

Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC)



Transatlantic Relations and the Mediterranean

Monika Wohlfeld (Editor)
Med Agenda — Special Issue

MEDAC Publications in Mediterranean IR and Diplomacy

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Malta, April 2019

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Acknowledgment

This edited publication entitled 'Transatlantic Relations and the Mediterranean' has emerged from a Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC) postgraduate seminar on the same subject matter held on 30th November 2018 in Malta. The authors of the papers presented in this special volume of the Med Agenda engaged during the seminar in November 2018 in a lively interaction with MEDAC students, many of whom are young diplomats from countries of the Mediterranean and beyond.

The Seminar has been made possible by funding provided by the German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of the German Chair for Peace Studies and Conflict Prevention project at MEDAC.

The Federal Republic of Germany has been a stakeholder in MEDAC since 2009. In recognition of the vital importance of a Mediterranean region with strong, co-operative Euro-Mediterranean relations, the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs established a German Chair in Peace Studies and Conflict Prevention at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC). The German Chair has been able to enhance the research and publication dimension of the Academy, in addition to teaching and supervision dimension of its work. The holder of the Chair, Dr. Monika Wohlfeld, has also edited this **Med Agenda**.

Introduction: Transatlantic relations and the Mediterranean

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Dr. Monika Wohlfeld

There is no doubt that the transatlantic relationship is experiencing a crisis of confidence and commitment that rivals or surpasses the Iraq crisis of the early 2000s. The United States and the EU states continue to co-operate in a number of frameworks, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, but increasingly differ on such key issues as trade and tariffs, energy security, environmental protection and climate change, nuclear disarmament and defense spending, relations with China and Russia, relations with Iran and Saudi Arabia, the Middle East conflict and the two state solution, to mention a few. Multilateralism has become a contested concept in transatlantic relations.

These differences certainly already have or will have palpable implications for the Mediterranean region. In the *Mediterranean Futures 2030* study, Peter Engelke *et al* present the following possible scenarios for the Mediterranean region – Erosion, Drawbridges, Power Play, and Club Med¹. Only the last (and least likely) possible scenario can be seen as positive. How transatlantic relations evolve in the foreseeable future will clearly have an impact on which of these scenarios will shape the Mediterranean region.

This publication and the seminar on the same subject held in Malta in November 2018 focus on the impact of the current state of transatlantic relations on the Mediterranean region. The authors which contributed to the publication display varying degrees of

¹ Peter Engelke, Lisa Aronsson, and Magnus Nordenman, *Mediterranean Futures 2030 - Toward A Transatlantic Security Strategy*. Atlantic Council, January 2017, p. 15. [https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Mediterranean Futures 2030 web 0201.pdf](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Mediterranean_Futures_2030_web_0201.pdf)

optimism and pessimism concerning the future of transatlantic relations, but are united in seeing the US-European interaction as very much relevant and vital for the future of the Mediterranean region.

Below, the papers that make up the core of this publication are summarized briefly.

Mr. Josef Janning takes a somewhat pessimistic view of the current state of the transatlantic relations and their impact on the Mediterranean region. He argues that already for some time, the US takes an instrumental approach to multilateral institutions, which is based on a calculation of the usefulness. The US is not alone in this, as other major powers in world affairs now also take such an approach to multilateral institutions. This approach is at odds with European thinking, which takes an affirming approach to multilateral institutions and their rules. Mr. Janning lays out a power paradigm that the United States and other powers are taking, and which will mean that Europe has to act without a solid multilateral surrounding and facing unilateral actions by great powers and regional powers that will run counter to the efforts and cooperation schemes that are supported by the Europeans. These powers will only look to institutions they can rely on for supporting some of their actions and cushioning some of their effects. None of these powers can be expected to effectively deal with the impact that is emerging from the antagonist triangle of Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, that has a lot of explosive potential for the entire region. Co-operative efforts are unlikely, and what Mr. Janning calls 'multi-unilateralism' has the potential of making matter worse in the southern neighbourhood of the EU.

Dr. Antonio Missiroli and Ms. Federica Genna present the role of the transatlantic alliance NATO in the Mediterranean, and take a more optimistic view of the state of affairs. They identify three pillars of NATO's activities: helping partner countries build capacity, contributing to the international fight against terrorism, and maintaining a presence in the Mediterranean Sea. Dr. Missiroli and

Ms. Genna argue that the turn to the South that NATO took in recent years is evident and tangible, and well justified. The activities and initiatives they outline reflect a serious commitment on the part of the Alliance to cooperate with its Southern partners - wherever possible, in parallel and in concert with the EU - to build their capacity so that they can address more effectively the challenges they face.

Dr. Missiroli and Ms. Genna also identify some emerging trends worth monitoring, beside the fall-out of civil conflicts in Syria and Libya. In particular, cyber, maritime and border security remain high on the list of priorities for partner countries in the Mediterranean, especially in relation to the fight against terrorism. NATO will also focus on such factors as water, food and energy security, climate change and socio-economic problems which could potentially fuel new conflicts or exacerbate old ones. The increased presence in the Mediterranean region of external actors, especially Russia and China, is also relevant, as is the potential implications of the discovery of undersea gas and oil deposits. Thus, NATO has a significant role to play in the Mediterranean region.

Amb. Nassif Hitti focuses largely on the intra-regional problems, which should be solved by the intra-regional players first and foremost. Writing about regional relations in the Middle East, he argues that the key challenges stem from ten such problems or challenges. These focus on the nature of the regional order (which Amb. Hitti identifies as an anarchical or disordered regional order), the proliferation of failed and failing states, the revival of sub-national identities and spread of non-state actors, the crisis of the Arab state and failure of national construction in many such states, the erosion of a collective pan-Aran identity, the emergence of wars (a regional Cold War, war by proxy, protracted social conflict), Arab expanding demography meeting lopsided development, a proliferation of political Islam of opposing schools, and a failure of the entire architecture of regional co-operation. He concludes by pleading for more regional co-operation on all of these issues.

Dr. Juliette R. Rouge Shedd presents an American perspective on transatlantic relations, taking up the question of “which America” or “whose America”. She argues that heightened political division in the United States emphasizes sharp divides in how the American public views the relationship with transatlantic partners. Dr. Rouge Shedd argues that while still structured around two parties, the American political system consists of at least four primary factions (conservative populists, traditional Republicans, traditional Democrats and liberal progressives) – and none of those is ideologically consistent. She looks at various facets of US policies in the context of transatlantic relations, keeping in mind these divisions into primary political factions (or ideological movements). Dr. Rouge Shedd suggests that the threat to strong transatlantic relations is coming from both the conservative populists and the liberal progressives, with traditional Democrats and traditional Republicans aligned overall in support of international relations and institutions. She uses the Dahrendorf Forum foresight project to identify the drivers for transatlantic relations which are most significant for American publics – shared liberal culture, which is affected by populism on both sides of the Atlantic; cohesion among EU member states, which is affected by Brexit and other similar policies; an understanding of responsibility for the global order, which is affected by the coalition wars of the last two decades; technological developments and co-operation on fostering technological advancements, at mercy of the concerns around cybersecurity and information security; and finally, the attitudes towards the use of military force, affected by a debate over legitimacy, strategic doctrine, and ultimately also NATO funding. Dr. Rouge Shedd concludes by arguing that both conservative populists and liberal progressives dismiss moderate approaches, but forget that American politics is built on civil discourse and compromise. This is important to keep in mind in the context of US relationship with its transatlantic partners.

Finally, Prof. Stephen Calleya provides a comprehensive analysis of the prospects for transatlantic relations and the Mediterranean, focusing on the role of extra-regional powers in the Euro-Mediterranean area, the role of the United States as a superpower

and the role of international organizations, with a focus on NATO. Prof. Calleya argues that while the United States remains the only superpower globally and a principal intrusive actor in the Mediterranean region, its willingness to assume a commensurate role is being questioned. However, any weakening of transatlantic co-operation would impact upon the ability to address security challenges in the Mediterranean and make a security vacuum scenario a permanent feature of the region. Prof. Calleya explains the historical rationale behind America's policies towards the Mediterranean and argues that to date there is no clear shift away from America's long held strategic objectives in the region. It continues to play the role of a strategic guarantor and crisis manager of disputes. Nevertheless, one may wish to speculate about a potential impact of US forces withdrawal from the region. Prof. Calleya suggests that such a move would result in a power vacuum which would enable bilateral types of external intervention in regional affairs replacing multilateral initiatives, including in the field of crisis management, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

Concerning the role of NATO, Prof. Calleya argues that the post-Cold War era is proving a continuous test to the *raison d'être* of NATO. The Alliance has found common ground in the fight against international terrorism. NATO can however preserve its cohesion by identifying common security ground in the new security environment that has emerged, and the Mediterranean and the Middle East offer the alliance such an opportunity. As no single organization can address all security challenges in the Mediterranean, a realistic alternative is a situation in which an international organization, such as the EU, is assisted by transatlantic organizations such as NATO and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The strategic goal of international organizations in the region must be to reduce the regional dynamics of fragmentation.

While the Mediterranean 'has brighter and darker spots, in general, insecurity and instability characterize the region'². The states of the region, the United States and EU states have a common interest

2 *ibid.*

in steering the Mediterranean region towards the only positive scenario – which the Mediterranean Futures report calls the ‘Club Med’ scenario. For this however, all three sides of the equation must engage and play a constructive role. While NATO continues overall to deliver on its mandate in the Mediterranean, the drifting apart of the Americans and Europeans on preferences in the context of the unilateralism (or as Mr. Janning suggests multi-unilateralism) versus multilateralism debate is clearly noticeable in the Mediterranean region. At the same time, the intra-regional situation is characterized by multiple challenges to statehood, collective identity, and the regional co-operation architecture. Conflict, divisions within political Islam and development problems complete the picture. While these challenges require an answer from within the region, the transatlantic tensions do contribute to the difficulties and exacerbate problems. As the Mediterranean Futures 2030 report succinctly suggests, ‘the region is crowded and increasingly contested, exacerbating tensions and drawing attention from distant powers’³.

3 *ibid.*

Transatlantic relations and the Mediterranean: taking stock and the way forward

Mr. Josef Janning

In their recent *Mediterranean Futures 2030* study, Peter Engelke et al present several possible scenarios for the Mediterranean region – Erosion, Drawbridges, Power Play, and Club Med¹. Allow me to start by saying that the only positive of those scenarios, Club Med, will not happen, though it represents an old idea – the idea to apply the lessons learned in the context of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) to the Mediterranean. Today, I would like to discuss the developments and trends, which make me state this with such clarity.

When you grow up in a country like Germany, you have a set of experiences that is really deeply engrained in the way that you look at the world; the way that you look at Europe. Our history shapes the way we, particularly in Germany but elsewhere in Europe too, have been looking at transatlantic relations and the role of the United States. Only when you understand this, can you also understand how profoundly shaken European political thinking is by the changes we are witnessing in the transatlantic relationship.

Allow me to address the issue at hand by focusing on the European policy perspective. We cannot but assume that the changes in transatlantic relations will also impact Europe's other important external relations and those are primarily Europe's role and Europe's policies in its rather dynamic, often times dangerous, many times

1 Peter Engelke, Lisa Aaronson, and Magnus Norseman, *Mediterranean Futures 2030- Toward a Transatlantic Security Strategy*. Atlantic Council, January 2017, p. 15 [https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Mediterranean Futures 2030 web 0201.pdf](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Mediterranean_Futures_2030_web_0201.pdf)

violent, mostly unstable environment both to the East and the South.

I would like to start with the observation that the Trump Presidency, as much blame as it gets, is not the beginning of all change. Rather, this Presidency has much accelerated trends that have been visible before and that will shape US foreign policy and transatlantic relations after the end of the Trump Presidency, whenever that will be, either in two years or in six years. Three of these trends I consider to be significant, because the US is also responding to change. Thus, the Trump Presidency, like all the previous ones, is responding to a changing environment that is quite challenging to the United States as well.

The first factor is that the US economic supremacy is withering away and that marks a profound change for the United States. The traditional approach of the American economic and trade policy focused on open markets and free-trade because it benefitted the US in a global economy. This translated into the belief that if Europe, if Asia, if other regions of the world begin to prosper, with or without some kind of US aid and initial investment or loans, then eventually the US economy would also benefit from these changes. The current reading, however, is that US 'exceptionalism', the role of the US as the centre of the global economy, is withering away. Because of its collective pooling of bargaining power, Europe now is an economy of the size of the United States' economy. EU countries still do not understand the significance of collective bargaining power. So, in Germany, we pride ourselves as being export 'world champions'. But we neglect the fact that a good part of our exports goes to the countries of the European Union, and so basically to what can be described as a domestic market. Individually, the countries of the EU are not really an issue for the US – but the EU with its collective bargaining power is.

The United States is now waking up to a situation where another power, China, is on its way to take a similar position in the global economy; at some point possibly even surpassing the United

States as the largest national economy in the world. It cannot be excluded that China will not be the only national economy to develop in a such a way, and while other emerging powers may not actually reach the size of the US economy or the Chinese economy, their rise still contributes to the process of ending the era of US exceptionalism. The traditional approach that United States' governments have taken to international trade and international economic cooperation is thus changing.

The second factor is President Trump's understanding of the international order as being established and maintained by power. By international order I mean a rules-based order that works through conventions, through regimes that countries build in order to give predictability to the ways and means in which they articulate and settle their interests or conflicts of interests. Multilateral governance, in the reading of American strategic thinking today, does not contain or address the key risks or the key challenges the US perceives to its role in the international system. Consequently, the conclusion is that multilateralism in the current form cannot bind the 'major league' of power, the United States. In the current American view, this multilateral order does not constrain China, nor does it sufficiently contain the threat of Islamist terror. In consequence of that, America is shifting away from a focus on institutions and global governance to a paradigm of power. Of course this development has to do with the economic setting, and with the rivalry with China. But it also has to do with the recognition that the goals that US policy sought to pursue through multilateralism did not come about or were not sufficiently fulfilled.

The third factor is that in the US view, European security is a problem that has been solved. The major reason for the United States to be so deeply engaged in European affairs, namely to contain any advance of the Soviet Union towards the West, has been dealt with. Even the most recent developments and tensions between the United States and the Russian Federation do not change this. In the American reading, which we in Europe have chosen to ignore for the past 25 years or so, during the Cold War, Europe has demonstrated

its inability to defend itself from an aggression from the East and therefore the United States had to step in and help to secure Europe. My colleague Jeremy Shapiro has described this perception and its policy implications in detail ahead of Donald Trump's election.² But ever since the end of the Cold War, US administrations have believed that this is a task that Europe could fulfil on its own. The US was not calling for Europeans to assume responsibility for nuclear deterrence. Rather, the expectation was that Europe would mount credible, conventional defence against an aggression, which in turn is essential to nuclear deterrence. In fact, nuclear deterrence actually depends not only on the availability of nuclear weapons, but also on the ability to mount credible conventional defence in order not to be forced to use nuclear weapons ahead of time. In the American reading, for 25 years now, this task of addressing conventional capabilities has been a task that Europeans could fulfil, but have not done so, and the Trump administration's view is only the bluntest expression of that thinking.

To sum up these three factors, I will put forward four observations:

1. The US takes now an instrumental approach to multilateral institutions. If they serve the purpose, the US is in. If they don't, either the US walks out or plainly does not care. The US is not alone in this: this converges with the approach of other major powers in world affairs, which now also take an instrumental approach to multilateral institutions. This instrumental approach however does not correspond to European thinking, which takes a principled and affirming approach to multilateral institutions and their rules.
2. The US seeks a big stick approach to rogue states that pose problems or challenges to its view of the international order. So instead of skilfully hedging on the Iranian issue, the US administration decided to tackle the issue head on.

² https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/how_clinton_and_trump_challenge_transatlantic_relations_7137

3. The United States re-injects mercantilist elements in its trade policy. It still walks along some of the same economic lines, but it tries to achieve short term outcomes – inter alia shifting jobs back and imposing tariffs in order to quickly change the trade balance. In this context, the US takes a transactional approach to European security in the sense that it follows a philosophy that says, ‘you can actually purchase support from us’, ‘you can purchase our commitment’.
4. The US focuses primarily on its major rivalry with China. It is very clear (and has been fairly clear since the presidency of George Bush Jr.), that in the US strategic view, the key adversary and challenge to the United States’ interests, role and prospects is China. US policy only took a 15 year detour on this issue after 9/11 by prioritizing other challenges and now returned to the focus on China. US policy looks at many of its other relationships through the prism of its rivalry with China; in how far they contribute, they help, they hinder, or they deliver either on US interest or the adversary’s interest.

All of these changes affect Europe directly or indirectly. First of all there is a focus on trade and pressure on Europe to extract economic concessions. This pressure is aimed at scoring short term points by blocking certain imports, by shifting corporate decisions in favour of the US labour market or in favour of mostly traditional industries. There is no need to use the power of the United States to advance the fortune of Microsoft; but for the Iowa farmer, for the corn farmers, for the beef industry, for the poultry industry in the United States, this administration has an open ear. Same goes for steel and cars, traditional industries that are the main beneficiaries of that approach. Consequently, trade is becoming weaponized. I believe that one of the more likely scenarios is that someday not too far away, there will emerge a conflict between the United States and China that will escalate into sanctioning each other. But the next phase will most likely see especially the Americans but also the Chinese demanding support and loyalty from the Europeans. The United States will make it clear that if European companies do

not comply, they can't do business with the United States, or they can't use the dollar in their exchanges, just as it happens currently with Iran and the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA). The structural power the United States has in international economic relations, the role of the dollar or US legislation on secondary sanctions, will be used to reign in other states.

On the security side, we witness an instrumentalization of security links for economic and fiscal interests. Allies can purchase US commitment rather than being able to automatically rely on it. The '2% debate' in the context of NATO is telling: responding to US pressure, the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) pledged in 2014 to increase their defense spending to 2 percent of their gross domestic products by 2024³, but most of them moved only a little way (if at all) towards this goal.

Unfortunately the performance of the Europeans on implementing this goal is rather poor, giving good grounds to the US administration to actually instrumentalize the security relationship in the above mentioned way. The idea is to enhance US power by pushing allies to spend more on defense and in effect purchasing more arms from the United States.

The United States increasingly tends to define security unilaterally, rather than as common security or shared security. The US approach to the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) is a case in point but arguably also the idea of leaving the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty, formally the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, a 1987 arms control agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union). There are of course reasons to say that the INF was concluded when the basic conflict on the nuclear level was

3 Jan Techau, *The Politics of 2 Percent: NATO And The Security Vacuum In Europe*. Carnegie Europe, Sept. 2015. https://carnegieendowment.org/files/CP_252_Techau_NATO_Final.pdf

a binary one between the Soviet Union and the United States and thus needs adjustments. In the past, the US may well have pursued a different type of arms control arrangement in place of INF, but now it is instead saying, 'well then, let's leave INF.' This approach is part of the view of the US administration under President Trump that toughness is needed to force the other side to the table. Essentially, pressure is put on others in order to get a deal, in order to get to an agreement.

What will be the implications of such a milieu, such an atmosphere or climate for the transatlantic relations? We are moving away from a situation in which the US saw itself as a *primus inter pares* (first among equals), as the most powerful, the strongest, possibly also the most committed, amongst a group of equals in the North Atlantic alliance, even though of very different size. Thus, the US is moving from alliance to empire and towards a policy of *divide et impera* (divide and rule). The divide and rule approach is intended to weaken common institutions. The US has never really appreciated European integration and European institutions. Washington deeply dislikes that Europeans take decisions and then show themselves inflexible in dealing with the US because changing a position agreed upon in the EU is too complicated to do. But the Trump administration takes this lack of appreciation one step further. I will give you just three very brief examples – of Germany, the UK, and Poland.

Let me focus first on the German case. The US administration is using the debate that takes place in Europe about the German export surplus and is tickling some of the anti-German sentiments that exist. It is not doing this because it thinks that Germany is the enemy, but because it knows that Germany is a pivotal actor in the European Union. If you take out that actor, if you take out the centrepiece in such a network, you could weaken or destroy the network.

The second case is the UK, which chose to leave the European Union. In the eyes of this US administration, this is good news because it is a case in point of a narrative that sees a 'regime' in Brussels. The

US's frustration with the Brussels policy machine implies that this machine needs to be weakened. Consequently, the UK's departure from the European Union is to be greeted⁴. President Donald Trump responded to the withdrawal agreement by arguing that this is a good deal for the EU. It is in fact not just the President in the US who thinks this way. But these are toxic phrases, meant to weaken the British Prime Minister Theresa May, meant to make sure that Brexit is as hard and disruptive for Europe as possible.

The third example is Poland. I can assure you there is not a single speech on foreign policy by the American President that does not contain references to the natural order of international relations as being cooperation and conflict between sovereign states. This is exactly what the Polish government thinks, and US statements bolster this thinking. The Polish government would love to see a return to the sovereignty paradigm within the EU, instead of the pooling of sovereignty. The idea is to take back control on a national level, rolling back the level of policy making and consensus building in the European Union.

These are three cases in point on how the US is disrupting the EU. In this situation, when Europe's preferred political environment is eroding, the key question is whether the Europeans can counterbalance the centrifugal forces, the disruptive strategy that the US is using. When you look at the response of the Europeans, you see for example the German Foreign Minister and some others stating „Europe united“ in response to ‘America first’⁵. However, in reality, European countries part ways in at least four different directions:

4 Paul Dallison, ‘Trump on Brexit agreement: ‘Sounds like a great deal for the EU’. *Politico* 26 November. 2018 <https://www.politico.eu/article/trump-on-brexit-agreement-sounds-like-a-great-deal-for-the-eu/>

5 Michelle Martin and Madeline Chambers, ‘Germany: ‘Europe United’ must be answer to Trump’s ‘America First’. *Reuters*, 7 November 2018’. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-germany-maas/germany-europe-united-must-be-answer-to-trumps-america-first-id-USKCN1NC1I9>

1. The UK is in the process of leaving the EU.
2. Italy and Poland are adding fuel to the fire, turning to the notion of sovereignty.
3. France claims that a re-founding of Europe and emancipation from the US is the way to go. The French President Macron has a lot of points to his argument⁶ but Europe will not change the situation by words. And in order to get things done President Macron will need the cooperation with others, especially Germany. It is not enough to give a statement about the need for a European army - the real difficulty is to get other EU member states to do together what needs to be done in order to achieve this.
4. And the fourth direction is the German approach, which aims at not rocking the boat, in the hope that things will not be as bad as they are presented.

In my view, none of these approaches could actually be a viable response to what is at stake.

To give an example of the difficulties: After the US withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA), Europeans stated their determination to abide by the agreement and to protect European companies from secondary sanctions imposed by the US⁷. Indeed, one can set up a state bank to manage financial transactions but the real point is that one cannot convince Airbus Industries to continue its deal with Iran Air on Airbus planes if that means that Airbus Industries will lose its business in the United States, one of the largest and most competitive markets for aircrafts in the world. How does one protect against that? This is not done by EU regulations and that is not done by establishing a small fund to compensate companies. This is all about structural power, about market power in international economics that is difficult to manipulate.

6 Pierre Haroche, 'Macron's 'European army': why is everyone talking about it?'. *EU Observer*, 14 November 2018. <https://euobserver.com/opinion/143372>

7 Mehreen Khan, 'EU launches counter-measures against US sanctions on Iran in Brussels'. *Financial Times*, 6 August 2018. <https://www.ft.com/content/be32d010-9973-11e8-9702-5946bae86e6d>

Regarding the Mediterranean region, the power paradigm will change the situation in several ways. Mostly it will mean that Europe has to act without a solid multilateral environment and will be facing unilateral actions by great powers and regional powers. These will likely run counter to the efforts and cooperation schemes that are supported by the Europeans. The great power paradigm I presented above will thus proliferate into the region. The consequences of this change will be felt in several ways. Regarding the issue of migration including efforts to address root causes of migration as well as dealing with human trafficking or returns, the tasks will have to be handled by Europe and its neighbours without a strong global co-operative framework. The 2018 UN Global Compact For Safe, Orderly And Regular Migration⁸, unfortunately comes years too late, because the global setting has evolved into a different direction — Africa in a wider sense is off the power radar of the United States, and China and Russia strictly follow their own interests and are not ready and willing to engage on an Africa strategy that the European Union could conceive.

The socio-economic crisis of the southern neighbourhood of Europe is an issue that Europe will have to deal with on its own, without a favourable multilateral trade environment. The Middle East will remain the most unstable and violent part of Europe's neighbourhood, shaped by 'multi-unilateralism' with several great powers (Russia, China, US) that are directly and indirectly acting on their own. None of them will look to the UN or to Europe as partners. These powers will only look to institutions they can rely on for supporting some of their actions and cushioning some of their effects, but not as part of a common policy framework. None of these powers can be expected to effectively deal with the impact of the emerging antagonist triangle of Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, which has a lot of explosive potential for the entire region. The Mid-East quartet is nothing but a piece of history. Co-operative efforts are unlikely, and 'multi-unilateralism' has the potential of

8 https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180711_final_draft_0.pdf

making matter worse in the southern neighbourhood of the EU. Thus, there will be no room for a Club Med scenario in the future of the Mediterranean region.

