the smuggling of narcotics, arms and humans via sea routes, and the use of waterways by terrorist groups are interconnected. Due to its complex

sea-geography, Greece should explore projects enhancing co-operation in this strategic area of contemporary international affairs.

Additionally, one more parameter could be added regarding “sea corridors” securitization that could also link the issue of illegal migration. Following tougher restrictions on legal entry in many European countries, the maritime route has become the best chance to enter Europe for many would-be immigrants and refugees. While European countries try to come up with adequate solutions to illegal immigration, the situation is pressing and collaboration with countries of origin and transit is crucial.<sup>49</sup> Greece and southern European countries should utilize their co-operation in the framework of the UfM to arrive at a common policy and means to address effectively this critical issue, including the active collaboration of its neighbours to take illegal refugees back (readmission agreements), as well as, technical/financial assistance and equipment for a more thorough control of southern partners borders. In parallel, FRONTEX should be substantially strengthened, able to deploy a sufficient number of coast guard control boats to intercept refugees on the high seas and return them to their ports of origin. This will require a friendly and active cooperation from its neighbour governments.<sup>50</sup> In the short term, the reinforcement of the “Poseidon operation” at the Greek-Bulgarian-Turkish borders (one of the important routes of illegal migration to the EU) and the engagement of FRONTEX is expected to provide an added value to the national border-management system is a good case in point.<sup>51</sup> Ideally however, one should immediately investigate the feasibility of establishing the FRONTEX operation in the Mediterranean into a permanent Euro-Mediterranean Coastguard Agency (EMCA) that would be mandated to co-ordinate the co-operative security network with a mission statement and plan of action similar to those carried out by a coastguard. The EMCA should initially carry out stop and search exercises in two principal areas, maritime safety and maritime pollution, while at a later stage it should be enhanced by monitoring other aspects of security, including trafficking of narcotics and illegal migrants.<sup>52</sup>

## Final Remarks

For many years Greek foreign and security policy makers maintained particular concerns regarding cooperation in Mediterranean, mainly restricted by the overarching framework of tense Greco-Turkish relations.<sup>53</sup> With its accession in the European Community in the early 1980s, Greece has

enhanced further the strategic significance of the Mediterranean for Europe, not least because its' borders constitute a crucial fault-line with the Muslim world and an important shipping route for the transportation of energy from the oil-rich surrounding areas to Europe. Since the mid-90s', initially through EU's multilateral approach and more recently through the more traditional patterns of international relations that the UfM has brought in Euro-Mediterranean politics, new opportunities for Greece in the Mediterranean have arisen in order:

- To enhance its strategic importance in the Mediterranean by maintaining strong bilateral relations with the most powerful maritime actor in the region, namely the US. Greece and its seas are of great strategic and economic value, as its numerous islands have been one of the major maritime routes throughout history. While the post-Cold War shifts in international relations have downgraded the strategic importance of Greece, crises and operations in the Middle East and the Gulf have had the opposite effect with reference to the strategic importance of Crete. Due to its geographic location, Crete is an ideal base to control and access the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean, as well as North Africa and the Suez Canal.
- To secure the continuity of the Greek defence space with that of Turkey's in the Middle East. The recent upgrade of Turkey's strategic role in the Middle East and the Muslim world should be balanced with the advancement of Greece's strategic value for both the US and European powers, firstly through the use of its FIR for strategic operations in the Mediterranean; and secondly, through enhancing its image as a maritime power able to contribute in the regional crises, as shown in the 2006 crisis in Lebanon.
- To enhance its regional profile by participating in both the Middle East Peace Process and the new Euro-Mediterranean structure. Taking advantage of its geopolitical location in the eastern hub of the Mediterranean, but also of the good neighborhood relations with both Arab countries and Israel, today Greece is called upon to play an important role in regional affairs.

These would require the significant upgrade of its foreign policy's Mediterranean dimension by devoting more resources in policy oriented research and in advancing its Mediterranean diplomatic team. Greece, as a credible regional actor, should continue to contribute to its full capacity in the dynamics of Euro-Mediterranean order-building and the gradual systemic convergence of southern countries with new initiatives to balance the over-enlarged EU and new strategic partnerships in the project-oriented UfM.<sup>54</sup>



Athens has actively participated in the establishment of the UfM, convinced that it shall bring about an essential upgrading in the quality of cooperation between the EU and its Mediterranean countries, primarily through the implementation of specific projects. These projects should have a regional and sub-regional dimension, as well as a strong developmental, environmental, social and human character, resulting in direct and tangible benefits for the Mediterranean peoples. This is precisely where the added value of the "Union of Projects" lies for Greece and the southern EU members. Perhaps even more so in the framework of the current economic recession Greek and other southern European Leaders hope that the slowly emerging southern Mediterranean markets is what they need to catch up with the northern EU economies, and that Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Lebanon will do for them what eastern Europe has done for Germany and Britain.

The function of the UfM and the implementation of the envisaged projects will depend heavily, as did during the wearisome decade of the Barcelona Process, on the situation in the Middle East. Only a year since its founding, it has become evident that the idea the UfM was established not in spite of the Israel-Palestine conflict, but because of it, is proving to be too simplistic.<sup>55</sup> As the Summits of the Heads of States and governments are established in the framework of the UfM, all controversial issues should be in agenda of discussions, regardless of the fact that some would prefer to abstain from such discussions to avoid political stalemate. Greece supports the view that political challenges in the region should not be left outside the UfM. It is argued that the UfM would only be successful if there could be found ways of submitting proposals and taking decisions notwithstanding relations among Mediterranean countries. Hence, issues such as illegal immigration and counter-terrorism should find their way in discussions. This is particularly important regarding Turkey's EU membership, because, as the EU's frontiers expand, drawing in countries that used to be buffers between First World prosperity and Third World poverty, the lines of demarcation between affluence and misery, democracy and extremism, become crucial security frontiers. If Turkey eventually accedes, Europe will border Syria, Iran, Iraq, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and illegal immigration will become a real security issue for Europe.

The UfM though primarily of economic drive, if it remains limited to a narrow framework of additional developmental programs for the South - although they are indeed necessary-, for sure, southern Mediterranean partners do not only expect additional EU aid for their economic development, but

also deeper cooperation leading to a community capable to deal with the political and socio-cultural challenges they face. The focus on the implementation of projects should not set aside critical region-wide issues, such as democracy-promotion, political reform and the strengthening of civil society, not to mention the prevention of another major outbreak of violence. No doubt, pressures for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict should be increased, but perhaps more important from a Greek perspective is that the chances for regional co-operation would dramatically increase if a viable solution for the Cyprus question is found and Greek-Turkish relations could further normalize, so that both countries can take advantage of the benefits stemming from their position at the regional crossroads. Greek and Turkish Cypriots are in talks that, over the next year, will decide whether the two divided sides of the Mediterranean island will reunite, or whether, after three decades of failed attempts, they will continue the slide to full partition. Considering that Barcelona Process' political and security pillar experienced the greatest difficulties, it is rather paradoxical for the ambitious UfM to avoid discussions on major regional questions, instead of facing up to the challenges they generate through a commonly formulated agenda.

## NOTES

1. Thanos Veremis, "International Relations in Southern Europe" in John Loughlin (ed.), *Southern European Studies Guide*, London, Bauker-Saur, 1993, p. 210.
2. Christos Rozakis, "Greek foreign policy 1974-85: Modernization and the international role of a small state" [Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική 1974-85: Εκσυγχρονισμός και ο διεθνής ρόλος ενός μικρού κράτους] in Antonis Manassis *et al.* (eds.), *Greece in Motion* [Η Ελλάδα σε Εξέλιξη], Athens, Exandas, 1986, p. 185.
3. See among others in Dimitris Conostas, "Systemic Influences on a Weak, Aligned State in the Post-1974 Era" in Dimitris Conostas (ed.), *The Greek Turkish Conflict in the 1990s: Domestic and External Influences*, Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1991, pp. 129-139.
4. Panayotis Tsakaloyiannis, "Greek Foreign Policy and Systemic Change" [Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική και Συστημική Αλλαγή] in Constantinos Arvanitopoulos and Marilenna Koppa (eds.), *30 Years Greek Foreign Policy - 1974-2004* [30 Χρόνια Ελληνικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής, 1974-2004], Livanis, Athens, 2005, p. 76 and p. 445.

5. Dimitris Keridis, "Greece and the Tension in the Euroatlantic Relations" [Η Ελλάδα και η Ένταση στις Ευρω-Ατλαντικές Σχέσεις] in Arvanitopoulos and Korpa, *op.cit.*, p. 76.
6. See in detail in Sotiris Roussos, "The Greek Middle East Policy: Between 'Operational Mentality', 'Internal Policy' and 'New Challenges'" [Η Ελληνική Πολιτική στη Μέση Ανατολή: Μεταξύ 'Επιχειρησιακής Νοοτροπίας', 'Εσωτερικής πολιτικής' και 'Νέων προκλήσεων'] in Arvanitopoulos and Korpa, *op.cit.*, 2005, pp. 79-98 and Vivi Kefala, "Greek Foreign Policy in the Middle East: 1990-2002" [Η Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική στη Μέση Ανατολή: 1990-2002] in Panayotis J. Tsakonas (ed.), *Contemporary Greek Foreign Policy – An Overall Approach* [Σύγχρονη Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική: Μια Συνολική Προσέγγιση], Athens, I. Sideris, 2003, p. 675.
7. Regarding Cyprus, the most crucial moment was in November 1983 and the proclamation of the Turkish Cypriot pseudo-State, when Greece launched an appeal in order to gain the support of the Arab countries. "A determining role against its recognition by the Muslim States was undoubtedly the firm resistance of the USA vis-à-vis this movement and more generally the status quo brought about by the Turkish invasion". Marios. L. Evriviades, "The US and the Search for a Negotiated Solution in Cyprus" in R. C. Sharma and Stavros Epaminondas (eds.), *Cyprus in Search of Peace and Justice*, p. 104-5, quoted in Roussos, *op.cit.*, p. 89.
8. Charalambos Tsardanides, *The 'Renewed' Mediterranean Policy of European Community and Greece's Mediterranean Policy* [Η «Ανανεωμένη» Μεσογειακή Πολιτική της Ευρωπαϊκής Κοινότητας και η Ελλάδα], Greek Centre of European Studies and Research, Athens, Papazisis, 1992, p. 102.
9. Thanos Dokos and Fillipos Pierros, *The Mediterranean towards the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Greece position* [Η Μεσόγειος προς τον 21<sup>ο</sup> Αιώνα. Η Θέση της Ελλάδας], Athens, Papazisis, 1995, pp. 292-3.
10. Apostolos Agnantopoulos, "Greece and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Discursive Constructivist Perspective", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 2007, pp. 359-379.
11. Rozakis, "Greek foreign policy 1974-85", *op. cit.*, p. 186.
12. Panayotis C. Ioakimidis, "The Model of Foreign Policy-Making in Greece: Personalities versus Institutions" in Stavridis et.al, *op.cit.*, 1999, p. 140.
13. See among others Dimitris Kairidis, "The Foreign Policy of Modernisation" [Η Εξωτερική Πολιτική του Εκσυγχρονισμού] in Tsakonas, *op.cit.*, p. 298.
14. In June 1994 the Corfu European Council gave the initial impetus and in its communications of October 1994 and 8 March 1995 the European Commission tabled its proposals for a EMP that were endorsed by the European Council at its Essen and Cannes meetings in December 1994 and June 1995 respectively.

15. Following the mobilization of the Greek Presidency during the Informal Conference of Defense Ministers in Rethymno, in October 4-5, 2002, the prospect of ESDP have been set on a more stable basis. An additional line of communication was opened regarding the structure and nature of ESDP, for both clarifying European intentions and dispelling possible misinterpretations in the Mediterranean South. Greek proposals for extra-transparency, trust-building and the institutionalization of political dialogue in the Mediterranean enhanced the Barcelona Process security dimension. See more analytically in Dimitris K. Xenakis and Dimitris N. Chrysoschoou, "The 2003 Hellenic Presidency of the European Union: Mediterranean Perspectives on the ESDP", *Discussion Papers*, C 128, Center for European Integration, University of Bonn, 2003.
16. This document was prepared by the Presidency and contained the basic guidelines for the envisaged inter-cultural dialogue. The objectives, principles and activities of the Anna Lindh Foundation were also agreed with the view to promoting further the inter-cultural dialogue, as well as the role of the Civil Forum and its contribution to the Barcelona Process was upgraded, together with specific references on how to strengthen the role of women. Dimitris K. Xenakis, "The contribution of Greece to strengthening Euro-Mediterranean relations", *Perceptions*, Special Euro-Med Issue, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2003, pp. 173-208.
17. Roderick Pace, Stelios Stavrides and Dimitris K. Xenakis, "Parliaments and Civil Society Cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2004, p. 79.
18. Yannis Valinakis, "Together in the Union for the Mediterranean" [Μαζί στην Ένωση για τη Μεσόγειο], *Kathimerini* (Greek Daily), 1 June 2008.
19. Speech of Foreign Minister Ms. Dora Bakoyannis Speech of Foreign Minister Ms. Dora Bakoyannis at the Permanent Parliamentary Committee of National Defense and Foreign Affairs and the Permanent Special Parliamentary Committee of European Affairs of the Hellenic Parliament for the Union for the Mediterranean, 23/7/2008, [http://www.aidfunding.mfa.gr/bpufm/nea\\_9\\_gr.htm](http://www.aidfunding.mfa.gr/bpufm/nea_9_gr.htm)
20. Commissioner Barrot was harsh on Turkey, while touching on the waves of illegal immigration leaving the Turkish shores to arrive on the Greek islands. He branded the fact that Turkey allows small vessels to sail from its shores and reach the Greek islands as unacceptable, since it had managed to put an end to the immigration waves during the 2004 Olympic Games. He then stressed that the uncontrollable waves of immigrants have really adverse influence on Greece, while the Greek authorities are swarmed with asylum petitions. See "Barrot Calls for Solidarity to Address Immigration", 14 July 2009 <http://news.ert.gr/en/24800-o-mparo-zita-allileggyi-gia-tilathromet-anasteysi.htm>
21. Driven by internal motives, Nicolas Sarkozy had a strong interest in building a consensus and in gaining votes from French migrants of Mediterranean origin.

- See Dorothee Schmid, "Is France back in the Mediterranean?", Conference on *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP): Perspectives from the Mediterranean EU Countries*, Institute of International Economic Relations, University of Crete, October 26, 2007.
22. Martin Kreickenbaum, "Who is responsible for the Libyan refugee boat tragedy?", *WSWS*, April 8, 2009, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2009/apr2009/libya08.shtml>
23. With an agreement signed in 1998, Greece and Egypt have institutionalised political consultations at the highest level on a six-monthly basis and between Foreign Ministers once per year. One subject of particular concern to both countries is the increasing movement of illegal migrants from Egypt to Greece over recent years. The authorities of both countries are working closely together to tackle this phenomenon, while negotiations are under way to prepare a repatriation treaty. See more analytically in <http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/Policy/Geographic+Regions/Mediterranean+-+Middle+East/Bilateral+Relations/Egypt/>
24. Twenty-two countries have negotiated for EU membership in its history, and all were ultimately offered accession. But French President Sarkozy has long blocked Turkey's entry and his objections are no symbolic snag. France is a key EU country, and Paris's veto has frustrated Turkey's EU hopes. See for example Selçuk Gültaşlı, "France under Sarkozy is a hopeless case for Turkey", *Sunday Zaman*, 6 July 2008, <http://www.sundayszaman.com/sunday/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=146753>
25. Panayotis J. Tsakonas, *The Incomplete Breakthrough in Greco-Turkish Relations: Grasping Greece's Socialization Strategy*, New York and Basingstoke, Palgrave-MacMillan, 2009.
26. Bringing Turkey to Europe's door has been Prime Minister Erdogan's epochal achievement. However, over the four years since Turkey opened formal negotiations to join the EU, enthusiasm seems to be lost. Since accession talks began, the populist instincts of Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party led its leaders to conclude that the reforms necessary to join would erode its popularity and thus dropped the idea. Grassroots anti-European thinking in the party, a legacy of its Islamist pedigree, accelerated this process. This emboldened Sarkozy to say no to Ankara on the grounds that Turkey is failing to become European—and the more times France vetoes Turkey's membership, the more Turks turn against the EU, thinking that the Union will never grant Ankara membership. See Soner Cagaptay, "Why Turkey Must Get In", *Newsweek*, 29 July 2009, <http://www.newsweek.com/id/206912>
27. The last two years Turkey is shifting away from US and Israel towards Arab radicalism. Although for years maintained close ties with Israel and Ankara acted

as a go-between for Jerusalem and Arab capitals, after Israel's Gaza campaign, Turkey is taking a strong anti-Israel and anti-Western stance. In Davos Meeting Erdogan has called the Israeli assault a "crime against humanity" and stormed out after accusing Shimon Peres of having a "guilt complex for killing people" and blasting the West for remaining "spectators". Turkey has also strengthening ties with Iran, including intelligence-sharing on Kurdish insurgents. At the same time Turkish policymakers insist that Ankara isn't taking sides. As the new Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoglu usually says "[w]e have more than one dimension in our foreign policy". Owen Matthews and Sami Kohen, "Turkey's New Tilt", *Newsweek*, January 31, 2009, <http://www.newsweek.com/id/182553?tid=relatedcl>

28. Under UN Convention on the Law of The Sea (UNCLOS), an EEZ is a sea-zone over which a state has special rights over the exploration and use of marine resources. It stretches from the edge of the state's territorial sea out to 200 nautical miles from its coast. In casual use, the term may include the territorial sea and even the continental shelf beyond the 200 mile limit. See more analytically in William R. Slomanson, *Fundamental Perspectives on International Law*, 5<sup>th</sup> edn, Belmont, CA, Thomson-Wadsworth, 2006, p. 294.
29. Turkey claims that the Aegean Sea's status as a semi-closed sea affords it a special nature (unlike other semi-closed seas, like the Adriatic, or even fully enclosed seas as the Black Sea). Moreover, Turkey is not among the signatories of UNLOS, which allows countries to expand the width of their territorial waters up to 12 nautical miles. Even though Turkey is a persistent objector to the relevant article of UNCLOS, it has expanded its own territorial waters in the Black Sea to 12 nautical miles. In 1995, Turkey declared that if Greece expands the width of her territorial waters over 6 nautical miles, Turkey would conceive this action as a containment attempt and a direct offence to her sovereignty and therefore the Turkish Parliament decided that if Greece attempts to expand the width of her territorial waters it would be a cause of war (*casus belli*).
30. Theodore C. Kariotis, "A Greek Exclusive Economic Zone in the Aegean Sea", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 2007, p. 56.
31. The decision was taken in July 2008 and the first attempt was with a Norwegian flag ship last November. After Greek Ministry's complains, Norwegians left, but as the head of Turkish Navy Metin Atats pointed "I recommend that eastern Mediterranean will become a hotbed of tensions and conflicts due to the energy importance it will gain in the near future. Because of its oil reserves it will be transformed into a second Arab Gulf. Turkey should be alarmed and ready to react". Stavros Lygeros, "Creating Crisis Mechanism" [Μηχανισμός πρόκλησης κρίσης], *Kathimerini* (daily press), July 24, /2009 [http://news.kathimerini.gr:80/4dcgi/\\_w\\_articles\\_columns\\_100103\\_24/07/2009\\_323319](http://news.kathimerini.gr:80/4dcgi/_w_articles_columns_100103_24/07/2009_323319). See also on this

issue Theodore C. Kariotis, “Kastelorizo and the Law of the Seas” [Το Καστελόριζο και το Δίκαιο της Θάλασσας], *Philelefttheros* (Cyprus Sunday Press), July 25, 2009, p. 11, <http://www.philenews.com/AssetService/Image.ashx?t=2&pg10322&>

32. At the December 2007 meeting between France, Italy and Spain, after the latter’s proposal it was decided that the initial idea of a “Mediterranean Union” will be transformed to a “Union *for* the Mediterranean”. During this meeting the guidelines of the initiative were made more explicit making clear that it will not replace existing structures, such as the EMP and ENP, but instead, complement and enhance them, as well as, that it will not be used as an alternative proposal for the Turkish accession process or an impediment in the Croatian Stabilization and Association Agreement. By March 2008, after co-ordinated pressures France had to pull back and incorporate the UfM in the wider Euro-Mediterranean mechanism, thus allowing for the participation of all EU members.
33. Raffaella Del Sarto at the Conference “Mediterranean Unions’ Visions and Politics”, RAMSES, St Antony’s College, 7 July 2008, Conference report: [www.sant.ox.ac.uk/esc/ramses/MUconference\\_report.pdf](http://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/esc/ramses/MUconference_report.pdf)
34. As Greek Prime Minister put it “... a policy for the Mediterranean would capitalise on Community funds and therefore all EU member-states must participate in it”. “Greek PM Karamanlis hails presentation of Mediterranean Union proposal at EU Summit”, *ANA-MPA*, March 14, 2008 <http://www.ana.gr/anaweb/user/showitem?service=132&listid=NewsList132&listpage=1&docid=6243441>
35. See <http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/European+Policy/External+Relations+Enlargement/Euro+mediterranean+Dialogue/>
36. Greece proposed: a) The creation of a Mediterranean Group within the European Investment Bank aiming to finance Euro-Med programs and initiatives. The argument is that the EIB has already acquired the necessary infrastructure, while the creation of a new Mediterranean Investment and Development Bank would slow down the process, spending most of its’ capital in functional and administrative issues. B) The establishment of Mediterranean Development Funds in the form of Private Equities. The financing of projects and initiatives in each domain would be between 2 and 5 billion euro for each, mainly attracted from the private sector, but also from member states of the UfM and the EU. These funds would be channeled for infrastructure projects with the private sector participation in funding enterprising initiatives etc. c) The upgrade of each country’s Enterprising Missions. Speech of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Petros Doukas at the Mediterranean Economic Forum, February 22, 2008, <http://www.petrosdoukas.gr/default.aspx?id=2&aid=83> See also “Greece intends to play leading role in the Union for the

- Mediterranean” [Βούληση της Ελλάδας να πρωταγωνιστήσει στην Ένωση για τη Μεσόγειο], *EMEA Business Monitor*, 5 March 2009, <http://www.emea.gr/default.asp?ElementId=15806&pPage=2>
37. Tobias Schumacher, “A fading Mediterranean dream”, *European Voice*, 16 July 2009, p. 7
38. “Greek PM Karamanlis hails presentation of Mediterranean Union proposal at EU Summit”, *ANA-MPA*, March 14, 2008, <http://www.ana.gr/anaweb/user/showitem?service=132&listid=NewsList132&listpage=1&docid=6243441>
39. Discussion with Secretary General for European Affairs, Dimitris K. Katsoudas, July 19, 2009.
40. Speech of Foreign Minister Ms. Dora Bakoyannis at the Permanent Parliamentary Committee of National Defense and Foreign Affairs and the Permanent Special Parliamentary Committee of European Affairs of the Hellenic Parliament for the Union for the Mediterranean, July 23, 2008, [http://www.aidfunding.mfa.gr/bpufm/nea\\_9\\_gr.htm](http://www.aidfunding.mfa.gr/bpufm/nea_9_gr.htm)
41. Discussion with Secretary General for European Affairs, Dimitris K. Katsoudas, July 19, 2009.
42. At the Euro-Mediterranean meeting in Marseille in November 2008 it was decided that a small and flexible, mainly of technical nature, Secretary will be established for the examination/evaluation of the projects; Headquarters will be based in Barcelona and it will be assisted by five under-secretaries. Greece has one for the first period; the remaining four are from Italy, Malta, the Palestinian Authority and Israel.
43. See [http://aidfunding.mfa.gr/bpufm/index\\_en.htm](http://aidfunding.mfa.gr/bpufm/index_en.htm)
44. The upgrade of combined land and maritime transfers to ease the flow of goods and peoples in eastern Mediterranean ports is based on the logic of diversion of cargos transportation from land to more environmental friendly transportations by the sea. Given the important know-how acquired from participation in the planning and implementation of the maritime corridor of the South-East Mediterranean and its expansion to the Black Sea, Greece submitted to the Commission a proposal for the improvement of combined transportations and the connection of Greek ports with these of Egypt, Libya and Syria; the creation of an observatory for the Mediterranean maritime highways aiming to gather, observe and record transportation flows and the functionality of the maritime highways; and the organization of a Ministerial Summit in Greece for these issues.
45. The initial idea came from Germany, but Greece also contacted other countries, such as France and Egypt, in order to promote this idea. Although European countries use the advantages of solar energy in numerous ways, the



Mediterranean countries are limited only in systems for hot water. To that end Greece supports the extended use of solar energy systems.

46. The proposal aims to establish a network for better coordination in the proactive management of the challenges from the lack of water sources, aggravated by radical climate changes in the Mediterranean. See further Dimitris K. Katsoudas, "Union for the Mediterranean. From inception to implementation" [Ένωση για τη Μεσόγειο. Από την ιδέα στην εφαρμογή], *Evropaiki Proklisi*, February 2009, <http://proeuro.gr/articles.php?artid=2965&lang=1&catid=1&fdid=23&fdpage=1>
47. Michael D. Greenberg, Peter Chalk, Henry H. Willis, Ivan Khilko and David S. Ortiz, *Maritime and Terrorism: Risk and Liability*, Center for Terrorism Risk Management Policy, RAND, 2006.
48. Sarah Colisson, "Security or Securitisation? Migration and the Pursuit of Freedom, Security and Justice in the Euro-Mediterranean Area", *EuroMeSCo e-news*, No. 19, 2007, [http://www.euromesco.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=blogcategory&id=57&Itemid=38&lang=en](http://www.euromesco.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=57&Itemid=38&lang=en)
49. Calleya and Xenakis, "France's Mediterranean Initiative", *op.cit.*
50. George Tassiopoulos, "Greece and Sarkozy's Union for the Mediterranean", April 9, 2009, <http://jmecelabblog.wordpress.com/2009/04/09/greece-and-sarkozy's-union-for-the-mediterranean>
51. See more analytically in Stephen C. Calleya and Dimitris K. Xenakis, "Security and Strategic Co-operation in the Mediterranean: Confidence Building and Conflict Prevention" [Ασφάλεια και Στρατηγική Συνεργασία στη Μεσόγειο: Οικοδόμηση Εμπιστοσύνης και Πρόληψη Συγκρούσεων], *Policy Papers*, No. 11, Athens, ELIAMEP, October 2008.
52. Relations with Turkey remain tense since the end of the Cold War, while the traditional cycle of "conflict-negotiation-conflict" prevailed as the common feature of the new era. For a more detailed analysis see Thanos P. Dokos and Panagiotis J. Tsakons, "Greek-Turkish Relations in the Post-Cold War Era" in Chrestos G. Kollias, Gülay Günlük-Şenesen and Gülden Ayman (eds.), *Greece and Turkey in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Conflict or Cooperation. A Political Economy Perspective*, New York: Nova Science, 2003, p. 9.
53. See more analytically in Dimitris K. Xenakis, "Strategies to Upgrade the Greek Strategic Factor in the Mediterranean and Southern Europe" [Στρατηγικές Αναβάθμισης του Ελληνικού Παράγοντα στη Μεσόγειο και τη Νότιο Ευρώπη] in Dimitris K. Xenakis (ed.) *Guidelines for Progressive Governance* [Κατευθύνσεις Προοδευτικής Διακυβέρνησης], Centre for Progressive Policy Research, Athens, Papazisis, pp. 399-421.
54. Stéphanie Colin, "The Union for the Mediterranean: Progress, Difficulties and

Way Forward”, *Trade Negotiations Insights*, Vol. 8, No. 5, 2009,  
<http://ictsd.net/i/news/tni/47668/>

# **The Mediterranean Union from the Perspective of the Mediterranean Island States**

**Roderick Pace\***

## **RÉSUMÉ**

Les deux États-îles Méditerranéens de l'Union Européenne, Chypre et Malte ont un fort grand intérêt dans les initiatives méditerranéennes qui mettent l'accent sur la stabilité et la sécurité régionales. Comme la majorité des autres États méditerranéens, ils ont tous deux soutenu le lancement de l'Union pour la Méditerranée. Toutefois, les deux petits États ont une conception différente de ce que l'UPM devrait accomplir, Chypre mettant un accent particulier sur la résolution des conflits régionaux, tandis que Malte adoptant une approche plus fonctionnelle s'attache à la protection des ressources halieutiques et à la dé-pollution. Les deux États semblent ignorer les nombreux problèmes qui minent cette initiative, comme le manque de financement pour ses projets et les interférences entre les institutions de l'UPM et celles de l'Union Européenne. Une autre question est de savoir dans quelle mesure les deux États peuvent influencer le processus interne ou si les rivalités internes entre les plus grands États membres de l'Union Européenne pourraient les marginaliser. Ces deux petits États peuvent-ils jouer le rôle d'honnêtes courtiers que l'on associe souvent aux États faibles et petits?

## **ABSTRACT**

The two EU, Mediterranean island-states of Cyprus and Malta have a strong interest in Mediterranean initiatives that enhance regional stability and security. In line with the majority of the other Mediterranean states, they both supported the launching of the Union for the Mediterranean. However, both small states have a different conception of what the UfM should achieve, with Cyprus laying special emphasis on resolution of regional conflicts while Malta taking a more functionalist approach emphasising the protection of fish resources and de-pollution. Both states seem to overlook the many problems which beset the initiative such as the lack of finances for its projects and the interface between the UfM and the EU institutions. Another issue is whether the two island states can influence the internal processes or whether internal rivalries between the larger EU states could see them side-lined? Can these small states play the role of 'honest brokers' normally associated with small and weak states?

\* University of Malta.

## Introduction

The launching of the Mediterranean Union (MU) came at an opportune time when the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) was in crisis.<sup>1</sup> It was therefore cast as an attempt to free the EMP from the stagnation in which it had fallen. Now re-baptized the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the initiative provides both opportunities and challenges to the EU's Mediterranean island-states of Cyprus and Malta. Both stand to benefit if it shakes up relations in the region and encourages them to develop in a more positive direction. Therefore it is in both states' interest to ensure that the momentum which the UfM has picked up is not lost. However, apart from these points of convergence, the two island-states do not have identical interests in everything and their approaches to the UfM differ in some key aspects. Cyprus thinks that priority should be given to the resolution of regional conflicts. This is no doubt motivated by its greatest concern, the Cyprus Problem. However, experience shows that the most dismal record in Euro-Mediterranean relations so far has been precisely in the political domain and in conflict resolution. Malta's main focus is more functionalist, focusing on the maritime aspect such as the depollution of the Mediterranean Sea, strengthening maritime communications and protecting fish resources – all of which raise important challenges for the island and the region. The more salient points of convergence between the two island states comprise the need to combat climate change, deal with water stress and develop low carbon (alternative) energy resources. Both agreed that the Arab League should be involved in the UfM. They also agreed that the EU's Mediterranean partners' participation in or "Co-Ownership" of the UfM must be strengthened. Cyprus and Malta (perhaps unwittingly) concur as well when they fail to provide any proposals as to how the institutions of the UfM will interface with the EU's – given that the latter is the provider of the giant share of the funding for the Mediterranean projects and when they fail to make concrete proposals on how the extra financial resources needed to finance them will be found particularly in the face of the deepening global recession.

What is also relevant is that the launching of the MU has instigated Cyprus and Malta to start refocusing more strongly on the politics of the Mediterranean region which they had neglected during the years in which they were negotiating membership and during the first five years of membership when their priority was the adoption of the EU's *acquis communautaire*. This new "more outward looking phase" appears to be slightly more pronounced in the case of Malta and less so in Cyprus's case which continues to be overtly preoccupied with the Cyprus Problem often at the expense of other policies.

For example, one could have predicted that in its reaction to the MU proposal, Malta would place a high priority on irregular immigration, but without neglecting the issue it did not place it at the very top of its 'wish list' thereby indicating that it has a wider focus than immediate national priorities and is also looking at the longer-term prospects of the region. The latter point is interesting because, while EU citizens in general find immigration the least important issue for co-operation with neighbouring states, 88% of the Maltese think the opposite.<sup>2</sup> Hence one can expect Malta to press this issue more strongly at a later stage in the life of UfM.

Also in the longer-term perspective, both Cyprus and Malta are aware that there are a number of challenges such as global warming, pollution, water and energy security to mention a few, which raise grave concerns in the region. Left unresolved these threats can negatively impact on their own security.

Another important question is: "to what extent are Cyprus and Malta, two of the smaller Member States of the EU, able to influence decision-making within the UfM in the direction that best suits their interests?" Do they have the weight to make their views known and felt in the Union for the Mediterranean?

These questions are discussed in this article where, as is customary in such analysis, I begin with a short summary of its thrust and objectives. The first part consists of a brief assessment of the evolution of the MU project from its inception up to its transformation into the UfM. This provides the background for further discussion. From there onwards, the analysis shifts first to a discussion of small versus large state behaviour in the context of MU/UfM, the dynamics of the "Olive Group" initiative and subsequently to the position of the two island Mediterranean States on the UfM. Relying mainly on public statements and information, as well as some interviews with diplomats in the field<sup>3</sup>, the analysis seeks to scratch a little below the surface of the very generic statement, to which most EU Mediterranean states have subscribed, including Cyprus and Malta, that the UfM is a welcome initiative.<sup>4</sup> A third portion of the analysis and perhaps the most slippery is prescriptive: what should the two island-states be shopping for in the MU and what are they actually pursuing? In the final part all these treads are brought together and the main conclusions are drawn.

## **The Mediterranean Union: The Battle of the Gullivers**

The Mediterranean Union was the brain child of the President of France Nicolas Sarkozy. Without going through the details of its development, this

section dwells on those aspects which are most relevant to the discussion in this article. President Sarkozy launched the idea of a MU during the French presidential campaign in early 2007. Initially it made no major impact, but when Mr Sarkozy referred to it again in his Presidential inaugural speech, the proposal was transformed from what many had considered to be a piece of electioneering rhetoric into a policy statement. The proposal immediately became controversial, partly because of its vagueness and for this reason it left many questions unanswered, but most of all because it irritated a number of key players. When it was still in its initial stages, it was interpreted as aiming to keep Turkey out of the EU by offering it a closer relationship with the EU within the MU. This of course angered Ankara which immediately sought and obtained clarifications that this was not the case. Hence the emphasis that has been made in practically all of the MU/UfM documents that it is not an alternative to EU membership for those participating states which are eligible to join the EU. However, it was not Turkey alone which was upset by the proposal. Indeed, Sarkozy's initiative led to differences between France on the one hand and Spain and Germany on the other.

Following his election, Mr Sarkozy visited a number of countries in the Mediterranean region with the double aim of strengthening France's bilateral relations in the area and measuring support and enthusiasm for the MU project. On the first of these visits, which took him to Morocco, President Sarkozy elaborated on the idea of a MU in various speeches, though many of the major questions surrounding the proposal at that point remained unanswered.<sup>5</sup> In countries like Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt his proposal eventually met with support. But reactions in other countries such as Syria and Algeria were more guarded, while Libya eventually came out strongly against it, on the pretext that it would obstruct African and Arab unity. While Mr Sarkozy tested the ground in the Mediterranean region he also busied himself with the more important challenges to his proposal coming from Germany and Spain.

The original proposal was that the MU would include only the Mediterranean littoral states. But this raised a lot of misgivings in Berlin. Germany rightly feared that if plans went ahead for a strictly Mediterranean Union on such lines, the EU would be divided. Mr Sarkozy later would deny that he had any such intention in mind when launching the proposal, which indeed, also proposed the inclusion of the European Commission and observer status for the northern EU Member States. German misgivings apart, Sarkozy's proposal also raised concern in Madrid where it was seen as an attempt to

eclipse the Barcelona Process or Euro-Mediterranean Partnership started in 1995 by Spain then holding the EU Presidency.

In December 2007, Spain, Italy and France held a summit in Rome where they discussed all the problems and decided to work together. They agreed that “The Union is not intended to encroach on the preserve of the cooperation and dialogue procedures already uniting the Mediterranean countries, but to supplement these and give them an extra boost seeking to complement and work in cooperation with all the existing institutions. So the Barcelona Process and European Neighbourhood Policy will remain central in the partnership between the European Union as a whole and its Mediterranean partners.”<sup>6</sup> Time alone will tell whether this will be the case.

With one major divisive issue bridged, the focus shifted to Franco-German differences. German’s main bone of contention can be found in what the German Chancellor Angela Merkel later told *Reuters* news agency (after the differences with Paris had been settled) that “the original plan would have split the EU and siphoned off common funds for the benefit of a few members and their former colonies.”<sup>7</sup> Franco-German differences were resolved at a meeting in Hanover in March 2008 between Mrs Merkel and Mr Sarkozy. In Hanover, the two leaders decided to present a joint plan to the other EU leaders at their next Council meeting. EU leaders eventually approved the project at the March 2008 Council in Brussels. The Council decided to call the Union “Barcelona Process – Union for the Mediterranean” (BP-UfM) and that it was to include all the EU Member States and the non-member littoral states. It also agreed to convene a Mediterranean summit in Paris which actually took place on July 13<sup>8</sup>, and asked the Commission to prepare a document on the modalities for this BP-UfM.<sup>9</sup> An earlier proposal to have two summits, one exclusively for the Mediterranean littoral states preceding the grander union of all EU and Mediterranean states was also dropped.

The Paris summit led to agreement on a number of projects falling under six main headings as outlined below. It was followed by another meeting, this time involving the foreign ministers of the EU and the Mediterranean partners, which took place in Marseilles in between the 3-4 November 2008. The main decision taken at Marseilles was to deepen the scope of the agreement reached in Paris, namely that the Union would be project-based and financed from existing EU financial programmes for the region, but with some additional funding from other sources. Existing Initiatives under the EMP were meshed in with the new projects agreed in Paris and gathered under four main headings: a political and security dialogue; maritime safety; an economic and

financial partnership including energy, transport, agriculture, urban development, water, the environment and the information society; and last but not least social, human and cultural cooperation.<sup>10</sup> Ministers also took stock of the 'state of progress' of the projects identified in Paris within the following domains: the de-pollution of the Mediterranean, maritime and land highways, civil protection, alternative energies – Mediterranean solar plan, Higher Education and Research as well as the Euro-Mediterranean University based in Slovenia, (a recent 'convert' to the Mediterranean identity) and finally the Mediterranean business development initiative.

Most welcome too was the decision to shorten the name of the initiative from "Barcelona Process – Union for the Mediterranean", to the simpler title "Union for the Mediterranean".

At Marseilles ministers agreed that the Arab League should participate in all meetings at all levels of the UfM, though it will only have observer status. This decision supported by both Cyprus and Malta was somewhat controversial as shall be discussed further on, since fears were expressed that it would lead to the isolation of Israel in the process. It was also decided that the UfM would be led by two co-presidencies and that the seat of the secretariat would be established in Barcelona. On the sidelines of the gathering, agreement was reached to open an EU-Arab League liaison office in Malta. In this respect it is important to note that the first ever EU-Arab League ministerial conference was hosted in Malta in between February 11-12, 2008.<sup>11</sup>

### **The Significance of these Events for Small States**

These events can be analyzed from various angles. Should the creation of the Mediterranean Union supply new impetus to the flagging Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, then it goes without saying that the initiative will benefit the region. But in the context of this discussion on the role of Cyprus and Malta in the UfM and the manner in which it has been launched, there are some lessons which these two small states need to ponder upon very carefully.

The events show beyond any doubt that when a major, new Mediterranean proposal is launched by an individual state, which initiative may be crucial to these two island-states' security viewed in its broader meaning, the divisions that may ensue among the bigger states can create opportunities and dangers for small states. On the one hand, while the Gulliver's struggle to have their



proposals accepted, the smaller states may see their importance augmented as the larger states canvass them for support. On the other hand they may also risk being left helpless on the sidelines with the main decisions being taken by the stronger contestants. In the latter scenario, the fiercer the struggle between the big states becomes, the more sidelined the small states may become. This may seem 'natural', but quite unorthodox from the perspective of most of the literature on small states in international relations, which often depicts small states in similar situations, as either being capable of exploiting the lack of agreement amongst the large states to their advantage or of acting as "honest brokers" in helping to bridge their differences. Numerous studies show how small EU states acting in either of these two capacities, have been capable of influencing the EU decision-making process to their advantage, to take policy leadership and break internal EU policy stalemates.<sup>12</sup> In the wider academic literature we encounter examples of small and weak states behaving as "honest brokers" in international organizations or multilateral negotiations. During the Cold War, the neutral and non-aligned states (NNA) played such a role within the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE).<sup>13</sup>

However, strong disagreements among the more powerful states have also been known to preclude small states from playing the "honest broker" role in such multilateral gatherings. Albert W. Sherer, Chief of the U.S. negotiating team at the Geneva Conference of the CSCE (1974-1975) and at the Belgrade preparatory meeting (1977), observed that in periods of confrontation between the superpowers in the CSCE, the NNA found it more difficult to play their "honest broker" role.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, up to the Paris BP-UfM Summit, the small EU member states found themselves in an identical position. Furthermore, if in the future Franco-Spanish or other big state rivalry intensify within the UfM, it will be difficult or very tricky for the smaller states to exercise influence on the process.

One potential avenue which small states can follow in order to mitigate similar situations from developing, is to successfully encourage prior consultation at all levels. This provides some peace of mind – though the danger will not be entirely eliminated – that new initiatives do not 'pop up' out of nowhere. Cyprus and Malta thus need to ensure that informal groups like the so called 'Olive Group' – a gathering of EU Mediterranean states – continue to strengthen their coherence in the future and provide a forum for real and timely consultation. They also need to work closer together, share information and try to pre-empt situations before they develop into standoffs.

## The Need to Strengthen Cooperation

If there is one general statement that can be made about the Mediterranean EU Member States, it is that in the past they have shown a weak propensity to coordinate their positions, particularly on issues that affect the Mediterranean region as a whole. One could at times also sense a ‘prima donna syndrome’ whereby some states engaging in prestige politics vie with each other for the honour of being first with a proposal that would as it were shape the politics of the region. Of course, none of these initiatives have so far helped resolve the old Mediterranean conflicts in a definite way, though on balance they have led to some benefits, while the advantages of “being first with a new initiative” normally lasts for only a few months until the arduous tasks of putting flesh on the policy’s bones begins in earnest – at which point the original proposal might undergo acute metamorphosis.

President Sarkozy’s proposal for a Mediterranean Union has many of the trappings of this vexed approach, although it needs to be said that his initiative came at a time when the EMP was at a stand still and most EU member states and their Mediterranean partners were in agreement that it was in serious difficulties. Notwithstanding this tendency to work alone, the Mediterranean countries are beginning to realise the advantages of co-operation and convergence of views as opposed to unrestrained competition. It is never too late to draw the indisputable conclusion that in the EU-27, the Mediterranean states are a minority and that they are better off working together on Mediterranean issues than struggling apart.<sup>15</sup>

Positively, Cyprus and Malta have also been affected by this co-operative spirit and in December 2008 they agreed to strengthen co-operation between their two foreign ministries and to man a joint mission in Tel Aviv and Ramallah.<sup>16</sup> A few months before, in February 2008, the foreign ministers of the two countries had signed a protocol reinforcing co-operation between their respective ministries of Foreign Affairs and providing for an annual meeting between senior officials. Four main areas have been designated for co-operation, namely bilateral and political issues, the Cyprus question, regional and international matters of common interest and issues related to the EU, “such as its future, the process of enlargement, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and the foreign and security common policy.”<sup>17</sup> It would be interesting to see in the future whether this bilateral co-operation succeeds and whether it is extended to other areas, or whether it will turn out to be a dead letter agreement.

## The Olive Group

The Mediterranean states' foreign ministers have also been meeting informally and more frequently in order to co-ordinate their positions on crucial regional issues. The first meeting of the "Olive Group", as it has been called, took place in Lagonissi, Athens, in 2006. It consisted of France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Malta, and Slovenia. At the Valletta meeting held on February 1 and 2, 2007, it was agreed to extend the group to include Romania and Bulgaria which had just joined the EU.

During his visit to Malta in late October 2008, Italy's Minister of the Interior Roberto Maroni also proposed that Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Malta should form an informal group to lobby for stronger EU action to control immigration in the Mediterranean. But this proposal has since been stifled by an ongoing dispute between Malta and Italy over responsibility for asylum seekers rescued in Malta's search and rescue area. Rome insists that these are Malta's responsibility, while Valletta counters this by insisting that any refugees rescued at sea must be taken to the nearest port of call.<sup>18</sup> Maroni criticised Malta's position during a Pan-Mediterranean Conference on immigration held in Rome on April 17, 2009<sup>19</sup> which immediately elicited Malta's reaction.<sup>20</sup> Mr Maroni was reported to have cancelled a planned visit to Malta. This shows that such informal gatherings are not easy.

The creation and expansion of the 'Olive Group' has strengthened the Mediterranean caucus within the EU in so far as numbers are concerned. Positively, the Black Sea region which shares a number of commonalities with the rest of the Mediterranean region, was brought more and more within the Group's focus. However, the bigger the group and the broader the geographic area it covers, the more numerous are the problems and challenges falling within its scope, making convergence of views more difficult to achieve. In turn, this is certainly not helped by the heterogeneity of approaches and differing state interests. Another difficulty is that for the sake of coherence and effectiveness, agreed policy stances of the "Olive Group" have to be pursued consistently, both within the EU Council and in similar formal gatherings such as the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial meetings within Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) / UM / UfM, and the informal ones such as the "5+5" in the Western Mediterranean and the Mediterranean Forum, as well as in the Black Sea fora.<sup>21</sup> All these difficulties are being highlighted just to avoid any possible misconception that such informal "Gymnich" style meetings are a "one way street" producing only advantages and minimising costs.

This point can be illustrated by reference to the Olive Group's stand on the Mediterranean Union. At their meeting in Paphos the ministers expressed their support for reflection on the creation of a Union for the Mediterranean, that would be project based, include all the EU member states, be complementary to the existing co-operation framework in the region and not try to be a substitute for enlargement.<sup>22</sup> At the meeting in Taormina, Sicily, held between the 15 and 16 December 2008, Ministers referred to the crucial role of the Union for the Mediterranean in fostering an integrated and prosperous Mediterranean region. They called for the quick establishment of well-functioning institutions of the Union, the steady implementation of the projects including their financial means to be defined through a stronger involvement of the business community. The ministers underlined that the project was "wholeheartedly European" implying a wider and more active participation of all the EU member states.<sup>23</sup>

These public statements showed a concurrence of views on key UfM issues, but there is no indication as to whether the more divisive issues referred to in this article had been discussed within the meetings of the Olive Group or whether they were wholly dealt with bilaterally by France as seems to have been the case. It is also not very clear what the role of the Olive Group was in dealing with other hot UfM issues, not least amongst these the structure and location of the seat of the secretariat and the financial resources for successfully launching the UfM projects as well as the participation of the Arab League. The seat of the secretariat was desired by many participating states and particularly by Malta, Spain and Tunisia. At Marseilles the decision was taken to establish the secretariat in Barcelona. This certainly looked like a *quid pro quo* in which Spanish support for the French initiative was repaid by the location of the UfM's secretariat in Barcelona. But did this issue feature in the Olive Group meetings or was it left to be thrashed out by France and Spain on a bilateral level as is most likely to have happened?

The point being made here is that although informal consultative groups such as the 'Olive Group' could be extremely beneficial to all Mediterranean states and to small states in particular, it does not entail that they will always be useful in helping small states achieve their foreign policy objectives. What a small state may consider as one of its major foreign policy goals, is often treated by the larger states as just another chip to be gambled on the table. At the same time, without such fora, small states run bigger risks because they will have fewer consultative frameworks and networks which help them promote their agendas. For example, a small state foreign minister will not need to travel

to an X number of capitals if foreign ministers meet periodically in such informal gatherings.

### **The Positions of Cyprus and Malta**

In this section we analyse the position of Cyprus and Malta on the Mediterranean Union. It must be stressed from the start that both countries strongly support this initiative and concur on many of its aspects including the participation of the Arab League. While many have lauded Sarkozy's project as a means of injecting renewed vigour in the EMP, it must be added that this proposal may also help Cyprus and Malta refocus on the regional issues. Since the start of their negotiations to join the EU and in the five years following membership, the two Mediterranean countries have been primarily absorbed by their adoption of the EU *acquis* at the expense of relations with their neighbours. In an interview with the Cyprus News Agency (CAN), Foreign Minister Markos Kyprianou said that old allies in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Arab World and the Middle East must be won back by Cyprus, adding "We seem to have neglected to some degree this aspect of our foreign policy because of our accession course to the EU."<sup>24</sup> As for Malta the regional refocus may be said to have begun in October 2007 during the Finnish Presidency of the EU, when Malta proposed a structured dialogue between the Arab League and the EU at ministerial level. The first conference convened in Malta in February 2008. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Tonio Borg, visited Lebanon, Syria and Jordan in mid-April 2009 where a series of double taxation agreements were signed. However, a political co-operation protocol was signed with Syria in Damascus in which both sides agreed to pursue discussions on the Mediterranean Union, the Middle East Problem and EU-Arab League co-operation.<sup>25</sup>

There are a number of important elements which are neglected by both Cyprus and Malta and one of them is the development of a parliamentary dimension of MU. The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly after first establishing itself as the parliamentary dimension of the EMP, acts in the same role for the UfM. Parliamentary encounters of this sort are important for small states because if they are effective, they can help bridge the gap between civil societies on both sides of the Mediterranean littoral, act as conduits for the transmission of democratic and market values from north to south and the southern cultural values to the north, and they may also lay the ground for conflict resolution if they become the locus of dialogue instead of

the arenas of confrontation. Malta and to a more significant effect also Cyprus, do not appear to have parliamentary co-operation much within their focus in the context of UfM. In Malta's case, this may be blamed on the fact that Malta hosts the secretariat of the Parliamentary Union of the Mediterranean (PAM).<sup>26</sup> However, this is unlikely. Malta's Foreign Minister, Dr Tonio Borg, makes a clear distinction between PAM and EMPA highlighting the importance of each:

"We wanted to give to the Mediterranean a unique forum that would be exclusive to the Mediterranean States, enabling the parliaments involved to examine issues of direct concern to themselves and the Region. The Secretariat General of the PAM is, rightly so, located in Malta. The difference between PAM and EMPA is that the former is an autonomous initiative coming from all Mediterranean States (Libya included), whereas EMPA is an EU initiative of partnership between the entire EU and Mediterranean States."<sup>27</sup>

A spokesman for the Malta Labour Party, Dr George Vella, made a less than a diplomatic assessment stating that when Mr Sarkozy had launched the idea for a Union of the Mediterranean, "we were incensed by the fact" that PAM had already been proposed as the parliamentary component of such a Union, "but as fate, and may I say, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, would have it, this was not to be, and it has now been decided that the parliamentary arm of the UfM...will be EMPA, already established within the Barcelona Process and Programme of Action."<sup>28</sup> Dr Vella had in the past and since 1982, been calling for the establishment of a Mediterranean Parliamentary assembly.

### *Cyprus*

When at the beginning of 2008, Mr Dimitris Christofias was elected President of Cyprus, he made it quite clear that the primary objective of his government was to create a new momentum in the search of a solution to the Cyprus Problem. A solution of the Cyprus Problem has been the overriding priority of all Cypriot governments since the forcible division of the island by Turkey in 1974. But in recent years, particularly after the rejection of the Annan Plan by the Greek Cypriot community, and the hardening of positions on all sides involved in the conflict, the peace process had stalled despite periodic flurries of activities and optimism that it may be moving forward. Hence it is not surprising that Mr Christofias's government prioritises the issue in its government programme. One important outcome of this for Cyprus's attitude towards the UfM is that the latter is seen as coming second in

importance after the solution of the Cyprus Problem or (another way of seeing it) that the UfM could be instrumental in resolving the problem.

Placing conflict resolution at the top of Cyprus's UfM perspective is very problematic and somewhat idealistic because the EMP has been notoriously unsuccessful in the political domain, unable to agree on a Security Charter and wholly impotent when it comes to conflict resolution. For this reason there is some merit in Mr Sarkozy's functionalist emphasis in his initial proposals.

However, in his intervention at the Paris summit of July 2008, President Christofias began by focusing on problems threatening the Mediterranean region such as global warming, water security and drought and the need to develop alternative energies and to harness the power of the sun. He also fully supported the list of projects included in the annex of the draft declaration. It was at the end of his speech that he laid special emphasis on the need of the Mediterranean Union to help in settling international problems that have troubled the region for years, adding that this could be achieved by respecting the principles of international law and UN Security Council Resolutions.

Official press statements by the Nicosia Government reversed the order of the points made by President Christofias starting with his appeal for the solution of the Mediterranean conflicts first and following it up by reference to the other points he made in his intervention. A press release issued by the Cyprus Government on July 15, 2008 following Mr Christofias's return from Paris, referred to his meetings on the fringes of the summit, with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, Mr Christofias's first, with Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad and with the President of the Palestinian Authority Mr Mahmoud Abbas, but hardly made any mention of his stands on Mediterranean issues or what was discussed at the Paris Summit.<sup>29</sup> This is interesting from several angles firstly because it betrays a deliberate attempt to deflect the political thrust of the President's speech for "home consumption" which is all the more extraordinary because according to a 2007 public opinion survey by Eurobarometer, Cypriots are the most aware amongst EU citizens, of their neighbours in the Mediterranean region.<sup>30</sup> This bewilders many observers as to the real objectives Cyprus will pursue within the UfM.

Cyprus supported the inclusion of the Arab League in the UfM and the notion of "co-ownership" of the process.<sup>31</sup> We will return to this issue further down.

### *Malta*

When during the French presidential campaign, candidate Sarkozy had proposed the establishment of a Mediterranean Union, he mentioned all EU Mediterranean Member States as possible partners in this scheme, except Malta. The newspaper *Malta Today* claimed that this omission so displeased the Maltese government, that it instructed its ambassador in Paris to write to Mr Sarkozy expressing her government's regret at this mistake.<sup>32</sup> According to the same newspaper, Mr Sarkozy later tried to make emends for this by holidaying in Malta just after his election as President of France and by inviting Malta to participate in the FRONTEX patrols in the Mediterranean.<sup>33</sup>

When addressing the Paris Summit, Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi laid special emphasis on the need to tackle climate change because of the dire consequences this has for the region, particularly in increasing water stress and as a bi-product the flows of irregular immigrants. He proposed that the Mediterranean region could become the testing ground for the development of low carbon technologies.<sup>34</sup>

In diplomatic activity behind the scenes, Malta affirmed the importance of maintaining what had already been achieved by the EMP.<sup>35</sup> It supported the UfM project because it would strengthen the working methods and effectiveness of the EMP as well as the Mediterranean Partners' participation in the decision-making process. Throughout the lifetime of the EMP, repeated calls had come from many quarters of the need to strengthen "co-ownership" of the EMP. Malta also supported the idea that the UfM would be "projects based" going on to prioritise the maritime aspect of these projects, particularly the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea, the development of the maritime highways and the development of fishing resources in the Mediterranean.

On the institutional aspects, Malta supported the notion of a co-presidency and a small "projects based" secretariat adding that geographically speaking, Malta was ideally situated for the establishment of the seat of the secretariat. Malta supported the inclusion of the Arab League with observer status and the widening of the UfM to include other countries which up to then were not part of the Barcelona Process. It also supported the German notion that all the EU Member States should form part of the UfM. Last, but not least, Malta underlined that the UfM should not be seen as shifting the EU's attention and financial resources to the Mediterranean region and appealed for the EU to maintain a balanced approach by continuing to give importance to other EU



initiatives in the Black Sea and the Baltic region and by following up on the Polish-Swedish proposal for strengthening the Eastern dimension.

## **Encapsulating the Challenge**

The UfM is still a work in progress and Cyprus and Malta can still become more involved in shaping the direction of its future development, provided of course that they are able to refocus on the regional challenges and to find a successful way of working with each other and with other states in the EU and the Mediterranean region. Both countries have overcome many, though not all, of the initial difficulties of EU membership and are adjusting well to membership. On January 1, 2008, Cyprus and Malta completed the final stage of European Monetary Union (EMU) and introduced the euro. Hence the prospects of a stronger engagement in the politics of the Mediterranean region look brighter. This is helped by the fresh impetus, as long as it lasts, that has been supplied by the UfM to the faltering EMP. The other side of the coin is that the global recession limits the amount of financial resources that can be diverted to the region and may make the EU member states more inward-looking causing them to neglect the Mediterranean region.

The success of the UfM is crucial for both Cyprus and Malta which are often perceived as the southernmost outposts of the EU. But from a totally different perspective they can also be seen as two relatively prosperous states lying at the centre of a region with enormous potential but which is equally bedevilled by enormous problems. It is in the two island-states' interest that they become not merely the southernmost tips of the European stability-prosperity zone, but the centres of an economically dynamic, politically stable region. Their own economic prosperity and social development depends on it as well.

The main Mediterranean challenges are well known. There are the unresolved conflicts such as the Middle East Problem, the Cyprus Problem and the Western Sahara where the efforts to resolve them have been "frozen" for a number of years. These conflicts continue to produce political turbulence in the region, which spills over into other domains and fuels the costly Middle East arms race. Then there is the challenge of global warming which if left unchecked could negatively affect the region in many ways primarily by increasing water stress. The Mediterranean region is already the most water-stressed region in the world and already the theatre of strong rivalries between states on access to this important resource. Climate change is also important for the development of tourism which has become one of the main economic

activities for most of the countries in the region and an engine of growth. This activity can also be jeopardised by the flare up of any of the above mentioned conflicts particularly the Middle East one.

There is also the illegal immigration problem. Michael Emerson has succinctly paraphrased the crux of the problem thus:

*All the coastal Mediterranean (EU) member states are in the front line facing huge migratory pressures, including the spectacular and often tragic trafficking of 'boat people' into the EU's southern islands – Canary islands, Lampedusa, Malta, the Aegean islands, Cyprus. Given the realities of the completely open Schengen area, responsibility for both practical border management and more strategic issues of migration policy have gravitated towards a significant EU role in cooperation with member states. Border management is a regular chapter in the EU's bilateral relations with the Mediterranean states (e.g. Action Plans of the ENP). The Frontex agency of the EU is operational, and since 2005 it has been responsible for 30 joint operations at the EU's external borders, including 9 operations consisting of countermeasures against illegal immigration flows at the EU's Southern maritime borders. Resources in support of these operations are scarce, and the operating teams for southern operations include participation from several Northern member states. March 2008 CEPS.<sup>36</sup>*

There is no single “silver bullet” which will resolve these challenges, in whose resolution Cyprus and Malta share a deep interest. A number of policies need to be pursued concurrently, particularly the stabilization of the situation in Africa by means of the proper aid programmes, combating the organized crime networks at the heart of this inhuman trade, patrolling borders both in the Mediterranean sea and land borders in Africa, repatriation schemes and a sounder EU immigration policy. The effort has begun on all fronts but the EU and its partners are still a long way from beginning to reap the results of their efforts.

However, two things need to be observed. The first of these is that for these policies to succeed they require an effort that is infinitely beyond that of any single EU member state, let alone that which can be supplied by Cyprus and Malta. Hence the latter must work through existing EU and UfM institutional structures and policies. The second is that for most of these policies to be successful the co-operation of the EU's Mediterranean partners is a *sine qua*

*non*. Their co-operation can be secured only if they see benefits accruing to them from their relationship with the EU. The UfM can play a pivotal role in cementing this north-south collaboration and in delivering to the southern neighbours the advantages which the EMP failed to deliver. But this ground has yet to be crossed in practice and past experience does not give rise to optimism. Similarly, the stress on “co-ownership” of the UfM is important but much remains to be seen as to how this will work. As the Italian proverb goes, “Fra il dire e il fare *c’è di mezzo il mare*.”<sup>37</sup>

In this respect it is important to turn to the participation of the Arab League in the UfM. It is relevant to point out that the League also participates with observer status within the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM). Also, when Mr Sarkozy proposed the MU, fears were expressed by Israel and the French Jewish community that Israel would be excluded. When later, the Arab countries started to insist on the participation of the Arab League in the UfM there were renewed fears that Israel would be excluded or that its participation in the UfM would later be rendered difficult or that it would be blocked all together. A mini-Arab summit hosted by Libyan leader Mumamar Ghaddaffi on 10 June 2008 and which brought together Syria, Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia did not help matters. Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak was invited but Egyptian officials say that he was unable to attend because of a heavy work schedule. At the Tripoli summit, Ghaddaffi lashed out at the MU, saying that it would harm African and Arab unity.<sup>38</sup> And this was not the only pressure on the UfM. In October 2008, Jordan postponed an important EMP conference on water following Israel's objection to the participation of the Arab League and in support for the Arab demand for the inclusion of the League in the UfM.<sup>39</sup> Egypt as co-leader with France of the UfM tried to pacify Arab fears about Israel's inclusion.<sup>40</sup> The issue of the Arab League's participation was resolved at the Marseilles Ministerial meeting by giving Israel a place in the secretariat for a period of three years with the possibility of it being renewed. But when hostilities flared up between Israel and the Palestinians in Gaza, Egypt suspended all activities related to the UfM.<sup>41</sup>

It does not appear that the Cypriot and Maltese support of the Arab League participation in the UfM is intended to exclude Israel, with whom both countries enjoy good relations. However, if concerted Arab efforts take place at some later date to seek to exclude Israel, Cyprus and Malta which have a tradition of neutrality will have to ensure that indeed they remain neutral (by opposing Israel's exclusions) and act as bridge builders between the two sides. This will confront the two island-states with an enormous challenge and

bilateral co-operation between themselves on the issue would perhaps hold the most promising potential of a mutually satisfying solution.

Finally there is the question of terrorism and its impact on the securitization of the political discourse in the Euro-Mediterranean area.<sup>42</sup> The effort to combat terrorism is seen as obstructing the EU's democracy promotion policies in the Mediterranean region by retarding the process of political reform in many of the southern neighbours, producing what Marina Ottaway and Julia Choucair-Vizoso have popularized as "Façade Democratic Reforms".<sup>43</sup> This has detrimental consequences for the economic and social development of the people of the southern shore countries and there is an acute need to re-embark on the road of proper reform.

### **A Possible Way Forward for Cyprus and Malta**

Cyprus and Malta have strengths which they can put to better use in the region and weaknesses which they have to overcome. Being small they have the obvious lack of human resources, restricted diplomatic reach and lack of punch in international affairs, but they can overcome these hurdles because their membership of the EU provides them with a rich flow of information and they can use the EU's policies to achieve their own foreign policy objectives.

They also have an interest in strengthening multilateral initiatives in the region whether they are formal ministerial meetings in various formations under the aegis of the UfM or informal ones such as the Olive Group, the "Five Plus Five", the EU-Arab League encounters, the Mediterranean Forum and lest they are overlooked, the parliamentary initiatives such as the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM). These initiatives are based on the notion of equality of states and consultation. The less room that is left to unilateral or bilateral initiatives by large states, which leave the small states little alternative but to pursue a "reactive" foreign policy to them, the more can small states exercise influence on the politics of the region.

The Olive Group is of central importance because it is within it that Cyprus and Malta can first test their proposals and provide ideas. It would be important to strengthen this informal gathering as a coordinating unit before important meetings in other fora such as the UfM ministerial meetings, the "Five plus Five", the Black Sea Forum and the Mediterranean Forum.

Cyprus and Malta could also benefit from devoting more resources to foreign

policy and particularly to regional politics. Strengthening mutual collaboration and information-sharing is also important in this respect. They also need to be closer to their southern neighbours so that the latter will find them trustworthy interlocutors in their relations with the EU and bridge builders.

Both island-states have a rich heritage to turn to if they want to play this role. As weak states, themselves former victims of colonialism, they share a lot of experiences with their southern neighbours. As former colonies which have successfully built a market economy within a democratic political framework and the rule of law, they can project themselves as role models for the other countries of the region. As former adherents to the now defunct non-aligned Movement and to the values of neutrality, they are ideally placed to project the values of peace and co-operation in the region and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The most potent tool in the small state's arsenal is norms. For example, it was by promoting the concept of the "Common Heritage" of mankind as an organizing concept for a new International Law of the Sea, that powerless Malta sought the answer to its own quest for a more equitable distribution of the resources on the seabed in the central Mediterranean.<sup>44</sup>

Fear of marginalization in the decision-making process is natural to small states, but as Christine Ingebritsen (2004) has observed citing the example of small states in EU institutions and NATO, there are defining moments when small states can structure new alternatives even though they do not define the rules of the game in European institutions. Although they do not always share the same vision of European unification, they are increasingly seeing it as a more attractive means of securing stability and building prosperity in a more global international society.<sup>45</sup> Ingebritsen, again citing the experience of the Scandinavian countries, sees the small Scandinavian states as promoters of norms in international affairs, what she calls "norm entrepreneurs", which enables them to make an effective contribution to international affairs.<sup>46</sup> Although as she observes, not all small states behave in this way, the analysis above shows that Cyprus and Malta share the properties which would enable them to play a similar role. It may be argued that the promotion of norms is not the free choice of states but an imposition on the weak ones who have no other alternative. But this is not always true: often it is a deliberate conscious choice which states make. In addition, the power of ideas and norms does not have to be underrated or ignored. In 1958, Isaiah Berlin wrote: "Over a hundred years ago the German poet Heine warned the French not to underestimate the power of ideas: philosophical concepts nurtured in the stillness of a professor's study could destroy a civilization". They could also make it.

## NOTES

1. Without going into the well known details of how the Mediterranean Union became “Barcelona Process – Union for the Mediterranean” and finally “Union for the Mediterranean”, in this paper, MU is used to refer to the “Mediterranean Union”, UfM is used for “Union for the Mediterranean” and BP-UfM for “Barcelona Process – Union for the Mediterranean”.
2. Special Eurobarometer 285, “The EU’s Relations with its Neighbours”, European Commission, September 2007.
3. A note of caution: since this analysis is based upon publicly available information and personal encounters by the writer with diplomats working in the field, no systematic analysis has been possible of diplomatic exchanges which have taken place and which, had they to be analyzed, could throw up a different reality to the one that emerges from this article.
4. A minor but quite significant statement to illustrate this point is provided by the President of Cyprus, Mr Dimitris Christofias. During a press conference in Brussels on the sidelines of the Council in March 2008, Mr Christofias was asked whether he supported the MU to which he answered quite plainly, “Yes, of course. We are a Mediterranean country and we want to take an active part in this Union” – Transcript of the Press Conference, published by the Cypriot Embassy at The Hague and accessible at: <http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/embassies/hagueembassy.nsf/All/36E6B9C170A4D041C125740C00510F43?OpenDocument> (accessed 19.03.2009)
5. President Sarkozy delivered a number of speeches on the Mediterranean Union during his visit to Morocco, the main ones being at Marshan Royal Palace Tangiers, on Tuesday, 23 October 2007; at Marrakesh and also Tuesday October 23, 2007 before the two houses of the Moroccan Parliament in Rabat on the same day and at the State Dinner held in his honour by His Majesty King Mohammed VI on Wednesday October 24.
6. Communiqué issued by the Presidency of France, Rome 20 December 2007, published on the web page of the Embassy of France at [http://www.ambafrance-uk.org/France-Italy-and-Spain-call\\_for.html?var\\_recherche=mediterranean](http://www.ambafrance-uk.org/France-Italy-and-Spain-call_for.html?var_recherche=mediterranean) (accessed 20.03.2009)
7. Reuters Service at <http://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSL1468253220080314?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews> (accessed 19.03.2009)
8. See the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit For the Mediterranean published by the French Government at [http://www.ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/07/0713\\_declaration\\_de\\_paris/Joint\\_declaration\\_of\\_the\\_Paris\\_summit\\_for\\_the\\_Mediterranean-EN.pdf](http://www.ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/07/0713_declaration_de_paris/Joint_declaration_of_the_Paris_summit_for_the_Mediterranean-EN.pdf) (accessed 20.03.2009)

9. Conclusions of the Presidency, Brussels European Council, 13-14 March 2008, Council Doc. 7652/1/08 Rev 1, Brussels may 20, 2008.
10. Final Declaration, "Barcelona Process Union for the Mediterranean" – Ministerial Conference, Doc. 15187/08 (Presse 314), Marseilles, November 4, 2008.
11. See the Malta Communiqué, EU-League of Arab States foreign affairs ministerial meeting Malta, 11-12 February 2008, Press Release 0259, Department of Information, Malta, February 12, 2008, at <http://www.gov.mt/frame.asp?l=1&url=http://www.doi.gov.mt> (accessed 10.02.2009)
12. It is not possible to give a comprehensive list of articles on this subject but some examples are included here: Braille Sasha, "The Seat of the European Institutions: An Example of Small State Influence in European Decision-Making?", *EUI Working Paper*, RSC No 96/28, European University Institute, Florence, 1996; D. Arter, "Small State Influence Within the EU: The Case of Finland's Northern Dimension Initiative", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 5, 2000, pp. 677–97; P.V. Jakobsen, "Small States, Big Influence: The Overlooked Nordic Influence on the Civilian ESDP", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Volume 47, Number 1, 2009, pp. 81–102;
13. Bloed Arie (ed), *From Helsinki to Vienna: Basic Documents of the Helsinki Process*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1990, p. 10; see also Michael W. Mosser, "Engineering Influence: The Subtle Power of Small States in the CSCE/OSCE" in *Small States and Alliances*, Erich Reiter and Heinz Gärtner, eds., Heidelberg; New York: Physica-Verlag, 2001, pp. 63-84;
14. Albert W. Sherer, "Helsinki's Child: Goldberg's Variation", *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1980, pp. 154-159.
15. In this respect we can consider the Mediterranean EU Member States as being France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal (even though this is on the Atlantic Coast), Cyprus, Malta and Slovenia. Bulgaria and Romania are recent additions to this group which makes it 10 out of 27.
16. Press Release No 1938, Department of Information, Malta, 08.12.2008.
17. Protocol on Reinforced Co-operation Between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta signed in Valletta on February 12, 2008.
18. Malta and Italy both refused to take refugees rescued by a Panama registered ship, the *Pinar E*, within Malta's Search and Rescue Area, but 41 km from the Italian island of Lampedusa and 114 km from Malta. Both sides traded some strong political statements. See "Dispute Turns into a War of Words", *The Times of Malta*, 18 April 2009 and "Immigrazione, tensione Italia-Malta: Barcone bloccato a largo di Lamepdusa", *Il Messaggero*, April 17, 2009.

19. 'Conferenza Panmediterranea sull'immigrazione clandestina e sulla sicurezza delle frontiere esterne', on the web-page of the Italian Interior Ministry, [http://www.interno.it/mininterno/export/sites/default/it/sezioni/sala\\_stampa/notizie/2100\\_500\\_ministro/0504\\_2009\\_04\\_17\\_panmediterranea.html](http://www.interno.it/mininterno/export/sites/default/it/sezioni/sala_stampa/notizie/2100_500_ministro/0504_2009_04_17_panmediterranea.html) (accessed 19.04.2009)
20. Department of Information, Malta, Press Release No 0630, April 17, 2009.
21. The fifteenth foreign ministers' meeting of the Mediterranean Forum last met in Algiers in June 2008 where it discussed issues related to the then "Barcelona Process - Union for the Mediterranean". The "5+5" consists of Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Malta together with Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia and focuses mainly on the challenges of the Western Mediterranean.
22. Press Statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus, at <http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2006.nsf/All/BA35403E200B5B5FC22573D40044C579?OpenDocument> (accessed 03.03.2009)
23. Copy of a press statement obtained from a diplomat who attended the meeting.
24. Foreign Minister – Interview to the Cyprus News Agency (by Ralli Papageorgiou, Nicosia 12.04.08).
25. Department of Information, Malta, Press Release 0610, April 16, 2009.
26. Roderick Pace, Stelios Stavridis, and Dimitris K. Xenakis "Parliaments and Civil Society Cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Winter 2004; Ioannis Seimenis and Miltiadis Makriyannis, "Reinvigorating the Parliamentary Dimension of the Barcelona Process: The Establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly" *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Spring 2005; Stelios Stavridis and Roderick Pace, "The EMPA and parliamentary diplomacy in the Mediterranean: a preliminary assessment" in Stelios Stavridis, Natividad Fernández Sola (eds), *Factores políticos y de seguridad en el área euro-mediterránea*, Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Zaragoza, Zaragoza (forthcoming 2009).
27. Welcome Speech by the Hon. Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, at the Mediterranean Day seminar, Palazzo Parisio, Valletta, March 23, 2009, <http://www.apm.org.mt/documents/pdfs/Welcome%20Speech%20Borg%20Med%20Day%20Seminar.pdf> (accessed 9.04.2009)
28. Address by the Hon Dr George Vella at the Mediterranean Day Seminar, <http://www.apm.org.mt/documents/pdfs/Med%20Day%20Colloquy%20Speech%20-%20Vella.pdf> (accessed 09.04.2009)
29. <http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/pio/pio.nsf/All/7C015843D1459B56C225748700218A04?OpenDocument&highlight=President%20Christofias%20Paris%20Summit&print> (accessed 19.03.2009).



30. Special Eurobarometer 285, September 2007, op.cit. page 12: In the Mediterranean, shared maritime borders seem to influence country results the most. Compared to the EU average, a higher share of respondents in Greece and Spain, Portugal and Malta but Cyprus in particular, perceive countries in the southeastern Mediterranean to be neighbours”.
31. Foreign Minister Markos Kyprianou speaking in Nicosia on October 9, 2008 in a conference organized by the Daedalos Institute of Geopolitics, <http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2006.nsf/All/B919D65803674FC2C22574DD004702E9?OpenDocument&highlight=Mediterranean%20Union>
32. James Debono, “Sarko’s Mediterranean Council in Bighi? ‘Puro desiderio’, Frendo says”, *MaltaToday*, Sunday September 9, 2007, <http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2007/09/09/n7.html> (accessed 20.03.2009)
33. Frontex is the “European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union” and was established by Council Regulation (EC) 2007/2004/ (26.10.2004, OJ L 349/25.11.2004).
34. Speech by the Hon Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister, at the Paris Summit on the Mediterranean, Sunday July 13, 2008; <http://www.gov.mt/frame.asp?l=1&url=http://www.opm.gov.mt/> (accessed 21.03.2009)
35. The following two paragraphs are based on information which the writer has gathered from personal interviews with officials engaged in the MU initiative.
36. Emerson Michael (2008), “Making Sense of Sarkozy’s Union for the Mediterranean”, CEPS Policy Brief, No 155, March, Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels.
37. “An ocean lies in between what is proposed and what is actually done”.
38. “Khadafi Opposes EU Mediterranean Plan”, AFP, June 10, 2008, <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5g8ht6f2TYywqrkj9fuNrmWUO93KA> (accessed 10.04.2009)
39. “Jordan Calls off Euro-Med Water Conference”, *Arab News*, October 27, 2008 <http://www.arabnews.com/services/print/print.asp?artid=115821&d=27&m=10&y=2008&hl=Jordan%20calls%20off%20Euro-Med%20water%20conference> (accessed 10.04.2009)
40. “Egypt quells Arab Fears of Euro-Med Union”, *The Egyptian Gazette*, 129th year, Issue No 41,649, Thursday July 10, 2008, front page.
41. Alain Gresh, “Gaza War Changes Middle East Equation at Israel’s Expense”, *Le Monde Diplomatique* (English Edition), February 2009.
42. For a brief discussion of the impact of securitization on EU policies in the region see Aliboni et. al., “Union for the Mediterranean: Building on the Barcelona

- Acquis”, Report No 1, Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Paris, May 13, 2008, pages 16-19.
43. Marina Ottaway and Julia Choucair-Vizoso (eds.) *Beyond the Façade: Political Reform in the Arab World*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC, 2008.
44. Address by Ambassador Arvid Pardo to the First Committee, UN General Assembly, Meeting 1515, 1 November 1967, Official Records, A/C.1/PV.1515, pp. 1-16; 1516 Meeting, November 1, 1967, Official Records, A/C.1/PV.1516, 16-18.
45. Ingebritsen Christine, “Learning fro Lilliput: Small States and EU Expansion”, *Scandinavian Studies*, Fall 2004, Volume 76, No 3, pp. 373-4.
46. Christine Ingebritsen and Iver B. Neumann (eds.), *Small States in International Relations*, University of Washington Press, 2006, pp. 273-92.

# Turkey's Perspective on European Union's Mediterranean Policy and the Union for the Mediterranean

Atila Eralp\* & Petek Karatekelioğlu\*\*

## RÉSUMÉ

D'un point de vue historique, la conception turque de la Méditerranée diffère considérablement de celle de l'Union Européenne (UE). La présidence française du Conseil de l'UE, qui a eu lieu du 1er juillet au 31 décembre 2008, a été un tournant important aussi bien en termes de restructuration de la politique Méditerranéenne de l'UE que de réexamen du rôle de la Turquie au sein de cette région spécifique dans le cadre de la Politique étrangère et de sécurité commune (PESC). Cet article a pour but d'analyser la perspective turque relative à la politique méditerranéenne de l'UE, en général, et plus particulièrement envers l'initiative française d'Union pour la Méditerranée (UPM). La dynamique des relations Turquie-UE, la crédibilité de l'adhésion de ce pays, des considérations géopolitiques et l'image de la Méditerranée, ainsi que les objectifs et l'efficacité du Processus de Barcelone sont des facteurs majeurs, qui ont influé sur la formation de la politique turque concernant la politique méditerranéenne de l'UE. Cet article analyse dans une perspective historique ces facteurs derrière les schémas de changement et de continuité dans l'approche de la Turquie portant sur les développements du Partenariat euro-méditerranéen (PEM) à l'UPM.

## ABSTRACT

From a historical perspective, Turkey's conceptualization of the Mediterranean diverges considerably from that of the EU. Last year's French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, which ran from July 1, to December 31, 2008, was an important turning point both in terms of restructuring the European Union's (EU) Mediterranean policy and rethinking Turkey's role within this specific area of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). This paper aims to analyze Turkey's perspective on EU's Mediterranean policy in general and specifically on the French initiative UfM. Turkey-EU relations dynamics and the credibility of membership, geopolitical concerns and the image of the Mediterranean, the objectives and efficiency of the Barcelona

\* Middle East Technical University, Ankara.

\*\* Middle East Technical University, Ankara.

Process are major factors influential in shaping Turkish perspective on the EU's Mediterranean policy. The paper discusses in historical perspective, these reasons behind patterns of change and continuity in Turkey's approach to the developments from the EMP to the UfM.

## Introduction

Last year's French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, which ran from July 1, to December 31, 2008, was an important turning point both in terms of restructuring the European Union's (EU) Mediterranean policy and rethinking the role of Turkey within this specific area of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Since 1995 Turkey is a member of the Barcelona Process and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) recently evolving into the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). However, Turkey is also a candidate for EU membership since December 1999 and started accession negotiations on October 3, 2005. According to European Council's decision "Turkey sufficiently fulfills the Copenhagen political criteria to open accession negotiations" on the condition that political reform process continues.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the country's position in the "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean" is peculiar when compared to other member countries. Likewise, it can be argued that Turkey has a paradoxical approach to the EU's Mediterranean policy. On the one hand, the country's alignment with the common policies of the Union is going on within the framework of Europeanization. On the other hand, certain skepticism prevails among Turkish foreign policy makers on the possibility that belonging to the Barcelona Process could become an alternative for Turkey's EU membership in the future. This political stand was demonstrated during 2007 French Presidential election campaign when Nicolas Sarkozy presented the UfM as an alternative to Turkey's EU membership, the objectives of the recent French initiative were received with considerable uneasiness in Turkey. The Turkish government at first refused to take part in the project on the basis that it could become to be widely perceived by the EU member states as an alternative to the country's membership. In view of the country's ongoing accession talks and political reform process over a decade, Turkish public opinion and political elites find it hard to accept that in the image of France Turkey belonged to the Mediterranean rather than Europe.

The recent reaction of the Turkish government and public opinion debates on the French initiative can be explained through the lenses of Turkey's

perspective on the EU's Mediterranean policy, which over a decade is marked with a reserved attitude. There are several political and historical reasons why Turkey has kept itself distant from adopting a fully integrated Mediterranean policy in the model of its Southern European counterparts. In historical perspective, Turkey's conceptualization of the Mediterranean diverges considerably from that of the EU. Unlike its European counterparts Turkey's foreign policy has never been oriented towards imaging the Mediterranean region as a unity. Turkey agreed with EMP's aim to establish channels of political/economic cooperation and cultural dialogue among its members. Yet, it can be argued that the shortcomings of EU's policies in fulfilling EMP's foundational goals of promoting peace, development and stability in the region decreased its credibility in the eyes of Turkish authorities. On top of these diverging political views on the region, whether the Barcelona Process would be seen by the EU members as a suitable option to replace Turkey's European vocation has been a present concern among foreign policy makers. Although Turkey always participated in EU's Mediterranean policy initiatives, Turkish governments never really showed a strong commitment. It can only be observed in the post-Helsinki Turkey's EU candidacy period that the country became gradually more involved in the Barcelona Process and started to align with EU's Mediterranean policy. It is in this context that Sarkozy's launch of the UfM in 2007 was a breaking point, not only in terms of Turkey-France relations, but also in terms of reconsidering Turkey's role in the Mediterranean. The fact that France undertook the lead of reshaping the Euro-Mediterranean policy, a country where opposition to Turkey's membership is on the rise, revitalized Turkish skepticism with regard to the EU's policy.

This paper aims to analyze Turkey's perspective on EU's Mediterranean policy in general and specifically on the French initiative UfM. The main argument is that : (1) Turkey-EU relations dynamics and the credibility of membership, (2) Turkey's geopolitical concerns and its image of Mediterranean politics and policies, (3) the objectives and efficiency of the Barcelona Process are the major factors that are influential in shaping Turkish perspective on the EU's Mediterranean policy. Furthermore, in this paper it is observed that there are patterns of change and continuity in this perspective. The paper discusses in a historical perspective, the reasons behind these patterns of change and continuity in Turkey's approach to the developments from the EMP to the UfM. For this purpose, in its first section the paper covers the evolution of Turkey's attitude during the Barcelona Process and the EMP. The second section of the paper focuses on Turkey's responses to the

French initiative UfM. How Turkey conceives its role in the Mediterranean policy in the context of the evolving framework of the EU's common foreign, security and defense policies is one of the important axes of the analysis. Furthermore, in the concluding section the paper evaluates the prospects and challenges for further alignment with this specific area of CFSP.

### **Turkey and the Barcelona Process: From the EMP to the UfM**

In the first five years of its inclusion in the intergovernmental structure of the Barcelona Process, Turkish governments adopted an attitude of indifference, skepticism or at best were criticizing shortcomings of EMP's cooperative mechanisms. The governments questioned whether belonging to the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation would either mediate Turkey's EU accession or help resolve Turkey's key national foreign policy concerns in the region, such as relations with Greece and the Cyprus conflict. One of the major reasons behind incertitude was Turkey's diverging political perspectives from the EU's Mediterranean policy.

Starting from the EU's development policy in the 1970s to the EMP and the Barcelona Process in the 1990s, the Mediterranean region gradually acquired a particular geopolitical significance for the EU. In the 1970s, the development of bilateral economic relations with the countries in the region was particularly important for France and to some extent Italy because of their colonial past in North Africa.<sup>2</sup> After the EU's Southern enlargement to Greece in 1981, Spain and Portugal in 1986, and the applications for membership of Malta, Turkey and Cyprus, the countries on the Southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea became the immediate neighbors of the EU. Therefore, the region acquired both strategic and economic importance for the EU as well. After the Southern enlargement, Spain, Greece and Portugal also took an active role in shaping a new policy for the Mediterranean.<sup>3</sup> After series of Euro-Mediterranean conferences and negotiations, member states agreed on November 27-28, 1995 the Barcelona Process and the EMP. The main pillars of the Barcelona Process were defined at the Ministerial Conference which

*...laid the foundations of a process designed to build a multilateral framework for dialogue and cooperation between the EU and its Mediterranean partners ... in order to turn the Mediterranean into a common area of peace, stability and prosperity through the reinforcement of political dialogue and security, an economic and financial partnership and a social, cultural and human partnership.*<sup>4</sup>

The Barcelona Process and the EMP since its foundation provided a

platform for dialogue, regional cooperation and integration between Euro-Mediterranean countries through various EU instruments such as MEDA and regular Euro-Mediterranean conferences.<sup>5</sup> The members are the EU Member States and the Mediterranean non-member countries (MNCs) that are Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. The League of Arab States and the Arab Maghreb Union are invited in meetings and conferences, as is Mauritania.<sup>6</sup>

Unlike the comprehensive definition of the EU, Turkey has a fragmented image of the Mediterranean. The EMP was perceived as an instrument of economic cooperation and a gateway to Europe. Emanating from different geopolitical priorities, Turkey and the EU had different security threat perceptions in relation to the Mediterranean area. Thus, Turkey was reluctant to deepen the security and defense pillars of the Barcelona Process. Since the early 1990s NATO is responsible for the provision of security in the Mediterranean region and Turkey was not supporting the creation of an autonomous defense structure. According to Turkish foreign policy makers, "Turkey supports all forms of regional cooperation ... welcomes the initiative because it promotes economic development and aims to reduce internal and external political tensions in the region. But Turkey feels that the EMP is imperative for the security of the Union".<sup>7</sup> Even though Turkey was willing to co-operate on economic matters with other Mediterranean countries, and to get involved in a project for promoting political and cultural dialogue, it was less enthusiastic on political and security issues.

Therefore, geopolitical factors play decisive role in determining Turkey's perspective towards the EU's Mediterranean policy. Given the multifaceted problems in its own neighborhood, extending from the Balkans to the Middle East and Caucasus regions, the Mediterranean has never really occupied a central place in national security policy agenda. Even though Ottoman legacy is present in the region, modern Turkey's image of the Mediterranean has its ambiguities.<sup>8</sup> From Turkish foreign policy perspective the region is not defined comprehensively as an integrated whole. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs deals with the Mediterranean policy issues under different departments such as the Balkans, Middle East, Greece, Cyprus, North Africa, and Europe.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Mediterranean policy was usually understood as "South Eastern Mediterranean" and within the framework of Turkey's bilateral relations with Israel and to a lesser extent the Middle Eastern dimension. Yet, this is also a reason for which Turkey never underestimated the strategic significance of the Mediterranean.

The Barcelona Process diversified the areas of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation with defined goals such as promoting democracy and socio-economic reforms so as to ensure political stability and economic development in the region. This was essentially seen as a method to ensure European security in the face of challenges emanating from political conflicts, social turmoil and economic problems in its Southern neighborhood.<sup>10</sup> Among these perceived security threats were migration, regional disparities in terms of economic and social development levels and unemployment rates, the rise of religious fundamentalism in Islamic communities, the Arab-Israeli conflict and to some extent the Cyprus problem. The creation of a Euro-Mediterranean zone of security embedded a social, cultural and human dimension to overcome these economic and political challenges. Thus, overcoming these security challenges was partly dependent upon normative or civilian dimension of the cooperation with a political and socio-economic reform agenda.

However, the Barcelona Process remained very low profile in terms of the resolutions of major conflicts in the region and in terms of its contribution to the resolution of Turkey's immediate foreign policy objectives. From a national security perspective, conventional focus of Turkey's foreign and security policy has been on the resolution of the problems in its South Eastern Mediterranean shores that cover relations with Greece, the settlement of the Cyprus problem, uneasy relations with Syria and to some extent the Middle East Peace process. This differed from the priorities of EU member states that involved a wider North African dimension and the issue of migrant communities from the MNCs.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, from the perspective of Turkey, EU's comprehensive approach with regard to the Mediterranean region rendered the solution of these long lasting problems even harder. Therefore, in spite of acknowledging that the Barcelona Process provided the tools for economic cooperation and aimed at promoting peace, security and development in the region, Turkey's attitude with regard the EU's Mediterranean policy was evolving rather critical in terms of political and security chapters.<sup>12</sup>

An additional factor that shaped Turkey's perspective on the EU's Mediterranean policy emanated from transformations of international environment in which Turkey-EU relations were evolving. Although Turkey had cultural, economic and political relations coming from a long history with the Mediterranean and geographically Mediterranean coasts, the country has never fully identified itself as being part of the Mediterranean region. Its membership in NATO, OSCE, OECD and the Council of Europe and associate membership of the EU and WEU reinforced this foreign policy stand.



Turkey clearly was the only country in the process of accession negotiations with a majority of Muslim population, a free market economy and secular democracy differentiating the country from other MNCs. In this context, a foremost factor is that since its official application for full membership on 14 April 1987, the political priority of Turkey's foreign policy is to become an EU member and to reassert its position in European foreign and security policy structures. It can be argued that although Turkey has always been an integral part of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation framework, Turkish political elites have opposed the idea that the Barcelona Process and the EMP could be an alternative to Turkish membership in the EC/EU. On the contrary, they viewed Turkey's participation as a strategy for Turkey's closer integration with the EU's foreign policy.<sup>13</sup> Turkey's uneasiness was partly caused by the wider definition of the Mediterranean by EU member states. Furthermore, the EU's Southern enlargement to Spain, Portugal and Greece, and the candidacy of Cyprus and Malta in 1997 resulted in a feeling of exclusion in Turkey. The country became the only non-EU member Mediterranean country that has signed a customs union agreement with the EU. Turkey had already accepted EU trade agreements with third countries as a result of the Customs Union Agreement and made bilateral trade agreement in order to prevent the negative effects stemming from the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the EU and non-EU EMP members. In this context, tense bilateral relations with Greece constituted a main barrier for Turkey to receive financial aid under the Association and Customs Union agreements or profit from the MEDA funds. Therefore, the foreign economic benefits of the EMP were also called into question.<sup>14</sup>

This political attitude started to change with the December 1999 Helsinki Summit when Turkey was granted the status of candidate for EU membership. The post-1999 period is marked with more involvement of Turkey in the economic, political and socio/cultural spheres of the EU's Mediterranean Policy. Furthermore, Turkey's relations with Greece started to evolve from confrontation to cooperation in economic, cultural, even security areas. A major reason behind this transformation was that Turkey-EU relations evolved into a new phase, where the EU provided Turkey with a clear membership perspective. Furthermore, EU candidacy process has triggered significant domestic institutional reforms and policy alignment in Turkey with the aim of fulfilling the political conditionality for membership. It is fair to argue that Turkey's Europeanization process was becoming visible in its foreign policy perspective towards the Mediterranean region. In the period of the then foreign minister İsmail Cem, Turkey's foreign policy became more

multidimensional with the aim of improving its relations with the countries in its neighborhood.<sup>15</sup> These new policy initiatives within the context of Turkey's EU candidacy continued to evolve during the Justice and Development (JDP) government that came to power in November 2002.

In 2005 it became more and more visible that the Barcelona Process and the EMP did not respond to the expectations of its members. Diverging interests of members, financial issues, geopolitical transformations with the EU's Eastern enlargement, frozen conflicts, the unresolved issue of integrating of migrant communities in their host countries, notably in EU member states, are among major factors that led to the questioning of the efficiency of the process.<sup>16</sup> The necessity to go through a process of reforms was voiced by many of the Mediterranean countries. The problems were also originating from the EU's new CFSP initiative towards its new Eastern neighborhood, changing security policy agenda of the US administration after September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, increasing migration to the EU from the MNC's.<sup>17</sup> In response to these international transformations, the EU revised its foreign and security policy strategy, which involved the initiation of a new neighborhood policy. The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), issued a year after the European Security Strategy, is based on the idea of strengthening political, economic and cultural ties with the EU's neighbors, and the promotion of EU's common norms and shared values without offering membership. The aim is to provide regional security and stability through the development of new incentives for regional cooperation and dialogue.<sup>18</sup> According to the European Commission, the ESS and the ENP are complementary to the Barcelona Process, and have the potential to reinforce the cooperation mechanisms between the EU and its Mediterranean neighborhood.

However, in the wider Mediterranean context, the ENP has been received with criticisms on the basis that bringing the EMP and the Eastern neighborhood under a same umbrella would not provide sufficient policy tools to solve the long standing political and economic problems in the Mediterranean.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, from a critical perspective the ENP could be interpreted as privileging the Eastern neighbors. These debates marked the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona process and paved the way for the foundation of the UfM, but eventually not without compromise. These developments also impacted Turkey's foreign policy making in general and its perspective on the EMP and the ENP since the country's accession negotiations was opened by the end of the year 2005.

## The French Initiative UfM: Continuities and Changes in Turkey's Perspective on the EU's Mediterranean Policy

Throughout the years 1999-2007 Turkey started to view its role in the Barcelona Process and the EMP as an integral part of its EU membership process. Closer integration with EU's common policies, socio-economic interests, and geopolitical factors continued to shape Turkey's perspective on the Mediterranean region.<sup>20</sup> In the wake of the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona Process in 2005, the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) debates revolved around the need to adopt a reinforced policy strategy that would overcome hurdles caused by the weakening of its cooperative incentives.<sup>21</sup> During the same year, the then Minister of Interior and president of France's governing party *Union Pour un Mouvement Populaire* (Union for a Popular Movement), Nicolas Sarkozy, in his official visits to Morocco voiced the idea of re-uniting countries in the Mediterranean region under a new framework for cooperation. Sarkozy's project of a Mediterranean Union became much more accentuated during French Presidential election campaigns in early 2007. The French initiative underlined the idea of creating a zone of solidarity that would eventually revitalize cooperation in environmental issues, economic growth, and security and reinforce political and cultural dialogue among the countries in the region.<sup>22</sup> The effectiveness of cooperative mechanisms under the Barcelona Process and the possibilities for reforms were altogether called into question.

Sarkozy's discourse remained particularly focused on the central importance of the Mediterranean region and identity for Europe. Accordingly, despite the diversity of cultures in the region, a uniting project would mediate the establishment of platforms of dialogue between different religions and languages of those European, African and the Middle Eastern countries that fall within the geographical boundaries of the Mediterranean. After his election as the President of the Republic on 6 May 2007, the foundation of the UfM was already one of the most important pillars in France's foreign policy agenda. On 23 October 2007, in his first visit to Tanger after being elected as the President of the République, Sarkozy renewed his call for the foundation of a Mediterranean Union.<sup>23</sup> He invited all the Mediterranean countries and the EU for the establishment of UfM in the Paris Summit of July 2008. However, France's renewed Mediterranean initiative faced various objections. This new policy initiative addressed at the same time two controversial issues that became sources of debates in the EU, Turkey and the

MNCs. First, the Mediterranean Union was described as a project having its own internal political dynamics of integration that would operate outside the EU in which Portugal, Greece, Spain, Italy and Cyprus together with France were to take initiative. Second, Turkey would be a member of this newly emerging idea of a Union of the Mediterranean.

Some EU members led by Germany criticized the idea of founding a Mediterranean Union as an independent political entity.<sup>24</sup> The proposition was to reform the already existing cooperation mechanisms, notably the Barcelona Process or the EMP, so as to overcome their failure to initiate strong policies to cope with economic and political problems in the region. Other Southern European member states such as Spain, Italy, Greece and Portugal, and Euro-Med partners such as Morocco supported the French policies.<sup>25</sup> Yet, a uniformity of opinion could not be reached at the Mediterranean level. Countries such as Algeria questioned the future of Arab-Israeli conflict and whether it was a viable solution to integrate the Middle East Peace process in a wider Mediterranean framework. There were also several reactions within the Arab league on the assumption that this project would serve to deepen divisions between Arab countries.<sup>26</sup> These developments were followed by Turkey's withdrawal of support for the French initiative on the ground that it was seen as a natural member of the UfM rather than the EU.

In response to these objections, the decisive period for UfM has been the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Even though the break of global financial crisis and the Georgian war preoccupied most of French Presidency's policy agenda, important resolutions on the UfM were achieved in two consecutive meetings held at governmental and ministerial levels. The UfM that brings a new approach to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation was set on March 13, 2008 European Council. The French initiative was translated into EU's Mediterranean policy framework under "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean," on July 13, 2008 Paris Summit of Heads of State and Government.<sup>27</sup> The Summit was followed by the foreign ministers conference held in Marseilles on 3-4 November which was a step further towards reinforcing the Barcelona Process through the introduction of a new framework of institutional and policy structures, with the co-presidency of Egypt and France.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean" acquired an EU-dimension, articulated with the already existing institutional mechanisms of the EMP. It rather became a less ambitious framework for cooperation in areas of low politics, and platform for political and cultural dialogue among its members through development and implementation of a "plurality of projects."

Among the diversity of debates, the Turkish approach to the French policy initiative has been highly critical. Old skepticisms revitalized during these debates. Even though the idea of a “Union of the Mediterranean” embedded specific emphasis on the strategic importance of Turkey for its success, at the same time the country was identified belonging to a loosely defined Mediterranean identity. Sarkozy in his Toulon speech back in February 2007 stated:

*It is in view of the Mediterranean Union that we must consider the relationship between Europe and Turkey. Because Europe cannot be extended indefinitely. Europe if it wants to have an identity must have borders and therefore limits. Europe if it wants to have a power cannot be watered constantly. Europe if it wants to work cannot grow without stopping. Turkey has no place in the European Union because it is not a European country. But Turkey is a Mediterranean country with which Europe Mediterranean can advance the unity of the Mediterranean. This is the great ambition that I want to offer to Turkey.<sup>29</sup>*

In the context of the country's ongoing accession negotiations, the French initiative was received with considerable reactions. Not surprisingly, Turkish political elite's attitude with regard to the French initiative has been very negative in view of the fact that the Toulon discourse went as far as to claim that Turkey “is not a European country.” The problematic of the Mediterranean Union was that it carried the risk of marginalizing the country's EU membership prospects. Additionally, Turkish public opinion's awareness of rising opposition in France with regard to the enlargement in general and specifically Turkey's accession make it even harder to think about other political and economic openings that the UfM could bring to the Mediterranean. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan communicated Turkey's expectations on accession talks referring to the French Presidency of the European Council agenda.<sup>30</sup>

In response, the French government, acknowledging that Turkey is a major strategic and economic partner that could mediate the achievement of UfM aims, made considerable efforts to convince the Turkish government to participate in the Paris Summit. During July 13, meeting with the Prime Minister Erdogan, the French President said he “will not block progress in Turkey's EU accession negotiations, which were officially opened in 2005.”<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile the EU also emphasized that Turkey was an important asset for the success of the EU's Mediterranean policy and that membership in the UfM

will not jeopardize Turkey's EU accession process. According to the European Commission Turkey's membership is dependent on the country's compliance with EU's economic and political conditionality. The final declaration addressed Turkey's concerns declaring that the UfM "will be independent from the EU enlargement policy, accession negotiations and the pre-accession process."<sup>32</sup>

After a decade of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, a foremost factor that shape Turkey's perspective on the EU's Mediterranean policy is the challenges and prospects it could bring with regard Turkey's EU membership objectives. On the one hand, once it was understood that the UfM was not a substitute for EU membership the Turkish public opinion and media lost its interest. On the other hand, once it was no longer perceived as an obstacle to EU full membership, Turkish government decision to participate in the "Barcelona: Union for the Mediterranean" was highly motivated from an approach that views the UfM as policy area that would contribute reassert Turkey's importance in the CFSP.

A related factor through the lenses of which Turkey approaches the EU's new Mediterranean initiative is the country's geopolitical concerns. In this respect, Prime Minister Erdoğan states:

*Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean" essentially is a project aiming to develop cooperation in the Mediterranean. Definitely, it does not constitute an alternative to our country's EU membership process. These issues are highlighted several times by the European leaders ... Turkey is a Mediterranean country and the Mediterranean Sea in peace, of peace, prosperity is the greatest our ultimate desire. We also attribute a great importance to the development of cooperation among Mediterranean countries. Turkey has contributed actively to the development of the Barcelona process since 1995 ... Turkey has always supported the commitment of all countries to development of concrete projects that would strengthen regional cooperation ...*<sup>33</sup>

Turkish government's perspective on the UfM shows two important changes when compared to 1995-2005 period. To begin with, there is an unprecedented emphasis on the compatibility of Turkey's foreign policy objectives with the EU's Mediterranean policy. When compared to the period from 1995 to 2005 Turkey's Europeanization process, or the impact of the EU on domestic politics, is particularly visible on the country's foreign policy agenda. In the European Commission's regular reports (2000-2008),

alignment with the EU's common foreign and security policies is the area in which Turkey's progress is relatively more positively evaluated.<sup>34</sup> One can argue that this was one of the factors leading to the opening of the accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3, 2005. ESS and ENP are two recent pillars of the CFSP. Mediterranean countries, the Southern Caucasian countries, Russia, Belarus are part of ENP. These countries and regions are in the immediate neighborhood, and are part of national foreign and security policy concerns of the Republic of Turkey. As a country in the process of accession negotiations with the EU, Turkey is expected to align its foreign and security policies with the ESS and the ENP. Yet, the success of the ENP in stabilizing, securitizing and democratizing the region has the potential to benefit Turkish foreign policy interests as long as Turkey takes an active part in the implementation of these policies. This is one important factor that mediates Turkey's active participation in the "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean."

Second, the Turkish government recalls potential contribution of Turkey's active participation in the EU's Mediterranean policy for the success of the UfM's foundational goals.<sup>35</sup> Turkey's role as a mediator in the Middle East Peace process, its active participation in the Alliance of Civilizations, increases its strategic importance as a regional political actor. Additionally, the Turkish government often expresses will to cooperate in the Mediterranean region on fight against global terrorism and eliminate the sources of terror. Furthermore, the Turkish government underlines the strategic importance of Turkey as a country that could contribute to the diversification of energy and water resources in the region.<sup>36</sup> In the context of Turkey's ongoing accession talks, the foreign policy agenda of the JDP government plays a very decisive role in redefining Turkey's neighborhood policy. It is fair to argue that the present governments' foreign policy orientation towards the Mediterranean/Middle East is articulated with Turkey's post-Cold war strategy to play a more assertive role in the region.<sup>37</sup> In that period, one pillar of this foreign and security policy was the deepening of the bilateral relations with Israel. In the JDP government period the second pillar is strengthened, that is Turkey's relations with Palestinians, Jordan and Syria. Furthermore, the JDP government reasserted Turkey's commitment to contribute to the Middle East Peace Process. In this context, another contribution of Turkey that the JDP claims would benefit confidence building between the West and the Islamic world is the Alliance of Civilizations project initiative, which was launched with the cooperation of Spain. The Prime Minister Erdoğan, at the Opening Session of the First

Alliance of Civilizations Forum on January 15, 2008, stated:

*Turkey is a secular and democratic republic which has an overwhelmingly Muslim population and a dynamic market economy. Turkey is the only country which is a member of both the Organization for Islamic Conference and NATO and pursuing accession negotiations with the European Union. It is now generally accepted that, with these special characteristics, Turkey represents the best panacea against “clash of civilizations” theories.*<sup>38</sup>

In the context of Turkey's increasing involvement in the Mediterranean/Middle East region, the Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoğlu describes Turkish foreign policy principles as “balance between freedom and security, zero problems with the neighbors, multi-dimensional diplomacy.”<sup>39</sup> Even though the results of these policies are to be seen, the discourse of the Turkish government demonstrates a certain degree of alignment with the idea of “soft power” Europe such as safeguarding regional peace and stability through the promotion of good governance principles, good neighborly relations, political and economic cooperation, and cultural dialogue, which have gained considerable weight within the CFSP strategies.<sup>40</sup> However, Turkey's defense capabilities are further assets while NATO is the primary security provider in the Mediterranean region. Finally, the JDP's government recent efforts to establish new channels of cooperation with the North African countries can also be evaluated in the context of Turkey's changing perspective on the Mediterranean.<sup>41</sup>

## Conclusion

Over a decade after the establishment of the Barcelona Process and the EMP in 1995 it can be argued that Turkey's perspective on the EU's Mediterranean policy is shaped by three major political factors. The first one of these factors is the credibility of EU membership, and the prospects and the challenges that participation in the EU's Mediterranean policy brings for Turkey's membership in the EU. The second one is Turkey's geopolitical concerns and its definition of Mediterranean politics and policies. The third factor is related to the objectives and efficiency of the Barcelona Process. Through the lenses of these three factors, there are patterns of change and continuity in Turkey's perspective on the EU's Mediterranean Policy. The paper discussed in a historical perspective, the reasons behind these patterns of change and



continuity in Turkey's approach to the developments from the EMP to the UfM.

In historical perspective, Turkey and the EU's foreign and security policy approaches to the Mediterranean diverged considerably. Unlike its European counterparts Turkey has a fragmented image of the region. Given the multifaceted problems in its own neighborhood, the Mediterranean has never really occupied a central place in national security policy agenda, with the exception of Turkey's bilateral relations with Greece and the Cyprus issue. Even though Turkey made considerable efforts to take an active role in the achievement of Barcelona Process and the EMP's policy goals, during 1995-1999, it never really showed great commitment to fully align with the EU's Mediterranean policy. Furthermore, shortcomings of EU's policies in fulfilling the Barcelona Process foundational goals of promoting peace, development and stability in the region, decreased its credibility in Turkey. Additionally a foremost factor counting for Turkey's ambiguous approach to the Barcelona Process was the potential of the EMP to be viewed as a suitable option to replace Turkey's European vocation.

However, in the period that followed Turkey's EU candidacy, the EU provided a clear membership perspective to Turkey. Therefore, the country became gradually more integrated in the Barcelona Process and the EMP. National foreign and security policy started to align with CFSP objectives. Eventually, this process of foreign policy alignment embedded the EU's Mediterranean policy as well. In the context of the opening of accession negotiations, Turkey's alignment with the EU's Mediterranean policy became more accentuated during the JDP government. Despite initial objections of the Turkish government to the new French initiative, once the UfM was no longer seen as an obstacle to EU membership, Ankara agreed to take an active role in new Euro-Mediterranean cooperation projects. An influential factor increasing Turkey's willingness to take a more active role in the EU's Mediterranean policy was changing international circumstances. The post-Cold War era witnessed the reformulation of Turkish foreign and security policy aims on the way toward reasserting Turkey's role in European foreign and security structures.

Particularly from year 2002 onwards, the strategic importance of Turkey as a hard and soft security provider in the Mediterranean/Middle East region is underlined. One major development during Turkey's EU candidacy process manifests itself in the country's changing policy perspective towards the

countries and regions in its immediate neighborhood. The remarkable improvement of relations with Greece, and the participation in the initiation of the Alliance of Civilizations project are two major developments from a perspective of Europeanization of Turkey's neighborhood policy in the Mediterranean region. Furthermore, Turkey's active involvement in the Middle East Peace process as a mediator country is also one of the outcomes of this process. These transformations are both related with changes in international security environment as well as Turkey's alignment with the EMP. Nevertheless, it is important to note that in the post 2002 period JDP government's foreign policy orientation towards the Mediterranean/Middle East articulated with Turkey's post-Cold war strategy to play a more assertive role in the region.

Although it is demonstrated in this paper that over more a decade there are significant transformations in Turkey's perspective on the Mediterranean region, the findings of the paper also show that there are several limits to further alignment. First of all changes remain limited because of Turkey's geopolitical concerns and priorities. In this respect, political and economic investments in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Black Sea Economic Cooperation are more significant than the role Turkey plays in the Barcelona Process: UfM. Furthermore, it is hard to predict how the UfM will succeed to resolve long standing developmental and international conflicts in the region, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict or the Cyprus problem. On the one hand, the fact that the UfM is perceived as an instrument for a secure Europe, Turkey is not really convinced how this project would realize these objectives. On the other hand, Turkey does not identify substantially with the region, yet it gets engaged when it deems necessary for its national security interests. It can be argued that Turkey's perceptions of its role and belonging into the region is with reference to Turkey's European vocation.

Turkey sees its role in the Barcelona Process as an integral part of its relations with the EU. Acknowledging the strategic importance of the Mediterranean region for Europe, it opposes to the fact that the UfM becomes a political, cultural or economic alternative to Turkey's EU membership. This is the major limitation to the country's further alignment/integration with the EU's Mediterranean policy. Additionally, the low level of EU membership credibility is one of the reasons why the country is also developing a somehow autonomous neighborhood policy. It is true that a possible Turkish accession in the EU brings several challenges emanating from Turkey's geopolitical location. However, Turkey is part and parcel of the enlargement policy of the Union, and if Turkey's political reforms and foreign and security policy

alignment process succeed, this would contribute to the implementation of ENP, to the promotion of EU's democratic norms and values in the region. Furthermore, Turkey has the potential to enhance political and cultural dialogue and cooperation between the West and the Islamic world. Turkey's deeper integration with the EU's institutional and policy structures would increase the credibility of the Union in its external relations and help mediate the strengthening of EU's role in the Mediterranean.

## NOTES

1. Council of the European Union, Brussels European Council 16/17 December 2004 Presidency Conclusions, available at: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/83201.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/83201.pdf) (accessed May 2009).
2. Meliha Altunışık, "Avrupa Birliği'nin Akdeniz Politikası ve Türkiye" (European Union's Mediterranean Policy and Turkey), in Atila Eralp (ed.), *Türkiye ve Avrupa* (Turkey and Europe), Ankara, İmge, 1997, p. 356.
3. *Ibid.*
4. "Barcelona Declaration and Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", November 27-28, 1995, available at: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r15001.htm> (accessed May 2009).
5. The MEDA programme is the EU's principal financial instrument for the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and its activities.
6. After the latest enlargement on May 1, 2004, two new Mediterranean partners (Cyprus and Malta) joined the European Union. The Euro-Mediterranean partnership now counts 35 members: 25 EU Member States and 10 Mediterranean partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey).
7. Fatih Tayfur, "Turkish Perceptions of the Mediterranean", *EuroMeSCo Papers*, Paper 8, March 2000, available at: [http://www.euromesco.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=141&Itemid=48&lang=en](http://www.euromesco.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=141&Itemid=48&lang=en) (accessed May 2009).
8. Dorothee Schmid, "La Turquie et L'Union pour la Méditerranée: un partenariat calculé", *Politique Étrangère*, Vol. 1, Février 2008, pp. 5-8.
9. Fatih Tayfur, "Turkish Perceptions," *op. cit.*
10. Peter Seeberg, "EU and the Mediterranean: Foreign Policy and Security" in Peter Seeberg (ed.), *EU and the Mediterranean: Foreign Policy and Security*, University Press of Southern Denmark, 2007, pp. 7-35.

11. Stelios Stavridis, "The EMP: Perspectives for the Mediterranean EU Countries", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 2008, pp. 103-108.
12. Tobias Schumacher, "Dance In – Walk Out: Turkey, EU Membership and the Future of the Barcelona Process" in Nathalie Tocci and Ahmet Evin (eds.) *Towards Accession Negotiations: Turkey's Domestic and Foreign Policy Challenges Ahead*, Florence, European University Institute RSCAS, 2004, pp. 157-173.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Cana Balkır and Allan M. Williams, *Turkey and Europe*, London, Pinter Publishers, 1999.
15. Mehmet Özcan, *Harmonizing Foreign Policy: Turkey, the EU and the Middle East*, Ashgate, 2008, p. 97.
16. Roberto Aliboni, "The Union for the Mediterranean A view from Southern Europe" IAI's contribution to EuroMeSCo research Project "Putting the Mediterranean Union in Perspective", pp. 3-4.
17. Rafaella A. Del Sarto and Tobias Schumacher, "From EMP to ENP: What is at stake with the European Neighborhood Policy towards the Southern Mediterranean?" *European Foreign Affairs Review* 10: 17-38, 2005.
18. European Commission. 12.5.2004. *Communication from the Commission: European Neighborhood Policy Strategy Paper*. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities COM(2004) 373 Final.
19. Rafaella A. Del Sarto and Tobias Schumacher, "From EMP to ENP", *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.
20. Tobias Schumacher, "Turkey, EU Membership and the Future of the Barcelona Process", *op. cit.*, p. 159.
21. These debates centered on Discussions on the prospects and challenges Euro-Mediterranean Partnership faces in its tenth year are available from the official web site of the European Parliament: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/president/Presidents\\_old/president\\_borrell/euromed/en/default.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/president/Presidents_old/president_borrell/euromed/en/default.htm).
22. Déplacement de MM. Nicolas Sarkozy, Bernard Kouchner et Jean-Pierre Jouyet au Maroc (Octobre 22-24, 2007), Point de press du porte parole de l'Élysée, October 18, 2007, available at: [http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/pays-zones-geo\\_833/maroc\\_410/france-maroc\\_1185/visites\\_5538/deplacement-mm.-nicolas-sarkozy-bernard-kouchner-jean-pierre-jouyet-au-maroc-22-24.10.07\\_55403.html](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/pays-zones-geo_833/maroc_410/france-maroc_1185/visites_5538/deplacement-mm.-nicolas-sarkozy-bernard-kouchner-jean-pierre-jouyet-au-maroc-22-24.10.07_55403.html) (accessed in May 2009).
23. Discours de M. Nicolas Sarkozy président de la République, Tanger, Octobre 23, 2007, available at: [http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/pays-zones-geo\\_833/maroc\\_410/france-maroc\\_1185/visites\\_5538/discours-m.-nicolas-sarkozy-president-republique-tanger-23-octobre-2007\\_55551.html](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/pays-zones-geo_833/maroc_410/france-maroc_1185/visites_5538/discours-m.-nicolas-sarkozy-president-republique-tanger-23-octobre-2007_55551.html) (accessed May 2009).

24. On March 3, 2008 Hannover meeting, Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel agree on the inclusion of the EU member states in the UfM that will now build on the Barcelona process.
25. Roberto Aliboni, "The Union for the Mediterranean: A view from Southern Europe," *op. cit.*
26. "Paris Summit Inaugurates Mediterranean Union," EurActive.com, July 14, 2008, available at: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/paris-summit-inaugurates-mediterranean-union/article-174213> (accessed May 2009).
27. Roberto Aliboni et al., "Putting the Mediterranean Union in Perspective," EuroMeSCo Paper, June 2008.
28. *Ibid.*
29. Nicolas Sarkozy's Toulon speech, February 7, 2007, available at : [http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/ump/s\\_informer/discours](http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/ump/s_informer/discours) (accessed May 2009).
30. "Turk PM urges France to loyal its commitments to Turkey accession," Hürriyet Dailynews.com, June 2008, available at: <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/english/home/9425797.asp?scr=1> (accessed May 2009).
31. "Paris Summit Inaugurates Mediterranean Union," *op.cit.*
32. *Ibid.* See also "Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean" available at: [http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article\\_8021\\_en.htm](http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_8021_en.htm).
33. "Erdoğan: 'Akdeniz İçin Birlik' AB'ye alternatif değil" (Erdoğan: UfM is not an alternative to EU," Anadolu Ajansı, July, 13, 2008, available at: <http://www.tumgazeteler.com/haberleri/akdeniz-birligi/> (accessed May 2009).
34. European Commission. 2008. *Regular Report 2008 on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession*. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.
35. See also the official web site of Justice and Development Party, available at: <http://web.akparti.org.tr/disiliskiler/ana-sayfa.html> (accessed May 2009).
36. *Ibid.*
37. Rafaella A. Del Sarto, "Turkey's EU Membership: An Asset for the EU's Policy the Mediterranean/Middle East?" in Nathalie Tocci and Ahmet Evrim (eds.) *Towards Accession Negotiations: Turkey's Domestic and Foreign Policy Challenges Ahead*, Florence, European University Institute RSCAS, 2004, pp. 137-155.
38. The speech of Prime Minister Erdoğan, available at: <http://www.unaoc.org/repository/erdogan.pdf>.
39. Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu* (Strategic Depth: Turkey's International Position), İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2005.
40. Ian Manners. 2002. "Normative Power of Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40(2): 235-258.

41. Mehmet Yılmaz, “Gül’ün Afrika Ziyaretinin Önemi” (The Importance of Gül’s Visit to Africa), *Zaman Daily*, February 29, 2009.

# Current Israeli Perspectives on EU-Mediterranean Relations<sup>1</sup>

Alfred Tovias\*

## RÉSUMÉ

Le PEM n'abordait pas du tout les besoins d'Israël, une société post-industrielle avec de nombreuses caractéristiques correspondant à un petit pays européen comme l'Irlande, le Danemark ou la Finlande. Aux yeux des Israéliens, il était un programme de développement Nord-Sud à travers le commerce et s'il a échoué c'est pour deux raisons. D'abord et avant tout, parce que l'UE avait exclu des accords d'association les biens agricoles et les services intensifs de main-d'œuvre et le cumul des règles d'origine ont pris beaucoup de temps à être mis en place et, deuxièmement, parce que les membres arabes du PEM ont échoué à mettre en place des réformes économiques et politiques. Israël n'est pas à blâmer pour tout cela. En ce qui concerne le nouveau projet de l'UPM, Israël a un intérêt à faire le plus de ce qu'il peut pour le faire réussir, une fois qu'il est devenu clair que la politique européenne de voisinage de 2003 est là pour rester. Dans le cadre de l'UPM, Israël va probablement avoir tendance à privilégier de nombreux, plutôt que seuls quelques projets, comme plus de micro "projets" sont les moins susceptibles d'être politisés.

## ABSTRACT

The by now old EMP did not address at all the needs of Israel, a post-industrial society with many features corresponding to a small-sized European country such as Ireland, Denmark or Finland.. In the eyes of Israelis, it was a North-South development-through-trade program and if it has failed it is for two reasons. First and foremost, because the EU had excluded from the association agreements agricultural goods and labour-intensive services and the cumulation of origin rules have taken a lot of time to be introduced; and second, because the Arab members of the EMP have failed to reform economically and politically. Israel is not to blame for all this. Regarding the new UfM project, Israel has an interest in doing the most it can to have it succeed, once it has become clear that the European Neighbourhood Policy of 2003 is here to stay. In the context of the UfM, Israel will probably have a tendency to privilege many, rather than only a few projects. The more and more "micro" the projects are the less likely can they be politicized.

\* Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

## Background

The various EC and later on EU initiatives, such as the Global Mediterranean Policy of 1972, the Renovated Mediterranean Policy of 1990, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) in the framework of the Barcelona Process in 1995, and the New European Neighborhood Policy of 2000. All these policies were supposed to promote the stabilization of the region through the virtues of free trade. More recently, Europe requested from its Mediterranean partners to adhere to its system of values, in particular to democracy and the rule of law; in exchange for which Europe proposed to share the prosperity of its liberal economy. It also promised to those countries implementing fastest the new Neighborhood policy that they could benefit, at least partly, from the “four liberties”. However, these diverse propositions have convinced none of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries which were reluctant to operate rapid political and social changes, but for the singular cases of Israel and more recently, Morocco. The on-going Israeli-Palestinian conflict has complicated any attempt of cooperation and finally has led the Barcelona Process to a political deadlock. Can the project of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), not yet formally inaugurated as these lines are being written, resolve these problems or overcome these obstacles?

There has been over the years a consensus building up, at least among political establishments and academic experts, that the Barcelona Process had not been a big success, although by far not a total failure, as the people in charge of the project for the creation of a “Mediterranean Union” in France around the spring of 2007 were boldly stating. In any case the EMP had failed to diminish the economic gap between the North and the South around the Mediterranean. However it also appeared that there was no consensus whatsoever about the reasons for these odd results. For example, for Arab countries involved in the EMP, it was the aggravation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since the failure of the Oslo Process which was the main culprit<sup>2</sup>. This was of course rejected by Israeli experts, who stressed that the EMP was not created to lead to peace in the Middle East and for the matter to resolution of open conflicts in the Mediterranean (be it between Algeria and Morocco or between Cyprus and Turkey). Israeli scholars have been stressing that the EMP was a North-South development-through-trade program and that it had failed for two reasons. First and foremost, because the EU had excluded from the association agreements agricultural goods and labour-intensive services and the cumulation of origin rules had taken a lot of time to be introduced; and second, because the Arab members of the EMP had failed to reform economically and politically<sup>3</sup>.



In fact the Israeli political establishment, as well academic experts, consider that the EMP does not address at all the needs of Israel, a post-industrial society with many features corresponding to a small-sized European country such as Ireland, Denmark or Finland. In cultural terms and values, Israel is part of the West; it is a Western country in the Middle East. It has achieved a development level which is going to allow its entry into the OECD in 2010, together with Chile, Slovenia and Estonia.

Recent elections both in Israel and key European countries have contributed to an on-going silent convergence of Israeli views to European ones. The last elections in Germany, France and Italy have put at the helm of these three countries leaders (i.e. Merkel, Sarkozy and Berlusconi) that are very sympathetic to Israeli development and security needs. The reinstatement of Benjamin Nethaniaou as Prime Minister has led to the nomination of Mr. Lieberman as Foreign Minister and Mr. Ehoud Barak as Defense Minister. It so happens that the first has included EU membership for Israel in his party's political agenda, reflecting the European tendencies of his voters, mainly from Russia, Moldova and the Ukraine.

### **Current State of EU-Israel Bilateral Relations**

In April 2009, the European Union and Israel marked fifty years of partnership celebrating the 1959 establishment of official diplomatic relations between Israel and its European neighbors. During this period of relations, many successful milestones have been met which have increased economic, cultural and political cooperation and interdependence between the EU and Israel. How this relationship will continue to evolve is as much a critical point of topic in EU dialogue as it is in Israel, as it seeks to advance forward in the context of the ENP agreement established in 1995. Beginning in 1975 with the first co-operation agreement, EU-Israeli relations have continued to evolve over time from an economic, political and cultural perspective. The EU is Israel's most important trading partner, ranking first in Israeli imports, second in its exports. Although Israel only ranks 30<sup>th</sup> in terms of the EU's imports and 22<sup>nd</sup> in its overall exports, it is considered a significant trading partner in the Euro-Mediterranean area for the EU. The legal foundation of the EC-Israel Cooperation Agreement was redefined in 2000 replacing the initial 1975 agreement, which served to expand greater economic bilateral links, dialogue and cooperation in a number of fields while maintaining the existing free trade area. Furthermore, the agreement sought to establish "a framework for regular

political dialogue and aims at promoting peace, security and regional cooperation. It includes provisions for the strengthening, on the widest possible basis, of economic and socio-cultural collaborative endeavours, including freedom of establishment, liberalization of services, unrestricted movement of capital, and free market competition". In March 2007, EU and Israeli leaders reached a mutual consensus to establish a framework for enhancing relations, referred to as the 'Reflection Group', which would seek to identify new opportunities for cooperation, integration and areas of interdependence. This decision was based on different models the EC first and then the EU have considered to further develop closer relations with non member countries. In a June 2008 report on the European Commission's enlargement strategy, it was noted by the former chairman of the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee that "something between the European Neighborhood Policy and full-fledged membership" should develop between the EU and its neighbors.

In June 2008, the EU-Israeli Association Council convened in Luxembourg, and made a very revealing statement including the following:

2. *Last year, during the seventh Meeting of the EU-Israel Association Council, Israel proposed to upgrade its relations with the European Union... The EU, responding positively to Israel's request, expresses its deep satisfaction with the fact that this EU-Israeli Association Council will mark a new phase in our relations.*
3. *Our common goal to upgrade relations stems from our awareness of the traditional links, the cultural and human values, and the economic and security interests that we share. Israel is a key partner of the EU in the Mediterranean. It has contributed to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership since its origins in 1995. As a vibrant market economy, with a well-developed public administration and a functioning rule of law, Israel also possesses the necessary institutional structures which permits it to work even more closely and intensively with the European Union.*
4. *Since its conception in 2003, the European Neighborhood Policy has contributed to an increase in both the quantity and quality of relations between the EU and Israel. The European Neighbourhood Policy provides a flexible framework for the further strengthening of relations with all ENP partners, including the Palestinian Authority, on the basis of the principle of differentiation, ensuring equal possibilities for all partners. Further upgrading of relations will take place within this context. The EU considers that the upgrading of relations with Israel serves the purpose of pursuing the common objectives and interests of both parties.*

*5. The European Union wants to continue to develop its partnership with Israel in the context of the European Neighborhood Policy and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and in the framework of the broader objective to promote stability, cooperation, and prosperity in the Middle East.<sup>4</sup>*

Since this resolution to advance relations was defined, the EU and Israel have been active partners in outlining a framework to increase bilateral integration within the context of the ENP, which is evidenced by progress reached in implementing priorities defined in the Action Plan. However, as this cooperative relationship continues to deepen, it will become increasingly important for Israel to exhibit willingness to engage in constructive dialogue with the EU on sensitive foreign policy initiatives for greater political integration to be achieved. It is not astonishing that at present and in the wake of the January 2009 Gaza crisis the EU has decided to postpone implementation of the Action Plan. But it does not speak of a "freeze". This means that for both the EU and Israel the preservation and for most actors the deepening of EU-Israel relations is of the first order of importance contrasting with the low priority that Europeans and Israelis assign to Mediterranean affairs in practice.

## **The Union for the Mediterranean in Israeli Eyes**

Given the clear preference that Israel has for deepening first and foremost the bilateral relations with the EU, it is, not surprisingly, particularly concerned by the following five dimensions of the UfM project (which does not need presentation here, given that other parts of this special issue do amply review the contents and form of the UfM).

### *The geo-economic dimension*

Israelis have dropped since more than a decade now the idea of (creating) a New Middle East. Are they likely to be charmed by the idea of a "New Mediterranean" in the form of the UfM? South-South economic cooperation has proved to be a pipedream, even more so after Oslo. Is not the UfM a distraction as far as Israel is concerned? To be sure, there is still a minority of Israeli intellectuals and businessmen, some of them very influential (such as industrialist and Israel Prize winner Steff Wertheimer) which still dream of integrating Israel in the Near East or the Eastern Mediterranean. They have been rejoined once again by President Peres who has lauded several times the initial and original ideas put forward by the new President of France, Sarkozy, as if they were a continuation of the theories of Jean Monnet. In a speech at

the headquarters of the French business association MEDEF (Mouvement des entreprises de France), while on an official visit to France in the spring of 2008, President Peres said that Jean Monnet was more important than Karl Marx because the former's influence was enduring. Then, in the State dinner with President Sarkozy, President Peres said: "The idea that the European Union should serve as a model for the Mediterranean region is daring and interesting. Following 1,000 years of war and bloodshed, an economic merger came along that succeeded in overcoming Europe's political wounds. Sarkozy is a groundbreaking leader. "He operates like a whirlwind: He doesn't dally, he leaps. The fact that he is unpopular should not affect his mode of behavior, because if leaders acted according to the polls, they would all have to be conservative and do nothing".<sup>5</sup> He added that he was convinced that Sarkozy would overcome opposition to his plan within the EU.

President Peres even tried to almost convince President Sarkozy to include one of the former's pet projects in the initial Sarkozy's priority list, namely the so-called "Peace Valley" project (including the construction of a Dead Sea canal) involving at least Israel and two of its neighbours. This being said, the press did report at the time that he also extracted a pledge from President Sarkozy to make the issue of upgrading Israel's relationships with the European Union one of his priorities during his term as the EU's rotating president. In this President Peres reflects very well what Israel's real priorities are.

Basically, the Israeli government is interested in pursuing the bilateral track favored by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2003, because it better takes into account Israel's high development level than the old EMP launched in 1995 and now the UfM. Not only this. Israel among ENP countries is the one having least to fear from the positive conditionality built-in in the ENP and which so much worries countries such as Algeria or Egypt. The reason is that Israel, a Western democracy and a developed country, shares by and large norms, standards and values prevailing in the EU. And the EU does not intend to transform the political system of Israel.

Thus, if Israel always considered the EMP as a side-show, how can it consider the UfM as more than that? Moreover, Israeli observers are aware that trade policy is dealt with by Brussels, and immigration policies increasingly so. There is a Common Agricultural Policy and a Common Competition Policy that are also decided in Brussels, not in Paris. This leaves practically only energy, education and environmental issues for the UfM. The creation of a common audiovisual space sounds attractive but hollow, when it is well known that Israel has never been accepted as part of the *Francophonie*, because of Arab

countries' opposition. The establishment of a Mediterranean Investment Bank was another pet initiative Israel promoted with Egypt in the context of the multilateral track of negotiations of the Madrid Peace Process in the mid-1990s. Unfortunately for Israel, Germany and other powerful OECD countries have been since then consistently against the idea alleging that there were enough existing multilateral banking institutions (e.g. the EIB, the World Bank) with no apparent need in creating yet another one. There is lingering skepticism about Israel being let in by other prospective partners in new projects for non-relevant reasons.

### *The "Essen" dimension*

Some Israelis asked themselves early on in 2007 whether the President Sarkozy's project for a Mediterranean Union was not a French overreaction against the ENP very much supported by Germany, a country already in favor of differentiating Israel among other Mediterranean Non-Member Countries way back in 1994 (i.e. the so-called "Essen Declaration"). Israel has always been delighted with Germany's policy in this respect. Israel is really delighted these days of being integrated in the Research and Development space of the EU after some initial hesitations. And the EU is willing now to consider Israel membership in some EU-created agencies in other domains. This is "deep integration" with a gigantic economic bloc of 27 developed countries, rather than "shallow integration" of the sort the Barcelona Process was striving at. And of course, it is also much more than sheer intergovernmental cooperation (rather than integration, merger and fusion) among 43 countries, including middle-income developing countries, which is what the UfM is to be about. As Rosa Balfour insists in a recent article<sup>6</sup>, the UfM is a down-sized project compared to what was initially suggested by President Sarkozy, which, of course, cannot rival in the case of Israel with the benefits that the Action Plan adopted in the context of the ENP promises to a country like Israel.

### *The project dimension*

In terms of content for the Union, the idea of launching projects on a regional basis really suits Israel. As indicated above, President Peres has requested that any idea of Mediterranean Union be linked to his own vision focusing on "the two seas canal" and the "valley of peace" and apparently President Sarkozy responded early on that he intended to turn the Med-Dead canal into a flagship project of France and Europe, and had instructed his aides to study the subject.

Israel has acquired since several years a lot of experience in micro-regional transnational projects after creating two QIZ, i.e. Qualified Industrial Zones, with Jordan and Egypt. Basically it has negotiated an amendment with the United States to the US-Israel FTA agreement of 1985, whereby duty-free access into the US market is extended to goods produced in these QIZ located in Jordanian and Egyptian territory, provided there is sufficient Israeli inputs and value added in the goods exported from this QIZ to the US. This has enormously promoted trade between these three ancient belligerents, something Jean Monnet would certainly have found as very positive.

Israel could only be positive when France proposed to create an ERASMUS student-exchange facility for the benefit of Mediterranean students, including Israelis. Of course this is so provided it goes beyond the present ERASMUS-Mundus scheme monitored by the EU Commission and to which Israel is already enthusiastically participating.

A clear advantage for Israel of the project approach is that it is not ideological but technocratic, even more so, paradoxically, than the EU-Israel 1995 association agreement. In the case of the latter, issues like rules of origin were sufficiently "macro" to make the press headlines. On the other hand there has not been any politicization around the QIZ because of their technical character. In passing, it so happens that all the projects which are scheduled to be tackled by the UfM in the initial two years and having been mentioned until now, do not involve problematic agents of civil society from an Israeli viewpoint (such as women associations; intellectuals, artists or the media). On the other hand the possible involvement of businessmen and private investors is seen as positive.

Regarding several of the first projects selected, Israel has acquired a lot of technical expertise over time, such as a project on Alternative Energies: Mediterranean Solar Plan, suggested by the French Delegation<sup>7</sup>.

### *The institutional dimension*

Israel is not, on the contrary, against the principle of co-ownership adopted early on as one of the basic principles of the UfM. In fact, Israel has succeeded in achieving a reasonable compromise in this respect. What bothered Israel was the consensus among European and Arab leaders that the Arab League should become, if not a full member of the UfM, at least an observer with no voting power. Israel was opposed to any Arab League participation in the UfM. But it was convinced to retreat from this extreme position against being promised that one of the Deputy General Secretary of the UfM would be Israeli in the

first two years of functioning of the new Secretariat of the UfM to be established in Barcelona, Spain.

For the moment, the only legal instrument in the context of the UfM is the Paris Joint Declaration. This was the only minimum common denominator for the 43 potential signatories. But is it realistic to think about an Agreement or a Treaty, even in regards to one of the projects, to be signed both by Israel and Syria?

There are then several more hypothetical scenarios, which must nevertheless be addressed. For instance would Arab countries ever accept an Israeli co-president of the Council of the UfM? Would Israel ever be able to accept a Syrian, Lebanese or Libyan citizen being named co-president? Clearly, if as agreed, the Co-President representing Mediterranean countries must be chosen by consensus, the number of possible candidates might be limited to those originating in Jordan, Egypt and possibly Morocco.

### *The Israeli-Palestinian dimension*

Several Arab countries initially said that they could not accept the new initiative of France if the latter did not engage more actively in the Peace process, expecting President Sarkozy to pressure Israel<sup>8</sup>. This was notably the case of Algeria<sup>9</sup>. Not only that. Some commentators in this country stated that they did not see how Israel could be included at all in the new project if Maghreb countries were expected to participate<sup>10</sup>. This of course was and is not at all the view in Israel. In fact, it sees the UfM as a way to expand ties with Arab states and one of the roads to normalization.

On the other hand, very important for Israel is that the UfM will not deal with issues related to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict nor for the matter with security issues, whether soft or hard. This is quite a departure in relation to the Barcelona Process, which is also multilateral in its nature, but which, in spite of its original intentions not to interfere with the Oslo Process at the time treaded here and there in murky waters. For instance at the Second EMP Ministerial Meeting held in Malta in 1996, under the Dutch Presidency, the latter kidnapped it by pushing obsessively for a meeting between Chairman Arafat of the PLO and Mr. David Levy, at the time Israel's Foreign Minister. In any case, Israel can be expected to decline paying the price of heavy interference or, even worse, an imposed political settlement only to keep its seat at the table of the UfM.

Another positive point is that the UfM has sparked interest in the United

States and it is not inconceivable that the US might participate in a capacity or another in some of the projects. Israel can only see this as very positive, in contrast to the EMP from which the US was totally excluded.<sup>11</sup>

This being said, there are early signs that again, as for the EMP, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is contaminating the new UfM. The recent Gaza conflict has had as a result the suspension sine die of the Senior Officials meeting scheduled for January 2009 which was to deal with critical organizational matters related to the UfM.

## Conclusions

Israel has an interest in doing the most it can to have the new UfM succeed, once it has become clear that the ENP is here to stay. Not only that. Germany and other Northern and Central European countries, traditional allies of Israel, are firmly on board of the UfM. There is thus no risk whatsoever of seeing the project kidnapped by other countries to transform it in an arena politically hostile to Israel. This is remarkable because the UfM with 43 countries participating, looks like a mini-United Nations.

Israel will probably have a tendency to privilege many, rather than only a few projects. The more and more “micro” the projects are the less likely can they be politicized. Related to what was just said, it is not necessary in Israeli eyes, contrary to what has been suggested elsewhere, that each individual project be highly visible, because in such an event, it will attract the media, which is always there to embarrass moderate leaders in the Arab world willing to cooperate with Israel, even before peace is signed. If Arab countries consider that Israel is too much of a developed country to be classified as a Southern Mediterranean country and should be placed among the “Northern owners” of the UfM, together with the EU, Israel should certainly go along with such a proposal. This would be a way of making sure that Israel can assure in the future one of the two Co-Presidencies (e.g. together with Morocco or Egypt).

## NOTES

1. This article draws extensively from the author's contribution to Alfred Tovias, Roberto Aliboni, Ahmed Driss, Tobias Schumacher, “Putting the Mediterranean Union in Perspective”, *EuroMeSCo Paper*, No. 68, Lisbon, 2008. <http://www.euromesco.net/images/paper68eng.pdf>



2. Denis Bauchard, "L'Union Méditerranéenne: un défi européen", *Politique étrangère*, No. 1, 2008, pp. 51-64.
3. Michael Emerson, "Making Sense of Sarkozy's Union for the Mediterranean", *CEPS Policy Brief*, No. 155, March 7, 2008.
4. Commission of the EC, *European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument*, 2007.
5. Haaretz, *The Two presidents' Vision*, 16 March 2008.
6. Rosa Balfour, "The Transformation of the Union for the Mediterranean", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 2009, p. 102.
7. Roberto Aliboni and Fouad M. Ammor, "Under the Shadow of Barcelona: From the EMP to the Union for the Mediterranean", *Euromesco Papers*, No. 77, 2009, p. 17.
8. See Denis Bauchard's article mentioned in the list of references.
9. www.numedya.com, January 18, 2008.
10. www.forum-algerie.com, January 18, 2008.
11. See Aliboni and Ammor, *op.cit.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abouyoub Hassan, "Union pour la Méditerranée: le mythe de Sisyphe?", <http://www.eurosduvillage.com/Hassan-ABOUYOUB-Union-pour-la,1370>.
- Aliboni Roberto (a cura di), "L'iniziativa dell'Unione per il Mediterraneo: gli aspetti politici", *Contributi di Istituti di ricerca specializzati*, No. 85, Senato della Repubblica, January 2008.
- Balfour Rosa, and Schmid Dorothée, "Union for the Mediterranean, disunity for the EU?", *CEPS Policy Brief*, February 2008.
- Barbé Esther, Mestres i Camps Laia, Soler i Lecha Eduard, "La política mediterránea de España: entre el Proceso de Barcelona y la Política Europea de Vecindad", *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, No. 79-80. December 2007.
- Bauchard Denis, "L'Union Méditerranéenne: un défi européen", *Politique étrangère*, No. 1, 2008, pp. 51-64.
- Brauch Hans-Günther, "From Confidence to Partnership-Building Measures in Europe and the Mediterranean: Conceptual and Political Efforts Revisited", in Hans-Günther Brauch, Antonio Marquina, Abdelwahab Biad (eds.), *Euro-Mediterranean Partnership for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Houndmills, Macmillan 2000.
- Brussels European Council, *Presidency conclusions*, March 13-14, 2008.

Collinson Sarah, "Security or Securitisation? Migration and the Pursuit of Freedom, Security and Justice in the Euro-Mediterranean Area", *EuroMeSCo Papers*, No. 19, November 2007, [www.euromesco.net](http://www.euromesco.net).

Commission Non-Paper on the "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean", no date indicated.

Conférence de presse conjointe de Mme Angela Merkel, Chancelier de la République Fédérale d'Allemagne et de M. Nicolas Sarkozy, Président de la République, March 3, 2008, web site of the French Republic Presidency.

Conférence de presse de M. Nicolas Sarkozy, Président de la République, lors du Conseil Européen de Bruxelles, Jeudi 13 mars 2008, web site of the French Republic Presidency.

Conférence organisée par l'IFRI, Paris le 11 mars 2008, les interventions de Nouria Chékib, président de l'Institut Arabe des Chefs d'Entreprises, Tunis et Abouyoub Hassan, ambassadeur itinérant du Maroc.

Daguzan Jean-François et autres, "Quelle Union Méditerranéenne?", *Géoéconomie*, No. 42, 2007.

Déclaration finale du sommet européen, Bruxelles, mars 13 et 14, 2008.

Deutschlandradio Kultur, "Brok lehnt Sarkozy Vorstoss zur Türkei ab", 8 June 2007.

El Pais, "La nueva paradoja francesa, Que pretende Sarkozy con su Union Mediterranea?", July 15, 2007.

Emerson, Michael, "Making Sense of Sarkozy's Union for the Mediterranean", *CEPS Policy Brief*, No. 155, March 7, 2008.

Emerson Michael and Tocci Nathalie, "A little clarification, please, on the Union of the Mediterranean", *CEPS Policy Brief*, June 8, 2007.

Escribano Gonzalo, y Lorca Alejandro, "La Unión Mediterránea: una unión en busca de proyecto", *Working Papers*, No. 13, Real Instituto Elcano, 2008, [www.realinstitutoelcano.org](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org)

Eurostat/European Commission, *Euro-Mediterranean Statistics*, Luxemburg, Office for the Publications of the EC, 2006.

Florensa Senén, "Limites del proyecto de Unión Mediterránea: hacia una nueva fase del Proceso de Barcelona", *Afkar/Ideas*, IEMed, Fall, 2007.

Grimaud Nicole, *Etudes Internationales*, No. 67.

Haaretz, "Sarkozy's Mediterranean grandeur", January 11, 2008.

Haaretz, "At State dinner with Sarkozy, Peres sees "unparalleled" French-Israel relationship", March 12, 2008.

Haaretz, "A reception par excellence", March 14, 2008.

Haaretz, "The Two-president vision", March 16, 2008.

Henry Jean-Robert, «Union méditerranéenne et Union Euro-méditerranéenne», [www.fundaciocampalans.com](http://www.fundaciocampalans.com)

Herman Lior, "An Action Plan or a Plan for Action? Israel and the European Neighbourhood Policy", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 11, No. 3, 2006, pp. 371-95.

Institut de la Méditerranée, *Rapport du Groupe d'experts réuni par l'Institut de la Méditerranée sur le projet d'Union Méditerranéenne* (Rapport Reiffers), Marseilles, October 2007.

International Herald Tribune, "Sarkozy's proposal for Mediterranean bloc makes waves", 10 May 2007.

International Herald Tribune, "Plan drafted for deeper EU ties to its South", March 13, 2008.

International Herald Tribune, "Merkel and Sarkozy: *What did Israel gain?*", March 25, 2008.

Interview with British Official from the Foreign Office in Paris on September 11, 2007, "Medelhavsunionen à la Merkel" in: [www.europanytt.se/default.asp?id=1670](http://www.europanytt.se/default.asp?id=1670)

Khader Bichara, "L'Union Méditerranéenne: une Union de projets ou un projet d'Union", *Confluences Méditerranée*, Analyses, November 23, 2007, [www.confluences-mediterranee.com/v2/spip.php?article1704](http://www.confluences-mediterranee.com/v2/spip.php?article1704).

L'Appel de Rome pour l'Union pour la Méditerranée de la France, l'Italie et l'Espagne, 20 December 2007, web site of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

La Croix, "La Méditerranée de Nicolas Sarkozy", October 9, 2007.

La Presse, "Le Président Sarkozy, à l'occasion de sa visite en Tunisie", July 7, 2007.

Le Figaro, "Le Président Ben Ali", January 4, 2008.

Le Figaro, "Méditerranée: l'UE entérine le nouveau projet", March 14, 2008.

Le Monde, "Accord franco-allemand sur l'Union pour la Méditerranée", March 4, 2008.

Le Monde, "Devançant l'Union pour la Méditerranée de M. Sarkozy, La Commission veut depolluer la rive sud avant 2020", April 12, 2008.

Lerman, Eran, *The Mediterranean Idea*, New York, American Jewish Committee, 2007.

Libération, "Méditerranée: le malentendu", July 9, 2007.

Majone Giandomenico, "Non majoritarian Institutions and the Limits of Democratic Governance: A Political Transaction-Cost Approach", *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, No. 157, 2001.

Patrie Beatrice and Espanol Emmanuel, *Méditerranée. Adresse au président de la République, Nicolas Sarkozy*, Paris, Sindbad, 2008.

Press conference of President Sarkozy at the Brussels European Council, March 13, 2008.

Schmid Dorothée, "Optimiser le processus de Barcelone", *Occasional Papers*, No. 36, EU-Institute for Security Studies, 2002.

Schumacher Tobias, "From Barcelona to Valencia: The Limits of the EU's Political and Security Partnership with the Southern Mediterranean Countries" in Bo Huldt, Mats Engman, Elisabeth Davidson (eds.), *Strategic Yearbook 2003. Euro-Mediterranean Security and the Barcelona Process*, Swedish National Defence College, Stockholm 2002.

Schumacher Tobias, *Die Europäische Union als internationaler Akteur im südlichen Mittelmeerraum. Actor Capability und EU-Mittelmeerpolitik*, Baden-Baden, NOMOS, 2005.

Schumacher Tobias, "The German EU Presidency and the Southern Mediterranean", *EuroMeSCo e-news*, January 11, 2007, [www.euromesco.net/media/enews11\\_en.pdf](http://www.euromesco.net/media/enews11_en.pdf)

Spiegel Online International, "Merkel Slams Sarkozy's Club Med Plans", December 6, 2007.

Statement on "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean" Annex 1, Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council, March 13-14, 2008.

Tovias A., "Israeli Policy Perspectives on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in the Context of EU Enlargement", *Mediterranean Politics*, 8/2-3, 2003, pp. 214-32.

Williamson Oliver E., *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism*, New York, Free Press, 1985.

# Explaining Foreign Policy: Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom in Times of French-Inspired Euro-Mediterranean Initiatives

Tobias Schumacher\*

## RÉSUMÉ

L'accord atteint au sommet du Conseil Européen de mars 2008 d'établir une Union pour la Méditerranée n'est pas le résultat d'une évaluation collective du Partenariat Euro-Méditerranéen et, par conséquent, ne repose pas sur une véritable évaluation des besoins. En revanche, il est la conséquence d'un réseau complexe des processus d'interactions inter-étatiques et de l'opposition conjointe, orchestrée de façon informelle par de gouvernements non méditerranéens de l'Union Européenne aux efforts unilatéraux de la France d'établir un cadre de coopération exclusif. En allant au-delà du concept statique d'analyse traditionnelle de la politique étrangère et en s'appuyant sur des arguments inspirés de la théorie constructiviste, d'une interdépendance complexe et des éléments de théories intergouvernementalistes, cet article vise à analyser d'un angle basé sur les théories de l'information, les politiques étrangères de l'Allemagne, de la Pologne et du Royaume Uni face à la région de la Méditerranée en général et le plan original du président Français Nicolas Sarkozy de créer une Union méditerranéenne en particulier. L'analyse ne montre pas seulement que le résultat de cette lutte entre la France et principalement l'Allemagne et les pays membres non-méditerranéens, tels la Pologne et le Royaume Uni, a généré des résultats contreproductifs et a considérablement érodé les fondements des relations euro-méditerranéennes. Il démontre également l'utilité de recourir à la théorie de l'information pour analyser la politique Euro-méditerranéenne.

## ABSTRACT

The agreement reached at the European Council summit of March 2008 to establish a Union for the Mediterranean is not the result of a collective evaluation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and thus not based on a true needs assessment. Instead, it is

\* Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology, Lisbon University Institute.

The author would like to thank Ambassador Gonçalo Santa Clara Gomes, Beata Wojna and officials in the European Commission, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the German Foreign Ministry for their very useful comments.

the consequence of a complex web of interstate interaction processes and of the joint, informally orchestrated opposition of non-Mediterranean EU governments to unilateral French efforts to establish an exclusive cooperation framework. By going beyond the static concept of traditional foreign policy analysis and drawing on constructivist-inspired arguments, complex interdependence and elements of intergovernmentalist theories, this article aims at analysing from a theory-informed angle the foreign policies of Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom vis-à-vis the Mediterranean region in general and French President Nicolas Sarkozy's original plan to create a Mediterranean Union in particular. The analysis does not only show that the outcome of this struggle between France and mainly Germany and non-Mediterranean EU member states, such as Poland and the United Kingdom, generated counter-productive results and considerably eroded the foundations of Euro-Mediterranean relations. It also demonstrates the usefulness of bringing IR theory to the analysis of Euro-Mediterranean politics.

## Introduction

One of the key features of Euro-Mediterranean relations has always been their high degree of intergovernmentalism, which allows governmental actors, be they in the southern Mediterranean or within the European Union (EU), to exert a strong and predominating influence on the shaping, making and implementation of policies. Undoubtedly, intergovernmentalism – here understood as a complex process of decision-making by the participating governmental actors with the aim of reaching consensus – in the Euro-Mediterranean context is neither a new phenomenon nor an exception, but rather the rule. Already in the early seventies, the then European Community (EC) member states and their counterparts in the southern Mediterranean were instrumental in initiating and eventually institutionalising Euro-Mediterranean relations and contributing to the adoption of what then became known as the EC's "Global Mediterranean Policy". In spite of further steps towards greater integration and thus an expansion in the Union's supranational characteristics, EU member states were still crucially involved in the adoption of the Renovated Mediterranean Policy, which replaced the "approche globale", and the Euro-Maghreb Partnership, as well as in the creation of the Barcelona Process in 1995. Also, in the fourteen years since then, in spite of the complex three-basket structure of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), supranational features have remained subordinate to intergovernmentalism – a trend that is likely to increase within the framework of the newly established Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). In other words, the extent to which national interests are

being pursued has a very strong impact on the development of relations, thus generating a dilemma for the smooth evolution of Euro-Mediterranean relations. On the one hand, intergovernmentalism has proved crucial in advancing the EU's relations with its southern neighbours in general; on the other hand, due to member states' formal and informal veto powers, it has turned out to be detrimental to the full and proper implementation of objectives, as laid out, for example, in the Barcelona Declaration and the Association Agreements. Most importantly, the holding on to the retention of intergovernmental practices and the all too frequent refusal to compromise on questions of putative national interest have contributed to repeated crises and, ultimately, stagnation of the Barcelona Process.

Against this background, this article argues that the decision to transform the Barcelona Process and thus the EMP into the UfM was not the result of a collective and deliberate analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the former, by all actors involved, but rather the consequence of a complex web of interstate interaction processes and of the joint, informally orchestrated opposition of non-Mediterranean EU governments to the relentless unilateral French efforts to establish an exclusive policy framework, supposedly led by France. While this has undoubtedly prevented the duplication of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation frameworks and at least a formal degradation of the Barcelona Process, it will be shown that the outcome of this struggle between France and mainly non-Mediterranean EU member states, has generated even greater counter-productive results and considerably eroded the foundations of Euro-Mediterranean relations.

By going beyond the somewhat static concept of traditional foreign policy analysis (FPA) and drawing on constructivist-inspired arguments, complex interdependence, and elements of the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism, as put forward by Moravcsik and others, it is the objective of this article to shed light on the position and foreign policies of non-Mediterranean EU member states and their governments vis-à-vis the Mediterranean region in general and French President Nicolas Sarkozy's original plan to create a Mediterranean Union (UM) in particular. This will contribute to a better comprehension of the final compromise reached at the Brussels European Council summit of 13/14 March 2008, where the 27 EU heads of state and government formally approved the UfM. With this in view, the article reflects the assumption that there is a strained relationship in the competing pursuit of national agendas and the Barcelona and UfM agenda, the results of which are flawed decisions based on the lowest common denominator and adopted at the expense of a

further deepening of Euro-Mediterranean relations.

The article is structured as follows: Section 1 provides the elements of a possible framework for an analysis of non-Mediterranean EU member states' foreign policies in general and of the role of the Mediterranean space and hence Euro-Mediterranean relations in their foreign policy agendas in particular. This will include a brief discussion of the relevance of incorporating into the analysis a multi-faceted complex of intervening variables such as power, autonomy, (inter-)dependence, domestic and external constraints, or the role of personalities and perceptions. To a greater or lesser extent, all of these influence a foreign policy decision, or its omission, and thus underpin a government's action or inaction.

On the basis of this framework, Section 2 will then analyse the extent to which the Mediterranean features in the foreign policy agenda of non-Mediterranean EU member states, thereby explaining their position vis-à-vis the Barcelona Process and the UM and the UfM. In this vein, three EU member states have been chosen as case studies – Germany, Poland, and the United Kingdom. This choice is justified not only by the fact that their governments were among the main critics of the UM, but also because they share a similar geographical distance from the Mediterranean, are located in different geographical and political environments, i.e. Central Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, and Western Europe, and have been EC/EU members for varying periods of time. Moreover, while Germany and the United Kingdom belong to the “big four” and thus have a greater ‘voice opportunity’<sup>1</sup> than others, as exemplified in their 29 votes in the EU Council, Poland can be said to be the leading actor in its regional environment and its actions and positions often serve as rallying point for its smaller neighbours.

Section 3 will briefly discuss the initial twelve months of the UfM and point to some of the inherent problems of the project, linking them to the original policy supply and interstate interaction. It is based on the assumption that the UfM is not a palliative to address the numerous political and economic problems in Europe's southern neighbourhood, but rather perpetuates the flaws of the Barcelona Process and, what is worse, has led, to date, to a complete standstill in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, even on the working level.

Section 4 summarises the findings and links them to some of the elements that could underpin a conceptual framework for a foreign policy analysis, as presented in Section 1.



## Explaining Non-Mediterranean EU Member States' Foreign Policy: Elements of a Conceptual Framework

The widespread opposition of EU governments to the UfM cannot just be considered as accidental or the result of a collective plot against France's original plans to establish a Mediterranean Union that would have excluded the majority of EU member states. While it can be assumed that some EU member states might even have been in favour of an institutional Mediterranean cooperation framework that would not have required their participation, many shared the concern that the creation of a non-EU Mediterranean project had the potential of triggering gravitational forces and a process that could be leading to erosion of the somewhat fragile consensus to maintain a collective policy on the Mediterranean. Yet, the (op)position of each one of them was grounded on a complex, multi-level and multi-causal web of intervening factors, all of which, ultimately, determine their individual foreign policy behaviour.

In principle, FPA would be the obvious starting point in relation to (non-Mediterranean) EU member states and the relevance of the Mediterranean to them. A number of factors do however speak in favour of a more holistic approach that is capable of taking into account the above-mentioned multi-level and multi-causal characteristics, which underpinned the European Council's eventual decision to downgrade the idea of a UM into a UfM. First, traditional FPA rests strictly on the (neo-)realist paradigm and is preoccupied with security issues at the expense of other, equally important policy fields. Both realism and neo-realism share a preoccupation with power and anarchy and, broadly speaking, consider states as monolithic actors.<sup>2</sup> Whereas in the case of realism the behaviour of states can be explained by their inherent desire to accumulate power, in the case of neo-realism, their ambitions for power are derived from the anarchic structure of the international system. Undoubtedly, while power is indeed a considerable driving force for states, both assumptions have proved to be insufficient, not least on account of their simplistic approach.<sup>3</sup> Second, FPA is based on the assumption that states are the main and most important actors in the international system, whereas the consensus is that the international system, as a matter of fact, is a mixed-actor system increasingly marked by complex interdependence and transnational structures.<sup>4</sup>

To date, in spite of the development of numerous strands in FPA, no single theory of foreign policy exists that could fully bypass the restricted state-as-actor focus. Certainly, in recent years valuable studies, usually associated with

FPA, have tried to de-construct the monolithic state-as-actor focus by introducing the importance of the decision-making system and, somewhat more importantly, the role of cognitive factors such as perceptions or the importance of the information-processing of individual policy-makers. This follows up on Holsti's seminal study of 1970, which introduced the sociological concept of role into FPA.<sup>5</sup> Yet, they have not abandoned the neo-realist outlook inherent in FPA. Almost hand in hand with this overdue expansion of the principal focus of FPA, however, another important and highly noteworthy addition was introduced into the field by the "constructivist turn in international relations theory"<sup>6</sup>. This pointed out the importance of ideational aspects and thus the impact that socially constructed meanings have on foreign policy decisions. Although their reference to structures fails to offer a sufficient explanation of sudden and major changes in the foreign policy of a given country, and the often Marx-inspired discourse of dependency does not always appear to be in touch with current political realities, the importance of constructivist arguments to the ability to draw a more complete picture of the explanatory factors of a given country's foreign policy cannot be underestimated. Hence, for the purpose of analysing the foreign policy of the three case studies in this article and the (relative) importance they attach to the Mediterranean and thus to the UM and UfM, it is essential to underline the role and perceptions – and misperceptions – of individual personalities and leaders, and their interpretation of their environment, as well as the meaning of symbolic power and its repercussion on negotiated configurations. As stated elsewhere, "perceptions, at a collective as well as individual level, are likely themselves in turn to help shape the nature of the regional and international systems these states operate in".<sup>7</sup>

It is against this backdrop that it is also being suggested here to incorporate certain aspects of the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism into the analysis presented in the subsequent section. While the theory is in fact a mixture of theories developed by various scholars, originally to explain the process of European integration, Moravcsik's and Putnam's insights in particular seem to be useful in our context, as they link the domestic with the international level.<sup>8</sup> What Moravcsik defines as "domestic preference formation" and Putnam as the linkage between "diplomacy and domestic politics" is nothing less than the acknowledgement that governmental actors absorb "policy demands" from the domestic space and aim at implementing them in the international arena, thereby reneging as little as possible on these demands. The domestic space is marked by a vast number of actors with a variety of

interests and preferences who attempt to influence both the legislature and the executive. Moravcsik places particular emphasis on their economic interests, whereas Putnam refrains from ascribing more importance to either economic or political issues. In this framework, governmental actors, in order to be successful, need to identify the intersection – if it exists at all – between their domestic constituencies' interests and attitudes and that of their international counterparts with which they are engaged in bargaining and/or interaction processes. In a best-case scenario, the final outcome of these processes – during which recourse can be made to practices such as the threat of using alternative unilateral policies, the threat of building exclusive alternative coalitions, compromise and, if need be, issue linkage<sup>9</sup> – leads to an overlapping of the concerns and interests of the actors involved and creates what Putnam coins “win-sets”.

To some extent, with their study on complex interdependence, Keohane and Nye paved the way for this work, as they linked foreign policy to autonomy, the growing interconnectedness of states, and the processes of transnationalisation, all of which have a non-negligible effect on foreign policy formulation. Of course, they did not criticize the explanatory power of a number of realist assumptions *per se*, but rather questioned the extent to which they were all still capable of capturing changed realities without taking into consideration co-operational aspects. Picking up on liberal institutionalism and class theory, they expanded our understanding of IR, and thus foreign policy, in the area of the relationship between power and interdependence and the issue of mutual dependence at both a regional and international level.<sup>10</sup> They also pointed to the almost unavoidable pressure on governments to adjust their individual policies to one another's policy ideas if discord and conflict, as a result of unsuccessful attempts to shift individual costs of adjustments onto the relevant (other) government, were to be avoided.<sup>11</sup>

As rightly pointed out by Nonneman, “Europe's presence on the northern shores of the Mediterranean”<sup>12</sup> and the engagement of EU Mediterranean and non-Mediterranean member states in a collective cooperation framework such as the EMP, must form a major part of the explanatory mosaic. In turn, this implies that the very existence of the EU as a level of intermediation, offers its Mediterranean and non-Mediterranean members an arena to either increase or even decrease their autonomy in foreign and Mediterranean policy matters and for some, even a chance to raise their potentially underdeveloped “voice opportunity”.

In a simplifying fashion, the numerous variables presented in this section can be subsumed under the term “contextuality”, as – taken altogether – they literally form the context in which states generate and conduct their foreign policy. Whether and to what extent these variables have impacted upon the three cases selected in this article and their foreign policies vis-à-vis the Mediterranean, their engagement in the EMP and, finally, their position on the UM/UfM will be analysed in the next section.

### **Non-Mediterranean EU Member States: The Mediterranean and Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation**

In recent years, much has been written about Mediterranean EU member states’ foreign policy and the extent to which the Mediterranean features in their respective foreign policy agendas.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, not least thanks to the nowadays widespread interest of the scientific community in the various facets of Euro-Mediterranean relations, the number of studies on non-Mediterranean EU member states foreign policies vis-à-vis the southern Mediterranean is certainly increasing, yet it is still comparatively sparse.<sup>14</sup> This is certainly surprising in view of the long-standing existence of the Barcelona Process and the EU’s Mediterranean policy and the political and financial pressures it has placed on EU member states. It is even more incomprehensible that a systematic analysis of the role of Germany, the United Kingdom and Poland in Euro-Mediterranean dynamics and of the potential impact of the latter on the former has been neglected, given that the three countries can be considered the most important non-Mediterranean EU member states, possessing considerable influence on the shaping and making of EU Mediterranean policies. This fact came to the fore again only recently, in the wake of the discourse on the UfM.

#### ***Germany***

The fall of the Berlin wall in November 1989 and Germany’s subsequent unification process had a tremendous impact on its foreign policy, its international outlook and, thus, its perceptions of the southern Mediterranean. Naturally, as a divided and non-sovereign state on the front line in the East-West conflict, one that “imported” its security from the United States, while simultaneously guaranteeing it through NATO membership, its autonomy in foreign policy matters was heavily constrained for more than four decades. As a result of this limited room for manoeuvre,

which was even more restricted due to stipulations in Germany's Basic Law, specifying the 'civilian' nature of the state, German foreign policy was underpinned by three major determining factors, i.e. its Western orientation, embedding in multi-lateral structures and Euro-centrism. In conjunction with a broad domestic consensus on the societal and political levels of this orientation, both of which grew considerably after the Social Democrats adopted their Godesberg Programme in 1959, German foreign policy confined itself for many years to issues "very close to home"<sup>15</sup>. As a consequence, the southern Mediterranean was mainly perceived by the political elite from a developmental perspective. It was only seen from a strategic angle within the larger NATO and hence Cold War context, if at all. While, for domestic economic actors, the (non-Arab) Mediterranean was for many years mainly a source of cheap labour, the interest of German society in the area was by and large limited to tourism and cultural aspects. Hence, domestic constituencies' demands on the executive to adopt active policies towards the southern Mediterranean were negligible.

Hand in hand with the changes in Germany's internal and external environment and the erosion of its external foreign policy rationale at the beginning of the 1990s came a gradual reformulation of the country's *Selbstverständnis* in foreign policy, initiated in particular by the conservative-liberal government under the leadership of Helmut Kohl and the subsequent red-green coalition led by Gerhard Schroeder – a process whose end result can best be summarised as a modern form of revisionism. Interestingly, in the framework of the so-called out-of-area debate that took place in the early nineties, there was a widespread consensus among the country's political left to oppose the governing parties' vehement support in favour of engaging Germany in peace-keeping and peace-building operations outside Germany, with a view to its assuming greater and, most of all, global responsibilities. Gradually, heavily influenced by their party leaders, who had finally understood the growing international demands, the Social Democrats changed their position in 1992. The constitutional court's ruling of 1994, considering out-of-area missions legitimate provided they were preceded by a parliamentary decision, prepared the ground for the political left's U-turn after it assumed power in 1998 and after Chancellor Schroeder risked a vote of confidence in November 2001 as part of his eventually successful efforts to obtain parliamentary support for Germany's and thus the *Bundeswehr's* participation in the US-led military action "Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan".<sup>16</sup>

This shift from externally imposed foreign policy navel-gazing to global activism was the result of both external and domestic demands and intertwined with the gradual build-up of the EU's common foreign and security policy, but it was also undeniably used by Helmut Kohl and Gerhard Schroeder, as well as former Foreign Minister Fischer, in their aspirations to sharpen and increase their own political profile beyond the realm of domestic politics.<sup>17</sup> Along with the growing pressure in the EU, mainly initiated by Spain and the European Commission, to make the Mediterranean an area of strategic importance, the developments mentioned above were not without consequences for the Mediterranean itself and for the extent to which it increasingly became an issue of post-unification German foreign policy. Undoubtedly, the numerous terror attacks in various southern Mediterranean cities over recent years, some of which claimed the lives of German citizens, the civil war in Algeria from 1991 to 2000, the failure of the Madrid Peace Process, and the learning process among parts of the German foreign policy establishment as a result of its membership of the EMP contributed to this. Nonetheless, as exemplified by the programmes of the German EU presidencies in 1999 and 2007, which hardly mentioned the Mediterranean at all, the relevance of this contextuality did not generate a single German "Mediterranean policy" as such. Moreover, in spite of Germany's participation in the Schengen agreement, which provides for the removal of border controls between the participating countries, thus supposedly triggering greater sensitivity for developments in the south, "neighbourhood" in Germany, both on the societal and political level, is still mainly associated with Central and Eastern Europe and the EU member states bordering Germany. Moreover, the Mediterranean as a foreign policy arena is also subordinate to Germany's virtual political, economic and socio-cultural neighbourhood that extends even to the US, owing to more than sixty years' close bilateral cooperation and the German foreign policy elite's structural decision to participate pro-actively in the international community's stabilisation efforts in the Balkans and Afghanistan.

Indeed, the German government played a crucial role in upgrading Euro-Mediterranean relations in the run-up to the Barcelona Conference in 1995. This engagement was, however, rather the result of an intensive bargaining process, involving recourse to the practice of issue-linkage, mainly between Spanish Prime Minister Gonzalez and Chancellor Kohl, at the end of which Germany accepted the initiation of the EMP in exchange for Spain's support for German-inspired plans to start the EU accession process for the Central

and Eastern European reform states.<sup>18</sup> Kohl's principal position at the time, i.e. to give free trade priority over political cooperation and prevent both the closer association of southern Mediterranean partners with the EU and greater financial assistance, has somewhat represented a consistent stance of all German governments ever since. Using the instrument of coalition-building, in particular with governments of other non-Mediterranean states, e.g. that of the United Kingdom in 1992 in the context of the Edinburgh European Council Summit and Poland before the Brussels European Council Summit of early 2008, Germany has not only been just partly successful in ensuring this line, but occasionally even displayed a contradictory attitude in the wake of free trade negotiations by acting in a highly protectionist fashion.<sup>19</sup> While Kohl and his British counterpart Major were instrumental in ensuring acceptance of the Delors II package in 1992, which in turn prevented even greater financial assistance under the MEDA I programme three years later, and while Chancellor Angela Merkel successfully orchestrated an anti-UM coalition in the early months of 2008, German governments could neither prevent the incorporation of the southern Mediterranean into the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and increased financial assistance within the framework of the latter, nor the granting of advanced status to Morocco in the autumn of 2008.<sup>20</sup>

Overall, in addition to Germany's long-standing commitments in the area of development assistance to the southern Mediterranean, two policy areas stand out – trade and Germany's special relationship with Israel and, thus, its interest in contributing to conflict resolution in the Middle East. Soon after the second world war, as a consequence of its division and the absence of sovereignty, the governing elite, with the support of the Western bloc, was already focusing on the creation of a market economy and the pursuit of a liberal export-oriented trade policy to generate a network of interdependence, which was also to be used in the context of (West) German governmental efforts to overcome the partition of Germany. This rationale and the end of the colonial period led to the gradual establishment of diplomatic relations and an intensification of bilateral trade relations with all southern Mediterranean countries. As part of this development, German industry, represented by the Federation of German Industries (BDI), along with the German-Arab Association and subsequent German-Arab economic forums, became highly instrumental over the years in intensifying these trade links and, through their policy demands, contributed to the fact that nowadays Germany is among the most important trading partners of all southern Mediterranean countries.<sup>21</sup> In conjunction with the

fact that existing Euro-Mediterranean association agreements predominantly contained trade stipulations, their consistent lobbying impacted seriously on the actions of all German governments in the field of the promotion of political reform. In effect, such issues as the strengthening of human rights, good governance and democratization in the south – in purely practical political terms – became subordinate to well-defined trade interests.<sup>22</sup>

The role of personalities in foreign policy-making was particularly obvious in the context of Germany's<sup>23</sup> recent pro-active engagement in the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as former Foreign Minister Fischer – driven by personal ambition, the moral imperative of Germany's past, and demands by many Arab governments to contribute to a just and peaceful resolution to the conflict – made the issue a priority in German foreign policy. His seven-point "Idea Paper" of April 2002 and his second four-page Middle East peace initiative of late 2002, albeit unsuccessful, left a very visible German imprint on the road map for peace, as well as all subsequent efforts by the international Middle East Quartet. In the person of Foreign Minister Steinmeier, though somewhat less prominently, the Foreign Ministry has continued along Mr. Fischer's path. In contrast, picking up on demands from various Jewish communities in Germany and the previous Israeli government itself, under Prime Minister Olmert, Chancellor Merkel has displayed a more Israel-friendly position, thereby jeopardizing the present more balanced perception in the southern Mediterranean and Arab world of Germany as an impartial negotiator in the conflict. In view of the supremacy of the Chancellery over the Foreign Ministry, it is thus hardly surprising that Germany has been highly influential in the current negotiations between the EU and Israeli government with respect to the establishment of a privileged partnership.<sup>24</sup>

As far as the UM/UfM is concerned, it is worth pointing out that Merkel's opposition to a project that was originally destined to adopt the form of a non-EU cooperation framework, excluding the majority of EU member states, was not rooted in any societal demands or pressures. Nor was the German government informally tasked by other EU member states' governments to take the lead in opposing French President Sarkozy. Interestingly, German industry also kept a rather low profile during the months preceding the Brussels summit of 13/14 March 2008 in spite of the fact that German business would have lost a potential opportunity to expand its market share in the south if the original French plans had been successful. One explanation of the low degree to which the BDI was influencing the Chancellery in its efforts to oppose the original idea of a UM that would exclude Germany is the fact



that the vast majority of both medium-sized and large industries are lukewarm about expanding their investment activities in the southern Mediterranean in view of the inadequate regulation underpinning the free flow of capital. Nonetheless, some interest manifested itself among German businesses operating in the field of solar energy – one of the six areas for enhanced cooperation under the UfM – as they adopted a joint Franco-German plan which foresees the construction of new electricity-generating capacities around the entire Mediterranean by 2020 and, arguably, the generation of substantial revenue.<sup>25</sup> Only after Merkel had finally managed to convince Sarkozy, at their bilateral meeting in Hanover in early March 2008, to abandon his exclusionary plans and it had been guaranteed that the new project would include all EU member states and even all non-EU Mediterranean riparians did the BDI publish a position paper. In this document the BDI generally welcomed the new initiative, considering the Mediterranean “an interesting market thanks to a growing dynamism and much untapped potential” but, even so, points to ten major challenges that the UfM would need to address in order to become an economic success.<sup>26</sup>

Interestingly, in the run-up to the Brussels summit, none of these concerns were ever raised by Chancellor Merkel or Foreign Minister Steinmeier, who was considerably less outspoken in his criticism of a UM. Instead, the point of departure for the Chancellery’s criticism of the Sarkozy initiative, which grew considerably throughout 2007 and reached a climax in December 2007, was a carefully chosen argument intended to shift the focus to the EU level and thus away from, what were in fact, purely power-oriented considerations: after months of deliberate restraint and silence, providing the Elysée with ample space to abandon the idea of a UM at a very early stage, Merkel argued that the creation of a UM that included only Mediterranean riparians had the potential to set in motion gravitational forces within the EU that in turn could generate a process of fragmentation and, eventually, disintegration. Furthermore, she reminded Sarkozy, and hence all other EU governments, that the use of EU funding for the exclusive pursuit of national interests could not be justified.<sup>27</sup> Fully aware that these arguments would raise concern among the governments of other EU member states, e.g. the United Kingdom and Poland, she hardly missed an occasion to make her message heard, with the aim of bringing potentially diverse perceptions in line with one another. Irrespective of the degree to which her putative concerns were serious and justified, it can be argued that the strategy was intended to portray her as acting in defence of the “common good”, i.e. the very existence of European

integration and EU-European commonality. On the other hand, the rationale underlying this strategy was to prevent France from becoming ‘*primus inter pares*’ in European foreign policy matters and thereby undermining Germany’s role as the leading actor within the EU, and to preclude a resurgence of French colonial ambitions. Another layer was added to this multi-level game by the incorporation of the growing concern among the German foreign policy elite that French President Sarkozy’s ignorance of long-standing bilateral communication and coordination channels had the potential of seriously affecting the Franco-German alliance – after all, a cornerstone of post-war German foreign policy and, due to the deep degree of mutual interdependence, almost a domestic issue.

In a way, even before the French-German meeting in Hanover, the “Appel de Rome”<sup>28</sup>, adopted by the Prime Ministers of Italy and Spain and the French President on 20 December 2007, gave a good indication of the first impact that Merkel’s warnings had had in other EU capitals. It also showed that the informal German-led coalition-building that had already started in the background finally had begun to bear fruit. By downgrading the proposal from a Mediterranean Union to merely a Union *for the* Mediterranean and by suggesting that all EU member states should attend the Paris summit of July 2008, the dynamics had changed and the Chancellery was using this momentum to play its cards one after the other, thereby gradually increasing the pressure on the Elysée. In this sense, it was almost a logical step for Merkel to go beyond her repeatedly raised concerns and open yet another front that would make it impossible for Sarkozy to push through his exclusive plans. Encouraged by Merkel, this front was opened in the form of a policy speech by the newly elected Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk on 23 November 2007, in which he mentioned that Poland should “participate in shaping the Eastern dimension of the EU through the development of relations with Ukraine and Russia”<sup>29</sup>. From the Chancellery’s perspective, the beginning of an intra-EU discourse, emerging simultaneously, on the possible need to establish an “Eastern European Union” and the linkage of two possibly emerging policy frameworks for Europe’s most sensitive neighbourhoods finally ensured the attention of all EU governments and, last but not least, opened new avenues for Merkel to score another foreign policy success and achieve what she had already announced in her speech before the European Parliament on 17 January 2007, namely that she would pay more attention to Eastern Europe.<sup>30</sup>

## *Poland*

Undoubtedly, the defining moment for current Polish foreign policy was the fall of the Berlin wall and the subsequent collapse of the Warsaw Pact. Forced by the “Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance” to surrender its autonomy in the field of foreign policy to the Soviet Union, the termination of the Pact in July 1991 led to a situation in which Polish society and the political elite – old and new – had to embark on a discourse over the future course of the country’s foreign policy. With the election of Lech Walesa in December 1990 to serve as President of the Third Polish Republic, after decades of totalitarianism, it soon became obvious that this discourse was less about whether Poland should or should not develop a Western orientation than about the extent to which this general orientation was synonymous with full or just partial integration into Euro-Atlantic structures.<sup>31</sup> Eventually, societal and political consensus emerged in favour of full integration into both NATO and the EU. Although this process was repeatedly exposed to setbacks, as exemplified by the developments in late 1994 and early 1995, culminating in the resignation of Foreign Minister Olechowski over the refusal of the Pawlak government to adopt an active pro-Western stance,<sup>32</sup> Poland became a member of NATO in 1999 and the EU in 2004.

Participation in Euro-Atlantic structures and the process of European integration set in motion the internationalization of Polish post-Cold War Foreign Policy, embedding the country in new cooperation structures and thus increasing the degree of interdependence between it and its partners in this newly evolving cooperation. This development occurred, however, at the expense of the relations with (Mediterranean) countries that Poland had developed in the context of the Cold War, not least for ideological reasons. While bilateral relations were established and maintained in particular with Syria, Algeria and Libya, the relative importance of these relationships declined as a consequence of the diversification of Polish foreign policy and the growing concern among both governmental and societal actors about Poland’s mainly non-democratic Eastern neighbourhood. Unsurprisingly, this development passed almost unnoticed and was never the subject of domestic debate among the political elite, the media or other constituencies and lobby groups, e.g. Polish Industry, the Poland Import Export Chamber of Commerce, the Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency or the Polish agricultural lobby. The absence of specific policy demands generated by domestic actors with respect to the southern Mediterranean region, noteworthy since the creation of the Third Republic, is thus even more blatant in Poland than in Germany.<sup>33</sup>

This situation, i.e. the absence of domestic Mediterranean-related policy supplies and thus domestic preference formation, remains almost unchanged in spite of Poland's EU membership and its corresponding participation in the EU's Euro-Mediterranean cooperation framework. At government level, however, the Europeanization of Polish foreign policy is discernible to the extent that every single Polish government, in the context of EU membership, has officially committed itself to the EMP, now the UfM, and supports the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area. Moreover, the government under Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz has even ensured Poland's active participation in the FRONTEX operations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the summer of 2006 with a view to combating illegal migration. Certainly, as in the case of Germany, exposure to Euro-Med practices and participation in sectoral cooperation programmes has led to greater, albeit still underdeveloped, sensitivity among Polish decision-makers as well as increased awareness of the socio-economic and political developments in the southern Mediterranean. In recent years, as a result of this socialization process and an increasingly firm grasp of the market potential of southern Mediterranean countries, as well as an awareness of the need to diversify energy supplies, Polish governments, in particular those of Prime Ministers Kaczyński and Tusk, have gradually started to reinvigorate their relationships with some of the country's former ideological allies in the Mediterranean. The leading government actor in this regard is the Ministry of the Economy: as a result of both a visit by a Polish government delegation to Algeria in 2006 and a bilateral meeting between the Minister of the Economy Piotr Grzegorz and the Algerian Minister of Energy and Mines in January 2007 in Warsaw, it initiated a Memorandum on Cooperation, supposedly leading to the strengthening of bilateral economic relations, particularly in the field of energy, mining, telecommunications, transport and construction.<sup>34</sup> In the light of Algeria's being the third most important market for Polish exports in Africa and its vast energy resources, the re-intensification of relations is quite a natural development.

Such an explanation, however, does not apply to Syria. Yet, on 5 March 2009, for the first time in 20 years, the Ministry of the Economy, under the leadership of Deputy Minister of the Economy, Adam Szejnfeld, together with the Polish Chamber of Commerce, held a Polish-Syrian business forum in Warsaw to identify areas of future cooperation. It was preceded by bilateral negotiations and the conclusion of an agreement to set up a Poland-Syria Business Board. As the meetings mainly revolved around issues such as the

operation of special economic zones in Poland, cooperation in the field of food processing, construction, infrastructure and utilities, their underlying rationale is simply related to the government's objective to explore new markets at a time when the European single market is in recession, and thus increase the bilateral trade balance, currently amounting to approximately USD 82 million.<sup>35</sup> However, sensitive issues pertaining to Syria's role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, its relations with Hamas and Hezbollah, and its special relationship with Iran – all of which are of utmost concern to the EU and among the reasons why the EU-Syria association agreement already initialled in October 2004 has still not been signed and ratified – were never addressed by the Polish government during the meetings. On the one hand, this can be explained by the fact that Polish government actors' perceptions of political developments in the southern Mediterranean are by and large simplified and all too often inaccurate. On the other hand, this attitude of benign neglect and the decision to attribute more importance to economic interests mirrors a widespread feature of EU foreign policy vis-à-vis its southern neighbourhood in general.<sup>36</sup> Since 1989, Polish foreign policy has officially been committed to the protection of fundamental rights, the rule of law and democracy but, apart from being the cornerstones of Poland's policy in international frameworks, these principles have been addressed in the context of Poland's relations with its Eastern neighbours and most recently of the Georgia-Russia war in 2008, but have never been the subject of any direct intergovernmental encounter with any of the EMP's southern partners.

The formation of government actors' interest in the southern Mediterranean is furthermore only discernible to the extent that the "Strategy for Poland's Development Cooperation"<sup>37</sup>, adopted by the Polish government in October 2003, singles out the Palestinian Territories as recipients of Polish ODA to be transferred either directly via the Polish Representation Office opened in 2004 in Ramallah or via UNRWA. Polish aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA) increased from EUR 130.000 in 2005 to EUR 500.000 in 2007, owing mainly to a decision taken by the EU's General Affairs and External Relations Council in April 2006 to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian population and address the deteriorating humanitarian situation.<sup>38</sup> It is however questionable whether Poland's development assistance towards the PA can be considered a sign of Polish ambitions to assume a political role in the region. As is argued elsewhere, the position prevailing among government officials seems to be that "development aid grants visibility" and thus is not a direct result of a normative and sustainable policy, but rather a

vehicle through which other political objectives not related to the Palestinian Territories and/or the Israeli Palestinian conflict can be achieved.<sup>39</sup> Undoubtedly, it is in this light that the “Polish Strategy Towards Non-European Developing Countries”, containing one chapter on North Africa and the Middle East, has to be read and, secondly, it is against this background that Poland has strengthened its military presence as part of UNIFIL II. Polish engagement in the southern Mediterranean, be it in the context of development assistance or in peacekeeping missions, does not stem from an explicit “Mediterranean agenda” but is rather the result of Polish governmental and societal desires to secure the country’s political and economic interests, along with its obligation to respond to the new responsibilities imposed upon it by EU membership.<sup>40</sup>

When, in late November 2007, Prime Minister Tusk declared that Poland should adopt an even more pro-active stance within the EU to facilitate, in particular, the latter’s relations with Russia and the Ukraine,<sup>41</sup> this announcement was in line with Poland’s post-Communist foreign policy objectives, long-standing considerations regarding regional stability and interdependence, various demands from domestic economic actors and, given Poland’s recent history and geographical location, the country’s broad societal attitudes. Having been in office for just seven days at the time of the speech, Donald Tusk refrained from making any reference to the UM/UfM, as positive and negative comments alike would have generated criticism either at home or in France – the latter being one of Poland’s key strategic partners in the EU and a member of the Weimar Triangle. Instead, the newly formed Polish government, already aware of the gradually surfacing differences within the EU over the future course of the EMP, very quickly identified the intersection of interests and attitudes between the Polish and German (and other non-Mediterranean EU member states’) domestic constituencies and, without stressing the fact explicitly, sided with the German Chancellery in its opposition towards the creation of a UM. Although the creation of a UM/UfM was never the subject of public debate in Poland, or even discussed in Parliament, Tusk picked up on the general sentiment that such a union of sorts would possibly require greater financial and political involvement by all EU member states, which in turn was perceived as a development that could have negative repercussions on the further development of EU policy towards Eastern Europe and thus on Poland and Germany’s ambitions in Eastern Europe.

The existence of overlapping concerns and interests between Germany and

Poland did eventually allow governments of other non-Mediterranean EU member states to formulate, albeit indirectly, their unease with the French initiative and gradually position themselves ahead of the Brussels European Council of March 2008. The Swedish government, particularly in the person of Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, subscribed to Tusk and Merkel's principal argument that the stabilization and democratization of Eastern Europe must not be forgotten in the debate over a UM/UfM and, though avoiding any official remarks in that regard, he had recourse to the practice of issue-linkage by linking Poland and Sweden's approval of an inclusive and cost-neutral UM/UfM to the creation of an Eastern Partnership.<sup>42</sup> Undoubtedly, from the perspective of the newly elected Polish government, the declared intention to propose an Eastern Partnership at the Brussels European Council in May 2008 generated a multi-faceted win-set in that it would guarantee broad domestic support for a major policy initiative, potentially destined to reflect Poland's growing influence within the EU, guarantee that Poland's most pressing foreign policy concern would be elevated to EU level, guarantee that the UM/UfM could not arouse unwelcome distributional consequences in financial terms and hence ensure that the newly elected government would simultaneously achieve a number of objectives without having directly offended any of its EU partners.

### *The United Kingdom*

The United Kingdom contrasts with Germany and Poland in that it had a long history of colonialism in the Middle East and North Africa and, even today, is present in the Mediterranean given its Gibraltar outpost and its sovereign base areas in Cyprus. The repercussions of both the signing of the Sykes-Picot agreement in 1916 and the adoption of the Balfour Declaration in 1917 have left a considerable historical legacy for the United Kingdom's relations with the countries of the region. It is precisely its colonial past that can be identified as an intervening variable responsible for its dense web of rather close and well-developed bilateral relations with the majority of countries in the southern Mediterranean. The special role the United Kingdom played, in particular, in the political development of both Jordan and Egypt in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century helps explain its present ties with both countries and, in addition to important British trade interests and an inclination, growing in particular after 9/11 and the London bombings in July 2005, towards close anti-terrorism cooperation, this role can be considered the key explanatory factor.<sup>43</sup>

As far as Jordan is concerned, cooperation in the defence area is particularly noteworthy, dating back to the inception of Transjordan in 1921: The United Kingdom provided support first for the establishment and later the modernization of the Jordanian defence forces. In the early 1990s the British Defence Ministry, under the direction of Sir Malcolm Rifkind, made an agreement with the Jordanian Royal Palace and the local defence elite to initiate joint military exercises, which started in 1993 and have taken place on an annual basis ever since.<sup>44</sup> While, politically, this cooperation follows the tradition of the United Kingdom's past engagement, economically it has proven to be extremely profitable, mainly for the British defence industry. Over the years, the multinational BAE Systems have turned out to be the most important domestic actor formulating concrete policy demands and thus generating concrete policy supply, much of which has been taken up by the various governments. This has created a situation in which it has become the almost exclusive beneficiary in financial terms of British-Jordanian defence cooperation.<sup>45</sup>

Apart from BAE systems, the British government's trade development arm, UK Trade & Investment, has established itself over the years as one of the key actors in the exploitation of the United Kingdom's export potential, in turn absorbing policy demands from the United Kingdom's export industry, particularly in areas such as telecommunications equipment, pharmaceutical products, machinery, transport equipment, textiles and yarn, and scientific instruments. By 2008, its lobbying had led to a large bilateral trade imbalance, with the United Kingdom exporting goods in the amount of £210 million and importing goods in the amount of £21 million. To compensate for this asymmetric development, in view of Jordan's considerable foreign debt, and not least in order to secure the Jordanian regime's support in the field of anti-terrorism cooperation, Prime Minister Tony Blair agreed with Jordanian requests in early 2002 and supported a debt rescheduling agreement. It came into force in July 2002 as a result of the Paris Club discussions. However, this agreement proved unsustainable and, in January 2008, Prime Minister Gordon Brown agreed to yet another, this time more comprehensive, debt settlement of over USD 2 billion.<sup>46</sup>

Since late 2004, on Tony Blair's personal insistence, the British government has introduced the fight against terrorism into its bilateral relations with the countries of the southern Mediterranean and has been actively seeking Memoranda of Understanding, facilitating the deportation of terror suspects from the region. In response to US practices and pressures, a highly important



external variable influencing British foreign policy-making from 2000-2008, the first such agreement was concluded with Jordan in August 2005 and another one with Libya just two months later, and negotiations were initiated with other southern Mediterranean regimes. As in the case of Germany and Poland, respect for and the strengthening of human rights and fundamental freedoms has become, in principle, a cornerstone of British foreign policy, owing in particular to the personal efforts and conviction of the former foreign secretary Robin Cook.<sup>47</sup> Yet, the memorandum of understanding with Jordan generated criticism precisely for not being in line with human rights norms, as it omits stipulations on the effective protection of returnees' rights. The question was even raised whether any British court, when confronted with a deportation request, would accept assurances from the Jordanian authorities, knowing that they make repeated use of torture.<sup>48</sup>

Clearly, relations with Egypt and other Arab southern Mediterranean partners were temporarily affected by Tony Blair's vehement support for the US-led invasion of Iraq. The ultimate implementation of his doctrine of interventionism, as presented in his Chicago speech in 1999 and exemplified by Britain's participation in "Operation Iraqi Freedom",<sup>49</sup> was a clear break with Cook's more pacifist notion of human rights and democracy promotion, for it was rooted in Blair's personal belief that the spreading of democracy could serve as a legitimate basis for military intervention. While the Jordanian regime, not least due to its multi-faceted dependence on British aid, abstained from criticising Tony Blair too strongly over the coherence of his pro-US policies, the Egyptian regime was much more critical of the Blair-Bush approach and, particularly before the war, anti-British/American sentiment all too often came to the fore in the context of major demonstrations in Cairo.<sup>50</sup> Very soon after the fall of Saddam Hussein, bilateral relations normalized again. Indeed, British investment in Egypt and external trade throughout 2003 were largely unaffected. Since then regular 'travel diplomacy' has resumed and the already close cultural relations, with British Council representation in both Cairo and Alexandria, have been intensified, as have British investment activities. Nowadays the United Kingdom is the largest foreign investor in Egypt. Domestic actors such as the British Confederation of Industry, Trade Partners UK, British Trade International and the British-Egyptian Business Association (BEBA) have proven to be highly instrumental in that regard, as they have consistently transmitted their policy preferences to the government and so must be considered the most important non-governmental source of policy supply.

Undoubtedly, the absence of other influential domestic constituencies trying to exert pressure on the government is one of the main reasons explaining the latter's silence – *grosso modo* – as regards criticizing the Egyptian and, in fact, other regimes in the region for the repeated violation of human rights and the perpetuation of authoritarianism. In the past, the British government under Tony Blair has indeed raised sensitive issues with the Egyptian regime, e.g. the persecution of Egyptian Copts or the imprisonment of opposition leader Ayman Nour, and must even be considered more outspoken and critical than most other EU governments. In practical terms, however, British criticism has not had any major impact on the ground and was even questioned by the regimes concerned themselves, given Britain's participation in the US-led coalition and thus Blair's dubious ideological notion of democracy promotion by force.

In the recent past, the approximately 2.4 million-strong Muslim community in Britain has undoubtedly come to be considered a not insignificant domestic constituency capable of exerting considerable pressure on the government. In particular the Muslim Council of Britain, the biggest umbrella organisation of Muslims in Britain with more than 400 affiliates, has repeatedly attacked the government, most visibly in early 2009, in the context of a public campaign against the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Hazel Blears, and Prime Minister Brown's offer to send peacekeeping naval forces to monitor arms-smuggling between Egypt and Gaza.<sup>51</sup> Whereas the Council proved to be an important source of policy input on domestic issues, such as the Equality Act in 2007, and a repeated critic of British foreign policy in Iraq, it has hitherto failed to leave its imprint on any of the government's bilateral relations with southern Mediterranean regimes or on the EU's Mediterranean Policy and the related British position.

Following Tony Blair's Chicago speech, democracy promotion in general and in the Middle East and North Africa in particular, was given a prominent place on the United Kingdom's foreign policy agenda, even leading to intra-governmental disputes between the Department for International Development (DfID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) during the year that preceded the US-led invasion of Iraq. The development minister Claire Short opposed the foreign secretary Jack Straw, arguing that capacity-building was more important than the hasty introduction of democratic structures, but was not successful in pushing through her views. On 12 May 2003 she finally resigned in protest at the war in Iraq.<sup>52</sup> Whereas her successors adopted a much more coherent stance with Downing Street,

this change hardly affected the southern Mediterranean. Undoubtedly, in the early 2000s, Prime Minister Blair was instrumental, on a personal level, in the matter of the Libyan regime's decision to abandon its arms programme and its reintegration into the international community and, before the invasion of Iraq, he tried to convince Syrian President Bashar of the need to introduce political and economic reforms. These overtures, underpinned by a newly established budget line specifically targeting reform projects in the Middle East, did not contribute to processes of political liberalization either in Libya or Syria and it is indeed questionable whether Blair's efforts were seriously intended to induce democratic change or were simply born of strategic and economic need/considerations.

The issue of counter-terrorism was one of the key drivers and decisive variables behind the FCO's decision to establish both a UK-Morocco Ministerial Dialogue Forum in February 2006 and the creation of a UK-Algeria Joint Committee on Bilateral Relations just a few months later, the latter of which led to the conclusion of four treaties of judicial cooperation. As far as Israel is concerned, relations go beyond anti-terrorism cooperation and are multi-faceted, and the British executive has been investing great effort in ensuring that it is not antagonizing the influential British Jewish community and jeopardizing Israeli investment in the UK.<sup>53</sup> The governments of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown have been repeatedly criticized for displaying pro-Israeli attitudes and pursuing a biased policy within the framework of international efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, both the FCO and Downing Street regularly exert pressure on the PA to detain anti-Israeli militants and implement both institutional and security-sector reform. Moreover, following Hamas' election victory in early 2006, they froze contacts with what they called the "terrorist Palestinian Authority".<sup>55</sup> Yet, this did not prevent the Blair government from providing large-scale financial assistance to the PA at a time when other EU governments were much more lukewarm about similar aid packages.<sup>56</sup>

The United Kingdom's well-developed interest in the Middle East never translated into an equally visible role within the EMP, not least due to the notorious Euro-scepticism of the British political elite since the days of Margaret Thatcher. In the first half of the nineties, according to Gillespie, the Tory government, in combination with the Kohl administration, was arguably responsible for the shaping and adoption of "Barcelona's" neo-liberal doctrine in the context of the second basket.<sup>57</sup> Over the years, as a consequence of Blair's new-found ideological interest in democracy promotion, the various British

governments also developed a growing interest in political dialogue with the Blair administration, having shown strong support for stricter and more coherent benchmarking measures within the EMP. Nonetheless, as in Germany and Poland, even today the political class in the United Kingdom does not perceive the EMP, and now the UfM, as a priority. After the British government organized the informal ad-hoc meeting of Euro-Mediterranean foreign ministers in June 1998, which proved to be a relative success thanks to Foreign Secretary Cook's skilful mediation between Arab and Israeli partners and the final decision to introduce the principle of partnership-building measures into the EMP, Prime Minister Blair put his political weight behind the 2005 Barcelona II summit that was supposed to celebrate the tenth birthday of the Barcelona Process. Criticised already in the run-up to the November conference for the lack of commitment and poor organisational skills, Blair published a joint article with Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero in the Spanish daily *El País* on 28 November 2005. In the article, they tried to induce a positive spirit and present a number of areas where cooperation should be intensified.<sup>58</sup> But these efforts came too late. They did not prevent a boycott of the summit by the majority of political leaders from the south, and the summit itself did not go beyond the adoption of a five-year work programme and an unspecific and intensely disputed code of conduct on countering terrorism.<sup>59</sup>

Unlike German Chancellor Merkel, British Prime Minister Brown and Foreign secretary Miliband did not make their criticism of the UM public, but rather opted for a more subtle way. They joined Merkel and Tusk in their principal assessment of such a union of sorts and shared their opposition towards any project that excludes EU member states but depends on EU funds. While the common denominator in British alignment with German and Polish resistance was the sensation of having been ignored by Sarkozy's original proposal, as well as a general preference for closer ties with Eastern Europe – a position also favoured by a large number of domestic export-oriented interest groups – another rather different motivation was the widely held perception that the project could end up as a replacement for Turkish EU membership.<sup>60</sup> As Britain proved to be a staunch supporter of Turkey's accession to the EU for a long time, and there was no domestic constituency formulating explicit and relevant policy demands, the government indicated to Merkel before the Brussels summit of March 2008 that the United Kingdom would also oppose the UM if it was to remain a project based on exclusion. In addition, it was transmitted both to Warsaw and Berlin that the idea of

creating an Eastern Partnership would be favoured by the British government as part of a wider issue-linkage process – a sign that finally convinced Polish Prime Minister Tusk and Foreign Minister Sikorski to seek the endorsement of EU member states' governments on a formal level as well. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the British government, like its German and Polish counterparts, did not undertake any specific action to generate interest formation among domestic constituencies once it was agreed to establish an inclusive and all-encompassing UfM. After the Paris summit of 2008, all Brown did was to praise the Mediterranean solar plan, supposedly with a view to both gaining domestic support for his approval of the UfM and provoking at least some interest among the British businesses operating in the field.<sup>61</sup>

### **The Union for the Mediterranean: A Prelude to the End of Euro-Mediterranean Relations?**

According to the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, the UfM is the expression of a “strategic ambition for the Mediterranean” and destined to be a “multilateral partnership with a view to increasing the potential for regional integration and cohesion”, increasing “co-ownership [...]”, setting “governance on the basis of equal footing” and translating “it into concrete projects”.<sup>62</sup> In conjunction with the formulated objective of making Euro-Mediterranean relations more relevant and visible for citizens, the UfM seems to take many of the shortcomings of the EMP into account, in particular in the areas of co-ownership and European Commission-dominated day-to-day management. The struggle between mainly non-Mediterranean EU member states and France over the principles of exclusion and inclusion and the deepening of the Barcelona *acquis*, has however generated a situation in which the practical implementation of these objectives faces an almost insurmountable impasse.

With respect to inclusion, the final decision by the European Council on 13 March and thus the preference of Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom to include all EU member states, all Mediterranean riparians and the Arab League, the latter of which was not granted any formal voting power, has naturally increased the number of players with a veto. A pre-taste of what enlargement would mean in practice in the absence of congruent foreign policy interests among EU and southern Mediterranean members was provided in the discussions revolving around the creation of a UfM secretariat. While the governments of Germany, Poland and Britain, together with a

number of governments from other northern EU member states expressed their support for a small-scale structure, France, Spain, Italy and some Arab governments voted in favour of a large-scale institution with a broad portfolio.<sup>63</sup> By choosing Barcelona, the 43 partners did manage to reach agreement on the future location of the secretariat, though they have hitherto failed to adopt the secretariat's statutes. Moreover, complex and difficult bargaining processes have taken place with regard to the position of the secretary-general. For months the threat of deadlock loomed high, with a number of members expressing their desire to fill the post, both Israel and Arab partners opposing each other's demands, and Turkey claiming one deputy post – a claim opposed by the Greek and Cypriot governments. It took until the Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers meeting in early November 2008 for at least a partial solution to be found, although its sustainability remains highly questionable in the light of the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the fact that Turkey's claim will only be dealt with further along in the run-up to the adoption of the secretariat's statutes.<sup>64</sup>

Enlargement of UfM membership and "governance on an equal footing" also turned out to be detrimental to the advancement of the newly created framework in general and, thus, progress on sectoral cooperation in particular. Pressured by the Arab League, Arab Mediterranean regimes used Israel's military attack on Gaza in December 2008 to suspend their participation in the UfM. They argued that, unless the Israeli government formally committed itself to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, meetings on all levels would be boycotted. Since then, no sectoral meeting, even on a working level, has taken place, turning the UfM into an entirely dysfunctional project. Although the EMP was occasionally also exposed to boycotts, particularly by Syria and Lebanon, it always kept a certain degree of momentum, even at the time of the second Intifada, Israel's military assault on Arafat's headquarters and the July War in 2006.

With this in view, plus the experience of the EMP's failure to set a process of intra-southern Mediterranean cooperation in motion, and the persistence of authoritarianism and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the chances of increasing "the potential for regional integration and cohesion" are minimal. Similarly, project-specific cooperation in the four domains stipulated by the Paris joint declaration, i.e. solar energy, transportation, infrastructure and environmental protection, remains a distant prospect. And even if the current deadlock is overcome – a rather unlikely prospect as long as the territorial occupation in the Middle East endures – the type of project-based cooperation planned will

not be sufficient to transform the southern Mediterranean into a viable economic space that is fully integrated into the world economic system. This is simply because the UfM underestimates local socio-economic specificities and ignores a vast number of more relevant problems in the political and economic realm, all of which are ultimately related to inequality, the lack of public participation, and the distribution of wealth.

## Conclusions

The three cases analysed in this study share a number of commonalities with respect to the role of the Mediterranean in their foreign policy agendas. Similarly, the attitudes and perceptions of the three current heads of government coincide in that they have all opposed the original idea of a French-led UM that would be based on the exclusion of non-Mediterranean EU member states. This opposition is all the more noteworthy in the light of the low importance current and past governments in Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom have attributed to the Mediterranean region as such and the relatively low profile they displayed in the context of the EMP. While – partly due to a shared common history and long-standing economic and trade ties – both Germany and the United Kingdom have a dense web of bilateral relations with a large number of southern Mediterranean countries, relations that have even been intensified lately as a result of mutual interests in intensifying anti-terrorism cooperation, Poland's relations with countries in Europe's southern neighbourhood are much less intense and hence less developed. Moreover, whereas Germany and the United Kingdom both have a global foreign policy agenda, Poland reached a broad consensus on the societal and political level in the early 1990s, in an environment of new-found sovereignty, which led its decision-makers to emphasize the importance of developing and pursuing a regional (foreign) policy embedded in Euro-Atlantic structures.

Interestingly, both Germany and the United Kingdom's close ties with at least parts of the southern Mediterranean have never been used in the context of Euro-Mediterranean politics, yet the governments of both countries have repeatedly used their bargaining power and well developed 'voice opportunity' within the EU to defend their national interests. In this vein, they do not differ from Poland and this commonality came particularly to the fore in the joint opposition of the three governments to the UM. Of course, German Chancellor Merkel was most outspoken in her criticism and, to a certain degree, the leading actor. But her opposition was facilitated by overlapping

concerns and joint recourse to the practice of issue-linkage, both of which eventually generated a win-set that ensured the downgrading and Europeanization of the French initiative, as well as greater and more institutionalized sensitivity within the EU towards Eastern Europe. This process was rooted not only in the absence of concrete policy demands from the respective domestic societal and economic constituencies in favour of greater engagement in the Mediterranean region, but also an equally shared domestic political consensus that any negotiated configuration needed to respect and guarantee at least some degree of cohesion within the overall ambit of European Security and Defence Policy. Furthermore, the three governments managed to identify the intersection between one another's domestic spaces' interests and attitudes – a development which turned out to be crucial for the success of their efforts. As a consequence of these dynamics and the French President's unsuccessful attempts to shift the individual costs that the UM was supposed to generate onto the EU level and thereby Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom as well, a non-negligible degree of pressure was exerted on Nicolas Sarkozy to adjust his original policy plan to the preferences of the three.

In addition to these intervening variables, other drivers were instrumental in the rejection of the UM and creation of a UfM. It is worth pointing out that, although the degree to which they mattered in the personal considerations of the actors involved differed, they were underpinning the decision-shaping in each of the capitals. The three governments were preoccupied with notions – inspired by realism – of power, status and the preservation of exclusive spheres of influence. Whereas the German foreign policy elite feared that approval of a UM could alter the balance of power within the EU, damage the Franco-German alliance and diminish Germany's recently achieved status as a potentially additional mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, British government concerns focused on the potential repercussions that an exclusive French-led project in the Mediterranean would have on the United Kingdom's role in the Mashreq; Polish decision-makers, in turn, sharing German concerns about the effects on the distribution of power within the EU, interpreted the UM, in its original form, as a threat to Poland's own interests in its Eastern neighbourhood, as it would have potentially implied the diversion of substantial Community funds away from the area and the triggering of a dynamic that could result in Eastern Europe's loss of its strategic relevance to the EU's common foreign policy agenda.

If they, and the French government, had focused instead on the reasons for



the EMP's lengthy record of failures, disappointments and misgivings, and admitted that the persistence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and authoritarianism in the southern Mediterranean will continue to obstruct Euro-Mediterranean dynamics, they could have avoided the current deadlock that has hit the UfM only six months after its fancy inauguration. That the deadlock is likely to continue unless a just solution is found is nowadays a commonly held view in European capitals and was even confirmed by the French Foreign Minister in May 2009.<sup>65</sup> In the light of the foreign policy interests of the three case studies analysed, this may however be seen as a welcome development for many in Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom.

## NOTES

1. The term "voice opportunity" was introduced by Joseph Grieco, "The Maastricht Treaty, Economic and Monetary Union, and the Neorealist Research Programme", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1995, pp. 21-40.
2. See David A. Baldwin (ed.) *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, New York, Columbia UP, 1993; Charles W. Kegley (ed.), *Controversies in International Relations Theory. Realism and the Neoliberal Challenge*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1995.
3. See Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Reading, Mass, Addison Wesley, 1979.
4. See Robert Keohane & Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence. World Politics in Transition*, Boston, Little, Brown & Co, 1977.
5. See Kalevi Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1970. See also John Vazquez, *The Power of Power Politics: From Classical Realism to Neotraditionalism*, Cambridge, CUP, 1998; Jakov Vertzberger, *The World in their Minds: Information-Processing and Cognition and Perception in Foreign-Policy Decision-Making*, Stanford, SUP, 1990; and Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision*, Boston, Little, Brown & Co, 1971.
6. Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory", *World Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 2, 1998, pp. 324-348.
7. Gerd Nonneman, "Analyzing the Foreign Policies of the Middle East and North Africa: A Conceptual Framework", in Gerd Nonneman (ed.), *Analyzing Middle East Foreign Policies and the Relationship with Europe*, London, Routledge, 2005, p. 9.

8. See Andrew Moravcsik, "Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4, 1993, pp. 473-524, and Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games", *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 1988, pp. 427-460.
9. See Moravcsik "Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach", *op.cit.*, pp. 499-506. According to Moravcsik, issue-linkage is faced with the risk of domestic opposition and potentially important domestic distributional consequences.
10. See Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence. World Politics in Transition*, Boston, Little, Brown & Co, 1977.
11. See Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony, Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, Princeton, PUP, 1984, p. 243.
12. Nonneman, "Analyzing the Foreign Policies of the Middle East and North Africa: A Conceptual Framework", *op.cit.*, p. 11.
13. See for example Stelios Stavridis, Theodoris Couloumbis, Thanos Veremis and Neville Waites (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of the European Union's Mediterranean States and Applicant Countries in the 1990s*, Houndmills, Macmillan, 1999; Raffaella Del Sarto and Nathalie Tocci, "Italy's Politics without Polity: Balancing Atlanticism and Europeanism in the Middle East, in Modern Italy", Vol. 13, No. 2, 2008, pp. 135-153; Eduard Soler i Lecha, "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, genesis, evolution and implications for Spain's Mediterranean Policy", *Documento de Trabajo OPEX*, No. 28, Madrid, Fundación, Alternativas/Fundació CIDOB, 2008.
14. See for example Richard Gillespie, "Northern European Perceptions of the Barcelona Process", *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, No. 37, 1997, and Tobias Schumacher, "The Mediterranean as a New Foreign Policy Challenge? Sweden and the Barcelona Process", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 2001, pp. 81-102.
15. Douglas Webber, "Introduction: German European and Foreign Policy Before and After Unification", in Douglas Webber (ed.), *New Europe, New Germany, Old Foreign Policy? German Foreign Policy since Unification*, London, Frank Cass, 2001, p. 5.
16. See <http://www.euractiv.com/en/security/schröder-wins-confidence-vote/article-114368>
17. See Patricia Clough, Helmut Kohl. *Ein Porträt der Macht*, Munich, dtv, 1998, and Gerhard Schröder, *Entscheidungen. Mein Leben in der Politik*, Hamburg, Hoffmann & Campe, 2006.
18. See for example Ricardo Gomez, *Negotiating the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership*.

*Strategic Action in EU Foreign Policy?*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2003.

19. See Tobias Schumacher, *Die Europäische Union als internationaler Akteur im südlichen Mittelmeerraum. 'Actor Capability' und EU-Mittelmeerpoltik*, Baden-Baden, NOMOS, 2005, p. 229.
20. See [http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en\\_GB/features/awi/features/2008/10/19/feature-01](http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/features/2008/10/19/feature-01)
21. See Rory Miller and Ashraf Mishrif, "The Barcelona Process and Euro-Arab Economic Relations 1995-2005", *The Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 2005, pp. 94-108 and Tobias Schumacher, "Survival of the Fittest: The First Five Years of Euro-Mediterranean Economic Relations", *EUI Working Papers*, No. 13, 2004.
22. See Tobias Schumacher, "Germany: A Player in the Mediterranean" in IEMed/CIDOB (eds.), *Med. 2009. 2008 in the Euro-Mediterranean Space*, Barcelona, IEMed/CIDOB, forthcoming.
23. *Ibid.*
24. On the privileged partnership between Israel and the EU see Sharon Pardo, "Towards an Ever Closer Partnership: A Model for a New Euro-Israeli Partnership", *EuroMeSCo Papers*, No. 72, 2008.
25. See Handelsblatt, 13 July 2008. In response to a request for information from the Liberal Party (FDP) in December 2008, the German government stated that the German Aerospace Centre had drafted a number of assessment studies with respect to a potential Mediterranean solar plan. See Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, February 16, 2009.
26. See [http://www.bdi-online.de/Dokumente/Internationale-Maerkte/Mittelmeerunion\\_Position\\_engl.pdf](http://www.bdi-online.de/Dokumente/Internationale-Maerkte/Mittelmeerunion_Position_engl.pdf)
27. See Dorothée Schmid, "Die Mittelmeerunion – ein neuer französischer Motor für die europäische Mittelmeer-Politik?", *DGAPanalyse Frankreich*, January 1, 2008.
28. See [http://www.elysee.fr/documents/index.php?mode=view&lang=fr&cat\\_id=1&press\\_id=821](http://www.elysee.fr/documents/index.php?mode=view&lang=fr&cat_id=1&press_id=821)
29. See <http://www.apcoworldwide.com/content/PDFs/112307-Tusk-speech.pdf>
30. See Tobias Schumacher, "The German EU Presidency and the Southern Mediterranean", *EuroMeSCo e-news*, No. 11, January 2008.
31. See Ilya Prizell, Paul H. Nitze, Andrew A. Michta (eds.), *Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered. The Dilemmas of Independence*, Houndmills, Palgrave, 1995.
32. See International Herald Tribune, "Poland's Foreign Minister, His Overtures to West Impeded, Resigns", June 15, 1995.

33. On Poland and the Mediterranean, see also Beata Wojna, *Poland and the Mediterranean*, unpublished manuscript, October 2008.
34. See <http://www.mg.gov.pl/English/News/Polish-Algerian+talks+on+economy.htm>
35. See <http://www.mg.gov.pl/English/News/New+prospects+for+economic+cooperation+with+Syria.htm>
36. See Schumacher, *Die Europäische Union als internationaler Akteur im südlichen Mittelmeerraum*, op.cit..
37. Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, *Strategia Polskiej Współpracy na rzecz rozwoju*, Przyjeta przez Rade Ministrów w dniu 21 pa'zdziernika 2003 r.
38. See Lena Kolarska-Bobinska and Magdalena Mughrabi, "New EU Member States' Policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: the Case of Poland", *EuroMeSCo Papers*, No. 69, 2008.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
41. See <http://www.kprm.gov.pl/english/s.php?id=1413>
42. For more on the Eastern Partnership, see Natalia Shapovalova, "The EU's Eastern Partnership: still-born?", *FRIDE Policy Brief*, No. 11, 2009, and Leszek Jesien et al., "Eastern Partnership – Strengthened ENP Cooperation with Willing Neighbours", *PISM Strategic Files*, 3 June 2008. See also [http://cria-online.org/7\\_3.html](http://cria-online.org/7_3.html)
43. See for example E.W. Polson Newman, *Great Britain in Egypt*, London, Cassell, 1928, and Mary C. Wilson, King Abdullah, *Britain and the Making of Jordan*, Cambridge, CUP, 1990.
44. According to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office the two British Infantry Battalions based on Cyprus exercise together with Jordanian troops every year during August to October and similar training is carried out by both fixed wing aircraft and helicopters of the Royal Air Forces of both countries.
45. Just in June 2009, BAE Systems received a \$43.3 million contract to upgrade 300 M113A1 Armored Personnel Carriers for the Jordan Armed Forces. See <http://www.defenceworld.net>
46. See also Agreement between the government of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland and the government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and, in order to implement the recommendations of the Paris Club Agreement on the Early Repayment of the debt of th Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.
47. See the speech of Rt. Hon. Robin Cook MP, "Human Rights into a New Century", June 17, 1997.

48. See House of Lords, House of Commons, "Joint Committee on Human Rights, Counter-Terrorism Policy and Human Rights: Terrorism Bill and related matters", Third Report of Session 2005-06.
49. See the speech of Rt. Hon. Tony Blair MP, "Doctrine of the International Community", Chicago, April 24, 1999.
50. See for example Al Bawaba, April 30, 2003.
51. See The Guardian, 25 March 2009, and Haaretz, January 18, 2009.
52. See Richard Youngs (ed.), *Survey of European Democracy Promotion Policies 2000-2006*, Madrid, FRIDE, 2006.
53. According to UK Trade & Investment, Israel is among the twenty leading countries investing in the United Kingdom. See <http://www.globes.co.il>
54. See for example Haaretz, 24 February 2009. For a detailed analysis of British attitudes and policies in the framework of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, see Ilan Pappé, *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-51*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1988.
55. See The Guardian, February 20, 2006.
56. In 2003 the Blair government agreed to a EUR 50 million aid package for the PA.
57. See Richard Gillespie, "Northern European Perceptions of the Barcelona Process", *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, No. 37, 1997.
58. See Tony Blair and José Luis Zapatero, "Una cumbre para el futuro", *El País*, November 28, 2008.
59. See George Joffé, "The British Presidency of the European Union and the Mediterranean in 2005" in IEMed and Fundaci\_ Cidob (eds.), *Med.2006 Mediterranean Yearbook*, IEMed, Barcelona, 2006, pp. 95-97.
60. See <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/1210773722.26/>
61. See <http://www.desertec.org/downloads/solarplan.pdf>
62. Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, Paris, 13 July 2008.
63. Interestingly, German and Italian positions are symmetric with respect to the creation of the post of a "powerful" deputy secretary-general which in their view should have horizontal responsibilities, including matters such as budget and staff.
64. It was decided to give the post of secretary-general to an Arab southern Mediterranean country, whereas the deputy posts will rotate between three European members and two southern ones; they will initially be held by Greece, Malta, Italy, the Palestinian Authority and Israel.

65. See Financial Times Deutschland, 27 April 2009, and Bernard Kouchner, “C'est la vie...heureusement qu'il est là Nanard”, *AFP*, Paris, May 20, 2009.

# **The European Parliament and the Debate over Sarkozy's Mediterranean Initiative: A Preliminary Assessment**

**Stelios Stavridis\* and George Tzogopoulos\*\***

## **RÉSUMÉ**

L'ambitieux plan pour la création d'une «Union Méditerranéenne» que le président français Nicolas Sarkozy a présenté initialement dans le cadre de sa campagne présidentielle en février 2007, a créé une discordance entre les États-membres de l'Union Européenne, plus particulièrement dans le cadre du Partenariat pour la Méditerranée connu aussi sous le nom de Processus de Barcelone. Cet article traite de l'évolution de cette question au sein du Parlement européen. En effet, le Parlement européen est un acteur de plus en plus important à la fois pour la politique européenne et pour les relations internationales. On doit s'interroger s'il est prouvé que les députés adoptent, sur ce sujet, une politique «européenne», ou si au contraire les préférences nationales l'emportent toujours.

## **ABSTRACT**

The ambitious plan for the creation of a 'Mediterranean Union' that French President Nicolas Sarkozy initially presented as part of his presidential campaign in February 2007 has created disagreement among European Union member-states, especially within the context of the already existing EMP/Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (also known as the 'Barcelona Process'). This article deals with the issue as it has developed within the European Parliament. Indeed the EP is a growing actor in both European politics and international relations. We ask if there is evidence of a Europeanised view on the subject among MEPs or whether instead national preferences still prevail.

## **Introduction**

The ambitious plan for the creation of a 'Mediterranean Union' that French President Nicolas Sarkozy initially presented as part of his presidential campaign in February 2007 has undoubtedly created disagreement among

\* ARAID (Aragon Foundation for Research and Development), University of Zaragoza.

\*\* Columnist, Apogevmatini (Greek daily), Athens.

European Union member-states, especially within the context of the already existing EMP/Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (also known as the 'Barcelona Process'). Over time, Sarkozy's idea has been - on the basis of a compromise - integrated into a relaunched and modified EMP, finally re-named a 'Union for the Mediterranean'/UfM in November 2008<sup>1</sup>. It consists nowadays of 43 members: the 27 EU member states together with 16 partners across the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East. The original 10 southern partners: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, the Palestinian Authority, and Turkey. Plus new members that have now also joined the UfM: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Monaco and Mauritania. Libya enjoys an observer status.

There has been a plethora of reactions and studies to the Sarkozy initiative. Put briefly, there were at least two identifiable camps: those in its favour on the grounds that the EMP had basically failed; and those opposed, as they considered it represented a direct threat to the whole Barcelona Process, indeed to the cohesion of the European Union (EU) as a single international actor in general and to its common external policies in particular.

The 'story' of this debate has been presented in many other publications but we will still offer an overview in order to put this article within its wider context (see below). However, we will focus mainly on the debate that the Sarkozy initiative has generated within the European Parliament. Our aim is to analyze the position of various of its members (MEPs) because the Parliament in Strasbourg/Brussels is becoming an important international actor in its own right. But also because the Parliament is an institution worth analyzing in order to find out if there is evidence of a "Europeanisation process" within its own midst. The Sarkozy initiative lends itself 'perfectly' to such an exercise: can we identify clear cleavages? For instance, is there evidence of positions adopted according to national lines (Mediterranean versus non-Mediterranean states, big versus small states), or according to ideological political ones (Left versus Right)? If it is the former case, then obviously there is little chance of identifying a Europeanisation process among MEPs. But if it is the latter, then perhaps some evidence of such a process could be found. Undoubtedly, Europeanisation is a long term phenomenon, but after so many decades of efforts in that direction, it is legitimate to try and test its validity in one of the leading EU institutions.<sup>2</sup>

The research will be conducted on the basis of MEPs' speeches, press releases, as well as parliamentary proceedings, resolutions, reports, and other sources, including secondary ones (media, newspapers, etc.). This article



consists of four parts. Before we analyze the question at hand in detail in Part 3 ('The EP debate'), Part 1 will put this study in its wider context by looking at the EMP and reactions to the Sarkozy initiative. As for Part 2, it will offer a general evaluation of the parliamentary dimension of Euro-Mediterranean relations. In the Conclusions, we will summarize our findings and present routes for further analysis and research.

## The Sarkozy Plan and its Wider Context

The consensus among observers of the EMP is that «so far it has not achieved many tangible results»<sup>3</sup>. It remains a *zone of conflict, instability and poverty*, and, of course, with plenty of *authoritarian and totalitarian regimes* in the South. There has been little progress in any of the three EMP dimensions: security/politics, economics, and even in the human dimension. There is still a long way to go for the creation of a *zone of peace, stability, and prosperity* (cf. the 1995 Barcelona Declaration).

In brief, the economic development gap between the two shores of the Sea has, since 1995, grown, not reduced. "Perhaps the most dramatic economic fact [is] the persistence and indeed the increase in massive income differentials between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, rising from 15:1 a decade or so ago, to perhaps 18:1 today". The now daily drama of Europe's *boat people* continues unabated. "Week after week boatloads of desperate people, many of them already dead or dying from dehydration and exposure, are found along the coasts and in neighbouring waters [of EU Mediterranean states]".<sup>4</sup> The initial hope to adopt "a Charter for Peace and Stability in the Mediterranean" has long vanished. Conflicts of all sorts continue to proliferate: from the Western Sahara, to the Cyprus Problem, let alone the Israeli-Arab/Palestinian issue, not to mention Lebanon or Kurdistan. The Mediterranean remains a 'zone of conflicts'<sup>5</sup>. Finally, all assessments (for instance the 2008 *Freedom House Index of Political Rights and Civil Liberties* or the 2008 *Reporters sans Frontières* Report)<sup>6</sup> continue to give credence to Heiner Hänggi and Fred Tanner's evaluation in 2005: "[t]he Greater Mediterranean is one of the regions in the world with the largest democratic deficit"<sup>7</sup>.

### *The Sarkozy initiative: reactions, developments and implications for EU policy*

Within the Union, the initial reaction to the Sarkozy idea<sup>8</sup> was positive in some countries, in particular Portugal, Spain (albeit only for a very short

period, see below), but also in other countries like Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Israel<sup>9</sup>. However Germany and the European Commission, let alone Turkey<sup>10</sup>, strongly opposed it from the start. The Spanish reaction is important because after some discrepant and confusing views between its Foreign Minister and Prime Minister, Spain joined the opposition front by strongly defending the *Barcelona acquis*<sup>11</sup>. In early August 2007, Miguel Ángel Moratinos had claimed that: “The time has come to accept that the [Barcelona] Process has concluded and to construct [instead] an authentic geographical space, by establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Union”<sup>12</sup>; whereas José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero had initially declared that “The reception (to the idea) was very favourable on my part”<sup>13</sup>, before making it sure that it would not prosper. First by securing the support of Italy, whose PM Romano Prodi had stopped short from endorsing the Sarkozy initiative<sup>14</sup>. And then, following a series of bilateral and multi-lateral meetings<sup>15</sup>, by re-defining the Initiative, once (at the request of the March 2008 European Council meeting) the May 2008 European Commission Report was finally published<sup>16</sup>. In it, it was made clear that, by dropping one key Sarkozy initial idea, it was no longer a question that those countries that know best the area would take the lead in the Barcelona Process; the EU had re-gained its preponderance.<sup>17</sup>

The above defence of the *Barcelona acquis* came clearly to the fore not only during the July 2008 “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean” Paris Summit (on the eve of the EU European Council meeting) which showed a solution which restored the primacy of EU unity. Indeed, the saga lasted until the final decision about the location of the UfM Secretariat. Sarkozy hoped that at least his initial ‘Mediterranean slant’ would be rewarded by a Secretariat based in either Tunisia or Egypt. But the Spaniards pushed strongly, firmly and effectively for the Catalan capital, Barcelona<sup>18</sup>. In a rare show of total solidarity in objectives and means, all levels of Spains’ quasi-federal system of government succeeded in discouraging any alternative venues, including that of Malta.<sup>19</sup>

As a result, where do we stand in early 2009? Some academic observers, like Bichara Khader, have argued that: «Plus d'un an après l'évocation de l'UM, force est de reconnaître que ce projet, présenté d'emblée comme une initiative française, a été si chamboulé qu'il devient ‘décaféiné’ et presque méconnaissable».<sup>20</sup>

But such an assessment is not universally shared. Gonzalo Escribano and Alejandro Lorca<sup>21</sup> contend instead that the French initiative did have a positive impact in revitalizing a stalled process. They view it more as a continuation of past practice rather than a total break from it. But Escribano and Lorca point

out that it is equally possible to overplay the continuity between the Union for the Mediterranean and other past or present EU policies such as the Barcelona Process or the ENP (European Neighbourhood Policy)<sup>22</sup>. In particular, there is no guarantee that the ENP will be compatible with the UfM for the following reasons: the ENP approach distances itself from the EMP's regional-building objective, mainly due to its intrinsic heterogeneity. In addition, it suffers from a clear ambiguity about whether it represents an alternative to enlargement for the Southern ENP partners or a pre-accession phase for its non-Mediterranean partners<sup>23</sup>. Furthermore, does it really represent anything new?<sup>24</sup> Its most fundamental weakness remains the lack of South-South regional economic integration, which is vital for any success in Euro-Mediterranean relations.<sup>25</sup>

This part of the debate on EU external policies is further complicated by existing policies or the Union's knack of continuously launching new ones. In the realm of existing policies, one could refer to the EU's Northern Dimension, which shows that at the end of the day Sarkozy's initial stress on a Southern Dimension only reflected a real-life division of labour along geographical lines among EU states. This reality is confirmed by the launch of the Eastern Partnership, under Swedish and Polish leadership<sup>26</sup>. The latter has a particular implication for the issue under study in these pages as it has offered the possibility of setting up the so-called 'EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly' bringing together national parliamentarians from the Eastern ENP members and the EP<sup>27</sup>.

### **The Parliamentary Dimension of Euro-Mediterranean Relations: Presenting the Wider Context of the Sarkozy Initiative**

The international activities of national parliaments, together with the appearance of transnational parliamentary bodies of all types have proliferated in recent years, mainly after WWII but most importantly since the seminal world events in 1989-1991. This is in part due to a process of economic globalization worldwide, a relative development of democracy again throughout the world, and the appearance of the necessary technological advances for making parliamentary diplomacy possible (internet and other communication 'revolutions' in particular). Those developments have allowed for more than 'just' technical transnational parliamentary cooperation to take place.<sup>28</sup> One important way through which parliaments engage in regionalism is via the setting up of International Parliamentary Assemblies, usually in a formal and highly institutionalised manner, based on written statutes and rules of procedures<sup>29</sup>.

The current proliferation of such parliamentary bodies and activities is also visible in the Mediterranean. Various national and transnational parliaments have been active in the region. Since the setting up of the Barcelona Process in 1995, there has also been a parliamentary dimension to it, initially in the form of a Forum (1998-2003) and since 2004 as a Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA).<sup>30</sup>

In addition to the EMPA, from late 2007, there is a Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) which possesses two important different characteristics: the first one is institutional: it consists of the *national* parliaments of the *riparian* states, and as such the EP does not belong to it. The second is circumstantial, although not devoid of political significance: neither Spain nor Israel currently participate in its activities. Initially both parliaments were involved but for different reasons, none of them is currently participating, although its new President (since November 2008), France's Rudy Salles, has declared in his acceptance speech that one of his main priorities was to ensure that both Spanish and Israeli MPs would return to the 'PAM family'<sup>31</sup>.

However, parliamentary activities in the Mediterranean do not limit themselves to the EP, the EMPA or the PAM. It is possible to argue that the following parliamentary bodies have a direct interest and impact in Euro-Mediterranean politics and policies: in addition to the national parliaments of the now UfM<sup>32</sup>, there are also transnational parliamentary bodies<sup>33</sup> with a multitude of overlapping memberships, some going well beyond the geographical zone or proximity of the *Mare Nostrum*. For instance we could list to the following ones: the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, the NAA (NATO Parliamentary Assembly), or the PA of the WEU, let alone the AIPU (Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union) for the Southern partner countries.

Out of the many available parliamentary bodies dealing with the Mediterranean, what follows in this article considers the EP's reaction to the Sarkozy initiative. Why is it important to deal with the EP and not another body? First, because, both as a result of internal developments and as a consequence of a more forceful EP presence in world affairs, the Parliament is an active actor in the European integration process, and its international role has increased over the years. There are several mechanisms dealing with international issues at its disposal, be they resolutions, reports, debates, question time and public hearings. The EP also has numerous Committees and Sub-Committees dealing in one way or another with international affairs. In addition it possesses 30 permanent parliamentary delegations with third countries. There is also the more traditional and expanding 'power of the purse', especially in cooperation

and aid policies or other trade and association agreements. No doubt there are no other parliaments that so frequently debate events in other parts of the world, or denounce human rights violations and breaches of peace.

Second, because the EP is the most sophisticated and advanced transnational, *voire* supranational, parliamentary body. As such its reaction to the Sarkozy Initiative deserves attention. In particular, such a study is needed in order to find out if there is a Europeanisation process in the EP or not. It is also important because there is open contestation as to which parliamentary body will 'dominate' the Euro-Mediterranean landscape: the EMPA or the PAM, although we will not address this particular issue here.

### The EP Debate Over the Sarkozy Initiative, 2007-2009

In the European Parliament (see political groups list below), two parties are particularly important as between them they have represented the bulk of the Parliament since direct elections in 1979. Although one should note that marginal parties have a greater leeway in Brussels/Strasbourg than they do in national parliaments, especially 'protest vote' groupings. This is due to a variety of reasons, the main one being the special nature of the EP which is not a true parliament but rather a parliamentary dimension to the European integration process. Its legislative role has expanded over the years (especially in co-decision matters, with the Council of Ministers), but it is true that as far as Euro-elections go, they remain clearly ones of 'second-rate', with very low turn-outs (as the June 2009 turnout confirmed). The political groups for the 2004-2009 parliamentary term (the period that covers the developments under study here) were as follows:

- The PPE-DE = Group of the European People's Party Christian Democrats- European Democrats
- the Socialist PSE = Socialist Group in the European Parliament
- the Liberals ALDE/ ADLE = Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
- the UEN = Union for Europe of the Nations Group
- the Greens (Verts-ALE) = Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
- the United Left GUE-NGL = Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left
- the ID = Independence/Democracy Group

The year of 2007 saw various members of the EP disagreeing with the proposal of Nicolas Sarkozy for a 'Mediterranean Union'. For instance, German MEP Elmar Brok (PPE-DE) reproduced the same position to that of Chancellor Angela Merkel (see above) in November 2007 when he declared the following during an EP debate on the ENP and the situation in Georgia<sup>34</sup>:

*It is not a matter of the Central European Member States alone looking eastward and the Southern Europeans looking southward; the whole European Community is responsible for both parts. For this reason, I have to say that I cannot accept proposals such as that for a Mediterranean Union' (Debate, 14/11/07).*

Likewise, Austrian MEP Hannes Swoboda (PSE) did not hide his concern for a possible division within the EU if Sarkozy's proposal materialized:

*I believe that such abstruse ideas, if you will pardon the expression, as a Mediterranean Union that would draw a line right across the European Union, a Mediterranean Union in which, as President Sarkozy suggested yesterday to the Conference of Presidents, the other Member States of the EU could have observer status, should and must be prevented, to which end we must have a common neighbourhood policy and work together to strengthen relations (Debate, 14/11/07).*

In the same vein, Portuguese MEP Jamila Madeira (PSE) also expressed her opposition to French President's idea. She - inter alia – asserted that:

*The proposal tabled by President Sarkozy, meanwhile, on the Mediterranean Union is completely out of context. Although it is extremely useful because it revitalises the debate on the Mediterranean, it proposes on the one hand to dismantle the current partnership while, on the other, it disowns the EU's fundamental principles regarding the supremacy of universal human rights and fundamental freedoms in particular, considering them to be secondary issues according to a case-by-case pragmatism that would foster a multi-speed relationship (Debates, 14/11/07).*

After presenting the EP's overall initial opposition to the Mediterranean Union idea, we now turn to the years 2008 and 2009 as they cover the period that saw the change of name and focus from a 'Mediterranean Union' to the 'Union for the Mediterranean' for the reasons discussed above (especially the agreement achieved in the 13-14 March 2008 European Council). That period saw a clear shift in this flimsy support and the (re-)appearance of

nationally drawn lines. The following analysis is based on two debates and two documents (a resolution and a report) from the European Parliament activities and documents, respectively of 5 June 2008 and of 19 February 2009. Similar opposition to the one described for 2007 can be seen in those events and documents. But the section will go one step further and address the original research question about a possible or otherwise Europeanisation of the EP on that particular issue. What appears as initial support for the revised Plan shows in fact that it does not go beyond traditional national interests positions.

It is true that during the 5 June 2008 EP debate on the Sarkozy initiative that was held in Brussels most MEPs had endorsed the French President's idea for a new European policy towards the Mediterranean<sup>35</sup>. Its ensuing resolution on the 'Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean' of the same day firmly supported the proposed development as 'a consolidation of the Euro-Mediterranean area based on democratic principles and respect for the rule of law and human rights'. The resolution also expressed the hope of the EP that this new initiative could bring added value to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and called the countries that were not part of the Barcelona Process, 'to share the Barcelona acquis as to move forward towards the same goals'.<sup>36</sup>

During the debate, Italian MEP Vito Bonsignore who spoke on behalf of the EPP-ED Group had stated for instance that:

*We applaud President Sarkozy for having started the ball rolling, for having aroused the interest of the European Council and for having prompted a renewal of our Mediterranean policy, which my Group supports and hopes will prove tangible and rapid.*

In the same vein, on behalf of the PSE, German MEP Martin Schultz, had also expressed his agreement with the French President proposal arguing that:

*The Mediterranean Union is a project which could lead to more peace and stability via the economic integration of our two regions, so it is an extremely good idea, and it is one which we Socialists therefore fully endorse.*

In addition to the two major political forces in the Parliament, more examples in the same direction can be found among the smaller parties: For instance, French MEP Thierry Cornillet (ALDE Liberals) showed his enthusiasm by saying:

*Our resolution makes no mistake. There was no misplaced initiative. On the contrary, there was a timely and welcome initiative: a new*

*initiative, new impetus, new momentum. That proves that it was at least possible to perfect the Barcelona Process and we will all focus our efforts in that direction. We welcome thus to this Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.*

On behalf of the UEN Group, Italian MEP Salvatore Tatarella seconded that opinion and ‘unreservedly’ backed Sarkozy’s initiative, ‘which has pushed - or even propelled - Europe into a position from where it can reclaim a vital role in the Mediterranean.’

But there were also signs of dissent. French MP Hélène Flautre (Greens) stated that: ‘The European Commission has put forward a good proposal. It has transformed a *relatively clumsy political initiative* - the Union for the Mediterranean - into a renewed political ambition for a strengthened Barcelona Process. That is an excellent thing’ (our emphasis). Another French MEP, Patrick Louis (IND/DEM), confirmed this important nuance: ‘Nicolas Sarkozy’s initiative is excellent in principle: it breathes *new life into a Barcelona Process*’ (our emphasis). Albeit the importance of their respective political groups is limited, it is worth noting their nationality. When put within the context of the statement that follows, made on 20 May 2008 by the EP President, Germany’s Hans-Gert Pöttering (EPP), then it becomes clear that the support was rather superficial. Referring to the European Commission communication he declared that:

*The Communication recognises the role of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly as the legitimate parliamentary representation of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean as requested by EMPA in its Plenary Session in Athens on 28 March 2008. Furthermore the Commission has taken into account both parliamentary assemblies’ views and strongly supports the strengthening of the role of EMPA in relations with Mediterranean partners. With the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership enters a new phase. It will become stronger, more efficient, and, closer to citizens.<sup>37</sup>*

Thus, one can identify two important issues, one that was already present in the wider debate over the Sarkozy initiative (see above) and one that is specific to the parliamentary dimension of Euro-Mediterranean relations. The first refers to the role (or better put, the initial absence of a role) for the EU and especially its Commission, but also of other non-Mediterranean EU countries, and especially Germany.



German MEP Martin Schultz (PES) could not be more explicit when he said in the EP on June 5, 2008:

*President Sarkozy's mistake from the outset was to give the impression that the Union for the Mediterranean was a Franco-French idea [...]. May I also remind you that when Mr. Sarkozy came to the House right at the beginning, in order to introduce the idea of the Mediterranean Union to the Conference of Presidents for the first time, I asked him: 'Can you tell me which role the Federal Republic of Germany should play in your Mediterranean Union?', and he answered: Le statut d'un observateur. [...] He has since become more reasonable, and that is why he must be congratulated (Debate, 05/06/08).*

The second dimension has to do with the question of which parliamentary body would represent the parliamentary dimension of the UfM? The EMPA or possibly the PAM? The EP could not be clearer about its role in the process and therefore the predominance it sees for the EMPA, which is the only parliamentary assembly of the two it belongs to. For instance, French MEP Tokia Saïfi (PPE-DE) stressed the importance of the EMPA by arguing that this Assembly will be 'recognised as a form of parliamentary support to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership' (Debates, 05/06/08). Likewise, Spanish MEP Carlos Carnero Gonzalez (PSE) noted: 'I want to say that in that case the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly must be the legislative body that lends democratic legitimacy to this process' (Debates, 05/06/08). Other socialists, such as French MEP Kader Arif and Polish MEP Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, issued similar statements<sup>38</sup>.

There are obviously other topics that were discussed during several debates, reports and resolutions on the issue. But to a large extent they confirm a lack of Europeanisation as each MEP involved would push for a more 'national' agenda. For instance, and without claiming to be exhaustive, we will focus on the following issues: Eastern Europe, Turkey, Cyprus, regional military arms race, and finally migration. We turn now to these issues.

To start with Eastern Europe, for instance, Polish MEP Konrad Szymanski (UEN) concentrated on the relations between the Union and its Eastern neighbours. He argued that:

*As a neighbour of Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova and Georgia I very much hope that no damaging competition will arise between the Southern and Eastern neighbourhood policies. The two should instead be mutually complementary. If we are to be successful in budgetary*

*negotiations, for example, we need to stand shoulder to shoulder. [...] I am today strongly supporting strengthening and renewing the political framework for neighbourhood as regards the Mediterranean countries. We support the projects relating to credits, communication and energy. We also support institutional reforms affecting the South. We trust that in the future similar support will be offered for strengthening policy towards the East. (Debates, 05/06/08).*

Clearly, Sarkozy's proposal was not considered to be a priority for Poland. German MEP Vural Öger (PSE) - of Turkish origin - did not hesitate in his speech on 5 June 2008 to negatively comment on Sarkozy's initial ambition, although the 'Mediterranean Union' had by then been replaced by the UfM<sup>39</sup>:

*Looking at the outcomes, however, it is clear that Mr Sarkozy's original idea, launched in February 2007, has failed on three counts. Firstly, a possible alternative to EU accession for Turkey was effectively banished by Spain and Italy with the declaration adopted in Rome in December 2007... (Debate, 05/06/08).*

As for the other two counts, Öger added:

*Then Chancellor Merkel ensured that EU-Mediterranean relations would be developed further within the existing EU structures. Finally, the Commission has now applied the brakes to Mr Sarkozy's ambitious plans for the secretariat and leadership structure of the project.*

He thus championed the idea of a perspective full membership of Turkey in the EU aligning himself with the official position of the Erdogan government. But also to that of the PSE which supports Turkey's attempt to join the EU as a full member mainly on the grounds that this country plays a strategic role in the stabilisation process of the Caucasus and the Middle East regions and with regard to the energy supply issue.<sup>40</sup>

Cypriot MEP Marios Matsakis (ALDE) expressed his concern about the situation in Cyprus, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. He argued:

*Commissioner, I was disappointed with your introductory speech, because you did not address some of the major political problems in the Mediterranean. I refer, for example, to the occupation by Israel of land belonging to the Palestinians; to the occupation of Cyprus by Turkey [...]. Unless you address those serious issues, we will not be able to turn the theoretical plans for a Mediterranean Union into a reality (Debate, 05/06/08).*

Although Matsakis did not only focus on Cyprus, there is no way to escape from the fact that his speech clearly mirrored a national interest, however legitimate this might be. As Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus remains a crucial and problematic issue, for Matsakis and his compatriots, any plan which aimed at promoting peace and stability in the Mediterranean basin could not ignore the need for a settlement to the Cyprus Question, nor the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Speaking on behalf of the Greens/ALE, German MEP Rebecca Harms expressed her concern about the potential increase of military equipment in the countries of North Africa and the Middle East. She declared in the same debate:

*A great deal has been said about the French President's idea to equip and arm the countries of North Africa and the Middle East with a nuclear capability for civilian but also military use within the framework of the Mediterranean Union. Let me quote Asterix the Gaul here: 'They must be crazy, the French!' However, I am now even more concerned about this development, given that these plans have been taken up and are fervently supported by the European Commission as well (Debate, 05/06/08).*

Although one could question her assessment about military nuclear proliferation, her overall view reflects as much a national as an ideological bias. Germany and the 'Greens' have shown extreme sensitivity over the use of military force and the question of arms sales. Since the end of World War II, Germany has witnessed one of the most active and widely supported 'peace' movements in Western Europe. The Greens have always mobilized in favour of unilateral disarmament.<sup>41</sup>

British MEP Graham Booth (IND/DEM Group), concentrated on the question of the possible consequence of migration from North African countries to the Union and their possible implications for European security. He said:

*We have already seen what happens when you allow people from poor countries to have freedom of movement into richer ones. Can you imagine how much more true this will be if North Africa gets this right too? At a time of heightened international terrorism, is it a good idea to have freedom of movement from countries with known Al-Qaeda presences? After the terrorist atrocities in Madrid and London, one would have thought Europe would have learned its lessons. Clearly not! (Debate, 05/06/08).*

Spanish MEP José Ignacio Salafranca Sanchez-Neyra (PSE) used a more diplomatic language but focused equally on the problematic issue of immigration and Islamic fundamentalism. He said:

*You do not need to come from that region [Mediterranean] to understand, as the Commissioner rightly pointed out, the major problems it faces: migration, mafias trafficking human beings, which unfortunately is not mentioned in the motion for a resolution, drugs, the economic gap between the two sides of the Mediterranean and, of course, radical Islamic fundamentalism, which is one of the greatest black holes in international politics.*

Again national biases and ideological views explain those comments much more than any Europeanised approach to the Sarkozy Initiative. For instance, Graham Booth finished his speech in the EP by urging the EU to cease the planned 'Union for the Mediterranean'. His stance reflects his own country's overall caution in accepting immigrants from countries outside the EU. In Britain, both Labour and Conservative politicians, let alone more xenophobic ones, are pressing for strong measures against migration. Polls show that more than 80% of voters endorse this policy.<sup>42</sup>

But beyond a possible national bias, Graham Booth's speech certainly represented a political one: British euroscepticism. The Eurosceptic flank of the country – to which no doubt Booth's Independence Party clearly belongs<sup>43</sup> – believes that Britain's historically proven record in parliamentary democracy is likely to be subsumed under that of EU bureaucracy.<sup>44</sup> Its leader, Nigel Farage, is a strong supporter of Britain's withdrawal from the EU in order for the country to have its own policy with reference to immigrants.<sup>45</sup>

On the contrary, but still representing national and ideological views rather than Europeanised ones, MEP Francis Wurtz (from the GUE/NGL Group) concentrated on various parameters analysing the relations between the EU and southern Mediterranean countries, such as economic imbalance and the Palestinian problem. On migration, he focused his comments on the question of what he sees as a inhumane treatment of migrants:

*The second problem is the humiliating treatment of migrants. The population of these countries is very young. The people want to live yet they do not see any future. Although they are deeply attached to their land, their culture, the history of their civilisation and its impressive contributions – with all due respect to Mr Berlusconi – many of them are looking to Europe and they see their emigrant brothers and sisters*

*suffering the affronts of which we are all aware: from profiling to discrimination, from detention centres to 'refoulement'.*

No doubt, his reference to 'respect' towards the Italian PM was only rhetorical. But in this case as in the others presented above, it is possible to identify a different stance of right-wing and left-wing European political parties towards migration and other issues. Does it represent Europeanisation or just 'uploading' national debates onto the European scene as critics of the claim to the success of such a process have shown? (Debate, 05/06/08).

In early 2009, there was an EP Report ('The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean', dated 19 February 2009) which was previously debated in the EP (18 February) and finally adopted with 51 votes in favour, 44 against and 13 abstentions.<sup>46</sup> Besides the observation that more MEPs did not actually support it than those that did (a common practice in the EP that creates problems of credibility), the Report reproduces to a large extent the same issues that were discussed in June 2008 and that we have presented above. Thus, further to the 2008 speech by Polish MEP Konrad Smyzanski about the relationship between the EU and its Eastern neighbours, this time round it was Estonian MEP (EPP) Tunne Kelam who focused on the EU's policy towards the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. In particular, Mr. Kelam said:

*I welcome the efforts made to further develop the EU's relations in the Euromed region. But I would like also to underline that the EU should not neglect its two other seas – the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. (Debate, 18/02/08).*

The debate of February 18, 2009 also saw Spanish MEPs endorsing the European decision for the Permanent Secretariat to be located in Barcelona. In particular, Carlos Carnero Gonzalez (PSE) said:

*This is a Union for the Mediterranean that is not ex novo but has come from the deep roots of the Barcelona Process, creating new institutions such as the Permanent Secretariat, which will be in Barcelona. It is something that we welcome as Europeans, as Mediterraneans, as Spaniards and as the parliamentary representatives who asked for it at the time (Debate, 18/02/08).*

This excerpt of the speech of Carnero Gonzalez mirrors the clear desire of Spain to play a more active role in the UfM through the Catalan capital (see above). Such an observation can be strengthened by the fact that Carnero

Gonzalez did not speak only for himself in the EP but attempted to represent his Spanish colleagues by using first person plural.

Overall, the Report of 19 February 2009<sup>47</sup> confirmed three major points: that opening up 'the Barcelona Process-Union for the Mediterranean' to countries not involved in the Partnership until then had increased the likelihood of establishing parity in relations between the EU and the Mediterranean partner countries and of tackling the problems of the region in a comprehensive way. The Parliament was of the view that the new name 'Union for the Mediterranean' would help to 'highlight the joint nature of the partnership'. A point that the MEPs have always called for in that the Barcelona Process ethos is meant to be fundamentally different from previous European policies which were more unilateral. Of course this is the rhetoric because most Southern 'partners' complain about the 'excessive leadership' from Brussels. But this criticism ignores not only real forces in the region but also that the EMP is to a large extent, as with so many other common policies, an attempt to marshall the European into a common policy<sup>48</sup>.

The EP also stressed that participation in the 'Union for the Mediterranean' did not constitute an alternative to enlargement of the EU and did not affect the accession prospects of candidate states, in clear reference to Turkey. Indeed, the Parliament's official policy remains the one it established in December 2004 when MEPs assented to start Turkey's accession negotiations during 2005. But it is strange that such a comment is made in early 2009 where there are clear signs of difficulties in both internal developments in Turkey and in its intransigence not to recognize the Republic of Cyprus as part of the extension of its 1996 Customs Union with the EU. The EP was in fact the first EU institution to put this item on the agenda, a move that led in late 2006 to a rather critical European Commission Progress Report, and the eventual decision by the European Council to freeze several chapters related with trade and external relations in December of that year<sup>49</sup>.

## Conclusions

What can be the main conclusions of the study? The first part showed how controversial and divisive the Sarkozy Initiative has been, especially among Northern EU states and the European Commission but, not surprisingly, in Spain.

If the EP had taken a more Europeanised view of the whole affair, one could

have expected a clearly pro-EU line. Some would argue that once the initial support had faded away in the Parliament, evidence of a certain degree of 'Europeanization' appears equally limited. Clear evidence of the same national preferences that emerged at the governmental level were indeed reflected among MEPs. Those parliamentarians that had been ignored by Sarkozy came back at him in no uncertain terms as we showed above: for instance German MEP Martin Schultz, but also most if not all Spanish MEPs. Furthermore, MEPs from countries with no direct national interests in the Mediterranean basin, such as Estonian MEP Tunne Kelam, used the opportunity to call for similar EU policies towards other areas, and in particular the Black Sea. Others, like MEP Vural Öger used the opportunity to support the position of their party for a full membership of Turkey in the EU. Here some evidence of a Left-Right division is clear, although other parties do not fit in this division (the Liberals for instance) but also the British Right<sup>50</sup>. So, it is fair to claim that even within the EP, the Sarkozy Initiative was dealt with in a way that clearly had more to do with internal domestic politics than any Europeanised political debate.

Needless to say, this is a preliminary study. More research on this particular question is needed. But other parliamentary bodies should also come under scrutiny. For instance those parliamentary institutions with an interest in the Mediterranean (see above) should also be analyzed. The same would apply to specific national parliaments considering how much 'national politics' have come out of this study. For future research, our own study points to the following parliaments as of 'prime interest': the Spanish *Cortes*, the Greek *Vouli*, and of course the French Parliament as one of its committees has produced a full Report on the issue in 2007.

Finally, there are the wider implications for other EU external policies, such as the 'Eastern Partnership' initiative for instance. It is hoped that this article has shown how little is known about an important aspect of parliamentary diplomacy and that more research is indeed required.

## NOTES

1. A process that one observer called a reconciliation between 'the original idea and political realities', Maxime Lefebvre, *An Evaluation of the French EU Presidency*, ARI No. 43/2009, March 17, 2009, Real Instituto Elcano, Madrid: [www.realinstitutoelcano.org](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org), p. 4.

2. Although the bulk of the academic literature on the question deals with the impact of EU membership on national institutions, politics and policies, including foreign and security policy, there has been no systematic study of the impact of Europeanisation on EU institutions. For an exception, on the EP and the Cyprus Problem, see Stelios Stavridis and Charalambos Tsardanidis, «The Cyprus Problem in the European Parliament: a case of successful or superficial Europeanisation?», *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 2009, pp. 129-156.
3. Fulvio Attinà, “The Barcelona Process, the Role of the European Union and the Lesson of the Western Mediterranean”, *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 2004, p. 141. See also various reports by the *Instituto Real Elcano* and the *FRIDE* ([www.realinstitutoelcano.org](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org); [www.fride.org](http://www.fride.org)), or by *EuroMesco* and *FEMISE*, respectively: [www.euromesco.net](http://www.euromesco.net) and [www.femise.org](http://www.femise.org).
4. Fred Halliday, *The Mediterranean in an age of globalisation*, IBEI Paper No. 2008/7, Barcelona, 2008, respectively, p. 9 and p.10: [www.ibei.org](http://www.ibei.org).
5. Paul Balta, « La Méditerranée en tant que zone de conflits », *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, Vol. 37, 1997, pp. 9-18.
6. Respectively: [www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=395](http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=395); and the section on the Middle East of the Reporters sans Frontières Report for 2008 which is significantly entitled ‘Between repression and servility’: [http://www.rsff.org/rubrique.php?id\\_rubrique=741](http://www.rsff.org/rubrique.php?id_rubrique=741).
7. Heiner Hänggi and Fred Tanner, *Promoting Security Sector Governance in the EU's Neighbourhood*, Chaillot Paper No. 80, Institute for Security Studies, Paris, July 2005, p. 68.
8. See ‘le texte du discours de Nicolas Sarkozy, président de la République, tel que communiqué avant le prononcé du discours, lundi 27 août’, *Le Monde*, 27.08.07: [www.lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr); joint press conference by President Sarkozy and Premier Prodi, 28 May 2007 in Paris (Embassy of France in London website: [www.ambafrance-uk.org/President-Sarkozy-s-joint-press.html](http://www.ambafrance-uk.org/President-Sarkozy-s-joint-press.html)). J.M. Martí Font, ‘Un Mediterráneo al margen de Europa’; Andrea Canino, ‘La Unión del Mediterráneo – Un ambicioso proyecto’, *El País*, 31.05.07. Ayhan Simsek, ‘Debate over Mediterranean Union heats up in Europe’, *Southeast European Times*, 13.08.07: [www.SETimes.com](http://www.SETimes.com). Joseph Byron, ‘Mediterranean Union: Peres views Sarkozy’s suggestion positively’, *EJP*, 07.05.07: [www.ejpress.org](http://www.ejpress.org). Dorothée Schmid, ‘La nueva paradoja francesa’, *El País*, 15.07.07. Katrin Bennhold, ‘Sarkozy’s proposal for Mediterranean bloc makes waves’, *International Herald Tribune*, 10.05.07: [www.iht.com](http://www.iht.com). ‘Spanish PM backs French plan for “Mediterranean Union”’, *News and Information for Expats in France*, 31.05.07: [www.expatica.com](http://www.expatica.com). Commentary by Andrea Canino, chairman of the Economic Cooperation Council, under the permanent sponsorship of the Spanish, French, Italian and Portuguese governments, ‘We are ready to create a Mediterranean Union’, *Le Figaro*, 31.05.07: [www.lefigaro.fr](http://www.lefigaro.fr).



9. For more on the Southern partner countries, see Carlos Echeverría, *El lanzamiento de la Unión para el Mediterráneo y sus consecuencias geopolíticas*, ARI No. 128/2008, November 17, 2008, Real Instituto Elcano, Madrid: [www.realinstitutoelcano.org](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org).
10. As it saw it as an attempt to exclude it from joining the EU ever. As the Chief foreign policy adviser to Prime Minister Erdogan, Egemen Bagis, put it in May 2007: 'This cannot be an alternative to Turkish membership in the EU.' (Bennhold Katrine, 'Sarkozy's Proposal for Mediterranean Bloc Makes Waves', [www.ihf.com/articles/2007/05/10/africa/france.php](http://www.ihf.com/articles/2007/05/10/africa/france.php), *International Herald Tribune* online edition, 10/05/2007). See also: John Thornhill and Daniel Dombey, 'France gives Turkish EU hopes reprieve', *International Herald Tribune*, 30.05.07: [www.ihf.com](http://www.ihf.com). Renata Goldirova, 'Turkey Slams Sarko's "Mediterranean Union"', May 2007: [www.businessweek.com](http://www.businessweek.com); The Associated Press, 'Turkey says "Mediterranean Union" cannot be alternative to its EU bid', *International Herald Tribune*, 30.05.07: [www.ihf.com](http://www.ihf.com); Fulya Özerkan, 'Mediterranean project vs. EU: An illusion or reality for Turkey?', *Turkish Daily News*, 30.05.07: [www.turkishdailynews.com.tr](http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr).
11. For such an approach at the policy paper level, see Eduard Soler, Mediterráneo, "dèjà vu", *El País*, July 19, 2008.
12. His August 2, 2007 *El País* article was characteristically entitled 'From the Barcelona Process to the Euro-Mediterranean Union'. Speeches MAEC: [www.mae.es](http://www.mae.es).
13. 'Spanish PM backs French plan for "Mediterranean Union"', *News and Information for Expats in France*, 31.05.07: [www.expatica.com](http://www.expatica.com).
14. The Associated Press, 'France's Sarkozy, Italy's Prodi say they share common goals for EU', *International Herald Tribune*, 18.05.07: [www.ihf.com](http://www.ihf.com).
15. For instance the French-Italian-Spanish meeting in Rome in December 2007 or the French-German meeting in Hanover in March 2008.
16. See the Communication from the Commission to the European Union and the Council at [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/euromed/docs/com08\\_319\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/docs/com08_319_en.pdf), 20/05/08.
17. This is why the initial proposal was referring to "a '7+8=15' core Union for Mediterranean: Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Malta on the EU side and Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco on the Southern Mediterranean side", Stelios Stavridis, "The Barcelona Process, twelve years on: a critical overview", *Agora without Frontiers - A Quarterly Journal of International Economy and Politics*, Vol. 13, No. 4, March-May 2008, p. 255.
18. 'A titanic struggle' in the words of one observer: Joseph Garriga, "La conjura por Barcelona", *El País*, November 9, 2008: [www.elpais.com](http://www.elpais.com).
19. *Ibid.*

20. Bichara Khader, "L' UNION POUR LA MEDITERRANÉE du Sommet de Paris (13 juillet 2008) à la Conférence de Marseille (novembre 3-4, 2008)", in Stelios Stavridis and Natividad Fernández Sola (eds), *Factores políticos y de seguridad en el área euro-mediterránea*, Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Zaragoza, Zaragoza, 2009, p. 83.
21. Gonzalo Escribano and Alejandro Lorca, "Proceso de Barcelona: 'Unión para el Mediterráneo': Continuidad o Ruptura?", *Ibid.*, pp. 57-81.
22. The ENP consists of 16 members, 10 from the South and 6 from the East: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia (Libya holds an observer status in the EMP since 1999; Turkey is not included as a candidate country); and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine (Russia is not included as it has its own special status with the Union).
23. Jacques Boniface, "La politique européenne de voisinage, entre élargissement et politique étrangère", *EIPASCOPE* No. 2007/1, EIPA Maastricht; 2007, [www.eipa.eu](http://www.eipa.eu), p. 28.
24. Cultura y Deporte, Zaragoza, 2007, p. 320.
25. Gonzalo Escribano and Alejandro Lorca, 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
26. See inter alia., Deniz Devrim and Evelina Schulz, *The Eastern Partnership: An Interim Step Towards Enlargement?*, ARI No. 22/2009, February 10, 2009, Real Instituto Elcano, Madrid: [www.realinstitutoelcano.org](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org).
27. See Panagiota Manoli and Stelios Stavridis, *An Emerging Euro-Black Sea Parliamentary Dimension? A Contribution to the Black Sea Synergy*, ICBSS Policy Brief No.9, ICBSS Athens, December 2008: [www.icbss.org](http://www.icbss.org), p. 12.
28. Gabriel Eloriagga, *La diplomacia parlamentaria*, Madrid: Imagine Ediciones, 2004, p. 35. On the conceptualisation of parliamentary diplomacy, see also Stelios Stavridis, "Parliamentary Diplomacy": *Some Preliminary Findings*, Jean Monnet Working Paper in Comparative & International Politics no.48, Università di Catania, November 2002, [www.fscpo.unict.it/euromed/cjmhome.htm](http://www.fscpo.unict.it/euromed/cjmhome.htm).
29. See Robert Cutler, "The OSCE's Parliamentary Diplomacy in Central Asia and the South Caucasus in Comparative Perspective", *Studia Diplomatica – Brussels Journal of International Relations*, Vol. LIX, No. 2, 2006, pp. 79-93; Zlatko Šabič, 'Building Democratic and Responsible Global Governance: The Role of International Parliamentary Institutions', *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 2, 2008, pp. 255-271.
30. For more on the EMPA, see Ioannis Seimenis and Miltiadis Makriyannis, 'Reinvigorating the Parliamentary Dimension of the Barcelona Process: The Establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Spring 2005, pp. 85-105; Stelios Stavridis and Roderick Pace, "The

- EMPA and parliamentary diplomacy in the Mediterranean: a preliminary assessment”, in Stavridis and Fernández Sola, 2009, *op. cit.*, pp 125-148; Roderick Pace and Stelios Stavridis, “The EMPA, 2004-2008: Assessing the first four years of the parliamentary dimension of the Barcelona Process”, *Mediterranean Quarterly* (2009 in press). On the Forum, see Stelios Stavridis, “The Parliamentary Forum of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: an assessment”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer 2002, pp. 30-53.
31. *Executive Report and Conclusions of the 3rd Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)*, Monaco, 13-15 November 2008, p. 22: [www.apm.org.mt](http://www.apm.org.mt).
  32. One should also add the sub-state parliamentary level, which is very common dimension among many EU member states, but which has not reached (yet?) the Southern rim of the Mediterranean.
  33. For such a list see Stelios Stavridis and Panagiota Manoli “Comparing Experiences in Regional Parliamentarisation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea Regions” (with), *Agora without Frontiers - A Quarterly Journal of International Economy and Politics*, Vol. 13, No. 4, March-May 2008, pp. 290-291.
  34. See the debate concerning the European Neighbourhood Policy and the situation on Georgia at: [www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20071114&secondRef=ITEM-010&language=EN&ring=A6-2007-0414,14/11/07](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20071114&secondRef=ITEM-010&language=EN&ring=A6-2007-0414,14/11/07).
  35. See the EP debate on the Barcelona process and the Union for the Mediterranean: [www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20080605&secondRef=ITEM-002&language=EN&ring=P6-RC-2008-0281](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20080605&secondRef=ITEM-002&language=EN&ring=P6-RC-2008-0281), 05/06/08.
  36. See the EP Resolution at: [www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2008-0257&language=EN](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2008-0257&language=EN), 05/06/2008.
  37. Press Release, ‘Hans-Gert Pöttering Welcomes The Commission Proposal on the Barcelona Proposal: Union for the Mediterranean’: [www.euromedinfo.eu/uploads/File/EP%20President%20%20Union%20for%20Med.pdf](http://www.euromedinfo.eu/uploads/File/EP%20President%20%20Union%20for%20Med.pdf), 20/05/2008.
  38. See: [www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20080605&secondRef=ITEM-002&language=EN&ring=P6-RC-2008-0281](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20080605&secondRef=ITEM-002&language=EN&ring=P6-RC-2008-0281).
  39. Vural Öger was born in Ankara in 1942 and grew up in Istanbul. He moved to Germany in 1960 (personal website of Vural Öger: [www.vural-oeger.de/](http://www.vural-oeger.de/) ).
  40. See: ‘PES Group Visit to Turkey: Clear Accession Perspective, No Open-Ended Process’, at: [www.socialistgroup.eu/gpes/media/documents/116959\\_116959\\_newsletter\\_en\\_090205.pdf](http://www.socialistgroup.eu/gpes/media/documents/116959_116959_newsletter_en_090205.pdf) , 05/02/2009.
  41. Paul Hollander, *Anti-Americanism: Critiques at Home and Abroad, 1965-1990*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1992, p. 378.

42. William Underhill, 'Time to Go Back Home': [www.newsweek.com/id/164598](http://www.newsweek.com/id/164598) (*Newsweek*, online edition), 18/10/2008.
43. In fact, this party gained prominence by arguing for a withdrawal from the EU.
44. Peter J. Anderson and Anthony Weymouth, *Insulting the Public? The British Press and the European Union*, Longman, London and New York, 1999, p. 5.
45. For instance, on April 1, 2008 Nigel Farage comments about the stance of the other British political parties amounted to the following: 'They can bicker and fight as much as they like over who is to blame for our current problem with immigration, but the fact still remains that all three parties voted for an enlarged EU and open borders with half a billion people living in the EU. I don't see why they can't seem to grasp the idea that if we want our own immigration policy and border controls then we have to leave the EU.' ('Immigration: We Must Quit EU', UK Independence Party website: [www.ukip.org/content/latest-news/561-immigration-we-must-quit-eu](http://www.ukip.org/content/latest-news/561-immigration-we-must-quit-eu)).
46. See the debate on the Barcelona Process and the Union for the Mediterranean at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20090218&secondRef=ITEM-020&language=EN&ring=A6-2008-0502>, 18/02/09.
47. Press Release: 'Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean Contributes Towards Peace and Prosperity' at: [www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20090218BRI49890+ITEM-005-EN+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20090218BRI49890+ITEM-005-EN+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN), 20/02/2009
48. Fulvio Attinà, 'Conclusions', in Fulvio Attinà and Stelios Stavridis (eds), *The Barcelona Process and Euro-Mediterranean Issues from Stuttgart to Marseilles*, Giuffrè, Milan, 2001, pp. 222 and 232.
49. For more see Stelios Stavridis, *La Unión Europea y el conflicto chipriota (1974-2006)*, Editorial Icaria, Barcelona, 2008, pp. 114-117 and 145-146; Stavridis and Tsardanidis 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
50. *Ibid.*

## Chronologies

### Chypre: 1<sup>er</sup> avril – 15 octobre 2009

**8 avril:** Selon une enquête d'opinion du Centre d'études politiques européennes de Bruxelles 56% des Chypriotes grecs et 61 % des Chypriotes turcs sont pessimistes sur l'issue des négociations directes entre les chefs des deux communautés. 80% des Chypriotes grecs veulent un Etat unifié avec un gouvernement central et 71% des Chypriotes turcs sont en faveur de deux Etats séparés et reconnus internationalement.

**19 avril:** En zone occupée les nationalistes du parti de l'unité nationale (UPB) ont remporté avec 44% des voix et 26 sièges sur 50 les élections législatives anticipées. Le Parti républicain turc (CTP/centre-gauche, au pouvoir) n'obtient que 29% des voix. Le chef de l'UBP Dervis Eroglu, bien qu'hostile à la réunification de l'île a tenu à assurer que les négociations visant à trouver un règlement à Chypre seraient poursuivies.

**28 avril:** Dans sa décision *Orams*, la Cour de Justice des Communautés Européennes a admis que les juridictions chypriotes de la zone libre avaient le droit d'intervenir pour faire respecter le droit de propriété des Chypriotes grecs pour leurs biens situés en zone occupée et que les décisions de ces juridictions soient applicables dans tous les Etats de l'UE.

**4 mai:** Le rapport de printemps de la Commission de Bruxelles prévoit que Chypre sera le seul pays de l'Union européenne à connaître en 2009 une expansion de son économie de l'ordre de 0,3%.

**7 juin:** Elections européennes. Abstention de 41,6% (28,56% en 2004). Disy (droite) arrive en tête (35,65%, 2 sièges) devant le parti communiste Akel (34,9%, 2 sièges), le Diko (12,28%, 1 siège) et l'Edek (9,85%, 1 siège) et l'Euroko (4,12%, 0 siège).

**24-25 juin:** Visite à Chypre de José Manuel Barroso venu s'assurer du soutien du président Christofias pour sa nomination à la présidence de la nouvelle Commission européenne.

**26 juin:** Au cours de leur 34<sup>ème</sup> entretien en tête à tête Dimitri Christofias et Mehmet Ali Talat ont décidé l'ouverture à Limnitis d'un septième point de passage entre la zone libre et la zone occupée de Chypre.

**30 juin:** huit nouveaux cas de victimes de la grippe H1 N1, qui s'ajoutent à deux premiers cas observés le 30 mai et le 19 juin.

**25 juillet:** Murat Hakki est le second avocat chypriote turc à avoir obtenu depuis 1974 son admission au Barreau de la République de Chypre.

**28 juillet:** Une Chypriote grecque a été indemnisée à hauteur de 1,75 million d'euros pour avoir été dépossédée de ses propriétés situées en zone occupée, dans le nord de l'île, par la Cour européenne des droits de l'Homme. Andromaque Alexandrou avait porté plainte contre la Turquie pour avoir été privée de la jouissance de ses terrains situés dans le district de Kyrenia depuis l'invasion du nord de Chypre par l'armée turque en 1974. En janvier 2009, les juges européens lui avaient donné raison, tout en réservant pour plus tard la question de l'indemnisation. Au total, la Cour européenne a déclaré recevables 36 plaintes contre la Turquie déposées par des Chypriotes grecs qui s'estimaient dépossédés de leurs biens dans le nord de l'île à la suite de l'invasion turque en 1974. Douze arrêts constatant la violation du droit à la propriété des requérants mais laissant en suspens la question de leur indemnisation ont déjà été rendus dans ces affaires.

Décision de la Haute Cour de Justice de Grande Bretagne refusant d'autoriser des vols directs depuis ce pays à destination de la zone occupée de Chypre. Chaque année 100 000 touristes britanniques se rendent en zone occupée mais sont obligés de transiter par la Turquie.

**8 août:** Découverte en zone occupée dans un puits à l'abandon des restes de 5 soldats chypriotes disparus et de quatorze autres Chypriotes; de nombreuses personnalités chypriotes demandent que la Turquie soit poursuivie pour crimes de guerre.

**17 août:** Iliana Nicolaou, Ombudswoman de la République de Chypre, accuse de passivité le gouvernement face aux violations des droits des homosexuels.

**23 août:** Chypre apporte son aide à la Grèce en matériel et en sapeurs pompiers, à la Grèce confrontée à de gigantesques incendies dans la région d'Athènes.

**2 Septembre:** Visite de travail à Paris du président Christofias.

**11 septembre:** début du second cycle de négociations directes entre Dimitri Christofias et Mehmet Ali Talat.

**13 octobre:** Le gouvernement chypriote et les dirigeants de l'entité chypriotes-turque ont tour à tour annoncé qu'elles renonçaient à leurs manoeuvres militaires respectives, dans un geste de bonne volonté vis-à-vis de négociations de réunification en cours sur l'île.

**Grèce: 1<sup>er</sup> avril – 15 octobre 2009**

**7 avril:** Le Président Obama rencontre à Constantinople le Patriarche œcuménique et se prononce devant l'Assemblée nationale turque en faveur de la réouverture de l'Ecole théologique de Chalkis.

**9 avril:** Le Premier ministre Costas Karamanlis rencontre à Paris le président Sarkozy et inaugure au Petit Palais l'Exposition «Le Mont Athos et l'Empire byzantin, les trésors de la Sainte Montagne».

**4 mai:** Rejet par les députés de la motion de renvoi en justice de M. Aristote Pavlidis ancien ministre de la marine marchande et de l'Egée (Nouvelle démocratie), impliqué dans une affaire de corruption.

**19 mai:** La Belgique, l'Allemagne et la Grande-Bretagne ont restitué des antiquités à la Grèce au cours d'une cérémonie au Musée national d'Archéologie, en présence du ministre de la Culture, Antonis Samaras.

Décès du député (Syriza) Michel Papayiannakis et ancien correspondant du *Monde* en Grèce.

**7 juin:** Elections européennes. Abstention record de 47,37%. Victoire du *Pasok* avec 36,64% et 8 sièges devant la *Nouvelle Démocratie* (32,29%, 8 sièges), Parti communiste *KKE* (8,35%, 2 sièges), *Laos* (7,15%, 2 sièges), *Syriza* (4,7%, 1 siège), *Verts* (3,49%, 1 siège).

**16 juin:** Réduction à 9 mois du service militaire dans l'armée de terre.

**19 juin:** A l'initiative de la Grèce les chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement de l'UE prennent des décisions sur le dossier de l'immigration clandestine en Europe.

**20 juin:** Inauguration du nouveau musée de l'Acropole.

**25 juin:** Arrestation en Allemagne de Michalis Christoforakos, ex directeur général de Siemens-Hellas, impliqué dans l'affaire des pots-de-vin du groupe allemand en Grèce.

**31 juillet:** le ministre de la santé de Grèce décide la vaccination de tous les Grecs contre la grippe H1N1.

**4 août:** décès de Nicolas Makarezos membre de la junte militaire qui a gouverné la Grèce de 1967 à 1974.

**23-27 août:** Gigantesques incendies de forêt près d'Athènes: 20 000 hectares sont brûlés, 150 maisons sont détruites et un pilote grec se tue dans une opération anti-incendie à Céphalonie. La France, l'Italie, Chypre et l'Autriche fournissent à la Grèce une aide en matériel et en sapeurs-pompiers pour lutter contre les incendies.

**2 septembre:** Attentats à l'explosif attribués à *Lutte révolutionnaire* contre des bâtiments publics à Athènes et à Thessalonique.

Costas Caramanlis déclare qu'il va proposer au chef de l'Etat la dissolution de la Chambre des députés et la tenue d'élections anticipées le 4 octobre en invoquant la nécessité de prendre les décisions nécessaires pour surmonter la crise économique et financière.

**10 septembre:** L'ancien Premier ministre Costas Simitis en désaccord avec Georges Papandréou sur le choix d'une circonscription électorale renonce à se présenter aux élections législatives du 4 octobre.

**15 septembre:** Décès d'un étudiant français, première victime en Grèce de la grippe H1N1.

**20 septembre:** Le patriarche oecuménique de Constantinople, Batholomée Ier, chef spirituel de l'orthodoxie, a exprimé sa "tristesse" lors d'une visite à Istanbul dans un cimetière grégorien profané à plusieurs reprises, ont indiqué dimanche les journaux turcs. C'est en août et en septembre que quelque 90 tombes de membres de la communauté grecque ont été vandalisées dans le cimetière de Balikli, sur la rive européenne de la ville, rapportent Hürriyet et Haber Türk.

**4 octobre:** Victoire aux élections législatives anticipées du parti socialiste *Pasok*, qui obtient 160 députés avec 43,92% des suffrages exprimés. Défaite historique de la *Nouvelle Démocratie* (91 députés et 33,48%) qui provoque la démission de Costas Caramanlis de la présidence de ce parti. Le parti communiste *KKE* en recul obtient 21 députés et 7,54%. Le parti de la droite nationaliste *Laos* en progression, remporte 15 sièges et 5,63%. Le *Syriza* (extrême gauche) avec 13 députés et 4,60% est le 5<sup>ème</sup> parti représenté au Parlement. Les écologistes avec 2,53% n'obtiennent aucun siège.

**5 octobre:** Georges Papandréou, le président du *Pasok* est nommé Premier ministre.



**6 octobre:** Prestation de serment du nouveau gouvernement:

*Premier ministre:* Georges Papandréou

*Vice Premier ministre chargé de la coordination du conseil de politique étrangère et de défense et de la commission de politique économique et sociale* Théodore Pangalos

*Ministère de l'intérieur, de la décentralisation et de la gouvernance électronique*  
Ministre Yannis Ragoussis  
Secrétaire d'Etat Dinos Rovlias  
Secrétaire d'Etat siégeant à Thessalonique Théodora Tzakri

*Ministère des finances*  
Ministre Georges Papaconstantinou  
Secrétaire d'Etat Philippe Sachinidis

*Ministère des affaires étrangères*  
Ministre Georges Papandréou  
Ministre adjoint Dimitri Droutsas  
Secrétaire d'Etat Spyros Kouvélis

*Ministère de la défense*  
Ministre Evangelos Venizélos  
Ministre adjoint Panos Béglitis

*Ministère de l'économie, de la compétitivité et de la marine marchande*  
Ministre Mme Louka Katseli  
Secrétaire d'Etat Stavros Arnaoutakis  
Secrétaire d'Etat, siégeant à Thessalonique Markos Bolaris

*Ministère de l'environnement, de l'énergie et du changement climatique*  
Ministre Mme Tina Birbili  
Secrétaire d'Etat Yannis Maniatis  
Secrétaire d'Etat Thanos Moraïtis

*Ministère de l'éducation, de l'enseignement continu et des cultes*  
Ministre Mme Anna Diamantopoulou  
Secrétaire d'Etat Evi Christophilopoulou  
Secrétaire d'Etat Yannis Panaréto

*Ministère des infrastructures, des transports et des réseaux*

Ministre	Dimitri Reppas
Secrétaire d'Etat	Yannis Magriotis
Secrétaire d'Etat	Nikos Sifounakis

*Ministère de l'emploi et de la sécurité sociale*

Ministre	Andréas Loverdos
Secrétaire d'Etat	Georges Koutroumanis

*Ministère de la santé et de la solidarité nationale*

Ministre	Mme Mariliza Xenogiannakopoulou
Secrétaire d'Etat	Mme Fofi Gennimata

*Ministère du développement agricole et de l'alimentation*

Ministre	Mme Katerina Batzeli
Secrétaire d'Etat	Michalis Karchimakis

*Ministère de la justice, de la transparence et des droits de l'homme*

Ministre	Haris Kastanidis
Secrétaire d'Etat	Apostolos Katsifaras

*Ministère de la protection du citoyen*

Ministre	Michalis Chryssochoïdis
Secrétaire d'Etat	Spyros Vougias

*Ministère de la culture et du tourisme*

Ministre	Pavlos Géroulanos
Secrétaire d'Etat	Mme Angeliki Gerekou

*Ministère d'Etat auprès du Premier ministre*

Haris Paboukis

*Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du Premier ministre et Porte parole  
du gouvernement*

Georges Pétalotis

**15 octobre:** Les anciens ministres Dimitri Avramopoulos, Dora Bakoyiannis, Antonis Samaras et le Préfet de Thessalonique Panayiotis Psomiadis se portent candidats à la succession de Costas Caramanlis à la présidence de la *Nouvelle Démocratie*.

**DIRECTEURS / EDITORS**

(1983-1985)

Stephanos CONSTANTINIDES

Leonidas BOMBAS

**DIRECTEUR / EDITOR**

(1985-2005)

Stephanos CONSTANTINIDES

**COMITÉ DE RÉDACTION / EDITORIAL BOARD**

(1983-1985)

Michel LAFERRIERE (†), McGill University (Canada)

**REMERCIEMENTS / THANKS TO**

Panayiotis Constantinides

Jean Catsiapis

Thalia Tassou

CONCEPTION GRAPHIQUE / GRAPHIC DESIGN: Iraklis Théodorakopoulos

COMPOSITION / MISE EN PAGE: Constantina Metaxa



### ADVICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

*Études helléniques / Hellenic Studies* welcomes manuscript submissions presenting original research on, and critical analysis of, issues prevailing among Greeks in both Greece proper and the numerous Greek communities abroad.

Manuscripts should be original and should not be under consideration elsewhere. Recommended length is approximately 7000 words. Authors should submit (either by postal mail or by email) three typed and double-spaced copies of manuscripts. Submissions must be either in English or in French, but quotations, terms, and references in other languages (especially Greek) are encouraged, especially if they are considered as supportive to the argument of the manuscript. In such instances, English translations should follow. Manuscripts should also include a 150-word abstract and endnotes. Manuscripts, published or unpublished, are not returned.

For more submission guidelines, please find the style sheet at:  
<http://www.mediterraneanstudies.gr/hellenicstudies>

The Editors and Editorial Board of *Études helléniques / Hellenic Studies* take no responsibility for the opinions or data presented by contributors to the journal.

### AVIS AUX COLLABORATEURS

*Études helléniques / Hellenic Studies* accueille des manuscrits présentant des recherches originales et des analyses critiques sur des questions qui prévalent parmi les Grecs de la Grèce métropolitaine ainsi que de ceux se trouvant dans les nombreuses communautés helléniques de la diaspora.

Les manuscrits doivent être originaux et ne pas avoir été proposés à d'autres revues. La longueur recommandée est d'environ 7000 mots. Les auteurs doivent envoyer (par courrier postal ou électronique) trois copies dactylographiées en double interligne de leurs articles. La présentation doit être en anglais ou en français, mais les citations ainsi que les références dans d'autres langues (en particulier le grec) sont encouragées, en particulier si celles-ci favorisent l'argumentation de l'auteur. Dans de tels cas, leur traduction anglaise ou française doit les accompagner. Les manuscrits doivent également inclure un résumé de 150 mots et de notes; publiés ou non ceux-ci ne sont pas restitués.

Vous pouvez trouver des indications plus détaillées, à l'adresse:  
<http://www.mediterraneanstudies.gr/hellenicstudies>

Les éditeurs et le Comité de rédaction de la revue *Études helléniques / Hellenic Studies* déclinent toute responsabilité pour les opinions ou les données présentées par leurs collaborateurs.

