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Felix Maier (ed.)

Managing asymmetric  
interdependencies  
within the Euro-Medi-  
terranean Partnership

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About the Authors:

Felix Maier is Director of the Mediterranean Academy for Diplomatic Studies in La Valetta/Malta.

Roderick Pace is Director of the European Documentation and Research Centre at the University of Malta.

Christian Sterzing is Member of the German Parliament for Bündnis 90/Die Grünen.

Mark A. Heller is Senior Researcher at the Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies in Tel Aviv.

Volker Perthes is Senior Researcher at the Foundation for Science and Politics in Berlin

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*Felix Maier*

## **Expectations of the Non EU-Partner countries after Marseilles**

Due to the fact that I myself as a Swiss, by definition neutral, have no clue neither about the Mediterranean nor the European Union. But apart from this fact, I think that the title “expectations after Marseilles” includes in fact two nearly impossible elements, I would like to elaborate on that and come then perhaps to a conclusion. But nevertheless, as a director of an institution in the middle of the Mediterranean, in the middle of the process, where all 27, especially the 12 non EU partner states can and do meet, I think I have a certain responsibility. And therefore it makes sense to look from this point of view. When I speak about impossibilities or difficulties of this title, then I mean first of all the expectations of the non-EU Mediterranean countries, what does that mean? It has to do with perceptions and therefore it's very important that there is something like a common perception as the Mediterranean view or the Mediterranean and the Mediterranean as such would be something unique, it is unique, but a unified, a monolithic block. I think it's a very often, I would name it, error, a quite common error that the Mediterranean is a monolithic, homogenous entity. This is far away, I think, from the realities, I think it's as far wrong or as far from the reality, as we speak normally about Africa and forgetting that Africa is 53 countries and we treat it just as one unique block, say, a little bit as with the Mediterranean.

First of all the Mediterranean is a geographic reality, nothing else than that. And there are a few things, someone has to understand why a process like the Barcelona process or every other integration process can work or doesn't work, or whatever can be criticised, we should have a look on this

what I call this error, it is geographical first. But then we have to see that the difference in speed of development around this “bassin Méditerranéen” is so different that it is nearly impossible to put on that something common. I mean it doesn't speak against a process like the Barcelona process as such, but if we forget that and we risk to permit a lot of logical errors out of this circumstance. It is and there is something in common, it is, let's say, a interface Mediterranean where all the things are coming together. I myself prefer this view that we say in the Mediterranean are coming together the three big monotheistic religions, the big two, let's say, in this sphere of the world, dominating cultures, the Christian Northern European dominated cultures with the Arabic dominated culture, is interfacing here together – it's all together with all this cultural and economic consequences. That means that the Mediterranean area and this is important I think to understand, that any process which would be either forced or managed in the way that the partners share the same history, share the same experience is bound to fail. Of course we're facing the same problems and threats. Just in brackets, too, for example environmental, I mean 65 %, if I'm not wrong, of the European oil transports are going through the street of Mesina and you can imagine what it means for the vulnerability of the area, for example Malta, 30 % of our income coming from tourism. We don't need an Exxon Valdez - our own flag ship Erika, you've heard about it, is enough to destroy the economic base and cultural base for the next 15 years of that country. So, there we have common interest. I think we should look more into the common interest and the share of history and the common concerns than in that what we perceive sometimes as monolithic block. I think especially for the North, if I may say so, we would wish or I think it would make sense to see more the diverse the individualistic approach within partnership and less consider it as a block. Today, it is very fashionable to criticise the Barcelona process. It has failed, it hasn't worked, whatever. I think, here also, we have to take care, I mean, something like that, I would like to quote the late president Mitterrand. "You can't, what has been and we have to look at the history of the Mediterranean – we share a common history. You have over hundreds of thousand of years of war, of blood, of conquests whatever". You can't expect within 5 years that everything is

as you say in German “Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen”, that everybody loves everybody and does everything together. We have to be realistic. I think we shouldn’t overstretch also the expectations, because this leads, this especially thinking in this block, monolithic block approach, that what we are suffering in this process. I think we might view it as one of the key problems that we think in terms of “we” and “them”. It’s always we, the South, together or against or without whatever and the other way round, too. And I can tell you as responsible for twice a year organise the workshops information and training seminars for the Barcelona process in Malta. It’s we and them, this has to do with the wrong perception, I think, of the region, as I said, more than once “monolithic”.

A second problem, a second area of the title of my contribution is “After Marseille”. It has to be seen, what was before or has something changed after Marseille? In my view, from the substantial point of view, absolutely nothing has changed substantially. But I think on the perception it is a tremendous step that has been done, namely, as I said before, to criticise and to call the Barcelona process already bad and failed. This declaration, this commitment of the people present in Marseille, is absolutely crucial. To say “No, we are committed.” We have to ask a little bit later on the concrete expectations of what that means in real terms. But the fact that the 27 said: “Okay, we want to go on with the Barcelona process” is a step forward, perhaps not a big one, not a dramatic one, not a spectacular one. It doesn’t create a lot of headlines in the newspapers, but is a very, very important result. We are going to be committed.

After this preliminary remarks I try to walk in what is the area which we deal with. We come to these expectations, what we have to speak about. Expectations mean, at least as I see it, aim on three different levels. On expectations there are more or less dreams, there are miracles expecting, there are illusions. There is a second category: there are ambitions. On the third category there are expectations, that are more or less realistic or I like the German word “realpolitische Ansätze”, the realistic approaches, the modest approach. We have then to ask what are those expectations.

Let me just mention the first category of these expectations: the dreams, the miracles and the illusions. It's a little bit a risky because the problem as such is tragic and they are very difficult and I think there can be more said about it, but at the same time one of the big problems of the process as such is the whole issue of the Middle East. Process peace or non-peace. A process which sometimes keeps the whole Barcelona process as hostage blocks everything. Sometimes I'm not completely sure. There are moments when we see that there what's going on is really making impossible further activities and sometimes it's even only an excuse, but anyhow this kind of expectation, I think it would be overstretch the Barcelona process if we would aid to solve or substantially contribute to contribute to a solution of the conflict. I think the nature of the conflict and especially its complexity is much more higher than the complexity of the system of the Barcelona process. And I think it's impossible to solve, due to this fact, within that framework. And I think not that the Barcelona process shouldn't expect anything in this regard, but I think that it belongs classically to the category of dreams, of miracles and of illusions. We should of course avoid anything that could make this solution more complicated. But in a positive way to contribute I think this is too much expected, and it's an illusion and it's not realistic.

The third category, namely the realistic or the modest approach, leaves us to, that we say: Okay, we are already satisfied, if the process as such is going on, if it can maintain the status quo, which again is already a success in my view in itself, compared with the last two thousand years. And we are happy to have what we have with slow steps forward. And I think especially in this context it's very important. I think the only way how we can do things also here is with all the difficulties, all the problems we are aware, is to go on. I think there are not very many alternatives to such and such programs. It would be made perhaps more efficient. It doesn't speak against the program as such. I think that this is important that it has been confirmed in Marseille. The program has to go on.

And the second category here: the ambitions. This is that where we have to spend a little bit time and look what could that be in concrete. The Barcelona process is aiming high but in a very idealistic way. Here just one re-



mark in brackets. And to make myself clear. The problem especially in this category is that: when we have looked in the final statement of the meeting of the ministers in Marseille, I think this itself raises expectations which are completely unrealistic. The expectations are not the sheer figure or the totality of the topics there is definitely too much. I come back on that in a short moment. I think we need something like a privatisation, but that means there is a lot of indications, too. Now the expectation is one side, the categories we have seen. But the question is to whom do we address these expectations? Here I would like to underline just without too much going into details, too often we address them to “them” without saying exactly whom we mean. I think not very often it’s clear – there is the South, the North. And this is for sure in my view the wrong way, because the partnership whatever it means with our individual experience, with working or not working partnerships in our daily life is never a one way, normally it should be a two way procedure.

What could be a way out, what could be a concretisation of that what I said before. Namely first we have this block thinking. We have something in common, but we are different. We have to look what means the expectations and we need to address now, what after Marseille, is just a point in time than a real turning point, where we are now. I would make four different expectations.

First of all, to the process as such. I think that it’s clear that the process as such – a banality of course, but it is much more difficult to realise – should go under all conditions on. On what level ever, if it is a lower level, or a higher or whatever, I think because there is no alternative for the moment. Of course theoretically a lot of things are possible or could be thought. But for the moment there is no alternative to the Barcelona process. We have to be completely aware about that. This is very important. We take it too much for granted. But we have to. It is the only alternative we have available for the moment. We should take care to it. Perhaps this process should be made much more visible. For the moment it is something that happens on a very high level We have the ministerials, we have the representatives or the ambassadors, the special Committee and that it’s and sometimes even the project is not absolutely clear. Who is behind them. I think the

visibility of the Euro-Med-Process is a core problem. The PR aspect could be much more improved in favour of exactly what I said before: raising or increasing the awareness or reducing the perception of we and them. But we see this is something that works in daily life. Not only that we write on our nice maps we gather or we distribute sponsored by. Of course not or that we really bring that into the daily awareness of the people.

First, we are neglecting the fact that it is a completely asymmetric process. That means that in terms of the system theory, that the complexity of the whole approach is that much, that it's not possible to deal with it with a simple process and in structures. Consequence and one of the expectations I would formulate in the context of an expectation process is such, is perhaps we have to think about the structure of the Barcelona process. Is it the correct structure and there is nothing against the "meta-Committee", absolutely not. This is very good and very good working – it is perhaps, it has to be, speaking for more structures, because I think structures should follow strategies and not the other way round. And Malta is perhaps sometimes exactly the proof of this. I think in this process we could need a little bit more of structure, exactly also to make it more visible. And when I think about strategies and structures, then the strategy should be to increase the complexity of the process. And we reach a level where we are able to deal with this high complex asymmetric interdependence of the region. And I think this is really worth that there should be invested much more time and energy, thinking, perhaps also money than we did it before.

A second expectation and I think this is an address to everybody of us, that we can't – if we like it or not, more or less we don't like it – to put priorities. This is also a very banal remark, I know, because we normally forget the second part of the sentence. Setting priorities means setting at the same time post-priorities. And when I read the ministerial final document, I have some doubts and I have my problems. Everything is a priority. Everything is emphasised – only one point in the second basket, for example, there are 11 lines emphasising, increasing – we should do, we are putting priority on – this is simply not possible. And not only because it's an asymmetric interdependence procedure, it is no way possible. And I think, I don't have to tell you that everybody has to do with everything even in life. I can't spend

it twice or three times, I can only spend it once. And then I have to decide what I do with this. We stop cheating ourselves in giving the impression that we can do everything. And this is perhaps also to address all the people who are preparing this process, documents whatever. Please calm down, come a little bit down. A little bit less would be much more than to touch everything. I think the expectation must be that the three baskets remain – no doubt about that. But to prioritise the baskets, what should be done first. In my view it's clear. It's the second basket, the economic basket. Because through economic integration we will have political integration. At least the condition for it politically, not an automatism, but at least a condition for a political integration because it is Charta and all these things can't work due to that what I said before, in addition to what you as a team are researching on it. And within that, let's define a few, but visible and measurable steps that could be done quite quick. The process as such and its priorities by the way leads all to the more flexibility – it is for the moment a very static approach. Due to this – it's one big sausage you know. You don't know what's the beginning and the end. And in between you don't see peaks, you don't see anything going up. It's just one big large sausage full of a lot of good ideas, but without anybody believing that this way it can be realised. And that in the end of the day it has to do with the credibility of the process as such. If you prioritise everything, I think we are not very credible.

So, a third expectation needs to be addressed to the South partner states. I think we should really and this is not, it's also not very new. We should really start to do something in the field of making more and a better use of the intraregional cooperation and then addressing the member side, that we reinforce and strengthen our cooperation. I think this is a very important expectation. Especially in the context of Barcelona, because the thinking of them and us as I labelled it a little bit short, I'm sure, it is not taking into consideration the whole complexity. We are too passive in waiting until something is falling down like manna from heaven. I mean manna in Brussels is mostly in the form of money on our desert island or whatever it is. I think we should instead of complaining, that we and I quote here only my own country, I'm not responsible for all the others. But that we say, we are a beautiful island, there is a lot of sun with blue sky but nothing else. It's

completely wrong. We have at least our rain, we have our creativity, we have a lot of things more. Instead of sitting there complaining how poor we are. I mean also that very much shortened, I fully agree. But I think there should be done an effort much, much more which would instead of just declamating we need reinforcement of the Barcelona process. We can't decree the reinforcement of the Barcelona process. It's not possible. We can just make it work, that's all. And as I said, we have to make it work. The Barcelona process as such is not existing. It is existing through our commitment, through our work. And we have to do it. We can't delegate it. There are possibilities which are not yet explored. All in all, again for me or for our side, important is that we on the way of a stereotype thing of a monolithic clear, well-defined I wouldn't say block, but region-area, which is clearly defined, which has everything more that we come to a more different, specially this expression taking into consideration, this asymmetric, I think is much more interesting than only complex, this asymmetric really describes the process situation and therefore the solutions for a lot of problems we are facing and that we are perhaps underestimating the potential of the problems.

*Christian Sterzing*

## **Germany and the Barcelona-Process – Setting Priorities**

I would like to talk a little bit about the perception of this Barcelona process in Germany and answer may-be the question: What did we learn of these experiences with five years of the Barcelona process? I think the euphoria about the Barcelona process has vanished. We have heard about the great expectations, the hopes, the ambitions and now, Marseille was a chance to sum up some kind of conclusion to see what has happened, what didn't happen. I think the Commission has listed all the shortcomings, the deficits of the Barcelona process in the last five years in the report of September 2000. And I don't want to repeat them. But I think looking at the process in a more realistic way, does not have to be a euphemism for being very disappointed. I think looking in a more realistic way, means also that we have learnt very much in this process. And I think this in general opens new possibilities to talk about the future and to talk about new priorities in this process.

First of all, let me mention that in Germany – and when I'm talking about Germany, I mean the political class right now – in Germany the perception of the Mediterranean region has changed during the last years. We have a single market since a few year. And many people realise that Germany lies at the banks of the Mediterranean sea in a way. The border between Germany and Africa is not the border between Austria and Germany. It's the border of Spain. And I think that there is a perception of Germany within a common market and that the regions outside of the EU come closer to us. And I think it is very important to realise that the awareness of many in

Germany have changed during the last years. And we are very much involved in the accession process, in the expansion of the EU to the central Eastern country and because of our geo-political situation in Europe this has a certain priority. But the political class at least in Germany has realised that we as Germans have to care about Mediterranean problems as well. And we can't just say: Well, this is the job of the Southern EU member states. We care about Poland and Czechoslovakia, Hungary and let the French and Spanish care about the non-EU Mediterranean states. So this is a learning process which of course is not at an end, but I think it's a growing sensitivity, a growing interest in problems of the Mediterranean region, and there is a growing readiness to get involved in problems of the Mediterranean region. So the Mediterranean region is more than a touristic region for more and more people in Germany. The perception has changed in a way, I think, in the second point that for many people in Germany the perception of a Mediterranean region didn't exist. There were just a lot of different states. And I think there is a growing awareness in Germany of the Mediterranean countries as a region. This doesn't mean that we are not aware of the differences of the different problems of the countries. But I think we really have a inventive approach of the Barcelona process is the regional approach, coming from the knowledge that the cooperation just on a bilateral level doesn't solve the central problems of the future and that we do have to come to a regional approach. And this doesn't mean that we perceive the region just as a monolithic body, but that we discover a common interest in this region. In the consequence I think this means that many people who realise the common approach to solve these problems, not ignoring the individual problems of each country. But bilateral cooperation is not enough to tackle all the problems to solve all the challenges.

The third point I want to mention that in my view many people realised the complexity of the region. In many ways there was a certain understanding of problems for example Algeria had or Lebanon had, but to create an area of stability, of stability of peace, prosperity means an end to the single issue policy and single issue outlook countries and the complex nature of the region and the interdependence on the problems creates the need for a multi-dimensional, multi-level approach. This I think doesn't neglect the fact that

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the Barcelona process is a very asymmetric partnership. But I think the experience of the Barcelona process corresponds with a lot of experiences, especially the Europeans have made during the last decade with regional approaches, for example the Balkan Stability Pact in a way similar regional approach tackle certain problems, the cooperation through the candidate countries for the EU for a way the similar process we're dealing with countries or a region in a multilateral way. And I think these experiences have created a new political culture, multilateralism and international cooperation.

One of the lessons to be drawn so far, I think, nevertheless, what we know of the shortcomings so far of the Barcelona process of the European Mediterranean partnership, I think this is not a good basis. We have to develop and we have to support this general approach, regional approach. Let me just point out, let me say, priorities I think should be important for the future.

First of all, the economic cooperation. I think most of us know that the economic cooperation between the Southern participants of the Mediterranean partnership is still pretty poor. After the era of free trade association is at the beginning. But I think this points to a very central issue. That the regional cooperation has to be supported and I think this is very important because this is a way, one way of fighting the asymmetry of the partnership in general. So I think within the economic developments of globalisation we will come to the point where the European Union should try to initiate a more regional cooperation. This should be one of the priorities. In a way I would like to say that I don't think this can be done so much by foreign investments because of many reasons, but a central point will be to repatriate the existing local or regional capital to initiate a new process of regional cooperation. Because the pressure will be put on the countries on the economic structures of these countries. This will create a new pressure to come to economic reform, to come to more mobilisation and to get a more competitive economic structure. So there will be different points of pressure and I think the Barcelona process should stress the need of creating more regional cooperation.

The second point I would like to make about the progress or let's say, the lack of progress on human rights' issues. You all know that this is one of the issues of the Barcelona process. As I can see there is no, most of the partners are aware of the fact that in this field nothing very much happened during the last five years. The rule of law, democracy, human rights – this is a private, important matter because I think intensifying the efforts to create the awareness in the Southern countries of the centrality of these issues will help in quite a few other fields of cooperation. So I think the EU should make it clear that this willing is ready to put a priority on this, for then the progress in this field will be a key for development in many other fields, especially the political but also the economic field. I think the rule of law, democracy is a central element of political and economic stability in the long run.

The third point is the problem of the domestic political structure. They have to face a lot of authoritarian and anti-democratic regimes. There is still the underlying contradiction of the partnership that the political and economic cooperation being successful would endanger the power and the influence of the political elites in many of the countries. It is important to realise that in the region we see a change of generation. Many of the old leaders are already gone or are still in power for so many years, the change probably will be accepted soon. So I think this is a chance for political change in the region because this, as far as we can see, for a few of the countries opens the possibility of an evolutionary change to more democracy, to more rule of law.

The fourth point: new Mediterranean partnership has been mainly a dialogue on the governmental level. I think this is a very important fact to note that the level of civil society – you can read about it in all papers, about the Barcelona process, but in reality, a dialogue on this level is just starting. And talking about the development of civil society in the countries doesn't mean only to intensify the dialogue between the classical type of NGOs, means intensifying the dialogue on the economic level as well, the trade union as far as they exist, or other associations because I think we have to see this in several parts of a changing society. And I think it is very important to put more emphasis on this field.



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In the end I would like to mention of course the peace process. Of course it is a major stumbling block for a cooperation. It was for the last years. Nevertheless, it was the Barcelona process which still over the years made it possible for the partners of the conflict to meet. So I think we still have to stick to the concept that regional cooperation within the Barcelona process is a chance of cooperation beyond the conflict. But this is not the common view. But I think the EU has to stress the fact that there are so many common problems but also common interests in the region that we have to do everything to initiate and support of the existing regional cooperation, at least the dialogue. The peace process of course is essential. We want to have progress in the way to economic stability and prosperity and without having some kind of final status agreement within the conflicting partners. But of course a central question of the European Union is: Whether there is willing and readiness to be more active in this field? As far as I can see, the EU is not willing to get more involved. Though of course the situation is very dramatic, and the global situation has changed. But this I think would be a central point for the future of the Barcelona process that the EU is willing to be more active, to give initiatives in this field. This I think is not only a matter of European interests, but also a matter of European responsibility for the whole region.

So of course I mentioned a few of the problems and they are big problems. There are a lot of challenges that have to be met, that have to be tackled, but despite all the criticism of the Barcelona process, despite all the shortcomings we have talked about during the last months, especially around the summit of Marseille. I think there are of course still a lot of risks, but there a also a lot of changes, chances and I think it is a matter of our political readiness and willingness to take the chance.



*Roderick Pace*

## **The Mediterranean Enlargement of the European Union and Its Effect on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership**

From its very beginning the European Union has had a strong interest in the maintenance of peace, stability and good neighbourly relations in the Mediterranean region. And for good reason too: many of the member states of the EU have a long Mediterranean coast line (France, Greece, Italy and Spain) as well as long-standing historic ties with the countries of the Mediterranean region. The region is an important outlet for EU exports particularly not least for the northern member states.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the Mediterranean region has developed into a strategically important conduit for the supply of a substantial part of the Union's oil and petroleum needs as well as a major world maritime highway for the carriage of goods and oil.<sup>2</sup> Environmental degradation has a direct bearing on all states of region, not least

- 1 In 1999, exports by the EU 15 to the Mediterranean Basin countries amounted to 87.8 billion Euros (11.6%) of total extra-EU exports of the EU, while imports amounted to 63 billion Euros (8.2%) of all extra-EU imports. In 1999, the main EU exporters to the Mediterranean Basin countries were Germany - 22%, France 20% and Italy 18%. Source: Eurostatistics, *Data for Short-Term Economic Analysis*. Theme 1, General Statistics, (Monthly), European Commission.
- 2 It is estimated that 30% of total merchant shipping in the world and 20% of oil shipping cross the Mediterranean each year. See, "*State and Pressures of the Marine Coastal Mediterranean Environment*", European Environment Agency and UNEP, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1999, pages 66-70.

among them the key EU member states.<sup>3</sup> A serious maritime disaster in this comparatively narrow sea<sup>4</sup> could have immediate negative economic effects on all states particularly those that have been expanding their income and employment from tourism. On the other hand, the expansion of the tourist sector is also increasing the environmental pressures in the region.<sup>5</sup> Sluggish economic growth when combined with rapid demographic growth as in some of the key southern littoral countries could also increase migratory pressures on Europe. In sum, negative developments in the Mediterranean region do not only affect the states of the region themselves, but they can also spillover onto the Union itself, sometimes with a knock on effect as well. This fact has long been recognised by the Union.

The Union's response has been a series of policies, beginning with the Global Mediterranean Policy of the early 1970s and culminating in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the so-called Barcelona Process, which began in 1995, in which the EU, acting as a civilian power, has sought to help stabilise the region. These policies have periodically been criticised for being inadequate. Their main aim is undoubtedly the Union's own interests. However, a broad assessment of the effects on the Mediterranean Basin countries reveals that indeed the policy has been instrumental in at least preserving the traditional trade outlets and market access for the southern littoral states and with laying the foundations for newer forms of co-operation across the region. The positive effects of this overlaying cobweb of relations are already being felt and could possibly intensify in the

3 See for example the *Dobris Assessment* on the Mediterranean: Stanners D., and Bordeau P., (eds.) "*Europe's Environment: The Dobris Assessment*", European Environment Agency, Copenhagen, 1995, pages 116-121

4 On average there are 60 maritime accidents per annum in the Mediterranean region, with about 15 involving ships causing oil and chemical spills. [ibid., op.cit., UNEP and EEA 1999, page 66]. According to the second assessment of Europe's Environment, carried out by the European Environmental Agency, there are about 40 oil related sites in the Mediterranean region (pipeline terminals, refineries, off-shore platforms etc) and an estimated 0.55 and 0.15 billion tonnes of crude oil and petroleum products respectively are loaded and unloaded every year. See "*Europe's Environment: The Second Assessment*", European Environment Agency, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1998, page 220.

5 For a discussion of the environmental effects of tourism on the region, ibid., pages 49-52.

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future, if the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is more successful. Lastly, the effects of the EU's Mediterranean policies had best be judged by reference to the *anti-monde* situation of the absence of such policies. In other words, would the countries of the Mediterranean Basin have been better or worse off without the EU's intervention in the region, defective as the latter may be?

It is to the EU's credit that it has not been myopic to the need of constantly reviewing its Mediterranean policy. The 1972 Global Mediterranean Policy (GMP) was an attempt to bring some order under a global approach to the plethora of agreements that the Community had been concluding with the non-member states of the region since the Athens Association Agreement of 1961. Following nearly two decades of the GMP, the „new approach“ originally announced in 1989, attempted to review the Mediterranean policy in the light of the second EC enlargement that saw the inclusion of Greece, Spain and Portugal in the Community. This enlargement was perceived by the non-member states as having eroded their preferences in the EU. This review was accelerated by developments in central and eastern Europe and the Community's need to restore 'balance' in its external relations, so as not to appear to be tilting too much away from the Mediterranean region and towards its new found partners in the East. Finally, in September of this year, the European Commission published new proposals on how the Mediterranean Partnership could be strengthened in the coming years.<sup>6</sup>

Another interesting and related process is the EU enlargement and particularly the future accession of Cyprus and Malta, which can occur in the short-term, and in the longer run Turkey. From this point onwards, this paper focuses on the possible impact of the accession of Cyprus and Malta in the EU on the Mediterranean Partnership.

6 „Reinvigorating the Barcelona Process“, Com (00) 497 final, Brussels, 06/09/2000

## *Enlargement*

The EU's enlargement has an external and internal aspect. On the external front, the EU's major trading partners, including those of the Mediterranean Basin, stand to benefit from a larger single market operating on common rules as well as new investment and trading opportunities.<sup>7</sup> Provided, of course, that matching national policies are pursued which help partner countries realise the opportunities that open up. The accession of Cyprus and Malta in the EU also has an internal as well as an external dimension from the EU's stand point. Externally, their accession will further extend the EU's borders southwards in the region. Internally, the Mediterranean group within the EU - presently composed of five member states, namely Spain and Portugal (even if the latter has only an Atlantic coastline), France, Italy and Greece will increase to seven. However, although the number of EU Mediterranean countries will increase through the entry of Cyprus and Malta, the internal balance in the Union more towards central and eastern Europe. This should not necessarily give cause of concern. When due consideration is given to the growing interdependence of the various member-states of the Union, as well the broader interests of all member states, which are bound to intensify as economic integration deepens and widens, then it becomes more worthwhile to consider the EU as a single system where any change in one of the parts affects the whole and hence is in every member state's interest. The knock-on effect or shock waves across an integrated single system such as the EU has become, means that the Mediterranean for example, is not a region that should concern only the Mediterranean EU member states, in the same way as central and eastern Europe should not be the concern of the states of that sub-region only.<sup>8</sup> In addition, consideration must also be given to the fact that the Union is governed by common institutions where the formal equality of all member

7 European Commission, *Strategy Paper on Enlargement*, November 8, 2000.

8 It is axiomatic to think on the basis of integration theory that any serious disturbance in any one of these regions will be quickly transmitted to the whole of the system, while the adverse effects caused will depend of course on the magnitude of the impulse. By the same logic, the beneficial effects of the EU's enlargement stand to benefit all countries with strong links with the Union.

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all member states is not only accepted but enables them to participate in all the decisions that are on the agenda.

However, proximity will continue to play an important role no doubt (e.g. Germany taking the lead in central and eastern Europe, France, Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal in the Mediterranean region, Italy in the Balkans etc) in shaping the Union's policies towards third countries. Hence, the division of the EU member states into real or imaginary 'clubs' or caucuses remains useful for the purpose of analysis, though it must not be treated as a unique explanatory variable.

In light of the above discussion, the entry of Cyprus and Malta in the EU, may indeed strengthen the sensitivity of the Union towards the Mediterranean region. The cause of this increased sensitivity derives from two main aspects: the small size of the two prospective member states and the fact that they are only two wholly Mediterranean states with little other competing interests apart from the Mediterranean region. By virtue of their small size and limited resources, their attention and contribution in the decision-making institutions of the Union has to be more focused. This 'Mediterranean orientation' is best brought out by this comparison: while the larger European Mediterranean states have multiple foreign policy interests, apart from what is happening in the Mediterranean region (e.g. the larger EU member states are all in one way or the other involved simultaneously in developments in the Balkans, Central and eastern Europe and trans-Atlantic relations to mention a few) and which divide their attention in international relations, the main concerns of Cyprus and Malta and which flow mainly from their smallness and vulnerability, are more focused on the matters of immediate relevance to them, which begin in the Mediterranean region, if not the sub-region of the Mediterranean to which they belong.<sup>9</sup> Their small size and their sense of insularity, makes them more sensitive to whatever happens in the region than most other states.

9 The argument used here with respect to the European states can be used with equal force to the 'multiple' foreign policy interests of the Arab states of the region: e.g. Arab politics, African politics etc.

In addition, it must be emphasised that Cyprus and Malta are not only island states but also the only ones with no physical link with any of the larger continents (Europe, Africa or Asia) surrounding the Mediterranean. Hence their 'Mediterranean orientation' tends to be stronger (although they are not totally focused in this direction only). The attitude of the Mediterranean states could perhaps be illustrated by reference to Malta's first policy statement when it joined the Council of Europe in 1965. Addressing the Parliamentary Assembly in 1965, Malta's Prime Minister expressed it this way: "*Membership of the Council of Europe has been to my country like returning home after a long absence... Whilst a European country sharing a common culture, history and way of life, we naturally gravitate towards Europe, our geographical position makes us aware of the importance of North Africa, which shares, with six members of the Council, a common sea and which has much to contribute to the welfare of the area. We therefore would think of this aspect of European foreign policy could be given some more thought.*"<sup>10</sup> From that point onwards, Malta's foreign policy emphasis has varied from more to less intense preoccupation with the Mediterranean region.

Consider for example the two states' income from tourism, which amounts to around 20% of GDP in the case of Cyprus and 22% of GDP in the case of Malta. A serious political disturbance in the region and its environs or a maritime ecological disaster close to their coasts, could negatively affect their economic well-being. The outbreak of the Gulf War in 1990-91 has supplied ample evidence of how travel and trade in and across the region could be negatively affected by a serious disturbance, even on the region's periphery.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, while every Mediterranean Basin country reaps

10 *Malta Today*, Department of Information, Malta, September 1965, pages 5-9.

11 *The Bulletin* published by the Central Bank of Cyprus in June 1991 (No 111, page 1), had this to say: "Economic activity during the first quarter of 1991 suffered a severe blow from the eruption of the Gulf war... Tourism and related activities, which are highly vulnerable under conditions of political and military turmoil, experienced substantial losses arising from a greatly reduced tourist inflow. The setback... was enhanced by an expansion of the trade deficit... (resulting) from reduced foreign demand for manufactured goods, particularly in the Arab countries and the Middle East..."



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economic dividends from peace and stability, small and economically 'open' countries such as Cyprus and Malta stand to gain more and risk losing most in the event of turmoil. Indeed the independence of small and weak states tends to be most at risk in times of conflict.

However, being small states, both Cyprus and Malta have a different approach to their Mediterranean agenda than the larger countries. The independence and identity of small states is probably more at risk in an anarchical international or regional states system, and particularly in times of war, than in a "rule-based" one. That is why, small states such as Cyprus and Malta are more inclined than larger states to support and uphold international organisations and to act through them in concert with others. Indeed, both countries have placed special importance on international organisations and multilateral negotiations where they have initiated their most notable foreign policy actions since their independence. The Euro-Mediterranean partnership is a rule-based international regime that suits these two countries' aims and methods in the region to near perfection: the partnership facilitates the achievement of more open trade, eventually a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area, it strengthens the links of interdependence among the region's states, it gives both Cyprus and Malta a freer access to the North African and Near Eastern markets, it provides a political forum for the discussion of some key regional political issues, strengthens confidence-building measures and multiplies the horizontal and vertical links of co-operation across the region and keeps both sides of the Mediterranean Basin positively engaged in search of common solutions. In the last analysis the partnership is a factor of stability for which there is no alternative substitute in sight. Furthermore, while the larger EU states can contemplate a national approach to the region in parallel with the EU's unified policy, Cyprus and Malta can only act effectively if they do so through a larger and more effective policy such as the EU's Euro-Mediterranean Pol-

*The Economic Survey January-September 1991* (Ministry of Economic Affairs Malta): (page 23) "One of the main factors behind this development (slow down in foreign demand) is the slowdown observed in the export of services, particularly tourism, associated with the adverse repercussions of the Gulf crisis on the economy during the first part of the year."

icy. As a result the importance that the two small states attach to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership will always tend to be different from that attached by the larger EU member states.

It is also likely that the importance and international standing of both Cyprus and Malta will increase in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership by virtue of their EU membership alone, and particularly by the fact that they become direct participants in the formulation and execution of the EU policies. What remains to be seen is how they will use this new found importance. Furthermore, by virtue of the fact that both island states are Commonwealth countries, they also have long standing relations with the countries linked to the EU by the Lom, Convention, apart from links with Canada, Australia, New Zealand and India to mention a few. These relations can also become useful to the European Union.

The question still remains, however, as to what possible role could Cyprus and Malta play in the Mediterranean region following enlargement. To begin with, it is worth observing that for a long time, Cyprus and Malta were members of the non-aligned Movement. Cyprus was one of the founding members of the Movement, Malta defined its neutrality, enshrined in the Constitution by reference to non-alignment. Although the non-aligned movement was neither a paradigm of unity (several of its members went to war against one another) nor of impeccable correct international behaviour, Kissinger accused members of the movement of exploiting East-West rivalry, nevertheless it served as a platform for dialogue between a number of countries, including practically all those of the southern Mediterranean littoral. The small size of Cyprus and Malta, coupled with their past involvement in the non-aligned Movement and the fact that they neither have the means to project power (they do not present a 'security dilemma' to their neighbours) nor broader ambitions, makes them ideal for the role of political 'brokers' in the region. The two countries have already had the opportunity to play this role during the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe together with the other members of the group of European Neutral and Non-aligned countries (N + N). As EU members Malta and Cyprus will be represented in the EU decision-making institutions while enjoying at the same time the trust of their neighbours.

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This does not mean that Malta and Cyprus will become the only diplomatic bridges between the southern and northern shores of the Mediterranean Basin. Cyprus and Malta will still lack the means, diplomatic resources and prestige to make meaningful interventions in major problems (such as the Middle East, Algeria etc..) But their role could become useful in the event of lesser problems that appear difficult to resolve and in lobbying inside the EU institutions in favour of Mediterranean initiatives by the EU. Taking their CSCE experience as a starting point, Cyprus and Malta could perhaps play the role of messengers, intermediaries, „mellowers“, initiators of third solutions, providers of a constructive push in times of stalemate and providers of good offices.<sup>12</sup> A lot will also depend on their role in the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU (CFSP) and the level of prestige they manage to build up in this EU pillar. Both applicant states claim to be ready to take on the CFSP acquis. Participation in the so called Petersberg tasks which are consonant with the preferred policies of neutral and non-aligned states will also increase their ability to play the roles described above. However, as long as they remain out of the EU, they can never muster the importance in international affairs or in the EU institutions themselves to be in a position to play such a role.

### ***Conclusion***

The accession of Cyprus and Malta in the EU does not threaten the Union with insurmountable problems and nor is it likely to negatively affect the EU's partners in the Mediterranean region. Their entry will also increase the Mediterranean group of states in the Union, but does not threaten the overall balance of the Union. As small states they may be regarded as helpless in advancing their international agenda. However, they also possess strengths which derive from their smallness. Hence, their stronger focus on their immediate environment, the Mediterranean, and a limited foreign relations agenda, the lack of broader distractions, coupled with their friendly

12 This is the role that the N+N group played in the CSCE according to Anton Bebler in „The NN Group in the New European Security Architecture“, *The International Spectator*, IAI, Rome, Volume XXVII, No 1, January-March, 1992, page 72.

relations with neighbouring countries, the fact that both applicants have a recent colonial experience (having suffered hegemony, not exercised it) which they share with their neighbours, their experience in the non-aligned movement and the experience of their participation in the CSCE, all help them to take on a very positive role in the EU and in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It may also be argued convincingly, that Cypriot and Maltese EU membership will benefit more the southern Mediterranean non-member states in dealing with the EU, than if the two small applicant island states stay out. The dynamics of the next Mediterranean enlargement of the EU to include Cyprus and Malta exhibit a few notable advantages as argued in this paper that are significant, despite the small size of these applicants.

*Mark A. Heller*

## **Israel and the Barcelona-Process**

In addressing Israel's approach to the Barcelona Process, two preliminary remarks are useful. The first is that public awareness of the process is very low. It is fair to suggest that most Israelis, even those who do take an interest in current affairs, do not know of its existence. It is certainly the case that very few know about the Marseilles meeting. Interest and concern are confined to a small group of people working in the government, in academia and NGOs, and in the business sector. As a result, the following comments are basically a distillation of conversations with these kinds of people and of the occasional commentary that leaks into the media, almost never on the front page.

A second preamble that may-be helpful in setting the context refers to the circumstances in which Barcelona was born. That happened about one month after the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995. Despite the clouds already hanging over people's heads, there was still some belief that things in Israel's part of the world were generally moving in positive directions. At the outset, there was therefore a hopeful, even enthusiastic approach to this experiment with respect to anticipated developments on both sides of the Mediterranean.

Concerning the South, the expectation was that the Barcelona process would act as a kind of a supplement or reinforcement to the greater momentum towards regional cooperation that was also manifested at the time in the ongoing multilateral negotiations connected with the Madrid peace process. In fact, by that time, i.e., at the end of 1995, many of these multilaterals were limping; one of them – the Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) Working Group had already been suspended. The hope

rity (ACRS) Working Group had already been suspended. The hope existed that Barcelona could come along and partially fill the gap that was opening up because of the fact that the multilaterals were not proceeding as quickly or as productively as people had expected. Besides, there was general identification with the objectives that were defined in the baskets of the declaration: the political and security partnership, the economic and financial partnership, and the partnership in social, cultural and human affairs. Not that Israel anticipated any direct economic benefit from the partnership. Instead, it hoped this mechanism or structure would stimulate greater inter-action between the partners and promote some kind of normalisation of relations, in the economic sphere as well as in a host of confidence- and security-building measures. Most importantly, there was hope that Barcelona would constitute an explicit acknowledgement by all the partners that there could be cooperation for mutual benefit on issues of common interest, not as a substitute for progress in the bilateral peace negotiations, but not conditional on it, either.

As far as the view of the North side of the Mediterranean was concerned, Barcelona was also viewed positively, in the sense that it seemed to signal a more inclusive European approach than had been pursued hitherto. In other words, it seemed to emerge as a replacement for previous Mediterranean-directed European initiatives -- the Euro-Arab Dialogue, the 5 + 5, or other kinds of multilateral institutions or structures from which Israel had been obviously excluded. In short, Barcelona was seen positively, not only because of its objectives *per se* were promising, but also because it might provide a vehicle for the deepening or improvement of relations between Israel and the EU.

Five years later, it can be said, at the risk of understatement, that attitudes are a bit less sanguine. If the expectations were as I have described them, then things haven't worked out as hoped. With respect to the South, the partnership is not seen as supporting the peace process (i.e., as a kind of replacement for the multilaterals); it's not even seen as proceeding independently of the peace process. Instead a situation has developed in which at least some of the Arab partners seem to interpret the Partnership, not as a mechanism for promoting common objectives for the mutual benefit of all

concerned, but simply as another kind of normalisation, which they view as a prize for Israeli compliance with their demands. And so over the course of time, a situation developed in which the Partnership is in some sense held hostage to the peace process. Now, that's obviously not the only obstacle. It could be argued that it's not even the most important obstacle. But it is certainly seen as the most salient problem from the perspective of Israel.

And looking North, the more commonly held Israeli view now is that Europe is fighting a rear guard battle against the intrusion of the peace process into Barcelona, but without much success and sometimes without much enthusiasm. As a result, the peace process dominates a lot of the proceedings of the Partnership. And in some cases, that has even spilled over into bilateral Israeli-EU relations. For example, there has been a very long delay in the entry into force of the Israel-EU Association Agreement. This is considered one of the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements, i.e., a function of Barcelona, although it was negotiated in 1995 before the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership came into being. Because ratification by some European members was held up, the Agreement didn't actually go into effect until June of 2000.

Another symptom is the lack of movement on another outstanding bilateral issue: the reference made in the Essen Declaration of 1994 to Israel's "*statut privilégié*" with respect to the EU. No content has been put into that, and one reason is that since the formation of the EMP, there is a concern that putting some meat on the bare bones of the Essen Declaration would make Israel resemble a European non-member country more than a Mediterranean non-member country, thereby provoking protests of other Mediterranean countries and adversely impacting the Partnership.

As a result of all these developments, we find ourselves in early 2001 facing a situation where Israel (like many other EMP members, though for different reasons) feels some loss of enthusiasm for, even disillusionment with, the original Barcelona idea. By and large, the approach of those people interested in Barcelona is still positive, in the sense that they continue to participate in the Partnership's activities and try to take an active role in

at least some of the things it is intended to do. But the major focus has shifted, and Israel's interest now rests on two approaches. The first is encourage the delinking of Partnership activities from the peace process, i.e., to encourage a situation in which Barcelona is not held hostage to the peace process. But if that proves impossible despite the efforts of Israel or anyone else, the alternative is to encourage the delinking of the bilateral EU-Israeli relationship from the progress of the EMP.



*Volker Perthes*

## **Making the Barcelona-Process more flexible**

The short answer to the question of flexibility is of course that the Barcelona process is not rigid – it is quite flexible already. The longer answer probably takes a little bit more time.

Today, the major problems of the Barcelona process may be described as a lack of enthusiasm which we have seen transpiring from basically all participant sides, and which is not so much a result of lack of flexibility but rather reflects disappointments on all sides. Very briefly, the partners in the South are disappointed that funds are scarce, that the measures to get disbursements are complicated which in the end makes funds even scarcer, and that individual EU states are blocking association agreements – like the one with Jordan that is still not ratified. And the EU-side in general is disappointed that the peace process is so much an obstacle to Barcelona. European policy makers always hoped that with the Arab-Israeli conflict could be de-linked from the Barcelona process. But as we have seen it is not possible to pretend that there was no linkage. The European side is also disappointed that security cooperation and the establishment of confidence and security-building measures has been dismal so far. And it is disappointed that any meaningful dialogue on human rights issues, on terrorism, on migration has yet to be established.

Seeing all these disappointments I think we should not forget that all the major moves – be it in European-Mediterranean partnership or in Europe's policies toward its Mediterranean environment – took place when optimism was high. Not only was Barcelona launched in 1995 when there was huge optimism on all sides with regard to the peace process. Also when we look at when the Common Strategy of the European Union from last summer,

summer 2000, it was again adopted in a phase when everybody thought: Well, now we are close to a breakthrough and there will be progress in the peace process.

In addition to that, optimism was generally displayed in at least three aspects: one, in the political security fields – the so-called first basket – European policies were driven by, as I tend to say as “functionalist”, optimism or “functionalist illusion” that remaining territorial conflicts could be overcome by regional cooperation in functional fields, such as industry, environment etc. And that meaningful cooperation could be established even before the peace process was brought to an end. Two, in the economic basket the basic optimism driving the partnership was that all the economic recipes from the international financial institutions regarding free trade and liberalization would work. It was clearly stated: Yes, it will work – only in some points there will be difficulties. And it only needs some funds from the European Union and some encouragement from the European Union to overcome the fears of penetration, the fears of marginalisations, of fears of dependency, which of course were there from the beginning amongst the Southern partner states. Three, in the social cultural field there was the hope that the process would have a major impact on democratisation, civil society empowerment etc.

So I guess in retrospect, or after 5 years, we could say that those who were a little bit more skeptic at that time were vindicated. And we have to be more realistic if we want to speak about flexibility or new measures. Realistic also in the sense and very much in the sense of realist school of international relations, mainly because regional relations in the Mediterranean and Middle East are closer to the realistic pattern than to the functionalist pattern which we, in Europe, were used to. The problems are obvious. Meaningful cooperation has not been achieved, at least not in the security field. There is strong resistance on the part of some Arab countries and societies to any cooperation that involves Israel, at least at this stage. There is strong resistance on the part of economic actors in the South and in the North against some of the elements that would have economic impacts or increase the participation of society. The participation of society as such is very limited. The process is not present in the minds of the people. The

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people in Israel or in the Arab states don't even know (in their majority) what the Barcelona process is. They know what Europe is. They may be aware of certain things which are part of this process but not necessarily of the Barcelona process as such.

There would be more to say of course as there are also obvious achievements. However, if we want to speak about more flexibility and new instruments or revising some of the instruments we might actually start from some of these problems I mentioned. And therefore I would sort of try to organise my ideas, which are only initial ideas, around these themes. The first point will be the question of multilateralism or: comprehensive multilateralism versus bilateral relations and subregional cooperation. The second point will be the subregional cooperation and decentralisation, and third there will be the question how to get society to participate in the process.

Regarding the first point, what should be considered is whether multilateralism in the Barcelona process actually has to be comprehensive all the time, and whether it is still the main approach we should follow. One of the central elements in the European approach to the Mediterranean Partnership has been to further comprehensive regional cooperation, particularly with Israel and Arab states involved at the same time. As a matter of fact, this insistence on comprehensive multilateralism, at times at least, made both Israelis and Arabs unhappy. The Israelis didn't like to be treated just as another Arab state, on the same footing like the Arabs in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. And the Arab states didn't want their relations to Europe to be conditioned on the peace process or on their preparedness to normalise relations with Israel. Probably for that reason we should give more weight in the future, at least for the time being, to what we sometimes call the "pluri-bilateral" aspects of the EU-partnership, i.e., cooperation between the EU on the one hand and individual partner states on the other as well as subregional cooperation, rather than insisting on a comprehensive multilateral approach which nobody really wants at the moment. Now this would certainly not be, it would explicitly not be to isolate Israel. Israel cannot but isolate itself. But this strategy would have the clear aim of strengthening the cooperative capacities of individual Arab states or, to put

it differently, to reduce existing asymmetries by not only strengthening the economic capacities of those states, but also their administrative, diplomatic and the political ones in order to make them more prepared for and to make it easier for them to think about comprehensive cooperation at a mature stage and also to reduce fears of Israeli domination.

On the instrumental level, we have to speak about dialogues, and how to broaden them. I will come back to that in the end. And we should probably try to find out whether individual Arab states or individual Arab institutions could be introduced into some EU activities, such as the Fifth Research and Development Framework Program. For the time being only Israel is part of it, which of course leads to complaints on the Arab side about special treatment for Israel. Of course there is some special treatment for Israel here. It is clear that there are huge technological divides between Israel and most of the Arab states. But I'm sure that we could find individual academic or scientific institutions from Arab states that could be associated to this framework agreement, not in all Arab states, but certainly in Egypt, Morocco and probably Lebanon.

Now my second point, the question of subregionalisation and decentralisation. When the Commission speaks of flexibility, and it does so in its own evaluation of the process, it usually puts the focus on subregional cooperation. And it's certainly true that any number of partner states should be encouraged to set up cooperative institutions between themselves in cooperation with individual EU states. The question which I would like to raise simply as a point of discussion is whether for subregional cooperative ventures there really should be a minimum number of states required, and whether it would always be necessary to have a EU state in such a subregional venture. Couldn't we also allow for funding from the MEDA programme, under the EMP, for cooperative ventures simply of two or three or four partner states without necessarily a EU state being directly involved. Perhaps we will have to differentiate here: in the political and security field, we will likely have to maintain the condition that for any cooperative venture all the twenty seven participant states should be invited or the seven should be invited at least lest the venture be seen as divisive by some. Also, such ventures should involve a combination of partner states and EU

and EU states. But I'm not sure whether the same goes for ventures in the economic field, the economic basket or the cultural basket. I'll give you one or two examples because I think it would make sense for the MEDA-fund or for the EU to support subregional cooperative ventures where we do not necessarily need an EU partner state to be involved. If, e.g., the Arab Maghreb Union, the UMA, was to be revived and they would build up a UMA free trade zone, couldn't that be something which could be counted as being among the subregional ventures in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership? Or if a number of two, three, four Arab states would say: Let's link our export offensives, or let's link our efforts to encourage exports to the EU, would we necessarily need a EU partner in here? Or if, as the Patten-Report states, one of the major successes in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership is the Social Fund for Development in Egypt – I don't know too much about the Social Fund for Development, but I'm taking it as granted, as it goes in the Patten-Report, that this is a major success of European support – if that is the case, wouldn't it be wise to have Egyptian experts trying to set up similar funds in Syria or in Morocco or in Tunisia for example. That probably would be cheaper, it could be funded through the MEDA-Program and it wouldn't necessarily need a EU partner involved and it would still be a subregional venture.

And another point closely related to the subregional issue, is the question of decentralisation. The suggestion from the Commission is clearly to be more supportive of institutions below the nation-state level. It is certainly expedient to explore further how municipalities and regional councils could be brought into the partnership. One other important phenomenon that should be studied are regional markets, markets at crossing points which do not only have an economic function, but very often also have a societal and a cultural one.

The European Parliament has demanded – and I think rightly so – that the EU-Programs that have been stopped in 1995, the decentralised programs such as Med-Urbs and Med-Media, Med-Campus be relaunched and I think it is necessary that they be relaunched. What happened was that because of corruption problems here in the EU, we prevent some people from the

chance to benefit from funds which have been considered very useful by basically all participants.

Decentralisation should certainly also pertain to bilateral relations between Europe on the one hand and a partner state on the other. When it comes to aid or financial support as outlined in the so-called National Indicative Programs for each partner country, the Commission Report made it clear that it wants to decentralise programs by basically entrusting the European delegations in the partner countries with everything. This may be wise and actually create more flexibility in a sense. At the same time I think we should ask whether it is actually wise to have all phases of a program being channelled through the same institution, which would mean to have the European delegation being in charge of the identification, of the selection, of the execution, of the evaluation and even of the follow-up of a certain program.

I'm not convinced by the suggestion of the Patten-Report ("Reinvigorating the Barcelona Process") where it says that in terms of aid, Europe should in future concentrate on, and I quote: "on a small number of strategic programs whereas small programs would no longer be funded". I think this would in the end go against the aim of having more flexibility and more involvement. I think that if the aim really is to reach a higher number of people and not only the usual suspects, the usual beneficiaries of the Euro-Med-Program – whom we basically all know, I mean, they meet in Bonn, they meet in Malta, they meet sometimes even in Arab, North-African countries, it's professional NGO-actors whom we know, plus the diplomats of course –, so if we want programs not only to reach the usual suspects, the EMP professionals from the North and South, then I think micro-projects would have special importance, and the EU-Commission should reconsider the idea to only fund strategic projects. Of course we all know that micro-projects are more labour intensive for those who launch them, who evaluate them, but I think many things could be outsourced here to less professional actors and NGOs in order to get more non-governmental actors on board. And I would even suggest that rather than doing away with micro-projects which is the tendency in the Commission now, a certain percentage of the National Indicative Programs should be reserved for micro projects.

My third point: How do we broaden participation in the Euro-Med partnership in general? Again I think the Commission is right in its report when it says, and I quote some things the Commission has actually quoted from the EuroMesCo network: A sense of common ownership has not yet been developed by all participants; we have to promote a sense of common ownership of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership at the societal level in the 27 countries. The number of persons involved in the Barcelona Process is very limited so far – it's a narrow elite of officials and societal actors. We cannot blame any particular side for this but we can state how it is and we can state reasons for the narrowness of participation. Partly of course it is caused by the structure of international relations in the Euro-Med relation, which are relations between states in the end. To some extent it is determined by the financing relations and the financing procedures of the European Union which makes it very, very difficult for small organisations to participate, because basically you have to finance projects in advance. You sometimes wait one year, two years until you get a positive financial decision and a contract by the European Commission. But actors, NGOs that are set up more or less spontaneously, cannot wait one or two or three years for a financial agreement or a financial contract and the actual financing from the European Commission. And partly of course the limits to participation are also a result of political structures in the partner countries, the main partner countries who don't want their citizens to participate in such activities that aren't under the control of the government themselves.

So what can we do to broaden participation? This is only a couple of unorganised ideas. I already mentioned the necessity to facilitate micro-projects. Furthermore I think we haven't made enough use of migrant communities from partner countries that live in our own countries. Migrant communities seen not in the sense of only being the object of discussion, as in "danger of migration" sort of arguments. But migrant communities as active agents who would often like to repatriate some of the skills they have developed while being migrants in European countries who could bring these skills back to their countries and be sort of translators of skills, of knowledge, of expertise. If we would make more use of migrant communities, we would probably also save some money on experts because many of these people

would be prepared to go back to their country not for an expert salary, but for a good European salary. So it would also be financially effective.

Another question that has to be tackled is one of the ideas which again have been developed in the EuroMesCo network – we are not claiming a copyright, but we are happy that the External-Relations Committee of the European Parliament has adopted it – is to create a special visa for all persons involved in the partnership activities so as to make it easier for someone who wants to participate in a conference like this or another “Barcelona-related” activity to get a direct and quick visa to come to Europe. It still is very difficult for participants from some countries.

There possibly also is a way – let me be trivial a little bit – to spread more knowledge about what the Euro-Mediterranean partnership is. We have to use the potential of popular culture which is not used by the partnership until now. I remember that when I was an early teen, a few decades ago or so, my idea of what Europe, what the European Community as it was called at the time was, was pretty much furthered by the so-called European Song Contest. It was a yearly event, certainly not very intellectual, and there were all these young people following it, and there was a Eurovision melody and things like that. So for someone who was in his early teens, for my generation, it contributed to create the idea of Europe. It’s very trivial, but when will we organize something like that in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership – a Euro-Med Song Festival? As we know that the popular culture from the North is consumed in the South anyway and now we are having popular culture from Algeria or from Turkey being consumed in Germany, why not making something like that a regular event? It doesn’t need more than one television station from every country participating. Israelis are participating in the European Contest anyway, Moroccans have been participating in one or two of these Song Festivals.

Now back from trivial things to politics. And this is my last point. I think we have to find a new format for what is called the “enhanced political dialogues” in the bilateral association agreements. Now since the name “enhanced political dialogues” is already taken, we might find a new name or a new concept for it. But the essential point is that these official dialogues as



foreseen under the association agreements tend to be rather sterile. A real discussion is not taking place which leads to the Foreign Minister of the partner country showing up but hardly a Foreign Minister of the EU countries showing up, which leads to more disappointment on the Southern side and makes the dialogue even more sterile and formal. So I think we need political dialogues, expressly political dialogues, with a broader involvement. I'm thinking of something like regular meetings on a yearly basis between Europe and individual partner countries which would be probably led by NGOs, by institutes like yours or others and involve policy-makers as well as journalists as well as people from cultural fields, academics of course, and officials to allow for a sort of behind-the-door, open, regular dialogue. And let us concentrate on younger people here in order to build the real strategic partnerships, create a community that is interested in those bilateral relations – truly bilateral relations between Europeans on the one hand and individual partner countries on the other.

To finish, I think before we actually discuss new instruments and discuss flexibility, we would probably have to ask ourselves very, very seriously on both sides of the Mediterranean whether we really want more than a free trade zone and economic aid. Maybe in the end we are all happy with a free trade zone and economic aid. It might only be a couple of academics like us who really think we would need much more than that: that we really should build a region, that we really should build trans-Mediterranean structures. Now if it is the case that the majority of the policy-makers and the societies only want free trade and aid, then of course we would say: Let's have a clear priority, and let's wait with the rest until there really is ripeness and enough willingness on all sides to go forward. Europeans often have doubts that our partners in the South want to build real trans-Mediterranean structures which includes confidence building and all that. We shouldn't ignore that the Southern partners, too, have real doubts: doubts about the European sincerity. Apparently the European Common Strategy which was adopted in June last year, was not even discussed or presented to the partner states in the Mediterranean region. At least this is the impression on the Southern side. And if this impression reflects reality, I really would say that the EU side was not so sincere regarding its cooperative spirit. Of course it is a EU

strategy and we don't need the partner states to approve of it or to be able to veto it. But if we are speaking so much about dialogues and transparency, it could at least have been presented in some way to the Southern partners. Because if you read the Common Strategy closely, you realize that in the end it contains a lot of paragraphs that state what the partner states should do. So if we have a strategy which says what the partner states should do, we should at least have discussed the text with them.

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**Center for European Integration Studies**

**Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn**

Walter-Flex-Straße 3  
D-53113 Bonn  
Germany

Tel.: +49-228-73-1880  
Fax: +49-228-73-1788  
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