

THE EU'S ENLARGEMENT AND EURO-MEDITERRANEAN RELATIONS

Constantine STEPHANOU, Dimitris XENAKIS
Panteion University of Athens

1. Introduction

The post-1989 shift in the vocation of the new European international system has resulted in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to become part of the European Union's (EU) zone of democracy, stability and prosperity. Ten more countries have recently joined the EU. However, European enlargement is not only about opening borders, but also about minds. Apart from the serious questions regarding the future of the Union itself after this massive enlargement, there are also serious questions regarding the Mediterranean dimension of the EU project. No doubt, this enlargement has also a small Mediterranean dimension. *Prima facie*, the accession of Cyprus and Malta suggests a serious change in the European involvement in Mediterranean strategic affairs. Yet, it is also no secret that the stability and prosperity of the wider Mediterranean region is of great importance for European security. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and the so-called Barcelona Process, already at work since 1995, face serious obstacles, such as structural and functional problems, together with the situation in the Middle East, and will now have to adapt to the new politico-economic difficulties that the enlargement poses. But contemporary Euro-Mediterranean affairs are also clearly affected by the formation of the new European crisis-management tool – a new development that enhances the role of the Union in regional security affairs.

2. The Euro-Mediterranean setting

The terrorist attacks on September 11th 2001, have ushered in a new era in international politics. The priorities of international relations, the nature of regional politics, the shape of political alliances, the driving purpose of US

foreign policy, the nature of international cleavages, the evolving role of military forces and the risks of weapons of mass destruction have all been affected by the epoch-making events. Against a turbulent and unpredictable international environment, clear manifestations of which have been the wars in Afghanistan and, more recently, in Iraq, analysts were quick to point out that the Mediterranean region is particularly vulnerable to the emerging global security setting. The majority of security analyses suggest that the Euro-Mediterranean space constitutes a zone of strategic and socio-economic instability, migration flows, violent religious and cultural conflicts, varying forms of political and economic institutions, differing perceptions of security and above all differing worldviews. The Mediterranean security agenda includes *inter alia* Algeria's civil war, Turkey's issue, Lebanon's struggles, the Cyprus question, the Palestinian issue, Israel's relations with Arab world, terrorist groups, pervasive economic backwardness and demographic growth throughout the Southern shore, the use of the region as an area of rising transnational crime including narcotics trafficking, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the activities of the great powers in areas of long-standing rivalry and intervention.

Issues of Mediterranean security are not new, and yet they still rest on considerable variation in the EU's foreign policy. The extent to which the Mediterranean can be seen as a distinct region complicates further the discussion about the appropriate scope and level of a common European policy towards this part of the world. Partly as a result of the Community's Mediterranean enlargements in the 1980s, and partly due to the changing conditions post-1989, Mediterranean affairs have come to occupy a significant amount of Europe's external relations. Since the mid-1990s, the EU's Mediterranean policy has gained a significant degree of multilateralization, as compared with previous European approaches to the Mediterranean.

Although security plays a highly important role in Euro-Mediterranean relations, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is essentially a soft-power projection of the EU in the region (Tanner, 2003). The Barcelona Declaration has set a framework of cooperation between the EU and its 15 former Member States, and on the other 12 Southern Mediterranean countries – Turkey, Malta, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Palestine (Pargeter, 2002)¹. The main objectives were to establish a common Euro-Mediterranean area of peace and stability; create an area of shared prosperity through the progressive establishment of a free trade

¹. Libya has been attending all ministerial meetings since 1999 as an observer of the EU Council Presidency following the lifting of UN sanctions, which had been imposed over the Lockerbie.

area between the EU and its Mediterranean Partners and cooperation and policy dialogue in several areas. It also aims at helping improve mutual understanding and tolerance among peoples of different cultures and traditions (Panebianco, 2003).

The EMP has infused a greater political (security) bias to Euro-Mediterranean relations, whilst encompassing an ambitious economic plan for an (industrially inspired) Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by the year 2010, and a “human dimension” similar to the one introduced by the Helsinki Process in 1975 (Xenakis, 1998). It has been argued that the concept of the Barcelona project is the careful “westernization” of the Mediterranean in terms of requiring a convergence of principles and methods in dealing with pressing issues such as democracy and human rights. Although the political conditionality principle allows the EU to suspend its commitments in cases of regime failure, it exposes the Mediterranean Partners to the good will of the EU, thus offending their demand for equal partnership (Jünemann, 1998). From this view, the charge of “westernising” looks like a shady political stratagem aimed at discrediting forces that are pressing for change.

The EMP may prove instrumental in fostering a new cooperative ethos among its Members. Interest-convergence around economic tasks could contribute to a relaxation of tensions in areas where controversy is more likely to arise – *i.e.*, military security and human rights. It is on this premise that a more easily discernible Euro-Mediterranean regime may come into being (Xenakis, 1999). The composite nature of the regional process offers a wide range of opportunities for the functionalist expectations of the countries involved to form the basis of a consensually pre-determined set of policies, which are beneficial to overall systemic stability. In practice, however, the EMP has moved forward to a large extent by the new Association Agreements that updated and enhanced the previous individual agreements between the EU and its Mediterranean Partners. They focus mainly on trade liberalization, foreign direct investment and economic cooperation, as well as on the strengthening of interregional socio-cultural ties.

In its 10 years of functioning it is fair to say that the Barcelona Process has not yet fulfilled its rather high ambitions. The process has experienced significant constraints for two main reasons, firstly because the Barcelona Process has not helped in the resolution of any major security problem in the region. All three of its baskets of cooperation have suffered from problems such as the proliferation of conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, low level of investment and infrastructure, illegal migration, violation of human rights, and above all the regional “ticking bomb” called demography.

Secondly, all the initial optimism that the Oslo Process produced in the early 1990s has evaporated in a mutually reinforcing violent cycle of suicidal terrorist attacks and excessive use of military force. It is lamentable that since the beginning of the second *Intifada* in 2000, the EMP has failed continuously to free itself from the Middle East Peace Process. When the EMP was conceived, it was based on the assumption that the Middle East Peace Process, whatever its problems, was to be a permanent cornerstone of collective security in the Mediterranean. More than that, it was also to signal the final Arab-Israeli reconciliation. Although these hopes were to be dented by extra-regional developments changes in subsequent years, as well as by tensions between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Middle East peace has continued to be an integral part of the underlying assumptions of the EMP. Now, however, these assumptions can no longer be sustained. We face a real war between two Members of the Barcelona Process. The implications of this for the EMP are particularly gloomy after Arafat's death.

The post-September 11th counter-terrorism campaign and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have complicated the institutional-building of the Barcelona project. Moreover, there has been little progress on regional conflicts, where some relief was expected, such as in Cyprus, or Western Sahara. As a result, the long awaited *Charter on Peace and Stability* has been stalled. The talks on the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability, first initiated by the Southern partners aimed to contain European desires to implement a fully-fledged regional security regime along the lines of the Helsinki Process, but gradually shifted towards democracy, human rights and the rule of law in the Southern partner countries. Given this impasse, the "Charter" talks failed and were suspended, but since Marseilles the EU has sustained its efforts to advance democracy and good governance proposals within the EMP framework, and more recently in the context of the enlargement to Eastern Europe (Aliboni, 2004).

There is no doubt that the EU exhibits difficulties in dealing with Middle East security. But the EU also faces significant challenges as a result of the presence of the US and the continuing reluctance of the latter to share its "cooperative hegemony" in the Middle East. The US sponsored counter-terrorism campaign in the Arab world and the crisis over Iraq have also highlighted the existence of profound divergences not only within the international community, the transatlantic alliance and the EU, but also within the EMP partners themselves. Moreover, the inadequacy of the EU's intervention in the 2002 Middle East crisis seriously affected the status of the EMP, not only regarding security cooperation but also its multilateral nature. It is no secret that the EU has to make considerable efforts to keep Israel in

the process, whilst continuing to cooperate with the Arab countries. Europeans have to contribute something concretely positive to the Peace Process in accordance with the reasonable demands of the Arab States, whilst dealing with Israel's hostile attitude towards any EU-led intervention.

The Barcelona Process has been an ambitious and innovative initiative, and although today is not in its best shape, it is still alive. The follow up implementation has proved to be much more complex than expected. Based on tremendous results achieved of the Helsinki Process and, later, on the multifaceted EU involvement in the transition of the former communist countries to pluralistic democracy and market economy, the Barcelona project was primarily meant to extend that assistance in the Mediterranean (Xenakis, 2004). Of importance in the years to come will be the chosen institutional format to transcend the peculiarities of Euro-Mediterranean relations. But the institutionalization of the Barcelona Process alone will not be sufficient to manage a rather complex regional security agenda. The question is twofold: whether the EMP can meet its prescribed ends without first transforming itself into a system of patterned behaviour, and whether the cooperative ethos embedded in the new regional institutional setting can go beyond the level of contractual interstate obligations and closer to a genuine or, at least, meaningful partnership (Xenakis and Chryssochoou, 2001)². New rules and norms will have to be created, given that behaviour, not just proclamations, will determine the outcome of the regional order-building project.

3. European Security and Defence Policy: a regional strategic variable

Euro-Mediterranean relations are full of misunderstandings about distorted perceptions and images of Islam, as they are about the threat of terrorism used by transnational extremist groups, especially post-September 11th. The broader redefinition of Europe's relations with the Arab world is ever more necessary, including the power deficit between the two shores which has been escalating

². In this framework, the EU's strategic choices will be of great importance, together with the promotion of norms of good governance, given the tensions arising from different conceptions of democracy and modernization. Equally crucial are the socio-cultural barriers in furthering the prospects of an open inter-civilizational dialogue, keeping in mind the recent re-embrace of religious fundamentalism. Whatever the legitimising ethos of the prevailing views, a structured dialogue based on the principles of transparency and symbiotic association is central to the cross-fertilization among distinct politically organized and culturally defined units. Such a dialogue could not only alleviate historically rooted prejudices, but also endow the EMP with a new sense of process.

since the signing of the Schengen Treaty, which has been conceived by some as the forerunner of a “fortress” Europe. Euro-Mediterranean strategic affairs are also affected by the formation of the common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Its formation suggests a new regional strategic variable that enhances the European role in Mediterranean security affairs (Xenakis, 2003). The ESDP was formally launched by the conclusions of the Cologne European Council (June 1999). Since then, ESDP has passed through decisions taken in Helsinki (December 1999), Feira (June 2000), Nice (December 2000), Göteborg (June 2001), Laeken (December 2001), Seville (June 2002), Brussels (October 2002), Copenhagen (December 2002), Thessaloniki (June 2003), and more recently in Brussels (December 2003). Each of these successive European Councils has gradually given substance to this desire to give the EU the capacity for autonomous international action³.

There is no doubt that the creation of a united and military autonomous EU should not lead to a “fortress” Europe, and therefore should not obstruct the regional transformation process and the creation of a stable and prosperous Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area. In this framework it is important for the Euro-Mediterranean Partners to arrive at common definitions and responses to common security anxieties related to terrorism, information-flow, human security, civilian engagement and trust-building. All strategic intentions and perceptions in the Euro-Mediterranean space should be reconsidered and clarified, so that the open character of both projects (the EMP and the ESDP) is safeguarded.

The EU’s official documents such as the *Common Strategy for the Mediterranean* are general descriptions lacking prioritization over the EU’s strategic intentions⁴. In the process of consolidating a common European defence identity with operational capabilities, the conceptions, intentions, planning, political goals, individual national interests of EU States and their attempt to maintain a relative diplomatic freedom in the region remain vague. «*In the absence of a clear range of goals, deriving from a joint strategic plan for the Mediterranean*», the EuroMeSCo’s report argues that «*a certain level of vagueness is inevitable*» (EuroMeSCo, 2002a). However, most analysts, in

³. In the military aspects of ESDP, the EU has committed itself to setting up a force of 60,000 men, deployable within two months and sustained on the ground for 12 months. But this embryonic military structure is not meant to be a standing force. Hence, the term “Euro-Army”, which has been in inflationary use for some time now, does not describe accurately, at least for the time being, the nature of the EU’s crisis-management apparatus.

⁴. The *Common Strategy for the Mediterranean* was adopted by the Feira European Council and constitutes a means for accommodating Mediterranean issues to European foreign policy aspirations, as well as a mechanism for implementing CFSP objectives according to the provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty.

the light of the negative experience with *Eurofor* and *Euromarfor*, have underlined the need of complementary measures to support the ESDP. Given the low level of information about the ESDP in the Arab world, the EU decided to pay greater attention to the misperceptions and fears of its Mediterranean Partners regarding the strengthening of its military capabilities. Thus the ESDP acquired its own Mediterranean dimension, courtesy of the initiative taken by the Spanish Presidency during the first half of 2002. The Hellenic Presidency that followed played a decisive role to that end (Xenakis and Chryssochoou, 2003). Proposals on transparency, trust-building and the institutionalization of security dialogue allow Mediterranean Partners to gain better access in the making of a cooperative regional security space and to reduce the existing levels of regional power deficit.

4. Responses and expectations

Southern Mediterranean responses to the EU's enlargement process have so far been moderate and not very articulate – which is not so strange if one takes into account that during the last years these countries have had other, more immediate worries before them, such as the worsening state of the Middle East conflict and more recently the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, looking deeper, one can detect that there is a degree of uncertainty among Southern Mediterranean Partners about the situation following the 2004 enlargement, due to the fact that most vital decisions for the region are normally taken by the Europeans outside the Barcelona framework, usually within the EU. At the same time the slow decision-making processes and the lengthy procedures in several EU bodies for programming and implementing capacities that keep at low Euro-Mediterranean cooperation are expected to be more acute after the enlargement.

Southern Mediterranean countries do not perceive the EU's eastwards enlargement as equal to the Euro-Med project and regional cooperation. They do not claim EU membership nor they expect, for instance, equal financial aid packages or appropriations to MEDA as to PHARE and TACIS programmes. Although the Southern Mediterranean Partners have a clear understanding of the privileged treatment of the new Member States, at the same time they do not expect the EU to present them with lists of criteria identical or even similar to the Copenhagen criteria or other conditionalities. Occasionally of course they have come to meet a bit of those in their interactions with the EU (Schmid, 2003).

There is a frequently expressed expectation among EU neighbours that once the EU's enlargement was finalized, the Union will pay more attention to the Mediterranean security anxieties. Although the Barcelona Process and several other minor Mediterranean projects (Mediterranean Forum, CSCM, Five+Five Initiative, etc.) have been undertaken post-1989, these cannot compare to the political attention and the unparalleled quantities of technical and financial aid devoted to the enlargement process. This is natural, given that the new Members have to undertake difficult and costly domestic reforms, and hence need EU help. However, most of them are far from being the only countries in EU's periphery which suffer from a need of economic and social reform. Many Mediterranean countries also need urgent reform, and perhaps the EU will now be able to dedicate more attention and resources towards helping its non-candidate neighbours, the same way that it has assisted its newly accessed Members. These hopes are targeting the Barcelona project, especially the economic basket, where financial and technical assistance could be revived and accelerated, along the Southern Mediterranean shore.

There is no doubt that regional economic relations will be affected by the EU's enlargement. On the one hand the Southern Mediterranean economies will have the opportunity to grow and prosper, as a result of the expansion of their potential markets to more than 700 million people. The "Wider Europe-Neighbourhood" initiative can also reinforce the trade dimension of the Barcelona project by further encouraging Mediterranean Partners to engage in trade liberalization, sub-regional economic integration and regulatory convergence. On the other hand, it also raises challenges in terms of capacity of different groups of countries to integrate into more developed markets and face increased competition, particularly between the Southern partners and the newly accepted EU Member States.

The enlargement of the Union is a development of truly historic proportions and its long-term effects put the basis for a stronger EU in international affairs. The enlarged Union will develop into a much more important international actor, being one of the largest regional economic blocs in the world. This growing international importance might be used in various ways, which directly or indirectly will benefit Southern Mediterranean countries, *i.e.* the need to find a permanent solution in Palestine – the caucus of the problem in the Middle East. Bush administration's focus on the 'anti-terrorist' campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq has opened a vacuum in the Middle East conflict, which no-one so far has managed to fill. It is highly expected that the EU will press for the announcement and implementation of the Road Map, shelved since December 2002. It is important however to

mention here that the Arab partners generally doubt the international role of the EU, since the favourable European attitude towards the right of existence for the Palestinian Authority is counterbalanced by its ineffective action in Palestine. Rather naturally, the public opinion in the Arab populations of Mediterranean societies considers the EU's stance fairer to that of the US, but the Israeli perception over the European presence in the area is opposite. In Israel there is a dominant "hopeful pessimism" over the international role of the EU *vis-à-vis* the 'obvious' hostility towards Israeli interests in the Palestinian issue. On the other hand, the Arabs are positive for a more active EU role in the Middle East (EuroMeSCo, 2002*b*).

An important issue here is the EU's ability and willingness to be an active and efficient party in the regional conflicts' resolution or, on the contrary, to choose to protect itself, to isolate itself from the overflow of violence related to these conflicts. This is a very important issue because political and security dialogue is the most underdeveloped area of the EMP. And it will continue to be so until the EU becomes more clearly involved in the resolution of urgent conflicts, which have prevented, to date, the approval of the *Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability*.

A final expectation that refers to the new Mediterranean Members of the EU, Malta, Cyprus (and maybe Turkey tomorrow) could help return some of the importance of other Mediterranean issues on the EU agenda. A role that the EU is expected to play after the enlargement is to support the efforts for a viable solution in Cyprus and, in parallel, to provide for this solution to be in line with its own *acquis communautaire*. Although the EU had ideally preferred a solution before opening its membership to the Republic of Cyprus, the situation today suggests that the whole of Cyprus should benefit from EU membership. Apart from the urgent need to address the implications of the many new and foreseen developments in the EU's *acquis*, the Euro-Med *acquis* included, in the context of enlargement, and even within the new Constitution Treaty, the shifting geo-political, geo-economic and legal scenarios on the variegation (or otherwise of "EU-Med" and "Med-Med" relations) should also be of primary concern.

The peaceful resolution of the Cyprus question may also further improve Greek-Turkish relations. The easing of tensions in the Aegean will relieve subsequently some congestion from the wider Mediterranean security complex. At the same time, and considering that all past efforts towards a settlement of the Cyprus question have failed, the EU will have made a great step to adopting a new role in international affairs if it is successful in contributing towards a peaceful solution. In this context, the solution of the historical problem would also affirm the European commitment to be

decisively involved in regional high politics. However, in case of EU's failure to follow an assertive policy based on its own declarations for the preservation of peace and prosperity of the wider Mediterranean, it will further expose the difficulties involved in the making of the new Europe.

5. Concerns

One of the most pressing concerns of the Southern Mediterranean countries is the inevitable feeling of exclusion – that of being refused to join the EU. Some Southern Mediterranean countries (notably Morocco, but also a few others including Israel) would also like to join the Union in that they feel that this could be a panacea to a majority of their socio-economic problems. Certainly, not being accepted as eligible for EU membership, causes certain frustration, but the exclusion and marginalization is even more hurting since the refusal of membership is allegedly only based on the simple fact of being located on the 'wrong' side of the Mediterranean. This feeling of exclusion is dangerous in that it in turn produces hostility and the almost inevitable pursuit of alternative explanations for being left outside (religion, culture, race, etc.). Such feelings are unfortunate for the new Europe in that they generate a lot of friction in regional relations and fuel social discontent and radical groups in Arab societies.

Another issue of concern refers to the development of ESDP. Although the development of an ESDP is positive for Europe, in that it will lead to a degree of independence from the US for security, Southern neighbours have become suspicious. The ESDP produces, in the same way as the enlargement, contradictory feelings: it is desired and yet feared. In the Mediterranean, although some sectors would wish the ESDP to represent an assertion of Europe's power to provide peace enforcement forces in the Mediterranean area under a UN mandate, the ESDP is at the same time feared among EU's Southern Mediterranean neighbours in that their particular country might become the involuntary target of a EU military intervention some day in the future. To remove the existing lack of information, or even outright misinformation among EU neighbours regarding the ESDP, there has been a large scale information campaign explaining the ESDP to EU's neighbours during the Spanish and the Greek Presidencies of the EU (2002-2003) and beyond (Tsinisizelis *et al.*, 2003). This has been going on to reassure Southern Mediterranean countries through regular Euro-Mediterranean defence and security dialogue within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

Most of the Southern partners of the EU see positively the strengthening of regional defence cooperation and their involvement in joint military exercises. It is essential to promote the positive expectations for a more active EU in Mediterranean security affairs, by encouraging its partners to participate in joint strategic activities. The participation of Southern EMP partners in future ESDP exercises in the region is a confidence-building measure that needs to be encouraged (Papantoniou, 2002). The reinforcement of scientific cooperation in joint military exercises like emergency rescue missions and the handling of natural disasters is a good case in point (Tanner, 1999). It is also suggested that coordination mechanisms for bilateral security and defence cooperation should not be excluded from the agenda, initially at the level of exchange of information in sub-regional initiatives where security is a clear issue, such as the Mediterranean Forum⁵. This could then be extended to the EMP. This will promote regional cooperation in the fields of security and defence through immediate upgrading of the intelligence level in ESDP matters.

6. The Mediterranean dimension of an enlarged Union

The enlargement of the EU brings new neighbours from the East, and decreases the distance to the other side of the Mediterranean. The accession of Cyprus and Malta expands the EU's geographical borders very close to North African and Middle East shores. This does not however suggest that a renewed interest on part of the enlarged Union is guaranteed. This is because, today, the EU is a much wider institution, composed of 25 Members, whose characteristic is the non-uniformity in terms of economic, political and legal systems, let alone defence and foreign policy orientations and priorities. In other words, today the EU is approximating more closely a regional regime, where the dominant logic is that of differentiation or, in recent EU parlance, flexibility.

The analytical validity of these presuppositions is further justified when trying to establish a link between continuity and change within a system of multinational shared rules; when attempting to identify the common values of

⁵. While conceived as a sub-regional "proximity" circle within the wider Euro-Mediterranean space, the Mediterranean Forum can have a very active and specific role in promoting a multilateral cooperation agenda in the Mediterranean in what concerns particularly security and defence issues. Its membership makes it easier to tackle cooperation on such issues, which would be a harder task, due to current circumstances, at the EMP level to address. Istituto Affari Internazionali, *Summary of Deliberations*, workshop on "Measures for Conflict Prevention in the MedForum Countries' Framework", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome 21-22 June 2002.

distinct polities and the prospects for the emergence of new ones; when aiming at shedding some additional light on the dialectical union between a highly interactive society of independent Nations and new sources of political authority; or even when engaging in a process of investigating the allegedly “part-formed” and/or *sui generis* physiognomy of a Union composed of distinct culturally defined and politically organized units, where the dynamics of intrastate policy-making intermesh with those of large-scale polity formation with enormous complexity, producing a new type of collective entity characterized by interlocking structures of political authority: a transnational polity which lacks a single locus of decision-making (Chryssochoou *et al.*, 2003).

The EU is a polity with no historical precedent. Hence our expectations to elevate its current status to the level of a global actor with enhanced military capabilities are difficult to be contextualized. Even though the transformation of the EU into a collective security system is an inadequately addressed issue, it is clear that, today, extraordinary opportunities arise for a redefinition of its future, given that the EU represents a global symbol of political stability and economic prosperity. The EU has been actively involved in the process of democratizing the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and of promoting political and economic change in the Mediterranean countries. The vision of an EU that plays an important part in global security management entails more than the consolidation of economic might; it requires the emergence of a commonality of interests leading to a single European voice in world affairs. This, however, implies that EU Members will have to sacrifice their gains from diplomatic manoeuvres in their national foreign policy for the achievement of a defence-oriented CFSP.

The EMP is also a means to coordinate the different national policies of the EU Members. It has been rightly argued that the CFSP Common Strategy on the Mediterranean (2000) is a way of making sure that the EMP’s main role is one of coordinating better the EU policy and then imposing any given decision to the Southern Mediterranean Partners who are neither united, nor coordinated. Thus, the EMP depends very much on intra-EU coordination (Attina, 2001). However, developments in the region receive special attention mainly from the Southern EU Members, while they are hardly recognized in the North, let alone in the new Members from Eastern Europe. Turning the balance within the enlarged EU will thus be a difficult task, given that almost all are convinced that economic assistance should be aiming to support the newly accessed economies.

Gillespie (1997) suggests that the North/South European dimension must be considered in any analysis of EU Mediterranean policy, for it provides a

potential fault-line along which European disunity could develop. Pre-1989 European ambitions for a stable and prosperous Mediterranean have been mainly promoted outside the framework of the EU, in the form of different state-led initiatives for regional cooperation like the CSCM, the Mediterranean Forum, etc. Mediterranean anxieties are clearly reflected in demands by Southern EU Members for increased financial and political support to Southern Mediterranean countries. Such interest has resulted in a substantial increase in financial assistance from France, Spain and Italy [Gillespie, 1997]. The increasing diversity within the Union after the enlargement will no doubt influence the future of the EMP, especially now that the EU has made considerable progress in re-approaching the Mediterranean. In addition, the intergovernmental nature of the Union itself ensures that the pursuit of national interests in the region will remain dominant in the foreseeable future. Therefore, the main challenge for the EU's Mediterranean Members is to redress the imbalance within the Eastwards enlarged Union. This could only be achieved through coalition-building and alliance-formation not only with the rest of the EU Mediterranean States – something that is the staple approach in EU decision-making – but also with the rest of the littoral countries, as both share the concerns of the increasing challenges the region is facing in the new era.

But differences of perceptions and interests still persist with regard to the EU's relations with its Mediterranean Partners among the Southern EU Members. In particular, France, Spain and Italy bring Mediterranean issues to the fore of the EU's agenda for they traditionally maintain a plethora of economic and political interests in the region. France, however, has displayed a distinctive and rather inchoate policy towards some Mediterranean States, thus making it hard for the Union to accept a French leadership in the formulation of its Mediterranean policy. The problem is further compounded by the fact that other EU Members have also expressed their own preferences on the EU's Mediterranean policy, most notably Italy and Spain (Gillespie, 1999; Holmes, 1996; Stavridis *et al.*, 1999)⁶. It should be considered yet another "Mediterranean paradox" that, while those 3 Southern European countries play a more essential role in setting the Union's Mediterranean agenda, smaller countries like Greece, Portugal, Malta and Cyprus receive the

⁶. These differences stem from the geographical position of the Southern EU Members and their different historical pasts: while Spain tends to concentrate on North-Western Africa, Italy's main focus is Libya and the Eastern Mediterranean; the attention of France is divided between Algeria and Lebanon; and the main preoccupation of Greece is Cyprus and Turkey.

challenges and constraints confronting peripheral but relatively less-developed regions in Southern Europe⁷.

Differences in their Mediterranean priorities illustrate that the EU's Mediterranean Members have not yet found a *modus operandi* for utilising their common membership to promote their interests in the EU's agenda. It is almost certain that in the enlarged and ever more diverse Union, the differences involved in the making of a genuine Mediterranean policy are even more acute. Coordinated pressure by all European Mediterranean countries will prove necessary if peace and prosperity of the Mediterranean region is to remain in the EU's policy priorities.

7. Prospects

There is no doubt that a different political status is attached to enlargement than to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. The enlargement project is about the complete integration of the established laws and practices of the EU's *acquis*. The Barcelona project is about developing and intensifying regional cooperation. The full integration of 10 new Members makes quite different demands of all parties. However, old and new EU Member States have important political and economic goals for the relationship with Southern Mediterranean countries. It is important for them to send signals to the South that the Mediterranean remains important for Europe, also after the enlargement.

With an EU of 25, financial assistance to "outsiders" risks becoming a residual after distribution of costs and benefits among "insiders". However, in five years time, we would be approaching the ultimate objective of establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area to form, together with EFTA and Central and Eastern European countries, a zone including some 40 States and about 800 million consumers, *i.e.* one of the world's most important trade entities. That is why the EU's enlargement and the EMP can be mutually reinforcing and complementary projects.

There is, also, no doubt that both old and new Member States have ambitions of playing a more important role in the Middle East Peace Process; and of supporting national processes towards good governance,

⁷. Over the past two decades, international migrations patterns have undergone considerable changes. These are basically due to the changing role of some Southern European countries (Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal) – transformed from sending to receiving countries – to the decline of migrations within the European Union, to the increase of immigration coming from less developed countries and, more recently, to the emerging of significant migration flows from Southern Mediterranean countries.

democratization, rule of law and respect for human rights without trying to impose the western model, parts of which do not fit in with cultural, social and political specificities.

The EU's enlargement is bound to have a significant impact in and beyond the Old Continent. Recently, the European Commission issued a Communication entitled "*Wider Europe-Neighbourhood*" proposed a new framework for relations with the EU's Eastern and Southern neighbours (European Commission, 2003). It is thus imperative for the Union and its new Members that they meet with neighbouring non-candidate countries, listen to their concerns, and inform them fully and frankly, about its security motives. Transparency is particularly important where the Mediterranean is concerned since one of the specific purposes of the Barcelona Process is to promote mutual trust. Indeed, security building in the Mediterranean cannot be properly handled without the involvement of all parties concerned. Moreover, it is necessary to devise ways to give Southern partners a greater voice in correcting the asymmetry amongst the partners. Indeed, since this asymmetry does not go unnoticed in the South, southern perceptions, concerns and suggestions regarding these matters should be given as much consideration as possible.

References

- Aliboni R. (2004), "Promoting Democracy in the EMP: Which Political Strategy", EuroMeSCo, Third Year Report, Unpublished Paper, September.
- Attina F. (2001), "Conclusions: Partnership-Building", in Attina F. and Stavridis S. (eds.), *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership from Stuttgart to Marseilles*, Giuffrè, Naples, pp. 269-288.
- Chrysoschoou D.N., Tsinisizelis M.J., Stavridis S. and Ifantis K. (2003), *Theory and Reform in the European Union*, 2nd revised edition, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York.
- EuroMeSCo (2002a), EuroMeSCo First Year Report, "European Defence: Perceptions vs. Realities", *EuroMeSCo Papers*, No. 16, p. 14.
- EuroMeSCo (2002b), Report of the Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission (EuroMeSCo) Working Group III, "European Defence: Perceptions vs. Realities", *EuroMeSCo Papers*, No. 16, especially pp. 11-12.
- European Commission (2003), *Communication* "Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours", March.
- Gillespie R. (1997), "Northern European Perceptions of the Barcelona Process", *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, No. 37.

- Gillespie R. (1999), *Spain and the Mediterranean: Developing a European Policy towards the South*, Macmillan, London.
- Holmes J.W. (1996), "Italy: In the Mediterranean, but of it?", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Autumn, pp. 176-192.
- Istituto Affari Internazionali (2002), *Summary of Deliberations*, workshop on "Measures for Conflict Prevention in the MedForum Countries' Framework", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome 21-22 June.
- Jünemann A. (1998), "Europe's Interrelations with North Africa in the New Framework of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership – A Provisional Assessment of the Barcelona Concept", *The European Union in a Changing World*, Third ECSA-World Conference, 19-20 September 1996, Brussels, 1998, p. 373 and 383.
- Marks J. (1996), "High Hopes and Low Motives: the New Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Initiative", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Summer, p. 11.
- Panebianco S. (ed.) (2003), *A New Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Identity*, Frank Cass, London.
- Papantoniou Y. (2002), "The Mediterranean Dimension of the European Union's Security and Defence Policy and the Hellenic Presidency", Inaugural speech at the Seminar on "The Mediterranean Dimension of the ESDP and the Hellenic Presidency" organized by the Hellenic Ministry of National Defence, Rhodes, 2 November 2002.
- Pargeter A. (2002), "Libya-Pariah No More", *The World Today*, Vol. 58, No. 6, pp. 25-26.
- Schmid D. (2003), "Linking Economic, Institutional and Political Reform: Conditionality within the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", *EuroMeSCo Papers*, No. 27, Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission, Lisbon.
- Stavridis S., Couloumbis T., Veremis T. and Waites N. (eds.) (1999), *The Foreign Policies of the European Union's Mediterranean States and Applicant Countries in the 1990s*, Macmillan, London.
- Tanner F. (1999), "Joint Actions for Peace-building in the Mediterranean", *The International Spectator*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 4.
- Tanner F. (ed.) (2003), *The European Union as a Security Actor in the Mediterranean: ESDP, Soft Power and Peacemaking in Euro-Mediterranean Relations*, Zürcher Beiträge, ETH Zurich.
- Tsinisizelis M.J., Xenakis D.K. and Chrysoschoou D.N. (2003), "Promoting Security Dialogue in the Mediterranean: The Hellenic Presidency and Beyond", *Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 119-136.
- Xenakis D.K. (1998), "The Barcelona Process: Some Lessons from Helsinki", *Jean Monnet Working Papers in Comparative and International Politics*, Special EuroMed Edition, No. 17, Department of Political Science, University of Catania.
- Xenakis D.K. (1999), "From Policy to Regime: Trends in Euro-Mediterranean Governance", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 13, No. 1, Autumn/Winter, pp. 254-270.
- Xenakis D.K. (2003), "The Mediterranean Dimension of European Security and Defence Policy: A New Regional Strategic Variable", *Defensor Pacis*, No. 13, pp. 17-30.
- Xenakis D.K. (2004), "The Politics of Order-Building in Europe and the Mediterranean", Defence Analyses Institute, Athens.

- Xenakis D.K. and Chryssochoou D.N. (2001), *The Emerging Euro-Mediterranean System*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York.
- Xenakis D.K. and Chryssochoou D.N. (2003), "The 2003 Hellenic Presidency of the European Union: Mediterranean Perspectives on the ESDP", *ZEI Discussion Papers*, C. 128, Zentrum für Europäische Integrationsforschung, University of Bonn.