

The Mediterranean dialogue - a transatlantic approach

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Arbeitspapier / working paper

Zur Verfügung gestellt in Kooperation mit / provided in cooperation with:

SSG Sozialwissenschaften, USB Köln

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Hauser, G. (2005). *The Mediterranean dialogue - a transatlantic approach*. (AIPA - Arbeitspapiere zur Internationalen Politik und Außenpolitik, 2/2005). Köln: Universität Köln, Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaftliche Fakultät, Forschungsinstitut für Politische Wissenschaft und Europäische Fragen Lehrstuhl für Internationale Politik und Außenpolitik. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-218430>

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AIPA 2/2005

Arbeitspapiere zur Internationalen Politik
und Außenpolitik

Gunther Hauser

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A Transatlantic Approach



Lehrstuhl für Internationale Politik
Universität zu Köln

ISSN 1611-0072

AIPA 2/2005

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ISSN 1611-0072

Herausgeber:

Lehrstuhl für Internationale Politik

Universität zu Köln, Gottfried-Keller-Str. 6, 50931 Köln

Druck:

Hausdruckerei der Universität zu Köln

Redaktionelle Bearbeitung:

Sabine Janatschek

Köln 2005

ABSTRACT

One of the consequences of the EU expansion is the advancement of the Middle East and Mediterranean region to constitute the southern borders of the EU. Thus, the strategic importance of these regions to the EU has increased. A significance that has been strengthened by the special relationship that the two regions (the EU and the Gulf) share with international terrorism: one is the target of terrorist attacks and the other the birth and breeding place of terrorists. The fact that these areas (the Middle East and North Africa) are predominantly Moslem, a religion that the terrorists claim to be fighting for, considerably increases their strategic relevance to the Western World. In recognition of this fact, Western international institutions – the EU, the OSCE, NATO and even the USA – have respectively initiated and intensified dialogues with the political leaders and international institutions of these Middle East and Mediterranean areas aimed at laying a solid foundation for political and economic developments in these areas, not only for peace, political stability and economic prosperity, but also as a sustainable counter offensive against terrorism. The following article traces the developments in the dialogues with these regions featuring a series of international institutions that have thus evolved in this process and calls for mutually reinforcing efforts.

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The Mediterranean Dialogue – A Transatlantic Approach

1 The significance of the Mediterranean Dialogue process for Europe

When the Iron Curtain fell and the Soviet systems in Europe collapsed, both the EU and NATO took steps to integrate the new transformation states in Central and Eastern Europe as well as successor states of the former Soviet Union into the Euro-Atlantic stabilisation process. During the early 1990s, the EU, NATO, and the OSCE respectively initiated and subsequently enhanced the Mediterranean Dialogue processes as integral parts of their cooperative approaches to security. These processes are based on the recognition that security in Europe is closely linked with security and stability in the broader Mediterranean region.

After the Cold War, the Mediterranean region entered the centre of the attention of European institutions as a region of security concern. About eight million

immigrants from the Maghreb countries¹ live in the EU member states; mainly in Belgium, France, Italy, and Spain. Twenty-two states comprising 350 million inhabitants with at least three monotheist religions on three continents border the Mediterranean Sea. This region is characterised by manifold religious, cultural and economic pluralisms. Economically, this region is of enormous relevance. The Suez Canal links the Mediterranean with the Red Sea and the Straits of Gibraltar link the Mediterranean with the Atlantic Ocean. About thirty percent of all vessels worldwide cruise this area.

The Mediterranean region belongs to the most important oil regions of the world. Industrial nations like Japan import ninety percent of their oil from this region. Egypt is the most relevant producer of gas which it also exports to Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Huge oil and gas fields that are exploited by international enterprises are located in Libya. Some 65 percent of the oil and gas consumed in Western Europe pass through the Mediterranean.² In particular, Southern Mediterranean states are of geostrategic significance to Europe – with special reference to security, environment, natural resources and migration: “The Mediterranean region is of strategic importance to the EU. A prosperous, democratic, stable and secure region, with an open perspective towards Europe, is in the best interests of the EU and Europe as a whole.”³ In the region of Middle East and North Africa (MENA), security issues relate to terrorism, economic disparities, demographic imbalances, the potential for social and political instability, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In this region, too many old conflicts persist; from the crisis between Israel and the Palestinian Authority to the Cyprus and Western Sahara problems. However, there is no region that has a greater impact on European security than the region of MENA. The OSCE, EU and NATO have therefore been engaged in this broader Middle East region.

1 Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, and Tunisia.

2 Mohamed Kadry Said, “Assessing NATO’s Mediterranean Dialogue,” in: NATO Review, spring 2004.

3 Common Strategy of the European Council, 19th June, 2000, On the Mediterranean region (2000/458/CFSP), § 1.

2 The CSCE/OSCE Mediterranean Dialogue

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) – with headquarters in Vienna – is the largest regional security organisation in the world with 55 participating states from Europe, Central Asia and North America. The OSCE is active in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.⁴ Its approach to security is comprehensive and cooperative in dealing with security-related issues including arms control, preventive diplomacy, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, democratisation, election monitoring, as well as economic and environmental security.⁵ Decisions of OSCE member-states are based on consensus. Some OSCE states share historical, cultural, economic and political ties with countries in the Mediterranean region of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). This is the major reason why the 1975 CSCE Helsinki Final Act states that “security in Europe is to be considered in the broader context of world security and is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean as a whole, and that accordingly the process of improving security should not be confined to Europe but should extend to other parts of the world, and in particular to the Mediterranean area.” At subsequent CSCE meetings, representatives of MENA countries were invited to present their standpoints on developments in the Mediterranean. Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia are currently partner countries of the OSCE Mediterranean process, known as the *Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation* (MPCs). Representatives of Lebanon, Libya and from Syria are also embedded in this dialogue process. These meetings take place at the ambassadors’ level. A number of specific expert meetings were also held on economic, environmental, scientific, and cultural issues. In 1990 and 1992, the CSCE participating states declared in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe to strengthen the integration of Mediterranean countries of North

4 OSCE General Information, <http://www.osce.org/general/>, 12th February, 2005.

5 Ibid.

Africa and the Middle East into the CSCE stability process. Since the 1994 Budapest CSCE Summit⁶, regular meetings have been initiated between the OSCE and the Mediterranean partners within a framework known as the *Contact Group*. Since 1995, annual Mediterranean Seminars have been organised by OSCE dealing with challenges of the Mediterranean, e.g. terrorism, poverty, youth unemployment, desertification, democracy and the rule of law as well as the freedom of the media. The MPCs are also invited to relevant meetings in all the three dimensions of the OSCE, viz, the politico-military, the economic and the human. In June 1998, the Permanent Council adopted a resolution that made provisions for the representatives of the MPCs to make short-term visits to the OSCE Missions on a case-by-case basis. Some of the MPCs have also participated in election monitoring missions organised by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Through this dialogue, OSCE has been in contact with organisations that have links with the Mediterranean partners like the African Union, the Arab League or the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). For example, the OSCE Secretary General, Ján Kubis was invited to the 2003 OIC Summit at Kuala Lumpur. Furthermore, OSCE is closely coordinating Mediterranean dialogue with NATO and the EU, creating a security network to promote "security and cooperation in the region through a comprehensive process of enhanced political dialogue, economic cooperation and intercultural exchanges, as well as through the strengthening of democratic institutions and respect for human rights and the rule of law."⁷ Additionally, under the framework of the *Platform for Cooperative Security* adopted at the November 1999 Istanbul meeting of OSCE Heads of State and Government, the OSCE is "to strengthen cooperation between those organisations and institutions concerned with the promotion of comprehensive security within the OSCE area." In autumn 2003, the OSCE Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum mechanism was inaugurated in Rome as an input of the Parliamentary Assembly towards the

6 Following the 1994 Budapest CSCE Summit conclusions, the CSCE was transformed into OSCE in 1995.

7 "Resolution on the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension," Rotterdam Declaration of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Resolutions adopted during the Twelfth Annual Session, Rotterdam, 5th-9th July, 2003.

promotion of the OSCE Mediterranean dimension in order to discuss issues related to security and stability in the Mediterranean.

3 The NATO Mediterranean Dialogue process

In the 1991 NATO Strategic Concept, NATO member states “also wish to maintain peaceful and non-adversarial relations with the countries in the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East.”⁸ Therefore, “the stability and peace of the countries on the southern periphery of Europe are important for the security of the Alliance, as the 1991 Gulf War has shown. This is all the more so because of the build-up of military power and the proliferation of weapons technologies in the area, including weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles capable of reaching the territory of some member states of the Alliance.”⁹

Since 1991, NATO has been enhancing the dialogue with Southern Mediterranean countries as stated in the NATO Athens and Istanbul conclusions of 10th June, 1993 and 9th June, 1994.¹⁰ The primary goal was to achieve mutual confidence-building.¹¹ The NATO Foreign Ministers concluded on 1st December, 1994 to “direct the Council in Permanent Session to continue to review the situation, to develop the details of the proposed dialogue and to initiate appropriate preliminary contacts.”¹² However in 1995, NATO initiated the non-permanent Mediterranean Dialogue with five Mediterranean partners: Egypt, Israel, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia. Later on in 1995, this dialogue process was extended to Jordan and Algeria during the first half of the year 2000.

8 North Atlantic Council – Heads of State and Government, S-1(91)85, § 12, Rome, 7th-8th November 1991.

9 Ibid.

10 North Atlantic Council – Foreign Ministers Meeting, M-NAC-1(93)38, Athens 10th June 1993, § 11, and North Atlantic Council – Foreign Ministers Meeting, M-NAC-1(94)46, Istanbul, 9th June 1994, § 29.

11 North Atlantic Council – Heads of State and Government, M-1(94)3, Brussels, 10th-11th January 1994, § 22.

12 North Atlantic Council – Foreign Ministers Meeting, M-NAC-2(94)116, Brussels, 1st December, 1994, § 19.

During the NATO Summit in Sintra/Portugal, foreign ministers decided on 29 May, 1997 “to recommend to our Heads of State and Government to formally establish under the authority of the Council a new committee having the overall responsibility for the Mediterranean Dialogue.”¹³ The meetings have been taking place on a “NATO member states + 1” and “NATO member states + 7” format. The *Mediterranean Cooperation Group* was launched by the NATO Heads of State and Government during their meeting in Madrid in July, 1997.¹⁴ Since 1997, an annual *Mediterranean Working Programme* has been established. It includes activities in the areas of information, civil emergency planning, science & environment, crisis management, defence policy & strategy, small arms and light weapons (SALW), global humanitarian mine action, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, as well as a *Mediterranean Dialogue Military Programme* (MDMP).¹⁵ Through participation in selected military exercises and related education and training activities, Mediterranean Dialogue countries could improve the ability of their forces to operate with those of the Alliance in contributing to NATO-led operations, consistent with the UN Charter.¹⁶ During the NATO Luxembourg Summit on 28th May, 1998, the foreign ministers “decided to designate NATO Contact Point Embassies in Mediterranean Dialogue countries to strengthen our relations with them. We welcome the progressive development of the different dimensions of the Dialogue and encourage partners in the Dialogue to take full advantage of all its possibilities, including the military dimension.”¹⁷ NATO has been focusing on the enhancement of military relations with the concerned states. Three dialogue partners – Egypt, Jordan and Morocco – did closely work with NATO during IFOR/SFOR peace-support operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Also troops from Jordan and Morocco are involved in the NATO-led KFOR operation in Kosovo for

13 North Atlantic Council – Foreign Ministers Meeting, M-NAC-1(97)65, Sintra, 29th May, 1997, § 6.

14 North Atlantic Council – Heads of State and Government Meeting, M-1(97)81, Madrid, 8th July, 1997, § 13.

15 NATO Mediterranean Dialogue Including an Inventory of Possible Areas of Cooperation, <http://www.nato.int/med-dial/upgrading.htm>, updated 2nd May, 2003.

16 Istanbul Co-operation Initiative, Policy document, <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2004/06-istanbul/docu-cooperation.htm>, 9th July, 2004. § 7b.

17 North Atlantic Council – Foreign Ministers, M-NAC-1(98)59, Luxembourg, 28th May 1998, § 8.

reconciliation in that province. KFOR currently comprises 17.000 soldiers. In June 2005, two Mediterranean Dialogue countries (Egypt and Israel) participated with troops in the field training exercise – *Cooperative Best Effort 2005* – in Ukraine. Israel participated as well in NATO's major submarine escape and rescue exercise *Sorbet Royal 2005* in Taranto, Italy. The Mediterranean partners also have the possibility to observe NATO manoeuvres. So the Mediterranean Dialogue became "an integral part of the Alliance's cooperative approach to security since security in the whole of Europe is closely linked to security and stability in the Mediterranean."¹⁸

The development of the NATO Dialogue process has been based upon five principles:

- The Dialogue is progressive in terms of participation and substance. This flexibility allows the number of Dialogue partners to grow and the content of the Dialogue to evolve over time.
- The Dialogue is primarily bilateral in structure. However, it also allows for multilateral meetings to take place on a regular basis.
- The Dialogue is non-discriminatory. All Mediterranean partners are offered the same basis for cooperation and discussion with NATO. Dialogue countries are free to choose the extent and intensity of their participation.
- The Dialogue is designed to complement and reinforce other international efforts to establish and enhance cooperation with Mediterranean countries. These include the EU's Barcelona Process and initiatives by other institutions such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).
- Activities within the Dialogue take place on a self-funding basis. However, there may be circumstances in which financial support by NATO can be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided that it could be accommodated within existing NATO budgets.¹⁹

18 North Atlantic Council – Heads of State and Government Meeting, Washington Summit Communiqué, NAC-S (99)64, Washington, 24th April 1999, § 29.

19 NATO Handbook Online, "The Opening Up of the Alliance. The Alliance's Mediterranean Dialogue," <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb0305.htm>.

In science issues, dialogue partners can contribute to meetings under the authority of the *NATO Committee of Science* as well as seminars and conferences sponsored by NATO. At the NATO School in Oberammergau/Germany, different courses are offered to Dialogue partners, e.g., in peacekeeping, civil emergency planning, arms control, responsibility of military personnel in the field of environmental protection and European security cooperation. In the framework of the *Cooperative Science and Technology Sub-Programme*, scientists and researchers from Dialogue countries are invited to cooperate in joint projects with their colleagues from NATO countries. Moreover, three Dialogue countries have acquired observer status in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly: Morocco and Israel in 1994, and Egypt in 1995.

Shortly after 9/11, NATO launched military operations in cooperation with Mediterranean partners. The Maritime operation *Active Endeavour* started in December 2001 in order to help deter terrorist activities in the Mediterranean Sea. NATO does not own any combat forces itself. It is not a transnational army; therefore it has to rely on the sovereign nations that make up NATO voluntarily placing their forces under NATO command.

15 out of the 19 of the 9/11 suicide hijackers came from Saudi-Arabia. This fact, coupled with the Afghan and Iraq military campaigns, has contributed to expanding the potential geographic space for security cooperation between NATO and Dialogue countries eastward. Since 2003, NATO has been engaged in peace operations in the broader Middle East. On 11th August, 2003, NATO took command of the 10,000 strong *International Security Assistance Force* (ISAF) in Afghanistan. There, NATO plays the principal role in providing security and the EU is playing a major role in financial assistance.

On 22nd June, 2004, the interim Iraqi Prime Minister Ilyad Allawi, in a letter sent to the NATO Secretary General, requested NATO support in training and other forms of technical assistance. This letter was the first formal contact between the Alliance and the interim Iraqi administration. It requested Alliance assistance in developing the country's security forces as well as other forms of technical assistance after the transfer

of power from the US-led coalition to Iraqi elected authorities on 28th June, 2004. At this time, NATO did not have a direct role in the international stabilisation force in Iraq. NATO has already been providing planning support to Poland when it took a leading role by commanding a multinational division in south-central Iraq in form of force generation, secure communications, logistics, movement coordination and intelligence.²⁰

The Iraq crisis caused significant tension within the transatlantic alliance. At the EU-U.S. Summit at Dromoland Castle, Ireland, on 26th June, 2004, U.S. President George W. Bush asked European allies to put disagreements over the war behind them and help the U.S. to rebuild Iraq. On this day, NATO ambassadors reached an initial agreement to respond positively to the request of the Iraqi Interim Government for assistance with the training of its security forces in accordance with U.N. Security Resolution 1546 (2004). As the NATO Secretary General emphasised, "Allies are united in their full support for the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Republic of Iraq and for strengthening of freedom, democracy, human rights, rule of law and security for all the Iraqi people."²¹ NATO is currently assisting with the training and equipment of Iraq's security forces, a mission that enjoys United Nations mandate. The training mission in Iraq is neither part of the coalition effort nor is it part of the related U.S.-led Operation Iraqi Freedom. Meanwhile, U.S. hopes for a larger NATO role in Iraq suffered a setback when Iraq war opponents led by France and Germany prevented the alliance from developing a wider role and refused to send their own troops even to the training mission in Iraq. However, NATO's role in Iraq has been limited to a small training mission in Baghdad and logistics support to a Polish-led force serving with the U.S. coalition. NATO aims to train about 1,000 senior Iraqi officers in the country per year, and about 500 outside Iraq, as well as providing a significant amount of military equipment.²² In September 2005, NATO stepped up its

20 Iraqi government requests assistance from NATO, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2004/06-june/e0622a.htm>, 22nd June, 2004.

21 Statement by the NATO Secretary General, PR/CP (2004)0105, 26th June, 2004.

22 "Iraqi Foreign Minister calls for continuing NATO support," <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/06-june/e0622a.htm>, 22nd June, 2005.

assistance to Iraq by establishing a NATO Training, Education and Doctrine Centre outside of Baghdad.

In the Middle East, there is a *time of change*: “A time when new ideas and policies are being generated in order to remove misunderstandings and foster cooperation.”²³ Through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) of June 2004, NATO has been searching for new ties with interested countries from the broader Middle East region, especially the *Gulf Cooperation Council* (GCC). By June 2005, four of the six GCC countries – Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – have joined the ICI, while Oman and Saudi Arabia have shown great interests in it. Through the ICI, there is a plan to elevate the Mediterranean Dialogue to a genuine partnership by promoting greater practical cooperation, enhancing the Dialogue’s political dimension, assisting in defence reform, military-to-military cooperation to achieve interoperability, cooperating in the field of border security, contributing to the fight against terrorism through information sharing and maritime cooperation, including the framework of *Operation Active Endeavour*.²⁴ Troops of participating countries could also be prepared for NATO-led peace support operations through the ICI. Within this framework, the UAE deployed troops to the NATO-led KFOR operation in Kosovo.

In late 2004, NATO approached Israel when the Israeli Chief of Defence Staff alongside counterparts from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia was invited to a joint NATO Chief of Defence Staff meeting on 5th December, 2004. During the meeting, the NATO Secretary General proposed to organise a NATO peacekeeping operation in Palestine to guarantee peace and stability – only if both Israel and Palestine agree, which should be in accordance with a future peace treaty with Palestine and/or Syria. The World Jewish Congress called on NATO to grant Israel “associate membership”. The WJC represents Jewish communities in nearly 100 countries. “An associate membership can have many different faces,” explained WJC

23 NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, “Secretary General’s speech in Jordan at the World Affairs Council,” Amman, 13th January, 2005.

24 “NATO elevates Mediterranean Dialogue to a genuine partnership, launches Istanbul Co-operation Initiative,” NATO Update, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2004/06-june/e0629d.htm> , 29th June 2004.

chairman Singer, an Israeli.²⁵ This is not intended to lead to a full membership, but “that would make Israel feel secure,” emphasised Singer: “If Israel became secure in its approach, it would change the entire mix with regard to Israelis taking chances for peace, and the rest of the Arab world would look at Israel differently.”²⁶ Israel could therefore help to bridge a gap between European and Middle East nations: “NATO itself has changed. In that function Israel could play a major role tying the Middle East and Europe together,” explained Singer. A NATO official said that NATO did not have a provision for “associate membership”. This kind of membership does not exist in the NATO framework. The Israeli ambassador to Germany, Shimon Stein, announced the Israeli intention to enhance relations with NATO and the EU, but no decision about membership. Israel would prefer the model of “variable geometry”, not offering the “same menu for all states concerned”.²⁷ Stein also could imagine a model for Israel that is similar to NATO PfP partner Finland or Sweden. If Israel has reached a similar status, Israel could discuss full NATO membership. But this is a long way, explained Stein.

The broader Middle East has been a pivotal region for stability and security in the world. However, the EU, the USA, NATO, and the OSCE focus their strategic interests and coordinate their assets in stabilising this trouble spot.

4 The EU Mediterranean Dialogue process

In November 1995, fifteen EU member states, eleven non-member Mediterranean countries – Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey – and the Palestinian Authority signed the Barcelona Declaration. Libya was accorded an observer status at certain meetings in 1999. On 1st May, 2004,

25 “WJC to call on NATO to grant Israel ‘associate membership’,” HAARETZ.com, 9th January, 2005, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/524422.htm>.

26 Ibid.

27 Interview mit Botschafter Schimon Stein: „Israel sucht Nähe zu NATO und EU,“ in: Handelsblatt.com, 28th January, 2005, <http://www.handelsblatt.com>.

Cyprus and Malta joined the EU. The Barcelona Declaration spelt out the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and determines a wide framework of political, economic and social relations between EU states and partner nations of the Southern Mediterranean. This Declaration outlines three major chapters:

- A political and security partnership aimed at creating a common area of peace and stability (*Political and Security Chapter*);
- an economic and financial partnership designed to gradually establish a common area of prosperity and free trade (*Economic and Financial Chapter*); and
- a social, cultural and human partnership to increase exchanges between the civil societies of the countries involved (*Social, Cultural and Human Chapter*).

In order to create a peaceful environment at the southern and south-eastern borders of Europe, the EU promotes cooperation with Mediterranean partners to “develop good neighbourly relations; improve prosperity; eliminate poverty; promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, good governance and the rule of law; promote cultural and religious tolerance, and develop cooperation with civil society, including NGOs.”²⁸

This EU Mediterranean Dialogue process is compatible with the NATO Mediterranean Dialogue.²⁹ The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was established during the Barcelona conference (27th-28th November 1995) and aims at creating a zone of stability and economic and social welfare in the Mediterranean (*Barcelona Process*). The partnership was similar to that established with central and eastern European countries, but without any perspective of EU or NATO membership.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership replaced the 1970s *Cooperation Agreements* through more far-reaching *Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements* that the EU negotiated with the Mediterranean partner nations individually. The core elements of these association agreements include expanding the political dialogue, promoting regional cooperation among Mediterranean countries and establishing a Euro-

28 Common Strategy of the European Council of 19th June, 2000 on the Mediterranean region (2000/458/CFSP), § 3.

29 North Atlantic Council – Foreign Ministers, M-NAC-2(95)118, Brussels, 5th December, 1995, § 12.

Mediterranean free trade zone. The respect for human rights and democratic principles are an essential element of the agreements and the architecture of each agreement is such as to enable it to be suspended in the event of major human rights violations. Free trade is to be established in accordance with WTO rules over a transitional period which may last up to twelve years as regards tariff dismantling by the partner nations. Trade in agricultural products is to be gradually liberalised, including the gradual liberalisation of tariffs in services according to the provisions of GATS (*General Agreement on Tariffs in Services*). The Agreements provide for EU financial assistance to the partners (except Cyprus, Israel and Malta). For the implementation of Association Agreements, two common institutions were established: the *Association Council* (Ministerial) and the *Association Committee* (Senior Official level).

The agreements with Tunisia of 17th July, 1995, Israel of 20th November, 1995, Jordan of 24th November, 1997, Morocco of 26th February, 1998, Egypt of 25th June, 2001, Algeria of 22nd April, 2002, Lebanon of 17th June, 2002 and the interim agreement with the Palestinian Authority of 24th February, 1997, have already taken effect. Negotiations with Syria for signing an association agreement began in May, 1998, and materialised on 19th October, 2004. The conclusion of this negotiation marked the completion of the grid of Association Agreements with the Mediterranean partners. With the other Mediterranean partner, Turkey, the European Community concluded a first generation association agreement in 1963.³⁰ As a result of this, a customs union with the EU entered into force on 1st January, 1996.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership regional programmes operate in all three domains of the Barcelona Declaration; namely, the political and security dimension, the economic and financial dimension and the social, cultural and human dimension. The first dimension comprises an enhanced regular political dialogue to establish a zone of peace, stability and security by promoting post-conflict rehabilitation including the encouragement of the peaceful settlement of disputes, prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), arms control, including confidence-building

30 After a military coup Turkey was barred from this association agreement between 1980 and 1986.

measures to facilitate the signature and ratification by Mediterranean partners of all non-proliferation instruments (including the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT))³¹ in order to create a zone free of WMD, enhanced cooperation in the combat of terrorism as well as organised crime and drug trafficking, promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law as well as coordination in the subjects of migration, justice and home affairs as outlined by the 1999 Tampere European Council.³² The Mediterranean Dialogue “should help to familiarise the Mediterranean partners with ESDP aims and instruments, with a view to their eventual, possible cooperation in ESDP activities on a regional, sub-regional or country basis.”³³ However, “some of the Mediterranean partners already work with the EU in peacekeeping activities (Balkans, Africa) under the UN aegis.”³⁴

On 23rd April, 2002, during their fifth EU-Mediterranean conference in Valencia, the EU Foreign Ministers adopted an action plan for enhancing the Barcelona process, a regional cooperation programme relating to justice and home affairs and an action plan to promote dialogue between cultures and civilisations. Relating to education, there are close cooperations with the *Euro-Arab Business School* in Granada and *European Endowment* in Torino. Further intentions relate to the establishment of the *Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly* (240 deputies, 37 countries) and the launching of new regional projects in the field of maritime safety and navigation by satellite (GALILEO) for the Southern Mediterranean partner.

31 The European Security Strategy “*A Secure Europe in a Better World*” was adopted on 12th December, 2003, by the European Council. This Strategy identifies a number of threats for the next decade, one of these threats being the proliferation of WMD. Additionally, a European Strategy against the proliferation of WMD was adopted by the European Council on 12th December, 2003. Therefore, the EU is concentrating its efforts on strengthening the international system of non-proliferation, pursuing universalisation of multilateral agreements and assistance to third countries. In October 2003, the High Representative, Javier Solana, appointed Ms Annalisa Giannella, as his Personal Representative for non-Proliferation of WMD.

32 Common Strategy of the European Council of 19th June, 2000, on the Mediterranean region (2000/458/CFSP), § 13.

33 Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Naples, 2nd-3rd December, 2003), Presidency Conclusions, 15380/03 (Presse 353), § 31.

34 Ibid.

This *Valencia Action Plan* contains a series of activities to reinforce all areas of the Mediterranean Partnership by focusing on three specific issues:

- The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly – a consultative forum under the framework of the Barcelona Process;³⁵
- The future course of Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment Partnership (FEMIP);
- The Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures.³⁶

The economic and finance partnership envisages the establishment of a complete free trade area and a joint welfare region by the year 2010, comprising 800 million people. In order to facilitate the implementation of this intention, the EU established the MEDA program (MEDA: *Mesures D'Accompagnement*). MEDA was adopted by the Cannes European Council in June 1995 to support Mediterranean partner countries in their efforts to ameliorate poor economic and social standards. For the period 1995-1999, MEDA accounted for EUR 3,435 million. Additionally the European Investment Bank (EIB) approved loans totalling EUR 4,808 million. MEDA is endowed with EUR 5,350 million for the period 2000-2006. The EIB's Euromed II lending mandate for 2000-2007 is EUR 6,400 million. The EIB committed itself to contribute a further EUR 1,000 million from its own resources and at its own risk over the same period for transnational projects.³⁷ The EIB has lent EUR 14 billions for development activities in the Euro-Mediterranean Partners since 1974 (EUR 3.7 billion in 2002-2003).³⁸ In 2003, the EIB launched the *Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment Partnership* (FEMIP), to support modernisation of the economies of the Mediterranean partner nations while also promoting social cohesion, environmental protection and communications infrastructure. FEMIP is based on a closer involvement of the Mediterranean partners

35 This path was welcomed by the foreign ministers at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Naples, see Presidency Conclusions, 15380/03 (Presse 353), § 32.

36 Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, "Presidency Conclusions," 2nd-3rd December, 2003, (Naples), 15380/03 (Presse 353), § 5.

37 European Commission/External Relations, "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership – The MEDA Programme," http://europ.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/meda.htm, printed on 22nd January, 2005.

38 European Commission/External Relations, "Euro-Mediterranean Partnership/Barcelona Process," http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/index.htm, 22nd January, 2005.

through the creation of a forum for dialogue (the policy dialogue and coordination committee). Currently, FEMIP lends approximately EUR 2 billion per year to the region.³⁹

The legal basis of the MEDA Programme is the 1996 MEDA Regulation (Council Regulation no. EC/1488/96, MEDA I) which was amended in November 2000 (Council Regulation no. EC/2698/2000, MEDA II). MEDA resources are subject to programming. Strategy papers covering the period 2000-2006 are established at national and regional levels. Based on these papers, three-year national indicative programmes (NIPs) were drawn up jointly for the bilateral channel and a regional indicative programme (RIP) covers the multilateral activities. The indicative programmes follow the 1996 Council guidelines. Annually adopted financing plans are derived from the NIPs and the RIP. The strategy papers, NIPs and RIP are established in liaison with the EIB. The annual appropriations for financial commitments and payments of the MEDA line in the EU budget are authorised by the budgetary authority (EU Council and European Parliament) based on a proposal from the Commission within the limits of the financial capabilities. In the near future, there could be an option of a *Europe Mediterranean Bank* as proposed by Italian EU Presidency in December 2003.⁴⁰ The MEDA assistance is focused on reforms of the justice systems, modernisation of banking and financial sectors, reform of public administration (e.g. in Morocco, the *Mediterranean Bypass (Rocade Méditerranéenne)*), development of regions like South Sinai, poverty reduction through local development, water resource management, agglomerations e.g. of the rivers Said and Sour in southern Lebanon and in Grand Beirut and establishing and strengthening democratic institution-building in Palestinian territories as well as improvement of employability of young Palestinian

39 European Commission/External Relations, "The EU, the Mediterranean and the Middle East – A longstanding partnership," http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/med_mideast/news/me04_294.htm, Brussels, 10th December, 2004.

40 Euromed Report – Issue No 71, "Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs," Presidency Conclusions, 12th December, 2003.

refugees.⁴¹ The Mediterranean partners are also participating in European Community programmes such as LIFE or TEMPUS, dealing with the environment and higher education. Altogether, the EU is the largest donor of non-military aid to the Mediterranean and Middle East, in addition to the assistance given by the EU member states through their national programmes. In 2003, the EU transferred EUR 1 billion in grants and another EUR 2 billion in soft loans.⁴² The EU is a major trading partner to every country in the region. It accounts for almost 50 percent of goods traded by them (imports and exports of EUR 141 billions in 2002) compared to 13 percent (EUR 38 billion) for the United States.⁴³

A crucial step towards the creation of a *Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area* by the target year of 2010 is the *Agadir Agreement*, a Free Trade Agreement signed between Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia on 25th February, 2004. The *Agadir Agreement* is also supported with a EUR 4 million program funded by the MEDA. This South-South agreement will create an integrated market of more than 100 million people in the four countries involved⁴⁴ and “will encourage WTO membership by all partners on the appropriate terms.”⁴⁵

The priorities for MEDA resources are

- support economic transition: the aim is to prepare for the implementation of free trade through increasing competitiveness with a view to achieving sustainable economic growth, particularly through developments in the private sector; and

41 European Commission/External Relations, “MEDA: over EUR 700 million in 2004 to support the EU’s Mediterranean partners,” http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/news/memo04_276.htm, Brussels, 26th November, 2004.

42 European Commission/External Relations, “The EU, the Mediterranean and the Middle East – A longstanding partnership,” http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/med_mideast/news/me04_294.htm, Brussels, 10th December, 2004.

43 Ibid.

44 European Commission/External Relations, “Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements: the Partnership is moving forward,” http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/news/memo04_275.htm, Brussels, 26th November, 2004.

45 Common Strategy of the European Council of 19th June, 2000, on the Mediterranean region (2000/458/CFSP), § 17.

- enhancement of the socio-economic balance: the aim is to alleviate the short-term costs of economic transition through appropriate measures in the field of social policy.

The primary goals are to reduce youth unemployment rates of fifty percent or above, support measures for sustainable socio-economic development and enhancement of regional and cross-border cooperation, promotion of private sector as the economic stability cell and tourism on the basis of the *Charter of Mediterranean Tourism*. This charter was adopted at the tourism minister summit at Casablanca in 1995. Mediterranean Dialogue countries are permitted to export their goods to EU member states duty-free. In the sector of environment, the EU Mediterranean Partnership envisages the creation of an integrated water management on the basis of the 1992 *Rome Mediterranean Water Charter* including waste water management, fishery management and measures to avoid pollution and prevent erosion. Water is a scarce resource. During the next 20 to 25 years, the main challenges for the Southern Mediterranean will be areas of demographic and climatic changes. These central factors influence further factors; namely, urbanisation combined with pollution, the reduction of rural surfaces through urbanisation, erosion and desertification, increasing water scarcity and importation of food.

Examples of projects financed by MEDA are structural adjustment programmes in Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan, the *Syrian-Europe Business Centre*, the social fund for employment creation in Egypt, rehabilitation of the public administration in Lebanon, rural development in Morocco and basic education in Turkey. Examples of loans signed by the EIB are financing of projects to improve waste water treatment and management of water resources in Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Morocco; measures to reduce environmental pollution and modernisation of traffic control systems at airports in Algeria, renovation of a train line in Tunisia and the reconstruction of infrastructures and industry in Turkey following the 1999 earthquake.

The third dimension – social, cultural and human – includes the development of human resources, promoting intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, recognition of fundamental social rights, recognition and promotion of cooperation between non-governmental and autonomous civil groups (*civil society*), migration issues and combating organised crime and terrorism. For this purpose, the *Anna Lindh Foundation* for inter-cultural dialogue was established in Alexandria, Egypt, in 2004.

After rifts and shifts relating to the war against the Saddam Hussein regime in March/April, 2003, both the EU and the U.S. emphasised their commitments to mutually promote comprehensive cooperation with states in the broader Middle East region.⁴⁶ For the U.S., the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) is a key instrument in combination with other bilateral instruments. For the EU, cooperation is based primarily on its Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Cooperation Agreement, the EU Neighbourhood Policy and other bilateral or multilateral initiatives, including the EU Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean and the Middle East adopted by the European Council in June, 2004. The Strategic Partnership of the EU has been focusing on the countries of North Africa and the Middle East, including the countries of the GCC, Yemen, Iraq and Iran. EU and U.S. also cooperate to fulfil the *G8 Plan of Support for Reform* goals of supporting democratic development, increased practical and financial support to enhancing human rights and efforts to significantly increase literacy, partly through increased higher and basic education cooperation, promoting regional economic integration and expanded trade opportunities in global markets through support, where appropriate, for accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Both the EU and the U.S. are concerted in their approach to stabilise this region.

46 EU-U.S. Declaration Supporting Peace Progress and Reform in the Broader Middle East and in the Mediterranean, Dromoland Castle, 26th June, 2004, 10000/04 (Presse 186).

5 The role of Libya

On the basis of a consensus among the 27 partners reached on the occasion of their admission during the *Barcelona III* Stuttgart conference of Foreign Ministers on 15-16 April, 1999, Libya could in time become a further partner in the *Barcelona Process* pending the lifting of U.N. Security Council sanctions against it and its acceptance of the full terms of the *Barcelona Declaration* and related actions. Since its participation in the Stuttgart conference as a special guest of the EU Presidency, Libya has taken part as an observer in some of the meetings of the *Barcelona Process*.

United Nations sanctions were imposed on Libya in 1992 and 1993 on the basis of suspected Libyan implication in the explosion of the *Pan Am* aircraft over Lockerbie on 21st December, 1988, killing 270 persons. The sanctions were suspended in 1999 and lifted on 12th September, 2003. The lifting of this ban was in fulfilment of the conditions set out in the United Nations resolutions 748 of 1992 and 883 of 1993, based on an agreement reached between the U.S., the U.K. and Libya on the Lockerbie issue. These conditions were then met in August 2003, when Libya sent a letter to the UN, in which the country

- accepted responsibility for the actions of the Libyan officials involved in the Lockerbie case;
- accepted payment of appropriate compensation; and
- renounced terrorism.⁴⁷

Subsequently, the Libyan government fulfilled its pledge by making financial compensations to the victims' families of the deadly bombings of *Pan Am* and French *UTA* civil airliners in 1988/89.⁴⁸ The sanctions which included a ban on military sales,

47 European Commission/External Relations, "The EU's relations with Libya," http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/lybia/intro/index.htm.

48 During attacks on a Pan Am Boeing 747 (Flight 103) via Lockerbie/Scotland on 21st December, 1988, 270 passengers and crew members were killed, among them 189 US citizens. 171 people were killed when a bomb blasted a UTA DC-10 (Flight 772) via the desert of Ténéré on 19th September, 1989.

air communications and certain oil equipment, was suspended by the UN Security Council in 1999 after Libya agreed to hand over two nationals for trial before a Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands in connection with the bombing. The United Kingdom and Bulgaria co-sponsored the resolution after Libya informed the Council in August 2003 of its readiness to cooperate in the international fight against terrorism and compensate the families of those killed at Lockerbie as demanded by U.N. Security Council resolutions 748 of 1992 and 883 of 1993.

From the American standpoint, the Libyan regime no longer presents the threat it used to when it closely collaborated with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Here, cooperation also replaced confrontation. Libya meanwhile signed the twelve conventions to fight terrorism as provided for in the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1273. Furthermore, Libya agreed with the U.S., the U.K. and the U.N. on 19th December, 2003, during secret negotiations to reduce the limit of Libyan missiles range to 300 kilometres, to destroy all the weapons of mass destruction, to end all programmes to develop WMD and to allow international inspectors to observe and survey these paths. Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi announced his readiness to take responsibility in the fight against terrorism. The U.S. and Great Britain have already received information from Libyan intelligence services about terrorists of Al Qaeda and other organisations.

Libya and the EU are concentrating on enhancing their relations. In June 2005, the EU started formal relations with Libya by establishing a Commission delegation office in Tripoli. There are several areas for potential interaction with Libya and one of them is migration. In November 2002, the General Affairs and External Relations Council considered it essential to initiate cooperation with Libya in this area. The European Commission conducted an exploratory mission on migration to Libya in May 2003. The fisheries sector is another area of interest. Discussions on the prospects for a possible fisheries agreement between the EU and Libya have taken place.

Several EU member states have extensive trade relations with Libya. France, Germany, Italy, and the U.K. are Libya's four leading suppliers of manufactured

goods, energy, food products and raw materials, amounting to roughly 50 percent of her imports in 2001. Moreover, Italy, Germany, Spain, France and Greece are Libya's top five export markets, absorbing about 78 percent of her manufactured goods, energy, food products and raw materials in 2001. Libya currently exports about 1.2 mbpd (million barrels per day) . Nearly all (about 90 percent) of this is sold to European countries like Italy (485,000 bbl/d in 2002), Germany (188,000 bbl/d in 2002), France (47,000 bbl/d in 2002), Spain and Greece.⁴⁹ After a nearly two-decade absence, U.S. oil companies were invited to return to Libya on 29th January, 2005, when *Occidental Petroleum Corp.* – in partnership with *Liwa* of the United Arab Emirates – was the big winner in the *Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries* member states' first oil and gas licensing round since international sanctions were lifted.⁵⁰ More than 60 companies (including most U.S. oil majors and many smaller independents) and also companies from Algeria, Brasil, Canada, India and Indonesia submitted bids in Libya's first exploration and production-sharing-agreement auction since 2000.⁵¹ The high quality of Libya's light, sweet crude, ideal for gasoline production, and the relatively quick travel time to the U.S. – about half the time it takes Saudi crude to arrive at Gulf Coast refineries – add to the attraction.⁵² Libya hopes its foreign partners and their investment dollars will help boost the country's oil production capacity to three million barrels a day by 2010. Years of sanctions and underinvestment have pushed Libyan production down to about 1.7 million barrels a day, well below its 1970 peak of 3.3 million barrels a day. Libya has 36 billion barrels of proven oil reserves – the world's eighth largest – and 1.3 trillion cubic metres of natural-gas reserves. The awards were based on two numbers – the percentage share of production the bidder offered to the Libyan state *National Oil Corp.* and the signing bonus the bidder was prepared to pay.

49 Ibid.

50 Occidental won a share of eight of the 15 exploration areas being offered in Libya's long-awaited EPSA-4 auction. The 15 areas awarded contain two to four blocs apiece and cover 130,000 square kilometres, and have three billion barrels in reserves. Karen Matusic, "Big U.S. Oil Firms Return to Libya," in: *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, 31st January, 2005, A10.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

U.S. oil companies return to the properties they were forced to abandon in 1986.⁵³ Libya intends to further enhance relations with Europe and the United States.

6 The EU and Turkey

Turkey applied for associated membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) in July 1959. After a delay caused by the Turkish military coup of 1960, the *Ankara Agreement* of association was signed in 1963. Article 28 contains a cautiously worded perspective of membership: "As soon as the operation of this Agreement has advanced far enough to justify envisaging full acceptance by Turkey of the obligations arising out of the Treaty establishing the Community, the Contracting Parties shall examine the possibility of the accession of Turkey to the Community." This agreement foresaw the gradual establishment of a customs union, which in accordance with details set out in the *Additional Protocol* of 1970 was to be finalised after a period of 22 years. After several delays, the customs union came into force in 1996. On 14th April, 1987, Turkey as a Euro-Asian country (95 percent of its surface is Asian) submitted an application for membership to the European Community (EC). It took the European Commission until December 1989 to produce an opinion which was approved by the European Council two months later, refusing accession negotiations on several grounds.⁵⁴ Due to economic and political reasons in Turkey, political disputes between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean Sea and also the less than quiet Turkish/Cypriot relations, this application was refused. Then, the EC prepared to establish a European monetary and security union by reforming the Single European Act (SEA) leading towards Maastricht Treaty of the European Union in February 1992. An application for membership of the EC submitted also in 1987 by Morocco was rejected out of hand as coming from a non-European country.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Report of the Independent Commission on Turkey, "Turkey in Europe: More than a promise?," September 2004, p. 13.

Turkey's relations with EU member Greece have continued to improve over recent years. Greece now supports the Turkish integration process to EU. At the Helsinki European Council meeting of 10th-11th December, 1999, the EU Heads of State and Governments agreed that Turkey is a "candidate state destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate states" and concluded at the Copenhagen European Council meeting of December 2002 that if it were to decide in December 2004 "on the basis of a report and recommendation from the Commission, (...) that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria (add.: political criteria specified at Copenhagen in 1993), the European Union will open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay." At the Brussels European Council meeting in December 2004, the European Council concluded to open negotiations with Turkey on 3rd October, 2005, because "in the light ... of the Commission report and recommendation, Turkey sufficiently fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria to open accession negotiations ...".⁵⁵ So the "shared objective of the negotiations is accession," but "these negotiations are an open-ended process, the outcome of which cannot be guaranteed beforehand. While taking account of all Copenhagen criteria, if the Candidate State is not in a position to assume in full all the obligations of membership it must be ensured that the Candidate State concerned is fully anchored in the European structures through the strongest possible bond."⁵⁶ If Turkey breaches seriously and persistently "the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law on which the Union is founded, the Commission will, on its own initiative or on the request of one third of the Member States, recommend the suspension of negotiations and propose the conditions for eventual resumption. The Council will decide by qualified majority on such a recommendation, after having heard the candidate state, whether to suspend the negotiations and on the conditions for their resumption. The Member States will act in the IGC in accordance with the Council decision, without prejudice to the general

55 Brussels European Council 16th/17th December 2004, Presidency Conclusions, 16238/04, § 22.

56 Ibid, § 23, fourth point.

requirement for unanimity in the IGC. The European Parliament will be informed.”⁵⁷ In this context, there was no mention of a “privileged partnership” proposed by EU opponents to Turkish EU accession as an alternative to full membership – like the French Minister of the Interior Nicholas Sarkozy or the Bavarian *Christlich-Soziale Union* (CSU).

In its 6th October, 2004 report, the Commission noted the considerable progress made by Turkey in the areas of democracy and human rights. However, there were considerable deficits in the practical implementations, with reference to violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms like religion (20 million Alevites and 100,000 Christians were not recognised as religious minority)⁵⁸ and the protection of ethnic minorities (12 million Kurds, about 20 percent of the Turkish population, are not officially recognised as ethnic minority).⁵⁹ Economically, even with growth rates (5 percent), Turkey will need about four decades to reach 75 percent of EU-15 income levels. Turkey will certainly profit from EU transfer payments which, according to current rules, will count for 3 to four percents of her GDP.⁶⁰ So, the implementation of the *acquis* will be a major problem for Turkey and entails costs that are intensified by the demands of structural adjustment. Costs arise through structural change such as higher unemployment especially in rural areas. Therefore, higher levels of pre-accession financial assistance will be necessary.⁶¹

Relating to the Kurdish population, Turkey has long worried that the U.S.-led war in Iraq would eventually result in an ethnic Kurdish province that will be independent and could therefore encourage unrest in Turkey’s own neighbouring Kurdish area. Turkish prime minister said political groups were organising a relocation

57 Ibid, § 23, fifth point.

58 Turkey is member of the Council of Europe since 1950. Between October 2003 and October 2004, the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg concluded breaches against European Human Rights Convention by 132 verdicts. Source: Austrian Institute for European Security Policy (AIES), Die politischen Kriterien von Kopenhagen und ihre Anwendung auf die Türkei. Eine Bewertung des Kommissionsberichtes vom 6. Oktober 2004, Arbeitspapier, November 2004, p. 7.

59 Wolfgang Quaisser/Steve Wood, „EU Member Turkey? Preconditions, Consequences and Integration Alternatives,“ Arbeitspapiere No. 25, Oktober 2004, Forschungsverbund Ost- und Südosteuropa (forost), München, p. 8.

60 Ibid., p. 11.

61 Ibid.

of Kurds from other parts of Iraq – more than 100,000 Kurds – to the strategic, oil-rich region of Kirkuk according to Turkish reports, in an attempt to change its multiethnic character.⁶² On 30th January, 2005, many Kurds voted enthusiastically in order to preserve their current autonomy from the rest of Iraq. Many Sunnis boycotted the elections. At present, Kurds represent about 26 percent of the deputies in Iraqi parliament although Kurds are 15 percent of the total Iraqi population. This poses a challenge to Turkey. Kurdish leader, Masud Barzani, emphasised that if Turkish government claim Kirkuk and its oil-rich region, Kurds could possibly demand Diyarbakir and Arabs could demand Antakya – both in south-eastern Turkey – from Turkey.⁶³ Barzani explained that in the long term, the creation of a State of the Kurds will be “inevitable”.⁶⁴ Kurds intend to establish their own state and government financed and backed up by a powerful oil industry.⁶⁵

Turkey is particularly concerned about the possibility of a better armed and organised PKK (Kurdistan People’s Party). Some 5,000 PKK guerrillas are based in inaccessible mountains along the Iraqi-Turkish border and have been on the offensive again since 1st June, 2004, when they called off a five-year unilateral cease-fire.⁶⁶ From 1984 to 1999, the conflict between PKK and Turkish security forces has claimed approximately 40,000 lives⁶⁷ and expelled 2.4 million Kurds from their villages. Furthermore, approximately 3,500 villages populated by Kurds, Alevites, Armenians and Yecides were destroyed.⁶⁸ Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, demands more support of the U.S. in combating PKK: “We should not discriminate against different types of terrorist organisations. If we are giving our support to the war against terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq, then Turkey expects the same response

62 Alan Friedman and Frederic Kempe, “Turkish Premier Takes Bush to Task over Kurds,” in: *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, 31 January 2005, A6.

63 Jan Keetman, „Kurdenstaat langfristig ‚unausweichlich‘“, in: *Die Presse*, 5th February, 2004, p. 7.

64 *Ibid.*

65 *Ibid.*

66 Alan Friedman and Frederic Kempe, *op. cit.*, A6.

67 *Ibid.*

68 Austrian Institute for European Security Policy (AIES), “Die politischen Kriterien von Kopenhagen und ihre Anwendung auf die Türkei. Eine Bewertung des Kommissionsberichtes vom 6. Oktober 2004,” *Arbeitspapier*, November 2004, p. 9.

and cooperation against the PKK, which is located in Northern Iraq, and that means all the financial resources and access to training and weapons.”⁶⁹

The official Turkish government still denies genocide in 1915/16 when about 1 million Armenians and about 500,000 Assyrian Christians were killed by Osman regime in Anatolia. Till the present, about 20 million Alevites and 100,000 Christians have not been recognised as religious minorities by the Turkish state. Beyond this, there are still tensions between Turkey and the Iraqi and Syrian governments concerning distribution of water from the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and the planned construction of 21 high dams and 17 water power stations to strategically control the water reserves in Iraq and Syria. However, Turkey would import many conflicts to the EU were she to be granted a full EU membership.

The EU member states have direct links with Turkey as a result of widespread Turkish migration to Western Europe. About 3.8 million Turkish migrants live in EU states, with the majority (2.6 million) in Germany, followed by France, the Netherlands, Austria and Belgium.⁷⁰ Most Turkish immigrants were unskilled workers from rural areas of Anatolia who have had to overcome a double shock of relocating from a country to a city and from their homeland to a foreign environment. This, in part, explains the difficulties many of them encountered in their efforts to get themselves integrated into the societies of their host countries.⁷¹ Many immigrants did not succeed in their host nations partly because of religious and cultural differences that made their integration in their new societies difficult. This kind of “behaviour is attributed to Islam and religious tradition.”⁷² But the Turks remain relentless in their efforts to join the EU, citing democracy and not religion, as the basis of EU integration and membership. Mr. Erdogan said: “If the EU is a union of democratic values, then Turkey

69 Alan Friedman and Frederic Kempe, *op. cit.*, A6.

70 Report of the Independent Commission on Turkey, *Turkey in Europe: More than a promise?*, September 2004, p. 31.

71 *Ibid.*

72 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

will be part of it.”⁷³ He pledged again that Turkey would fulfil all EU membership requirements and will therefore intensify its relations with EU governments.⁷⁴

The island of Cyprus constitutes a lingering diplomatic rift between Turkey and the EU. Cyprus has been divided since 1974 when Turkish troops invaded its northern part in response to a short-lived coup by Greeks. This *coup d'état* by Greek army officers stationed in Cyprus to overthrow President Makarios aimed to unify the island with Greece. Turkish invasion was prompted by fears for the well-being of their fellow Turks in the wake of a Greek coup. At present (2005), about 40,000 Turkish troops are still based at the northern part of Cyprus. Turkish political leadership has continued to refuse official recognition of Cyprus as a result of the internal political situation. On 17th December, 2004, Turkish Prime Minister, Erdogan, agreed to sign a text extending his country's association agreement with the EU and ten new member states that joined EU on 1st May, 2004 – including Cyprus. Erdogan emphasised that this act does not mean official recognition of its government to Cyprus. Before the commencement of accession negotiations with the EU on 3rd October, 2005, the Turkish leader announced his readiness to sign the protocol relating to the adaptation of the 1963 Ankara Agreement which extends the customs union. Turkey still refuses to recognise the internationally accepted Greek Cypriot government or to show the intentions of doing so. Ankara only recognises a breakaway Turkish Cypriot enclave in the north of the island and insists it cannot recognise the Greek Cypriot south until a peace settlement has been reached. Erdogan said Turkey was ready to cooperate in any U.N.-led drive to revive the Cyprus reunification process, which has stalled since Greek Cypriots rejected the U.N. Kofi Annan plan to unify the island⁷⁵ in April 2004. Günter Verheugen, the EU enlargement commissioner at that time, announced his disposition to work with the Turkish Cypriot authorities in order to boost the economy. But this,

73 Alan Friedman and Frederic Kempe, *op.cit.*, A6.

74 *Ibid.*

75 The U.N. plan was accepted by 65 percent of Turkish Cypriots, and only 24 percent of the Greek Cypriots voted for this plan. Greek rejection means it cannot come into force. Source: “EU pledges aid for Turkish Cyprus,” BBC News World Edition, 26 April 2004, 16:28 GMT, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3660171.stm>.

according to Verheugen, does not mean that the north would be recognised as a separate state. Economic sanctions have been in force for years, leaving many Turkish Cypriots with a low standard of living.⁷⁶ In May 2004, Turkish Cypriots eased travel restrictions on tourists from EU member states, including the Greek Cypriots who cross from the internationally recognised south of the island to the breakaway Turkish north. A decree approved by the Turkish Cypriot cabinet on 21st May, 2004, stipulated that citizens of EU member states could show identity cards instead of passports to enter the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Citizens of non-EU member states, on the other hand, are still required to produce their passports when visiting Northern Cyprus from the Greek Cypriot south of the island. The decree also allows authorised travel agents to organise tours from the south of the island to the north at any time. However, it limits individual border crossings to between 6 a.m. and midnight local time, even as visitors are allowed to stay overnight in the north.⁷⁷

Turkey could be on the way to joining the EU but before it becomes a full-fledged member, it has to fulfil several political criteria – critical among which is finding a solution to the disputes in her neighbourhood.

7 The EU relations with the Gulf region and Yemen

European Union relations with Saudi-Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates are governed by a Cooperation Agreement signed in 1989 between the EC and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The EU relations with Iran, Iraq and Yemen are of bilateral nature.

In 1989, the European Commission and the GCC concluded a Cooperation Agreement under which the EU and GCC Foreign Ministers meet once a year at a Joint Council/Ministerial Meeting, and senior officials at a Joint Cooperation Committee as well as Regional Director's Political Dialogue. The primary objective of this Agreement

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ "Turkish Cypriots ease some travel restrictions," *International Herald Tribune*, 24th May, 2004, 16.

is to contribute to strengthening stability in a region of strategic importance and to facilitate political and economic relations. The 1989 Cooperation Agreement contained a commitment from both sides to enter into negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement between the EU and GCC. Consequently, negotiations were initiated in 1990 but soon reached a standstill. Finally in 1999, the GCC made a significant gesture of their willingness to resume the negotiations by announcing their decision to create a customs union by March 2005.

The European Commission's cooperation with the GCC is focused on energy and economic issues. There is a regular expert's dialogue on energy issues which has led to the launching of workshops and international conferences. Furthermore, an Economic Dialogue meeting was launched 2003 with the objective of facilitating dialogue and better understanding in areas of shared interests.

In 1998, the European Commission and Yemen concluded a Cooperation Agreement under which the Commission implements a variety of economic and development cooperation projects with new commitments to an average tune of more than EUR 20 million per year. The political dialogue that started in July 2004 represents an upgrading of the mutual relations. Both parties verbally adopted a joint-declaration formalising the dialogue. The EU assists Yemen in implementing its poverty reduction strategy and in strengthening democracy, human rights and civil society, as well as technical assistance for World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations. The EU assistance programme for 2005-2006 with a total budget of EUR 26 million, is focusing on two priority areas: poverty reduction and reinforcement of pluralism and civil society.⁷⁸

78 European Commission/External Relations, "The EU, the Mediterranean and the Middle East – A longstanding partnership," http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/med_mideast/news/me04_294.htm, Brussels, 10th December, 2004.

8 The role of Iran

Based on the Comprehensive Dialogue initiated in 1998, the EU is focused on a full integration of Iran into the international community and intends a strengthening of EU-Iran relations through a comprehensive strategy, including the prospects of contractual relations, aiming at producing tangible results with regards to the following areas of concern: WMD, human rights, terrorism, the Middle East Peace process.⁷⁹

In June 2002, the EU agreed to open negotiations with Iran which would cover these political aspects as well as a trade and cooperation agreement, whereby the agreement should have a contractual basis. The negotiations were launched in Brussels in December 2002, but have ceased since June 2003. Appropriate to its policy of *deterrent defence*, Iran aims at preventing Western – or more precisely U.S. influence – from spreading in the Middle East. The U.S. war on terrorism eliminated Iran's traditional enemies: the Taliban, Saddam Hussein, and insurgent groups that threatened Teheran from bases in Iraq. Ilan Berman, Vice President for Policy at the American Foreign Policy Council, sees the war on terrorism as a threat to Iran, identifying the U.S. as a powerful new adversary pursuing an aggressive anti-terror campaign that includes Iran in the so-called "axis of evil". Iranians fear being geographically "hemmed in" by "U.S. strategic forces which have been moved east," Berman explained.⁸⁰ Iran has therefore been actively opposing to Middle East peace process and materially supported Hizbollah – Lebanon's Shia Islamist party – and such Palestinian groups as *Hamas* and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Irani government also moved forward with nuclear programmes designed to deter prospective enemies and defend itself against perceived threats. Israeli secret services estimate that Iran will

79 Final Report (approved by the European Council in June 2004) on an EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East, § 9.

80 "Iran Pursuing 'Aggressive' Foreign Policy," Expert Says, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 17 August 2004, <http://www.rferl.org/releases/2004/08/258-170804.asp>.

reach nuclear weapons capability by 2007. Within a year, Iran will be “able to enrich uranium to weapons grade without any outside assistance given their progress on gas-centrifuge technology.”⁸¹ The acquisition or development of nuclear weapons by the mullah-led Irani regime would transform the whole region: “If Iran goes nuclear, it is likely to trigger a wave of others in the region doing the same.”⁸² Israel is ambiguous about its putative nuclear capability. Arabs suppose that Israel would only use nuclear weapons as a last resort. These facts have “reduced the pressure on Arab leaders to respond. But Iran would be a different story.”⁸³ For Israel, a nuclear Iran is “intolerable”. States like Saudi-Arabia could decide to develop nuclear bombs “as either a deterrent or a political counterweight against Iran.”⁸⁴

The U.S. point of view is that Iran is the main sponsor of terrorism: “We cannot let Iran, a leading sponsor of international terrorism, acquire nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them to Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East, and beyond.”⁸⁵ However, there is a strong need for “serious, concerted, immediate intervention by the international community”. So the U.S. promotes moves “to bring this issue to the U.N. Security Council, we are simultaneously pursuing other measures to bring a halt to Iran’s pursuit of nuclear weapons, ... worldwide diplomatic efforts including with Russia, the supplier of Iran’s Bushehr reactor, and improved enforcement against exports to Iran.”⁸⁶

Iran assertively claims that it has the right under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) to come within weeks of building a bomb. The U.K., France, and Germany are pleading with Teheran not to exercise this right.⁸⁷ On 15th November, 2004, the U.K., France, and Germany reached a nuclear deal with Iran (known as the

81 Dennis Ross, “The Middle East Predicament,” in: *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2005, pp. 61-74, p. 63.

82 *Ibid.*

83 *Ibid.*

84 *Ibid.*

85 John R. Bolton, Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, “The Bush Administration’s Forward Strategy for Nonproliferation,” Remarks to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 19 October 2004, <http://www.state.gov/t/us/rm/37251pf.htm>.

86 *Ibid.*

87 Henry Sokolski, “Rethink nuclear nonproliferation, before it’s too late,” *The Weekly Standard*, 22 November 2004, Volume 010, Issue 10.

“Paris Agreement”) by which Iran agreed to suspend its enrichment related and reprocessing activities to be verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Following confirmation of the suspension by the IAEA Board Resolution of 29th November, 2004, the European Commission made preparations to re-launch the Trade and Cooperation Agreement negotiations.

The EU has also established a Human Rights Dialogue with Iran, and a non-contractual Comprehensive Dialogue on issues including conflict prevention and crisis management, the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Following the humanitarian disaster resulting from the earthquake in Bam at the end of 2003, the Commission contributed EUR 8,5 million in emergency assistance.⁸⁸

Before his second inauguration on 20th January, 2005, U.S. President George W. Bush, announced that the U.S. might attack Iran if Irani government does not change its policy and intentions towards enhancing its nuclear programme. To protect Americans, Bush intends to take military measures against Iran if Irani government is not willing to cooperate with the IAEA Inspections. The U.S. journal *New Yorker* reported on 17th January, 2005, that secret U.S. commands spy for possible military targets (chemical and nuclear facilities) in Iran. Israeli government announced its readiness to attack Iran’s nuclear facilities in order to protect Israeli security interests, as it did to Saddam Hussein in 1981 by attacking the Iraqi reactor at Osiraq.

NATO General Secretary, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, asked NATO allies to formulate a common standpoint towards Iran and promoted multilateral diplomatic preventive actions. Relating to this situation, Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, defended Iran against charges by the U.S. and other countries that Iran, which like Iraq borders Turkey, is embarking on a programme to develop nuclear weapons under the guise of nuclear energy plants. Mr. Erdogan said Iran – Turkey’s second-biggest trading partner after Russia – had assured his government that it was

88 European Commission/External Relations, “The EU, the Mediterranean and the Middle East – A longstanding partnership,” http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/med_mideast/news/me04_294.htm, Brussels, 10th December 2004.

developing nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes.⁸⁹ Iran therefore has no preconditions with regard to the IAEA. Iran denies having ambitions to build a nuclear weapon and claims its programme is for purely civil purposes.

On 16th February, 2005, Iran and Syria heightened tension across the Middle East and directly confronted the Bush administration by declaring they had formed a mutual self-defence pact to confront the *threats* facing them. Syria came under suspicion over the assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister and billionaire, Rafiq Hariri, on 14th February, 2005. The declaration of this mutual defence pact came as the Israeli Foreign Minister, Silvan Shalom, predicted that the Irani government possesses the technology to produce a nuclear weapon within six months. Speaking in London, he accused Iran of preparing nuclear weapons that would be able to target “London, Paris and Madrid” by the end of the decade. The U.S. has called on Syrian government to close the headquarters of *Hamas* (the main Palestinian group responsible for suicide bombers) in its capital city; end its support for Hizbollah, the Lebanese-based, anti-Israeli militia; block the support for the insurgency in Iraq from within Syria as well as the removal of 14,000 Syrian troops from Lebanon in accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559.⁹⁰ In May 2005, Syria ended its 29-year military presence in Lebanon. One month later, an anti-Syrian alliance laid claim to victory in Lebanese elections. The country’s future rests presently in the hands of Saad Hariri, the son of former Prime Minister, Rafiq Hariri.

The U.S. government is concerned with pressing the U.N. Security Council to introduce new sanctions against Iran and Syria. Economically, Iran is eager to deepen relations with East Asia. Starting from the immediate past, Iran has been shifting its trade towards the east; in 2004, it has completed two oil and gas deals worth approximately US\$ 100 billion with China. Iran is developing into an economic power based on natural oil and gas resources trade. For the mullah regime, deterrence – also by nuclear weaponry – is pivotal to maintain its power. In addition, after the elections

89 Alan Friedman and Frederic Kempe, *op.cit.*, A6.

90 Ewen MacAskill/Duncan Campbell, “Iran and Syria confront U.S. with defence pact,” *The Guardian*, 17th February 2005; Bill Sammon, “Bush urges Syria to move Lebanon troops,” *The Washington Times*, 18th February, 2005.

of June 2005, ultimate power in Iran rests with clerical bodies and the unelected supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

9 The EU and Iraq

Under Saddam Hussein's 24-year regime, the EU had no contractual and very limited political relations. The Commission's role from 1991 has been restricted to implementing U.N. Security Council sanctions and providing humanitarian assistance. EU member states took divergent positions on the Iraqi crisis. U.S. and British governments led the coalition that attacked and brought down Saddam Hussein's regime. The IAEA "confirmed in the 1990s that Saddam Hussein had an advanced nuclear weapons development programme, had a design for a nuclear weapon and was working on five different methods of enriching uranium for a bomb. The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa. Our intelligence sources tell us that he has attempted to purchase high-strength aluminium tubes suitable for nuclear weapons production. Saddam Hussein has not credibly explained these activities. He clearly has much to hide."⁹¹ Bush emphasised that "with nuclear arms or a full arsenal of chemical and biological weapons, Saddam Hussein could resume his ambitions of conquest in the Middle East and create deadly havoc in that region."⁹² Saddam Hussein committed a "crime against American security".⁹³ Although no weapons of mass destruction had been found in Iraq, U.S. and allies toppled Saddam Hussein regime "in the face of 9/11". When Baghdad fell on 9th April, 2003, many Iraqis, overwhelmed with a misconceived notion of liberty, took to the streets, looting public buildings. Coalition forces have been combating *guerrillas* in a limited war.

91 U.S. President George when he delivered "State of the Union," 28th January, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/print/20030128-19.html>.

92 Ibid.

93 Gunther Hauser, „Die Sicherheit Europas im Wandel transatlantischer Beziehungen,“ Schriftenreihe der Landesverteidigungsakademie, Wien 5/2004, p. 113.

On 9th June, 2004, the European Commission adopted a Communiqué on EU relations with Iraq, making proposals for engaging and promoting dialogue with the appointed Iraqi interim government and with Iraqi civil society. The EU has shown its determination to play a role in supporting reconstruction. At the Madrid Donor's Conference for Iraq in October 2003, the EU (European Commission and member states) and the accession countries pledged more than EUR 1.25 billion. The European Commission's contribution to Iraq in 2003-2004, including humanitarian aid, amounted to almost EUR 320 million. For 2005, further EUR 200 million were earmarked. The European Commission adopted on 4th March, 2004, a programme setting priorities for reconstruction assistance to Iraq in 2004 of which the three priorities are: restoring the delivery of key public service boosting employment and reducing poverty; strengthening governance, civil society and human rights. The funds are distributed largely through the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq managed by the U.N. and the World Bank. A EUR 31.5 million package to support the elections was provided in 2004, including EU election experts to work with the *Independent Electoral Commission* of Iraq and the United Nations in Baghdad, as well as training of Iraqi election observers.⁹⁴ The Commission prepared an assistance programme for 2005 for which an additional contribution of EUR 200 million was to be made available.

The primary aim of the EU-Engagement in Iraq is the installation of peace and stability after the elections of 30th January, 2005. Despite lethal insurgent attacks that killed at least 35 people, Iraqi voters turned out in large numbers for a historic election that pushed the country into the next phase of its transition from U.S. and coalition occupation to full sovereignty. The turnout was about 60 percent, several points higher than the predicted 57 percent.⁹⁵ A 275-member parliament has been formed, based on the election results. The new parliament had to choose the top executives of a temporary

94 European Commission/External Relations, op. cit.

95 Of Iraq's 14 million eligible voters, 8,456,266 cast ballots for 111 candidates. The Shiite-dominated ticket received more than 4 million votes or about 48 percent of the total votes cast. A Kurdish alliance was second with 2.175 million votes or 26 percent. Prime Minister Allawi's list was third with about 1.168 million or 13.8 percent. Source: "Shiites win most votes in Iraq election," International Herald Tribune, 13th February, 2005, <http://www.ihrt.com/articles/2005/02/13/africa/web.iraqvote.html>.

government and then to oversee the drafting of a new Iraqi constitution. The constitution was supposed to be completed before September 2005, in time for a referendum in October. In case of approval, a new round of voting in December 2005 would elect a permanent government. If referendums in any three of Iraq's 18 provinces produce results that reject the constitution, the process would have to start over again with another voting exercise similar to the elections on 30th January, 2005. The situation in Iraq is still insecure. More than 40 percent of Iraqi population live in the threatened western and central provinces of Anbar, Baghdad, Ninive and Salaheddin, largely in Sunni Arab regions. Especially the area north-west of Baghdad has been the focus of activity of the heavily armed rebels. About 900 people had been killed by terrorists between the January elections and June 2005. Since March 2003, more than 25,000 Iraqi civilians, 6,400 Iraqi soldiers, 1,700 U.S. servicemen, 90 British soldiers and 95 servicemen from allied nations have been killed in Iraq. 60 to 70 Iraqi resistance attacks are conducted every day.⁹⁶ Post-election Iraq is a country in search of a governing model – maybe similar to Belgium, Canada, Lebanon or Switzerland – that grants substantial autonomy to various regions. Iraq's key challenge in the months ahead will be to craft a new constitution to balance its often hostile factions and regions to hold the country together. Iraq is divided roughly between three main groups: the majority Shiite Arabs (about 60 percent) and the Sunni Arabs and Kurds (about 20 percent each). Voter turnout on 30 January 2005 appeared high in Shiite and Kurdish areas, but much lower in many Sunni areas. Many Sunni Arabs stayed at home on election day. U.S. and coalition troops will be needed for years to help with security, especially the training of Iraqi troops.

96 „*Statistisch nicht sicher*‘ Pentagon-Chef Rumsfeld gesteht Fehler ein,“ Die Presse, 16th June, 2005, p. 5; „Der Aufstand im Irak könnte noch Jahre andauern,“ Die Presse, 28th June, 2005, p. 7.

10 The EU and the Middle East peace process

Many factors determine the future framework and intensity of the Mediterranean dialogue, e.g., the success of the Middle East peace process and the democratic and economic construction of Iraq. However, EU Mediterranean policy is also focused on the Middle East peace process, launched at the 1991 Madrid conference that led to the Oslo process two years later. A heavy crisis in Middle East peace talks led to the establishment of an EU Middle East special envoy in 1996. On 25th March, 1999, the European Council adopted its most far-reaching declaration relating to negotiations between Israel and Palestine in Berlin. There, the EU expressed the permanent and unlimited right for Palestinians for self determination including the option for Palestinians to create an own state.

Representatives from the EU, the U.N., the U.S. and Russia formed a group known as the *Quartet* which began to shape international policy towards the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On 17th September, 2002, the *Quartet* outlined their plan to reach a final peaceful settlement between Israel and Palestinians and adopted the EU proposal for a “three-phase implementation roadmap” to be realised by December 2005.⁹⁷ On 30th April, 2003, the parties to the conflict were presented with an international peace plan known as the *Road Map*, which the *Quartet* had drawn up in December 2002. Its basic tenets are as follows: the parties to the conflict are evidently incapable of resolving the conflict without outside help. What is therefore needed is a concrete framework and timetable setting out the modalities on the accomplishment of the two-state goal, a third-party monitoring mechanism, an international security component and democratisation of Palestinian institutions – only with reformed and democratic institutions could a Palestinian state alongside Israel be viable.⁹⁸

97 “Quartet Roadmap to Israeli-Palestinian Peace,” Mideastweb, 17th September, 2002, <http://www.mideastweb.org/quartetrm1.htm>.

98 “Germany and the Middle East Peace Process,” Last updated in February 2004, www.auswaertiges-amt.de, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin.

In a speech on the Middle East delivered on 24th June, 2002, U.S. President George W. Bush took up key elements of a *Seven-Point Plan* proposed by Germany, including the idea of a phased process and timetable as well as the call for a reform of Palestinian institutions. The new timetable envisaged the creation of a Palestinian state and a final status agreement within three years.

At their informal meeting in Helsingoer/Denmark on 30th-31st August, 2002, EU Foreign Ministers approved the text of an *EU Road Map* drafted by the Presidency and incorporating key aspects of the German *Seven-Point Plan*. The EU thus endorsed the idea of a three-phase process for the period 2002-2005 as well as all other main points, including the appointment of a Palestinian Prime Minister. On 17th September 2002, the *Quartet* agreed that a *Road Map* based on the EU proposals should be drawn up. Following negotiations between *inter alia* the U.S. and the EU, agreement on the final text was reached at a meeting of the *Quartet* held in Washington on 20th December, 2002, and attended by U.S. Secretary of State, Powell, Russian Foreign Minister, Ivanov, EU High Representative on CFSP, Solana and U.N. Secretary-General, Annan.

The *Road Map* specifies the steps to reaching a settlement. It “is a performance-based and goal-driven roadmap, with clear phrases, timelines, target dates, and benchmarks aiming at progress through reciprocal steps by the two parties in the political, security, economic, humanitarian, and institution-building fields, under the auspices of the *Quartet* ...”⁹⁹ However, a “two state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will only be achieved through an end to violence and terrorism, when the Palestinian people have a leadership acting decisively against terror and willing and able to build a practicing democracy based on tolerance and liberty, and through Israel’s readiness to do what is necessary for a democratic Palestinian state to be established, and a clear, unambiguous acceptance by both parties of the goal of a negotiated settlement ...”¹⁰⁰

The first phase planned to end in May 2003 envisaged a comprehensive security reform by ending terror and violence, normalising Palestinian life and building

99 The Road Map, “Introduction,” <http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/Archive/2004/Feb/04/-725518.html>.

100 Ibid.

Palestinian institutions, the establishment of an independent Palestinian election commission, the withdrawal of Israeli forces to positions it occupied before 28th September, 2000, and for the Palestinians to hold “free, fair and open elections”.¹⁰¹ The *Quartet* also proposed an *Ad Hoc Liaison Committee* to be formed to review “the humanitarian situation and prospects for economic development in the West Bank and Gaza and launches a major donor assistance effort, including to strengthen the reform effort.”¹⁰² Phase two included the creation of an independent Palestinian state with provisional borders based on a new constitution, “leading to a final phase of negotiations between the two parties aimed at achieving a permanent solution.”¹⁰³ Within Phase two, Arab states should restore pre-intifada links to Israel (trade offices, etc.). It also envisages a revival of multilateral engagement on regional water resources, environment, economic development, refugees, and arms control issues.¹⁰⁴ Phase two was planned to be finalised by December 2003. Phase three (2004-2005) made provision for negotiations between Israel and Palestine aimed at a solution that grants the State of Palestine a permanent status in 2005, and the resolution of other contested issues “including (...) borders, Jerusalem, refugees, settlements; and, to support progress towards a comprehensive Middle East settlement between Israel and Lebanon and Israel and Syria, to be achieved as soon as possible”.¹⁰⁵ These plans are geared towards ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip – home to about four million Palestinians - that began in 1967. This occupation is planned to be brought to an end through a settlement negotiated between the parties based on the principle “*land for peace*” and on U.N. resolutions 242, 338 and 1397. The *Quartet* agreed to intensify their efforts towards ending the violence and to achieve a settlement between Israel and its Syrian and Lebanese neighbours. The *Road Map* was approved through U.N. Security Council Resolution 1515.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 “*Quartet’s Roadmap to Israeli-Palestinian Peace*,” op.cit.

104 Phase II of the Road Map, <http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/Archive/2004/Feb/04/-725518.html>.

105 Phase III of the Road Map.

Additionally, the *Arab Peace Initiative* put forward by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah is based on the *Road Map* and was endorsed by the Beirut Arab League Summit of 28th March 2002. It recommended the recognition of Israel as a neighbour "living in peace and security".¹⁰⁶

As defence against terrorism, Israel began already in 2002 to construct a separation barrier along the northern periphery of the West Bank. The barrier consists in some areas of a fence and in others of a wall up to eight metres high as well as trenches and a no-go area (totalling 50 to 100 metres wide) on either side. The barrier follows a route predominantly east of the so-called *Green Line* (Armistice Line of 4th June, 1967) and cuts deeply into the West Bank proper.¹⁰⁷

In his statement following the 2003 Aqaba meeting, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon referred to the possibility of establishing a Palestinian state within temporary borders if the conditions for this are met. The Palestinian state should therefore, *inter alia*, be completely demilitarised. No Palestinian refugee will be permitted to enter the territory of the State of Israel.¹⁰⁸ Israel argues that if Palestinian refugees return, the "Jewish identity" of Israel will be endangered. Due to the wars in 1948/49 and 1967, four million Palestinian refugees presently live in the occupied territories and in neighbouring countries of Israel. At a summit held in Aqaba on 4th June, 2003, Ariel Sharon, and Mahmoud Abbas – at this time newly appointed first Prime Minister of the Palestinian territories¹⁰⁹ – endorsed the *Road Map* in the presence of U.S. President, George W. Bush. With the agreement of a number of Palestinian groups to a unilateral cease-fire following lengthy negotiations between 29th-30th June, 2003, – in which Egypt acted as mediator –, the way appeared to be open for the implementation of the *Road Map*. But neither side showed the necessary vigour in fulfilling the commitments they

106 European Commission, "The External Relations, The EU & the Middle East Peace Process, A Performance-based Road Map to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict by the Quartet (European Union, United States, the Russian Federation and the United Nations)," Brussels, 30th April, 2003.

107 Ibid.

108 Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "The Middle East Peace Summit at Aqaba," 4th June, 2003, <http://www.mfa.gov.il>.

109 Abbas (his *nom de guerre*: Abu Mazin) became the first Palestinian prime minister in March 2003.

had made in Aqaba till autumn of that year. Following a renewed outbreak of suicide bombings and Israeli operations against radical Palestinian leaders in Nablus and Gaza, the ceasefire was rescinded on 21st August 2003. By the end of 2003, progress on implementing the *Road Map* had completely been stalled.

On 1st December, 2003, an “alternative Middle East peace plan” was signed in Geneva. This plan was initiated by former Israeli Minister of Justice, Jossi Beilin, and former Palestinian Minister of Information, Yasser Abed Rabbo. This *Geneva Initiative* envisaged the creation of a Palestinian state that comprises 98 percent of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Two states should be created with Jerusalem as the capital of both. In return for this, expelled Palestinian families should renounce their demand of returning to their original homeland on Israeli territory. Closure of many Jewish settlements was also foreseen. This Geneva Initiative was rejected by Israeli government and by the radical wings of Yasser Arafat’s Fatah movement and by extreme Palestinian organisations. In 2004, Arafat’s death marked the end of an era. For Palestinians, he was an icon who succeeded in gaining international recognition of their national aspiration – with initial support from Austrian chancellor, Bruno Kreisky, in the 1970s. For Israel, Arafat had always been a terrorist who was not able and prepared to end the 60 year old conflict and truly accept coexistence. When Arafat died, Mahmoud Abbas was elected president of Palestine in December 2004.

The EU has been supporting the Palestinian Authority politically and economically for a long time. The European Commission plus member states are the largest donors of financial and technical assistance to the Palestinian Authority, providing over 50 percent of the international community’s financing to the West Bank and Gaza Strip since the beginning of the peace process. Total community aid to the Palestinians since 1994 has been over EUR 2 billion in grants of which the largest part has been allocated to Palestinian efforts at institution-building and promotion of reform, good governance, tolerance and respect for human rights. A breakdown of the figures shows for example, that EUR 187 million to the humanitarian aid was provided by ECHO; and EUR 581 million as humanitarian support was given through UNRWA

(United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) for assistance to the refugees, including food aid.¹¹⁰ The Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, has announced the European Commission expects to make about EUR 250 million available in 2005 to support further steps towards the creation of a Palestinian state.¹¹¹ Currently the EU is also the biggest trading partner and major economic, scientific, and research partner of Israel and a major political and economic partner to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt.¹¹²

The EU also provided extensive support to the electoral process. Consequently, EUR 14 million has been earmarked since 2003 and a substantial *EU Election Observation Mission* (over 277 observers from EU amongst a total of 800 international observers) were deployed for the Presidential elections. On 10th January, 2005, PLO chairman Mahmoud Abbas was elected Palestinian President with more than 62 percent of the votes cast.¹¹³ Abbas personifies “the hopes of an electorate weighed down by the privations of occupation and the tragic toll of resistance.”¹¹⁴ He is also the man being counted on by the U.S., the EU and Israel to revive the peace process and to put an end to *al-Aqsa Intifada*. Officials on both sides confirmed that Mahmoud Abbas and his Israeli counterpart, Ariel Sharon, intended to meet shortly for the first summit since the collapse of negotiations between their predecessors, Yasser Arafat and Ehud Barak, in 2000. The radical groupings who called for a boycott of the elections did not succeed. Before the elections, the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza strip was an important step towards implementing the *Road Map* – the international community’s Middle East Peace Plan. Israelis and Palestinians prepared for a resumption of dialogue between their top leaders after a four-year hiatus as a long-awaited plan for streamlining the sprawling Palestinian security services was unveiled. On 26th January,

110 European Commission/External Relations, op. cit

111 “Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner announces EUR 250 million support to the Palestinians in 2005,” Press Release IP/05/157, 9th February, 2005.

112 European Commission/External Relations, op.cit

113 Mahmud Abbas obtained 62.32 percent of votes cast (483,039 votes), ahead of his nearest rival, Mustafa Barghuti, who won a paltry 19.8 percent (153,516 votes). Indiainfo.com, 10th January, 2005; <http://news.indiainfo.com/2005/01/10/1001abbas.html>.

114 “Mahmud Abbas: Pushed to the forefront,” Aljazeera.Net, 10th January, 2005, 21:14 Makka Time, <http://english.aljazeera.net>.

2005, Israel announced a stop to lethal attacks on militant Palestinian leaders. So Israel fulfilled a central Palestinian demand to achieve ceasefire. President Sharon equally declared his readiness for direct contacts to Palestinian leadership. On 25th January, 2005, both Israeli and Palestinian generals agreed to deploy further Palestinian policemen to Gaza strip. Israeli forces started to remove from Gaza and the West Bank earlier. EU offered EUR 70 million to president Abbas for training security personnel and for exportations of goods. Palestinian police took control over Palestinian territories on 28 January 2005 to avoid missile attacks against Israeli territory.

Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, declared an effective cessation of all acts of violence in the four-year, low-intensity war known as the *intifada* during their meeting in Sharm El Sheik on 8th February, 2005. But there was an immediate reminder of the fragility of the declarations from the radical Palestinian group, *Hamas*. *Hamas* spokesmen insisted that Abbas's declaration of a truce was not binding on them, but a unilateral declaration of the Palestinian Authority. Israel has made it clear that if attacks do continue and Abbas does little to stop them, Israel will resume its military activity. The two sides also agreed on some further measures of good will: Israel will free about 900 out of 8,000 Palestinian prisoners and meet with Palestinians to discuss the release of another 230 or so who have been in jail since before the Oslo Accords of 1993.¹¹⁵ Israeli officials insisted that the declarations still left the two sides in a "*pre-Road Map situation*". Sharon was too vulnerable with his plan to pull Israeli settlers out of Gaza to be able to deal with more controversy over illegal settlement and outpost construction in the West Bank. Therefore, Israel is insisting that Abbas implements his obligations to destroy the infrastructure of terrorism in the first stage of the *Road Map* before Israel begins to implement its own obligations of stopping new settlement activity and dismantling up to 50 outposts erected after March 2001.¹¹⁶ Ariel Sharon and Mahmoud Abbas agreed to a mutual ceasefire at the Sharm El Sheik summit on 8th February, 2005. The absence

115 Steven Erlanger, "On 'new path' Sharon and Abbas call truce," International Herald Tribune, 9th February, 2005, <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/02/08/news/mideast.html>.

116 Ibid.

of an American mediator made this meeting seem, in a way, more important, because it was Cairo, not Washington that had brought the two sides together.

In February 2005, Israel's cabinet backed Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to withdraw soldiers and settlers from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank. Ministers voted 17-5 in favour of the plan to remove settlers starting from 15th August, 2005. This plan had already been approved by parliament.¹¹⁷ Through this *Disengagement Plan*, Israel pulls out all its 8,000 settlers from 21 fortified enclaves in Gaza. Israel will maintain control of Gaza's borders, coastline and airspace. Four isolated West Bank settlements have also been evacuated. The withdrawal was planned to take about eight weeks. This was the first time that Israel has abandoned settlements in Palestinian territories.

11 The U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative

The U.S. "has had critical interests in the Middle East for as long as it has been a global power. Securing the flow of the region's oil to the world economy has always been a central priority."¹¹⁸ Furthermore, the roots of global terrorism against U.S. citizens, allies and facilities are situated in this region. Therefore, a stable and secure broader Middle East is of high priority and pivotal interest to the United States. In U.S. views, only close political and economic ties to the West and promoting political, economic and social reforms in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) can create stability and security in this region. For this purpose, the U.S. launched the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) which is a Presidential initiative founded to support economic, political, and educational reform efforts in the Middle East. On 12th December, 2002, Secretary of State, Colin Powell, announced the creation of the MEPI. In light of the continuing war against terrorism, the Iraq crisis, and increased violence in Israel and the Palestinian territories, MEPI is an attempt to "broaden our approach

117 BBC, "Israeli Cabinet backs Gaza Plan," <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>, 20th February, 2005.

118 Dennis Ross, "The Middle East Predicament," in: *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2005, p. 61.

to the region”.¹¹⁹ This initiative comprises two essential elements: the existing *Middle East Partnership Initiative* (MEPI) and the proposed *Middle East Free Trade Area* (MEFTA). MEPI consists of 87 programmes in 16 countries. Programmes conducted in support of the MEFTA will be sponsored through MEPI funding. The initiative strives to link Arab, U.S., and global private sector businesses, non-governmental organisations, civil society elements, and governments in order to develop innovative policies and programs to decrease religious extremism, terrorism, international crime and illegal migration.

The U.S. proposed a plan of graduated steps for Middle Eastern nations to increase trade and investment with the U.S. and others in world economy. The first step is to work closely with peaceful nations that want to become members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in order to expedite their accession – like Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Algeria and Yemen. The *Generalised System of Preferences* programme will also be used to provide duty-free entry for many products from designated developing countries so as to increase trade linkages. As these countries implement domestic reform agendas, institutionalise the rule of law, protect property rights (including intellectual property), and create a foundation for openness and economic growth, the U.S. would expand and deepen economic ties through *Trade and Investment Framework Agreements* (TIFAs), *Bilateral Investment Treaties* (BITs), and comprehensive *Free Trade Agreements* (FTAs). In combination, these projects will ultimately lead to a U.S. – Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA) – possibly by 2013.

MEPI is structured in four reform areas: economic, political, educational and gender pillars. In the economic pillar, MEPI policy and programmes support region wide economic and employment growth driven by private sector expansion and entrepreneurship. The political pillar relates to enhancing democracy and the respect for the rule of law. In the educational pillar, MEPI supports education systems that enable all citizens, including girls, to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in today’s economy and improve the quality of their lives. Finally, in the

119 Jeremy M. Sharp, “The Middle East Partnership Initiative: An Overview,” CRS Report for the Congress, Updated 23rd July, 2003, 1.

gender pillar, MEPI works towards economic, political, and educational systems where women enjoy full and equal opportunities. Among the hallmark activities being conducted under the auspices of MEPI are the establishment of the *Middle East Finance Corporation* to assist small- and medium sized businesses in gaining access to needed capital and to create jobs bridging the job gap in the Middle East (economic pillar); a *Regional Judicial Forum* and *Regional Campaign School* to reform commercial codes, improve the climate for trade and investment, and strengthen property rights and also organise parliamentary training and election assistance/monitoring (political pillar); *Partnership Schools* that offer creative, innovative alternatives for quality and relevant education for children and serve as models for governments as they build schools in the future (education pillar); and regional micro-enterprise and business internships for women (woman's pillar). In May 2003, the *U.S. – Middle East University Partnership Programme* was launched. The objectives of this programme are to expand partnership between U.S. and Arab universities and their economic and civil society partners. The U.S. has agreed with Crown Prince Salman of Bahrain to establish a regional forum of judicial reform in September 2003. The three-day event brought together high-level government officials and non-governmental reformers active in the judicial arena from 15 Arab countries, the Palestinian Authority, the U.K. and the U.S. to discuss essential elements of sound judicial systems, like the role of the judiciary in human rights, efficiency of procedural systems and transnational judicial and legal cooperation in the fields of international crime, money laundering and corruption, the enforcement of judgements in foreign countries, and the possible benefit of uniform statutes on foreign investment.¹²⁰

The U.S. administration has committed US\$ 129 million to MEPI (US\$ 29 million supplementary allocation for the fiscal year (FY) 2002, US\$ 100 million supplementary allocation for the fiscal year FY 2003, US\$ 89 million for the FY 2004 and US\$ 75 million for the FY 2005). In sum, the U.S. government has allocated more than US\$ 5 billion in assistance for countries in the Middle East for the FY 2005 that

120 The Arab Judicial Forum, <http://arabjudicialforum.org/>.

began on 1st October, 2004, and ended on 30th September, 2005. This MEPI funding is in addition to the bilateral economic assistance the U.S. provides annually to the Arab world. The Deputy Secretary of State is the coordinator for MEPI.¹²¹

Under the auspices of the *United States Agency for International Development* (USAID) and its predecessor agencies, the U.S. government funds economic and social assistance programs in Morocco (since 1953), Egypt (since 1975), Lebanon (since the early 1950's), Jordan (since 1951), Gaza and the West Bank (since 1975) and Yemen.¹²²

The idea of remodelling the Middle East region has been mentioned on several occasions by both President George W. Bush and Vice-President Dick Cheney. George W. Bush addressed the issue twice – in his State of the Union speech on 20th January, 2004, and at the American Enterprise Institute on 26th February, 2004. Dick Cheney mentioned it at the World Economic Forum in Davos on 24th January, 2004. The U.S. *Greater Middle East Initiative*¹²³ was unveiled at the Group of 8 (G8) summit of major industrial countries at Sea Island/Georgia in June 2004 while the security aspects of this initiative were discussed at the NATO Summit in Istanbul at the end of June 2004. It urges Arab states to promote democracy, human rights and economic liberalisation. The U.S. initiative is designed to foster a *virtuous cycle* of political, economic and security reform by attacking the root causes of poverty and terrorism. It proposes to address the *three deficits* highlighted by the Arab authors of the 2002 and 2003 *United Nations Arab Human Development Reports* (AHDR) – freedom, knowledge and female emancipation and empowerment:

- The proposal is based on the assumption that a population deprived of economic and political rights is prone to extremism, terrorism, international crime and illegal immigration. It thus intends to advance democracy through technical assistance for free elections, to support women's political

121 U.S. Department of State, Middle East Partnership Initiative, <http://mepi.state.gov/>, and U.S. Earmarks \$5 Billion in Foreign Aid to the Mideast in FY 05, <http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/Archive/2004/Dec/14-506545.html>.

122 Jeremy M. Sharp, "The Middle East Partnership Initiative: An Overview," CRS Report for Congress, Updated 23rd July, 2003, p. 3.

123 The *Greater Middle East* refers to the countries of the Arab world, plus Afghanistan, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and Turkey.

emancipation and to provide general support for non-governmental organisations.

- The promotion of knowledge, which is the second objective of the proposal, has several aims, such as reduction of illiteracy rates, teacher training and educational reform.
- At the economic level, the plan proposes an approach that will unleash the potential of the private sector through micro-financing. It also seeks the creation of a *Development Bank for the Greater Middle East* and the creation of free trade areas.¹²⁴ The U.S. launched the *Middle East Entrepreneur Training* in the United States (MEET U.S.) to train new corps of business leaders for the Middle East and North Africa sponsored by the U.S. Department of State under the MEPI.

Today the Mediterranean region is in transition: the combined GDP of the 22 Arab League countries with a combined population of 300 million is less than that of Spain. Approximately 40 percent of adult Arabs – 65 million people – are illiterate; two thirds of the people concerned are women. Over 50 million young people will enter the labour market by 2010, 100 million will enter by 2020 – a minimum of 6 million new jobs need to be created each year to absorb these new entrants. If current unemployment rates persist, regional unemployment will reach 25 million by 2010. One-third of the region lives on less than two dollars a day. To improve standards of living, economic growth rate in the region must more than double from below 3 percent currently to at least 6 percent. Only 1.6 percent of the population has access to the internet, a figure lower than that of any other region of the world, including Sub-Saharan Africa. 51 percent of older Arab youths expressed their desire to emigrate to other countries, according to the 2002 AHDR, with European countries the favourite destination.

German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, was the first European politician to react publicly to the U.S. *Greater Middle East Initiative*. In his speech at the 2004 Munich Security Conference he proposed a combination of the efforts of the EU and NATO

¹²⁴ EuroMeSCo, "The 'Greater Middle East Initiative'," <http://www.euromesco.net>, 15th May, 2004, 16:17 hours.

into a grand transatlantic initiative to reform the Middle East.¹²⁵ France and Germany were carefully distancing themselves from the U.S. initiative and calling on the EU to define a distinct approach which should be complementary to the American proposal. Their joint position *A Strategic Partnership for a Common Future with the Middle East* envisaged a series of sequential Arab, European and American steps. They emphasised the cooperative nature of the original proposal and underlined the need to generate widespread Arab inputs and ideas so that a *Charter for a Common Future* could be adopted.

Some European opinions reflected a feeling that the U.S. is taking advantage of the EU's instruments in the *Greater Middle East* area to advance its own strategic vision. They feared that the EU will end up with the financial burden while the U.S. keeps the strategic leadership. Some also pointed out the absurdity of having a common strategy for such a diverse region – from Afghanistan to Mauritania.¹²⁶ However, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative and the multilateral reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrate the EU's, the U.S.', and also the G8's commitment to reform the region.

12 The EU's Neighbourhood Policy

For those countries that do not currently have the prospect of membership but which share borders with member states of the European Union – the Southern Mediterranean plus Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus – the EU has recently developed the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Through ENP, the EU is offering a more intensive political dialogue and greater access to EU programmes and policies, including the Single Market, as well as reinforced cooperation on Justice and Home Affairs (JHA). This cooperation is based on a joint commitment to common values and common principles within the fields of the rule of law, good governance, the respect

125 EuroMeSCo, *European Reactions*, <http://www.euromesco.net>, printed on 15th May, 2004.

126 Ibid.

for human rights, including minority rights, the promotion of good neighbourly relations, and the principles of market economy and sustainable development. The ENP reinforces the Barcelona Process and represents an essential plank in the implementation of the *EU Strategic Partnership* with the Mediterranean countries. Following a Strategy Paper, approved by the European Commission on 12th May, 2004, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian Authority were among the first of the EU's Mediterranean neighbours to agree to Action Plans that concretised the EU's offer under the ENP. These first plans approved on 9th December, 2004, are the product of negotiations with each state, and in each case, the plan is deliberately designed to reflect the specific interests of the country concerned.¹²⁷

13 Conclusions

The role of the Mediterranean as a bridge is more evident than ever. Demographics, economics, and energy needs create an ever closer interdependence between Europe and the broader Middle East. Threats from this region such as terrorism, the proliferation of WMD and transnationally organised crime also affect both Europe and the U.S. and require a common response within a comprehensive security approach. This approach comprises political, economic, social, cultural and military cooperation with the states concerned to stabilise the broader Middle East region and to fight against current risks and uncertainties. Since the early 1990s, comprehensive security management is becoming an essential political strategy. Security provision and conflict prevention is forward defence. Terrorism is a primary threat from the Middle East and the Mediterranean. Terrorists try to get non-conventional weapons. They could also use highly sophisticated missiles to bring down passenger planes at 15,000 to 25,000 feet. Non-state actors (like terrorists) are becoming major threats. The director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mohamed El-Baradei, emphasised "the emergence of a nuclear black market, the determined efforts by more countries to

¹²⁷ European Commission/External Relations, op.cit.

acquire technology to produce the fissile material useable in nuclear weapons and the clear desire of terrorists to acquire weapons of mass destruction.”¹²⁸ The creation of a nuclear weapons-free zone in the broader Middle East is one of the most important objectives of the US and the EU.

However, EU’s and U.S.’ primary goals are to fight the roots of terrorism and violence in the broader Mediterranean region – like political and religious extremism combined with poverty, illiteracy, unemployment – through comprehensive political, economic, social and security programmes. The challenges to the Mediterranean region extend to an extremely high population growth rates and migration coupled with a high rate of unemployment and land scarcity. Equally, many refugees from Africa’s several troubled spots try to reach European coasts via the Mediterranean, a major reason for locating huge refugee camps in European states bordering the Mediterranean, for e.g., in Fuerteventura (Spain), near Ceuta and Melilla (Spain) and at Lampedusa Island (Italy). The support of the Middle East and North African (MENA) countries is also needed for effective border control in Europe. To this end, European politicians have been considering erecting refugee camps in Libya or Algeria.

In the 1990s, the EU, the OSCE and NATO developed a comprehensive network of vital partnerships with the countries of the broader Middle East to tackle these problems within the Mediterranean Dialogue processes. The U.S. established the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) in 2003. In order to foster democracy and social stability, to create peace and to fight risks, there is a need to put emphasis on mainly non-military security instruments and invest more in building effective multilateral security institutions. The failure of the US and the EU to make progress in the broader Middle East region and also to stabilise Iraq will constitute a grievous set back to the cause of reform in this region. European and U.S. political leaders now promote efforts aimed at avoiding that Iraq becomes a threat to its own people and its neighbours, diminishing the possibility of an Iranian nuclear risk and strengthening ties between Israel and Palestine in order to stabilise the whole region. In order to

128 Mohamed El-Baradei, “Seven steps to raise world security,” in: Financial Times, 2nd February, 2005, p.13.

contain today's threats and security risks, the U.S. administration "wants to see Europe as a strong partner".¹²⁹

The best security strategy is based on prosperous economy, welfare, democratic political culture and formation and professional training of military and security personnel for crisis management. In the past, the Mediterranean Sea has been both a barrier and a bridge. It has been a region where different cultures and religions meet, sometimes violently, but also peacefully. And at all times, there were intense trade relations between the shores of *mare nostrum*. Enhancing the Mediterranean Dialogues and developing them into a coordinated genuine partnership is a major step in this process of stabilising the region. It also opens a new chapter of transatlantic cooperation.

129 Judy Dempsey, "U.S. supports Europe, NATO chief asserts," in *International Herald Tribune*, 7th June, 2005, p. 3.

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