
BOOK REVIEW

Stephan Calleya and Monika Wohlfeld, Change and Opportunities in the Emerging Mediterranean, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, January 2012.

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One should underline from the very outset that the volume ‘Change and Opportunities in the Emerging Mediterranean’ has been published by the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies in Malta (MEDAC) in a very timely manner, insofar as it touches upon the most acute and complex events in the geopolitical landscape of today’s world commonly dubbed ‘the Arab Spring’. Although the outcome of those events is far from clear in terms of stability and democratic development, one thing could be stressed without any doubt: whatever the outcome of the Arab uprising, it will have, and has already had, a considerable impact on contemporary international relations and, perhaps, on the balance of power not only in the Mediterranean and broader in the MENA but also worldwide.

Thus, analyzing the root problems and the ongoing critical situation in the Arab world becomes a matter of the utmost importance. Such a profound and target-oriented analysis could provide practitioners with the necessary instrument to influence the imminent developments, both from within and outside, in a way that could bring about a real change of regime and a cardinal transformation from stagnation to development. This, in turn, could provide the countries of the region with the unique opportunity to be guided by the values of human dignity, fundamental rights and freedoms, prosperity and stability.

The volume has a number of merits, and the first one is, perhaps, the attempt to thoroughly consider diverse aspects of the Arab uprising, based on which policy- and decision-makers could draw conclusions on how the above-mentioned goals could best be achieved. As the Chairman of the Board of MEDAC, Dr. Joe Borg, has put it succinctly in his Preface to the book: ‘The concept of this volume is ... to create a more democratic region where good governance and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms are the rule and not the exception’.

Another obvious merit of the volume is the broad range of issues under consideration. It is divided into five sections, each of which analyses an

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important segment of the topical matters with regard to the Arab uprising. Part I concentrates on the events during 2011 and serves as a background for the following sections. Part II deals with the challenges and prospects of good governance in the wake of the Arab Spring, while Part III focuses on the role of civil society. The last two parts of the volume are dedicated to an analysis of, respectively, 'Lessons Learned from the Other Regions of the EU Neighborhood' and the 'EU's Response to Challenges in the Emerging Mediterranean'. It should be added that the last section also considers the OSCE's involvement, so its title does not entirely reflect the content. This is important to note not only for the sake of correctness but also bearing in mind that the OSCE, in certain circumstances, may play a crucial role in the Mediterranean dialogue and in developing multilateral relations between the pan-European and MENA community in a broader and deeper sense.

Finally, another major merit of the volume is its thought-provoking and action-oriented nature. An attentive reader may clearly see a number of conclusions and recommendations, which, maybe, are not on the surface but stem from the very essence of the analysis contained in several essays and articles. Although the limits of a book review do not permit one to delve deeply into its substance, it is worth discussing a number of important topics raised in the volume, so that it could be possible to sum up, in the end, its most valuable conclusions.

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Part I starts with the article by Zaid Eyadat entitled: 'The Arab Revolution of 2011: Revolution of Dignity'. It contains a sound analysis of the root causes that led to the historic events in the MENA region. According to the author an utter lack of democratic practices, austere economic conditions, corruption and a politics of fear employed for a long period by the majority of the Arab regimes triggered those events. This argument is substantiated by concrete facts and figures demonstrating the polarization of society, human rights abuses and other negative trends, which, in the final analysis, could be described as 'a lack of dignity in personal lives'.

The author raises the conceptual question of the impact of Islam and its compatibility with democratic values. Indeed, this is the cardinal question, and the relations between the northern and southern Mediterranean countries, in particular, and the western European and the MENA countries, in general, will be shaped by the answer to this question and the concrete forms of cooperation or non-cooperation that will stem from this answer.

Zaid Eyadat does not give a definitive answer. He rather refers to the existing literature and contradicting opinions on the subject. True, it is impossible to have a clear-cut opinion. However, a constructive approach would suggest that Islam should not be considered as opposite to democratic development. On the contrary, 'dignity in personal lives' is central to Islam as it

is to other religions, and the problem here is that ‘a different form of democracy may need to develop in order to be effective in a Middle Eastern cultural context’, as Zaid Eyadat underlines, referring to one of the analytical sources.

One cannot but agree with the conclusion that ‘the situation is more complicated than previously portrayed’ and that a ‘forward looking method’ — that of combining cross-dimensional studies of political and social factors — should be adopted, if we want to understand the trends of democratic transitions ‘in both the Arab region and across the world’.

The following two articles touch upon the events in Tunisia. While Ahmed Driss concentrates on the pre-revolutionary situation and the unfolding events with a forecast of possible developments, Bishara Khader makes a comprehensive analysis of socio-economic and political conditions, the nature of power, the major characteristics of Tunisian society and a number of other factors which sparked the uprising in Tunisia and the Arab world. The article also contains a comparative analysis of the situations in the other countries of North Africa, as well as Syria and Yemen. One should underline the author’s following conclusions: ‘one must not hope for a sort of reform from the top, other than a cosmetic one’; ‘the Tunisian ... Revolution shattered to pieces several myths notably those of the ‘intrinsic despotism to the Islam’ and ‘the Arabian exceptionalism’ which intended to demonstrate that ‘Arabs and democracy is a contradiction in terms’; ‘It has also demonstrated the emptiness of the arguments ... according to which the authoritative regimes are the only ones able to ‘contain the surging Moslem’ and defend the geostrategic and economic interests of the West’.

Noha Bakr’s article contains a comprehensive analysis of the Egyptian revolution. This is an in-depth and meticulous study of the economic, social and political conditions existing in Egypt prior to the 25 January 2011 revolution, the reasons for the popular uprising and the possible scenarios. Bakr singles out three of them: the birth and survival of the liberal trend; the consolidation of the Islamic trend; and ‘the bleakest scenario’ — the fragmentation of Egypt. At the same time the author rightly points out that it is an incredible task to predict the model that Egypt will follow.

The article by Bruce Maddy-Weitzman entitled ‘The Arab Regional System and the Arab Spring’ concludes the book’s first section. Like the section’s first article it is of a conceptual character and touches upon a strategic issue of the inter-Arab relations and the Arab states’ role at the regional level. The author’s conclusion is not encouraging, but it is a sober one: ‘The Arab regional system increasingly appeared to be a concept whose analytical value had diminished, with inter-Arab affairs becoming folded into the larger Middle East regional system’. According to the author the only cohesive bloc of Arab states which came up with a multi-pronged response to the Arab Spring were the Gulf Cooperation Council states. They focused on Bahrain, Libya and Yemen, ‘while ... pumping billions of dollars into their own societies to neutralize potential unrest’. They spearheaded the Arab League’s debates and decisions, which *inter*

alia provided important Arab legitimacy for Western Governments' actions in the middle of the Libyan crisis.

The article points to another regional arrangement between the three Arab 'majors' — Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria which had undertaken at 'seminal moments' in Arab modern history concerted actions to tackle a given problematic situation. Maddy-Weitzman is of the opinion that the failure to institutionalize this triangular alliance contributed heavily to Arab fragmentation and weaknesses. Although it is arguable whether the above-mentioned states could ever form a permanent alliance, it should be stressed that the absence of a kind of lead countries or common ideological or strategic ground have really undermined the effectiveness of the Arab states' decision-making at the regional level.

In analyzing a larger regional context, i.e., the impact of the Israeli-Arab conflict, the involvement of Iran and Turkey and possible developments, the article rightly points out the crucial impact of the situation in Syria on the present dynamics and future balance of power in the region. Syria's importance stems not only from its geopolitical location or political weight among the Arab states, but not least, as the author emphasizes, because the country has been the 'beating heart of Arabism' since the beginning of the modern Arab nationalist movement'.

The opening article of Part II authored by Omar Grech discusses the issues of human rights and democracy in North Africa. It starts with the assertion that 'The view that human rights and democracy are not in synch with the Arab 'forma mentis' ... was clearly and unequivocally refuted by the Arab protestors...'. After considering the human rights situation in North Africa prior to the revolutionary events, the author points to the critical areas where intervention is necessary. These are: securing free elections; creating impartial and independent institutions, first of all, an independent judiciary; and promoting 'the quintessential aspect of democratic governance: citizen participation'.

One should underline that this observation holds true not only for the North African but for the bulk of, if not all, Arab states. The same goes for the author's opinion that 'The supremacy of the constitutional provisions over other laws would be an important tool'. The author underlines that apart from legislation and structures 'old habits will need to be eradicated, and a new culture of independence and impartiality created'. Another important aspect is the role of human rights education as a crucial one.

Fouad M. Ammor continues the topic of democratic governance in the Mediterranean and advocates the concept of 'stability based on democracy'. This necessitates a 'complementary relationship' between the newly established Arab regimes and the external actors 'to respect human rights and democratic governance'. In principle, one should agree with the author when he states that 'the conspiracy theory, which is a common attitude of authoritarian regimes, should be put aside because it is as banal as it is pointless'. This stands absolutely true when it comes to another region, the former Soviet Union, a subject that has been dealt with in another section of the book. In the Arab context, however,

things seem to be much more complicated and external influence and actions to either protect the existing regime (Bahrain) or to overthrow it (Syria) are still ongoing.

In any case, Ammor's recommendations are worth being given careful consideration: the EU's Mediterranean policies' cornerstone should be the promotion of democracy; emphasis should be placed on a comprehensive political approach dealing simultaneously with economic, political, identical issues, rather than opting for separate technical-economic projects; the importance of the regimes' political legitimacy and, hence, the need for Arab countries to 'come to terms with the ballot box verdict'.

In his article entitled "The Euro-Med Economies in the Early 2010s: Two Coasts in Crisis" Zafiris Tzannatos concentrates on the economic situation and the reasons for the crisis both in the North and South Mediterranean and argues that the Arab 'uprisings have to do more with rising political discontent regarding the autocratic regimes, in which economic factors played a role'. The author criticizes the principle of 'economic reforms first, political reforms after', clearly demonstrating through facts, figures and an analysis of concrete situations on both shores of the Mediterranean the primacy of political factors. It is difficult to argue with Tzannatos' assertion, and the events of the first half of 2012 seem to be supportive of his opinion that 'Both coasts of the Mediterranean are in active search for a new economic model that would rely less on unfettered markets and more on a sensible regulatory role for governments'.

The subject of the section's next article, authored by Derek Lutterbek, touches upon one of the most crucial and sensitive issues, that of the role of armed forces in the Arab uprisings. The importance of the army's attitude stems from the fact that: 'all Arab countries can be described as military-based regimes, where the armed forces have been at the core of the political system'. Lutterbek points to different responses by the army in different countries categorizing them in four main groups: i) support for movements (Tunisia); (ii) less open to popular movements but not obstructing them (Egypt); (iii) a fracturing of the military apparatus and civil war (Libya, Yemen); (iv) fierce opposition to uprising (Bahrain, Syria).

Lutterbek focuses on the deeply rooted causes of the army's behaviour in each separate case and comes to a somewhat frustrating but sober conclusion that: 'the armed forces have played a key role ... in determining the outcome of these popular uprisings'.

The subject of Lourdes Pullicino's study is the media in Egypt. It provides a description of the historical background, the situation prior to the uprising and thereafter outlining the possible trends of development. It also covers a diversity of the media (print, audiovisual, online), as well as focusing on the media-related legal framework. The article is a valuable source of information for those studying the media in Egypt and the Arab world in general.

Part III of the volume is dedicated to the role of civil society. In the opening article Claire Spencer discusses the concept of civil society in order to continue

with analyzing the concrete situation in the Euro-Mediterranean sphere, emphasizing the need for both the EU and other European structures, on the one hand, and newly emerged regimes in the Arab states, on the other, to demonstrate an inclusive approach towards civil society, having in mind also the creation of an appropriate framework for the relationship with Islamic organizations, the private sector, etc.

Colm Regan focuses on the role of the women's movement in the Arab world, emphasizing 'a simple, neglected yet obvious truth: women are crucial to human development in all its dimensions'. The article contains an overview of the women's movement in a number of Arab countries (both Maghreb and Mashreq) and points out that, despite the widespread opinion to the contrary, the women's movement has a long and distinguished history in the Arab world. The author also argues against another widespread opinion that gender and development perspectives are 'external' artificial constructions which are inappropriate to the region. In that context, he underlines that 'it is vital that the issue achieves a greater degree of 'indigenisation'.

Another dilemma is whether women's rights should be considered as 'divisive' and put aside until other broader objectives are achieved or they remain fundamental to the process itself. According to the author there is no clear path in this sense and a great deal depends on the nature of the political agreements and compromises that are emerging in successor regimes.

The subject of Rama Halaseh's study is the changing role of civil society and the emerging role of young generations in shaping the future of Arab countries. According to Halaseh a paradigm shift is unfolding when along with traditional protagonists 'young Arabs — the majority of the population — are increasingly realizing an empowered and influential role in all the various aspects of public life'. While an important segment of the article focuses on civil society organization's background, current conditions and development trends, it is exactly the author's argumentation in favour of 'young Arabs' empowerment' that seems to be the most topical one. Indeed, it has become a common place to describe the youth movement in the context of the Arab uprising as almost a crucial one and to attribute to the young generation a decisive role in past, present and future events, considering them as a 'new strategic actor' as characterized by Halaseh.

Summing up the arguments in favour of youth being strategic actors Halaseh has underlined the following ones: the rapid growth of the youth population in practically all Arab countries; widespread grassroots participation with rapid steps towards organizing; globalization and increased and hardly contained access to information. True, these trends have been observed in practically all Arab countries. The question is whether these and other factors are enough for the youth to become a driving force or whether their role will be confined to those who triggered and actively participated in the uprising without, however, the capacity of playing any significant further role in shaping the future of a given country.

Paul Walton's analysis of the Anna Lindth Foundation's strategy, which concludes the section, points to a reassessment, along with all the major players in the Mediterranean space, of hitherto adopted strategic approaches. According to Walton a shift in vision has taken place in the sense that the EU may now no longer 'subjugate concerns for human rights and democracy to the fear of terrorism', a shift in policy may occur towards a more inclusive political dialogue, moving the focus from relationships with the authorities to relationships with civil society, etc. Walton then concentrates on the activities proposed by the Anna Lindth Foundation in light of the new circumstances, the outcome of the Tunis Forum (June, 2011) with a firm intention to broaden the Foundation's scope of activities to include the topics of citizenship, human rights and pluralism in its intercultural dialogue mission.

Part IV of the volume deals with the lessons learned from the other regions of the EU neighbourhood. In the section's first article Anthony Jones stresses the similarity of the revolutionary events in Central and Eastern Europe and the Arab world in that 'in both cases it was not just popular rejection of a particular government or set of leaders, but a rejection of a type of system...'. Further in-depth analysis demonstrates, however, that here the similarities end and the differences start. Indeed, as the author rightly points out, contrary to the situation in Central Europe the Arab states and societies had no democratic past to return to, no neighbours that had gone through the same process and could influence positively through demonstrative effect, no external force like the EU in the case of the Central Europe, which could influence the developments. Thus, one cannot but agree with these arguments stating that the similarities between the two situations are rather superficial and one could hardly draw far-reaching parallels between them.

The next article authored by Nick Hopkinson also considers the similarities and dissimilarities between 1989 and the Arab Spring and argues that dissimilarities are much more tangible. In particular, the EU's possibilities are much more restricted in playing a similar role in terms of political, security, economic assistance and support for the Arab states than it had played in the context of the Central and Eastern European region. The author's opinion is that: 'Unless one day there is a radical (and highly unlikely) rethink of the EU's potential geographical *finalité politique*, the role of the EU in the MENA region will be limited, and a powerful external incentive for reform will not be available'.

While for Hopkinson this seems to be a key argument, it is difficult to agree with it. Conditioning the EU's influence with membership thereof would mean significantly complicating the EU's external action. All the more so as it becomes clearer that 'membership obsession' based on short-term strategic and security considerations, while ignoring the political, socio-economic and cultural differences, has turned into a permanent crisis-generating factor within the enlarged EU. The solution, most probably, lies in a cardinal change in the EU's approaches toward the MENA countries. An appropriate framework for an equal

partnership based on a few but shared values and not the mentality of absorbing new territories of influence should be central in this sense.

Olexiy Haran's article touches upon the lessons from the Orange Revolution in Ukraine. Rightly pointing out that the dominant factors of the Orange Revolution were domestic and not the result of 'the Western plot', the author then analyses the aspirations of the Orange Revolution and the actual situation in the country. The author underlines that the high hopes and expectations of the Orange Revolution have been thwarted, explaining this by the inconsistency of the political leadership in conducting cardinal reforms, namely, the prevention of the monopolization of power, administrative reform, an anti-corruption campaign, local government and the creation of public broadcasters.

Applying this scheme of cardinal reform to the Arab states in transition, one could say that it also holds true for the Arab political environment. Indeed, too hastily it is often said that the regime in a number of Arab states has changed. But the problem is that toppling the old regime does not automatically involve a regime change. Only in the case of profound political, socio-economic and cultural reforms can one argue that the process of regime change has started. This, perhaps coupled with the necessity of a favourable external setting, absent in the case of Ukraine, may be considered as the main lesson which has been learned from the Orange Revolution in Ukraine.

As mentioned above, Anthony Jones' article stresses that the Arab countries have no neighbours that could provide a positive influence through demonstrative effect. The section's last two articles examine the impact on MENA by Turkey as a major regional power and as a possible source of inspiration for adopting an appropriate framework or model of development. Therefore, these articles could help to shed more light on the issue of Turkey's eventual demonstrative effect.

Bahri Yilmaz's analysis starts with a brief historical overview of Turkey's role in the Middle East and the reasons why previous Turkish governments had refrained from pursuing an activist policy in the region. In Yilmaz's opinion 'it is... questionable whether Turkey can act as a role model'. To substantiate this point of view the author refers to Turkey's 'huge economic and democratic deficits', the possibility of boundary disputes and other kinds of conflicts with its neighbors (Iran, Iraq and Syria), Turkey's secularism versus the fundamental role of religion in the Arab countries, etc.

The article's conclusion is clear-cut: 'If a model is needed they [the Arab countries — VA] can adopt the democratic values and institutions from the mainspring of civilization, namely Europe which Turkey itself adopted as a model'.

Contrary to this opinion Adam Balcer states in his article that: 'Turkey as definitely the most democratic Muslim country within the Middle East ... and the strongest regional power ... seems to be a likely candidate to becoming a model for Arab countries'. In favour of this assertion Balcer refers to Turkey's example of extensive democratic reforms resulting from the integration process with the

EU, the country's experience of economic transformation, etc. At the same time, the author points to internal and external factors that may significantly hinder Turkey's impact, hence its significance as a role model in the region. These are the Kurdish question, the Cypriot issue, and the intensifying rivalry between Turkey and France in the Mediterranean Basin. But first and foremost, Balcer is of the firm opinion that 'the most important challenge to Turkey's capacity in acting as a source of inspiration for the Arab world is, in fact, a vague perspective of Turkey's integration with the EU'. The argument is that in reactivating the accession process 'the EU could gain a powerful tool in the form of a democratisation agenda in Turkey's foreign policy and possible success of some Arab countries, which would facilitate its efforts to persuade the Turkish government to continue the process of democratization of their country'.

This, however, does not sound persuasive. Too much conditionality, too much belief in the power of an external force, in this case the EU, and its ability to shape the future of Turkey and the Arab countries by pushing for a 'democratisation agenda'.

The last section of the volume, Part V, is devoted to the EU's responses to challenges in the emerging Mediterranean. Andreas Marchetti elaborates on the Barcelona process stressing its main principle of 'stability through democracy' and its multifaceted approach, insofar as it included partnership in political and security issues, economic and financial matters, as well as social, cultural and human affairs. The author focuses on the evolution of the EU's approaches and instruments in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), underlining its major purpose as enshrined in a number of the EU's documents: 'to promote a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union and of the Mediterranean with whom we can enjoy close and cooperative relations'.

As underlined by some other authors in the volume, Marchetti also points to a major dilemma in the EU's relations with the Mediterranean, namely the frictions between the short-term security and stability interests of a pragmatic EU, and the rather long-term promotion of norms and values. Paradoxical as it may sound, the author's conclusion is that 'in a long-term perspective the Union's approach has ... led to less stability', because, he argues, a failure in addressing substantial governance deficiencies, but rather adhering to the status quo, lies in negative development perspectives.

Marchetti comes up with a number of suggestions: the EU cannot stand aside because of evident interdependencies; it should have the courage to admit change, abolish 'double standards' and increase cooperation incentives by opening up the European integration project to its neighbours.

Stephan Callea suggests that in light of the recent developments in the Arab world there is a need for a strategic reassessment of the EU's policy towards the region in order to formulate 'a better coordinated cooperative mechanism' to directly support the MENA countries 'at this delicate moment of political and economic transition'. He further argues that an attitude of indifference is

unacceptable and that the EU should elaborate a clear strategy with clearly defined objectives and instruments. This is the way to consolidate the cooperation with the emerging Mediterranean and grasp the momentum of political change, otherwise 'political paralysis coupled by economic stagnation could lead to... a clash of cultures'. At the same time, Callea emphasizes that the Mediterranean countries themselves must adopt more of a self-help mentality.

An important observation concerns regionalism becoming a major characteristic of the international system and international regions becoming 'an intermediate level of analysis between the nation state and the global international system'. In that context, the author believes that Mediterranean states should start the process of sub-regional integration to avoid the danger of falling behind in the modern international system.

Callea reiterates that the EU cannot undertake necessary reforms in place of the governments in the partner countries and that the Mediterranean countries have an essential role to play to 'ensure implementation of a comprehensive reform programme that is built on the rule of law and respect of universal human rights'.

The next two articles of the last section deal with specific issues of the Libyan civil war and migration policies in Southern Europe (author: Cetta Mainwaring) and energy security in the Euro-Mediterranean region (author: Manfred Weissenbacher). Both articles contain a number of observations and conclusions, which may be useful not only for specialists in the relevant areas, but also for a general analysis of the situation, bearing in mind that migration and energy security issues may have a considerable impact on shaping political views and approaches on both shores of the Mediterranean.

The volume's last article, authored by Monika Wohlfeld, deals with the OSCE's Mediterranean Dialogue and its possible impact on democratization in North Africa. It is regrettable that this comprehensive volume has allocated only a very modest place to the OSCE, the most obvious explanation being that the OSCE itself has a number of constraints, both objective and subjective, which have so far prevented the Organization from playing a much more conspicuous role in the MENA region. The author points to the main reason: 'the OSCE does not have a vision that would guide its engagement in the region...'

In the context of the OSCE's Mediterranean Partnership, the article considers the issue of membership, the structure and the themes of the dialogue, the possibility of intensifying and broadening the membership and diversifying the dialogue's structure and topics in light of the Arab Spring. Two major factors that may further restrict the scope and the content of the dialogue have been identified: i) the OSCE's determination to use the existing frameworks and channels only, rather than to create new ones; ii) a lack of enthusiasm by the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation in developing and diversifying the dialogue or other forms of cooperation.

Nevertheless, Wohlfeld underlines a positive shift, namely, 'more focus on civil society and immediate needs in the human dimension, for example on

sharing good practices related to election observation'. A reference is also made to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly deliberations and decisions that suggest the OSCE's and the OSCE PA's involvement in the Mediterranean to share institutional expertise in the fields of governmental reform, election facilitation and political pluralism 'to facilitate peaceful regional transition'.

Finally, the article argues that the development of the Mediterranean dialogue will depend on a number of issues, such as broadening the scope of information on the OSCE among the governmental and non-governmental players in the region; participating States' consensus to support the transition process; the willingness of the Mediterranean Partners to cooperate with the OSCE; the motivation for the 'richer players', such as the EU, to coordinate with the OSCE; and last but not least, various stakeholders' capabilities to develop a more visionary approach to security in the region.

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In conclusion one should reiterate that the volume 'Change and Opportunities in the Emerging Mediterranean' edited by Stephan Calleya and Monika Wohlfeld is topical and comprehensive. The editors have involved authors from the north and the south of the Mediterranean, those who have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to analyze the complicated issues and almost unpredictable situations triggered by the Arab uprisings. It goes without saying that a great deal of the factual material has already become outdated. Since early 2011 the situation in the Arab world has been changing with kaleidoscopic speed and any description may easily be overtaken by events.

What is important, however, is that the volume, apart from containing a useful chronology of events, based on diverse sources and observations, represents in its integrity a thought-provoking research, containing in-depth analyses, conclusions and practice-oriented recommendations.

Perhaps it would not be superfluous to underline the most important ones, which argue:

that democracy and the Arab world are not incompatible, and that human rights, political diversity and socio-economic progress form the ground for human dignity and as such are equally understandable, acceptable and feasible in any part of the world;

that the Arab Spring was not the result of a foreign conspiracy but stemmed from popular movements, triggered by long years of negligence by ruling regimes of the necessity to protect the human dignity of every citizen or subject;

that the regime change has not yet taken place as a result of those uprisings but a real change or at least its beginning could be witnessed if there were convincing signs indicating that the nature of power hitherto dominant in the Arab states had started to alter in the sense of the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

that the formula “stability through autocracy” should be replaced by the formula “stability through democracy” and that the West should give up its short-term security arrangements and adopt a new bold vision based on the principles of comprehensive security and dynamic but balanced stability;
that in order to achieve these goals new approaches and the activation of old structures with new tasks, such as the OSCE with an amended mandate, might be necessary.

It remains to once again underline the importance of the volume and to suggest that its editors should consider a second volume to include an in-depth analysis, in particular, on Syria, Lebanon and within the framework of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is because since a certain time Syria has become the epicentre of the events in the Arab world. Because Lebanon is, unfortunately, in a state of permanent crisis, be it overt or latent. Because the unresolved status of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to be the greatest crisis-generating factor in the region and because, despite many impasses, the hope for a peaceful solution through new approaches is always there.

Such continued and broadened involvement by the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies in Malta in elaborating in-depth analyses and target-oriented recommendations for decision- and policy-makers would enhance the possibilities of promoting the Mediterranean dialogue through shared values and common goals of peace, stability and prosperity in the region and beyond.