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Med Agenda – Special Issue

Transatlantic Relations and the Mediterranean

Dr. Monika Wohlfeld (Editor)

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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

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 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

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

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 matters 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-Arab 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 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.

² *ibid.*

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 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

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

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

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

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.
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 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

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

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:

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.

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-USKCN1NC119>

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

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.

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 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.

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>

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

Security challenges in the Mediterranean: NATO's role

Dr. Antonio Missiroli, Ms. Federica Genna

As a meeting point for three different continents (Europe, Asia, and Africa), the strategic and geopolitical relevance of the Mediterranean region cannot be overstated.¹ Throughout the centuries, it has witnessed the development of glorious civilizations and flourishing trade routes². In pre-modern times, it already experienced all known types of international systems: bipolar (Rome vs. Carthage), hegemonic/unipolar (the Roman 'lake'), and multipolar (the Medieval Italian seafaring republics, the fledgling European nation-States and the rising Islam). In the modern age, up to the 20th century, it lost centrality but not relevance, and remained a major arena of great power competition and commercial and cultural exchange.

During the Cold War, the Mediterranean was one of the arenas where the East-West conflict played out, thus witnessing a growing US and Allied military presence and robust transatlantic cooperation. After the Cold War, the region experienced a season of hope, building also on the peace process in the Middle East, but not without problems in the Adriatic (the violent dissolution of former Yugoslavia) or the Eastern Mediterranean (e.g. Iraq, Lebanon).

Over the past few years, the Mediterranean has also been the theatre for some of the world's most defining developments and trends. Climate change, but also renewable and untapped energy sources; water and food insecurity, but also rising life expectancy; socio-economic instability and uncontrolled migration flows, but also increased access to education and information; weak states, authoritarian rulers, violence and terrorism, but also spots of civic progress and human development. And these are only some of the many, often intertwined and multifaceted issues that have made today's Mediterranean region a highly volatile, unstable but also dynamic environment.

With ten member nations and seven partner countries present in the Mediterranean, the region is now an area of increased focus also for NATO, well aware that the security of its surroundings - shaped by those and other developments - also means the security of the Alliance as a whole.

¹ Dr Antonio Missiroli is NATO's Assistant Secretary-General for Emerging Security Challenges and an Adjunct Professor at the College of Europe (Bruges) and the Paris School of International Affairs (Sciences Po). Federica Genna is a Junior Officer at NATO HQ. The views expressed here are their own and not to be attributed to any organisation.

² For a fascinating historical overview see D. Abulafia, *The Great Sea*. Oxford University Press, Oxford-London, 2011.

New context, new concept

This focus started taking shape as part of the overall transformation NATO underwent at the end of the Cold War, mindful of the need to adapt to the newly emerging security challenges in order to remain an effective player on the international stage. The implication that a stable Mediterranean region also meant a stable Alliance was for the first time formalized in the NATO 1999 Strategic Concept, which described the Mediterranean as “an area of special interest to the Alliance”, whose security and stability is closely linked to that of Europe³.

Over the years, this idea was developed and expanded into a wider strategic concept for NATO’s approach to its Southern flank—part of what, at the 2016 Warsaw Summit, was ultimately dubbed “Projecting Stability”.

“Projecting Stability” simply means contributing - through enhanced regional understanding and situational awareness, and effective capacity building efforts in partner countries - to a stable environment in NATO’s vicinity and, consequently, to NATO’s own stability. This builds on a series of partnership tools developed by the Alliance to cooperate more effectively with its Southern neighbours and reinforced its role in the Mediterranean region, fostering political dialogue and practical collaboration and providing concrete assistance and support in its areas of expertise.

As the challenges in the region grew, NATO’s attitude towards the South became even more focused, its activities multiplied and a need for streamlining them soon emerged. At the 2018 Brussels Summit, Allied Heads of State and Government endorsed the creation of a “Package on the South”, which included a range of political and practical cooperation initiatives contributing to a more strategic, focused, and coherent approach to countries in the wider Mediterranean region.

The Brussels Summit declared inter alia the Full Operational Capability (FOC) of the new NATO flagship initiative, the Regional Hub for the South, located in Naples. The aim behind the creation of the Hub was to increase NATO’s situational awareness of the threats – and opportunities – emanating from the region; to support the collection and sharing of information; and to deliver coordination and outreach activities with the Alliance’s partners in the South⁴. If nurtured, there is potential for this to be a valuable asset for NATO– bringing together valuable expertise and functioning as a focal point for the strengthening of mutually beneficial relationships with partners. The Mediterranean region would be the most obvious beneficiary of this initiative.

Three pillars, seven partners

If it were to be summed up schematically, NATO’s role in the Mediterranean region could be seen as resting on three main pillars: helping partner countries build capacity, contributing to the international fight against terrorism, and maintaining a presence in the Mediterranean Sea.

I.

NATO’s capacity building efforts are implemented through a myriad of different frameworks, some of which are of particular relevance to the Mediterranean region.

³ NATO. (1999). The Alliance’s Strategic Concept, para 38.

⁴ NATO. (2018). NATO Brussels Summit Declaration, para 55. [online] Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

Along with the Partnership for Peace (PfP)⁵, one of the oldest frameworks for cooperating with Southern countries is the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), a forum for dialogue and cooperation established between NATO and regional Partners in 1994. Initially comprising only Israel, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Mauritania, this framework welcomed Jordan in 1995 and Algeria in 2000.

At its inception, the MD was simply a forum for political dialogue. However, at the 2002 Prague Summit⁶ and 2004 Istanbul Summit⁷, new dynamism was injected into this forum, with Allied leaders agreeing on a package of measures to upgrade it and shift from dialogue-centred cooperation to a true partnership framework, enhancing its practical dimension.

To date, all of the MD countries have signed an Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP) with NATO. Each IPCP is tailored to the needs of the requesting country, and calls on the Alliance's know-how and assistance in areas such as defence institution-building, civil-military relations, and security sector reform (SSR).

Two of the seven participants of the Mediterranean Dialogue – Tunisia and Jordan – are also recipients of one of NATO's newest programme for building capacity in partner countries: the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative.

Defence Capacity Building (DCB) Packages are a core component of NATO's effort to project stability, not only in the South but also in the East. Launched in 2014, the DCB initiative aims at providing, upon request, tailored assistance to local forces by advising, assisting, training and mentoring them in specific, agreed-upon areas. In the South in particular, the work conducted under the DCB initiative has strongly contributed to countering many of the emerging security challenges affecting the area. In the wider Mediterranean region, Tunisia, Jordan and Iraq are DCB Package recipients.

Relevant areas touched upon by DCB Packages include cyber defence and countering Improvised Explosive Devices (Tunisia); military exercises, civil preparedness and border security (Jordan); military medicine, civil-military cooperation and security sector reform (Iraq)⁸.

Hopefully Libya, the major absentee from both the DCB Initiative and the Mediterranean Dialogue, will also at some stage become a recipient of a DCB Package. NATO intervened in Libya in 2011 with Operation Unified Protector, with a UN Security Council mandate to protect civilians from attack during the regime's brutal response to the local outbreak of the Arab Spring⁹. Since the fall of Gaddafi and the ensuing internal chaos, the Alliance has received

⁵ Since the reactivation (2008) of its original membership (1995), Malta is currently the only Mediterranean member of the PfP, as Albania, Croatia and Montenegro have joined the Alliance.

⁶ NATO. (2002). NATO Prague Summit Declaration, para 10. [online] Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_19552.htm [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

⁷ NATO. (2004). NATO Istanbul Summit Declaration, para 36. [online] Available at: <https://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm> [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

⁸ In Iraq, all DCB-related activities are now delivered within the framework of NATO's new non-combat, training mission, launched in late 2018 at the request of the Iraqi Prime Minister with the main aim of helping the country develop its capacity to build more effective national security structures and professional military education institutions.

⁹ In March 2011, a coalition of NATO Allies and partners began enforcing an arms embargo, maintaining a no-fly zone and protecting civilians and civilian-populated areas from attack or the threat of attack. The final UNSC

multiple formal requests from the Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) for support in stabilizing the country and training its security forces. Allied Heads of State and Government at NATO Summits have reiterated their readiness to step in and provide assistance to build Libya's security institutions, in coordination with the UN and other relevant actors.

II.

Overall, much of the assistance provided under the framework of DCB packages is relevant to the second area on which NATO works in the Mediterranean region. Counter terrorism (CT) is regarded by regional partners as one of the toughest challenges they are confronted with.

NATO's current enhanced focus on CT, highlighted by the large number of initiatives undertaken under this umbrella, exemplifies the Alliance's ability to adapt and evolve to the fast-paced changes occurring in the international environment.

Ten years after 9/11 and the historic decision to resort to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, policy guidelines were adopted in 2012 setting out NATO's need to be aware of the terrorist threat, capable of countering it, and engaged to this end with partners and international organisations. In May 2017, the Alliance issued an ambitious Action Plan on Enhancing NATO's Role in the International Community's Fight against Terrorism.

The 2017 document set the framework for the Alliance's role amongst those other international organizations active in the global fight against terrorism. It outlined a clear operational agenda playing to NATO strengths and focused on those areas where its contribution would provide added value, mindful of national sensitivities in dealing with the issue.

Providing support and building capacity in partner countries – in particular those in the South – in order to strengthen their own ability to fight terrorism is a key element. The Alliance's approach is two-pronged: on the one hand, it aims to enhance its partners' capacity to fight terrorism at an operational level, for example by training first responders to deal with the consequences of a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear (CBRN) attack, or instructing them on how to dispose of Improvised Explosive Devices. On the other hand, it seeks to have an impact at a strategic level as well, providing assistance and advice in restructuring defence institutions or in strengthening civilian-military cooperation across government. Understanding partners' needs and assessing the gaps in their national counterterrorism efforts is fundamental to ensuring that these initiatives have a substantial impact.

This said, NATO's main contribution to the fight against terrorism is - first and foremost - what it is doing on the ground in Iraq and especially, of course, in Afghanistan (a region that is often considered, internally, as part of NATO's "South"). In addition, in December 2018 NATO Foreign Ministers approved an update of the Action Plan, polished and reinforced to adapt to emerging terrorism trends and threats. New initiatives undertaken within this updated version aim to address concretely one of the most relevant issues in the Mediterranean region – the flow of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF). Since 2013, over 40,000 fighters are estimated to have travelled to Iraq and Syria to join ISIS, and roughly 7000 of them have returned to their country of origin. This constitutes a high security risk, as an estimated 18% of terror attacks staged in the West between 2014 and 2017 were carried out by returnees¹⁰.

mandate (UNSCR 1973) was under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter.

¹⁰ Global Terrorism Report 2018: Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism, [online] Sidney: Institute for Economics and Peace. Available at: <http://visionofhumanity.org/reports> [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

As part of a series of measures to address this threat, the UN Security Council issued Resolution 2396/2017, which urges its member states to “expeditiously exchange information [...] concerning the identity of foreign terrorist fighters”¹¹. NATO Allies agreed in July 2018 on a new data sharing policy that would support their “ability to identify returning foreign terrorist fighters and other threat actors and to comply with UNSCR 2396”¹². This illustrates the willingness to increase information sharing in the face of a common threat that needs to be tackled jointly.

III.

The picture of NATO’s role in the Mediterranean region would not be complete without considering its maritime presence. While not being directly involved in the management of migration – another major challenge emerging in the region in recent years – NATO has contributed within a limited scope to international efforts to tackle the crisis.

In February 2016, the Alliance mandated the Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2) to conduct reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance of illegal crossings of the Aegean Sea, in cooperation with and in support of the Turkish and Greek national authorities as well as the EU agency FRONTEX, in their efforts to fight the illegal smuggling of migrants and refugees. A few months later, in July 2016, Operation Sea Guardian was launched in the Mediterranean, with the trifold objective of supporting maritime situational awareness through information sharing; bolstering maritime counter-terrorism efforts; and contributing to maritime security capacity building. As part of its mandate, OSG is to support and contribute to the European Union’s migration-focused Operation Sophia by increasing situational awareness (through enhanced information sharing) and by providing logistical support.

EU too

As a major stakeholder in the region, the EU also does its own work to “project stability” in the South, and the Mediterranean basin can offer a golden opportunity for close cooperation with the Alliance. Some practical and effective collaboration strategies are already in place, as demonstrated by the support provided by Operation Sea Guardian to Operation Sophia. As in other circumstances where their respective activities meet, NATO and the EU look to cooperate closely so as to avoid any possible duplication or waste of effort.

In the context of the common set of proposals endorsed by NATO Foreign Ministers in their Statement on the implementation of the NATO-EU Joint Declaration signed in Warsaw in 2016¹³, for instance, Tunisia was selected as a pilot country in the region. The aim was to explore increased cooperation between the two organisations in areas where relevant work had already been initiated, e.g. on cyber or ammunition storage and safety¹⁴. Staff-to-staff coordination and information exchange have been frequent, open, and highly useful

¹¹ United Nations. (2017). UN Security Council Resolution 2396(2017). [online] Available at: [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2396\(2017\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2396(2017)) [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

¹² NATO. (2018). NATO Brussels Summit Declaration, para 11. [online] Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

¹³ Statement by the NATO Foreign Ministers on the Implementation of the Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2016). [online] Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_138829.htm [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

¹⁴ Progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by NATO and EU Councils on 6 December 2016. (2017). [online] Available at: <https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/170614-joint-progress-report-eu-nato-en-1.pdf> [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018].

-favouring complementarity (whenever desirable and possible) and mutual understanding, and offering just another practical manifestation of transatlantic cooperation and solidarity.

The turn to the South that NATO took in recent years is evident and tangible, and surely well justified by the number and type of threats stemming from the region. The flurry of activities and initiatives outlined above reflects a serious commitment on the part of the Alliance to cooperate with its Southern partners - wherever possible, in parallel and concert with the EU - to build their capacity so that they can address more effectively the challenges they face.

Conclusions

Since the end of the Cold War, the Mediterranean basin has indeed been overcrowded with efforts at regional transformation: from the Barcelona Process (1995), aiming to better integrate the EU with its neighbouring South, to the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq and its imported top-down democratisation blueprint; from the Union for the Mediterranean (2008), with its focus on practical cooperation, to the Arab Spring's wave of bottom-up democratisation attempts. NATO's distinctive focus is on cooperation and assistance, with special (operational) emphasis on Iraq and - further afield - Afghanistan.

Looking ahead, there are some emerging trends worth monitoring, beside and beyond the playing out of the civil conflicts in Syria and Libya. Cyber, maritime and border security remain high on the list of priorities for partner countries, especially in relation to the fight against terrorism. And while remaining focused on the use of its current tools, NATO will continue to assess the importance of 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 region of external actors like Russia and China - the former through military and diplomatic activities in (and beyond) Syria, the latter through increased investment and trade-related initiatives, and both through joint naval exercises- is another example of new trends and threads which need to be monitored, along with are the potential implications of the discovery of undersea gas and oil deposits.

The Mediterranean region remains a highly volatile, unstable and dynamic environment and its unravelling could have major security consequences, in particular for the Southern members of the Alliance. For that reason, NATO has a stake in ensuring that partner countries in the area continue to strengthen their defence institutions and enhance their resilience. The Alliance has made progress through its valuable contribution to the fight against terrorism, its strengthened maritime presence and its effective partnership frameworks. As the security environment continues to evolve, NATO will continue to keep pace with emerging threats and challenges and play a relevant role.

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Regional relations in the Middle East

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Unfortunately, specializing in Middle East affairs guarantees you a job for many years to come due to the complexities and interdependences that exist concerning the challenges and the crises that the region is undergoing. It is unfortunate in the sense that the peoples of the region are facing these challenges and crises, seemingly without respite. I will proceed by making ten general observations about these challenges and crises.

First, the Middle East could best be described today as being an anarchical regional order or a disordered regional order. Traditional rules of conduct and behavior among states concerning disagreements or differences between states, known as the Westphalian rules of conduct, are not respected at all by a number of states like they used to be years ago. Today a government of a certain state could grant itself the right to interfere and intervene directly, or via non state actors which are its allies, in the affairs of another state. It could question publicly the legitimacy of another state's authorities stating that the latter is not legitimate or that it must be changed. It is typical of a revolutionary order where ideology plays an important role in the behavior of states. This reminds us of another period in the modern history of the Arab World: the 1960s, known as the Arab Cold War, when the ideological factor weighed heavily in regional relations and was a main source of tension, crises, and conflicts among states. Such an ideological factor threatens stability and conflict management as well as conflict settlement approaches. What came to be known as the Arab Spring (that turned into four seasons as it degenerated in many instances into wars and open ended conflicts) contributed greatly to this regional anarchy. Governments interfere directly and publicly into the affairs of other states allowing themselves to do so in the name of transnational Islamic ideologies. Iran and Turkey are typical examples of such an established pattern of regional politics. Such context allowed for the strong emergence of the role of non-state actors, themselves the byproduct of transnational ideologies that de-territorialized political actions. These non-state actors carry the flag of or enjoy the support of many states in the region. This support to non-state actors is provided for ideological, strategic or political reasons. Most of the fighting in the conflicts today is done by NSAs: terrorist organizations or sectarian, religious or ethnic ones fighting under different slogans and coming from different countries to fight under the same banner of their non-territorialized Umma (nation).

Second, the region is characterized by the proliferation of failed and failing states. Somalia can be seen as the oldest case (hence the term 'Somalisation' as a description of a failed state). Syria, Libya, and Yemen also belong to the first category. The category of failing states refers to many states with different degrees of structural problems and crises that are on the way

to becoming failed states if these problems and crises are not addressed successfully. Failed states could be called sometimes 'off-shore states'. They exist abroad via their diplomatic mission and by being members of international and regional organizations, but they lack even minimal power of control and influence over society and any serious feature of stateness at home. The failed state carries two dangerous features: first of all the breakdown of the state's institutions and secondly, the decomposition of society along primary identity lines. A good example of this situation is that the Arab Spring, in certain instances, was derailed from what started as demands for political freedoms and socio-economic changes into subnational identities' warfare and confrontation. Syria and Libya are also very good examples of such a situation that was encouraged by strategic fights over the country among regional and international powers. What encouraged such fights were the societal vulnerabilities of the country on one hand and its strategic attractiveness on the other hand. The fight in Syria today is not over which democratic model of political organization of the state to have or which socioeconomic model to adopt. It is mostly a fight in the name of Allah, the same God but from a different sectarian identity, among those who are willing to sacrifice their lives while serving directly or indirectly the strategic and other interests of Great Powers involved. The real fighting, away from attractive slogans, is done in the name of transnational solidarities reflecting identity based religious, ethnic, tribal or sectarian ideologies. The curse of the geopolitical location or geo-economic importance of a country highjack's a conflict that could be domestic and relatively easy to address, transforming it into an externalized conflict via non-state actors on the battleground, feeding into a conflict.

Third, the revival of sub-national identities at the basis of the spread of non-state actors with transnational loyalties and solidarities is a main source of chaos in the region. The revival of the Sunni -Shia divide (or what I call the Karbala paradigm – Karbala is the name of the place that witnessed the beginning of the split in Islam in the year 680) leads to a revival of sectarianism with its capacity for recruitment, mobilization and seeking sacrifice in the name of the right interpretation of Islam. This emerges as a way of reviving and re-inviting old wounds into today's politics. It facilitates the strong return of Islamism and sectarianism into the game of politics, adopted and backed by major regional powers. Those who are coming from South Asia, from Africa or from Europe to fight in Syria or in Iraq are motivated by sectarianism. If the crisis and the conflict are settled tomorrow in Syria, in Libya or in Yemen and elsewhere by an externally imposed settlement reflecting the interest of the key external power brokers, the domestic reasons of the original cause or causes of these conflicts, namely socioeconomic marginalization and deprivation, will remain and could be aggravated over time.

Fourth, there is also the crisis of the Arab state, or the failure of the national construction in the case of many states, that should have cemented a national identity by integrating while reassuring and not by assimilating through denial of subnational identities. There is also a crisis or even a failure of the social contract between the society and the state and the need to renew the social contract in the light of the many changes that a society experiences over its history and development. In many instances, such a dual failure opened the door wide for the strong revival or return of subnational identities which were suppressed or marginalized and needed to be expressed as part of a national identity and not necessarily in contradiction of that identity.

Fifth, there occurred a dis-Arabization of the Arab regional order. A power vacuum began in the first decade of the century, immediately after the war of Iraq that led to a changed configuration of power in the region. The weakening and erosion of a collective pan-Arab

identity, replaced by a pan-Islamist identity, was expressed in different political ideologies. Such a change opened the door for two regional powers, Iran and Turkey, to adopt a pan-Islamist ideology which was instrumental in their policies to project their influence in the region at both societal and state levels. Subsequently, this ideology re-shaped the regional agenda. The two regional powers came to fill the power vacuum created by the withdrawal of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria from their regional collective role as the agenda-makers, as well as the role as a 'locomotive of the "Arab train"'. Iran emerged as the key power holder in the aftermath of the war in Iraq which was, in the past, the main counterweight to Iran's expansionism in the region. Iraq's strategic function changed from one of a wall, to stop Iranian expansion in the Mashreq, into a bridge for Iranian influence to reach into the Mediterranean shores. This new trend was consolidated with the changes and transformations brought by the "Arab Spring". The region witnessed the return of the two regional empires: both Turkey (the Ottoman Empire) and Iran (the Persian Empire) have been engaged since the very beginning of this change, in very proactive foreign policies. This dis-Arabization of Arab politics could best be illustrated with the example of Syria. One last observation in this respect has to do with the great interconnectedness among the different crises in the region, in terms of the strategic confrontation and cooperation among regional and external powers on the Middle Eastern chessboard, which brings together all these crises into one great game, regardless of the differences in the causes among these crises.

Sixth, one must note the emergence of a 'trilogy' of wars (to borrow from the famous Cairo Trilogy of the Egyptian novelist and Nobel Prize winner Neguib Mahfouz¹), each one feeding into the two others and feeding on the other. The first is the return of a regional Cold War, reminiscent of the Arab Cold War of the nineteen sixties. This war sees the emergence of an American-Arab alliance against Iran, with the US trying to form a sort of regional NATO, or a new Baghdad Pact, that is not easy to do because of differences in approaches on how to contain and confront Iran's influence. The second war is a war by proxy where great powers are fighting each other via their respective allied non-state actors. The third war is what we call a protracted social conflict: wars of identities or civil wars tearing apart existing states.

Seventh, to illustrate the dynamics of these conflicts, it is important to look at Syria, which is the conflict of all conflicts in terms of the number of actors involved and the issues at stake. The late Patrick Seale reminded us in his book *The Struggle for Syria*² about the geopolitical attractiveness of the country, for who controls Syria controls the Levant. The fight was always over who would earn the seat of Damascus among the different powers vying for influence in the Levant and Middle East. What we observe today is a game of musical chairs and shifting alliances and understandings among different powers involved in Syria. In Syria, the pattern of alliance of different powers in the South-West, on the borders with Israel is different to the pattern in the North-West or the North-East. In the Golan Heights for instance, the Israelis, Americans and Russians are on the same wave-length with the regime which would like to revive the old formula of disengagement, this time with Russian guarantees. Today's allies could become tomorrow's competitors and adversaries when it comes to splitting 'the Syrian cake'. This applies particularly to Russian-Iranian relations. The so called Astana process³ of the Russian- Iranian -Turkish 'troika' is running the show at the expense of the almost dead UN Geneva process.

¹ Neguib Mahfouz, *The Cairo Trilogy*. Penguin Random House, 2001.

² Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria*. I.B. Tauris, 1987.

³ <http://mfa.gov.kz/en/content-view/kratkaa-spravka-po-astanins-komu-processu>

Eighth, a basic remaining problem which is becoming more acute over time is the confrontation between ‘the two Ds’: Arab expanding demography and lopsided development. There is a need to create ten millions jobs in the Arab world each and every year to combat unemployment. As an illustration of the deteriorating socio-economic conditions in the Arab world, it is worth noting that many reports were issued in the first decade of the twenty first century by the UNDP’s Arab Bureau and by many research centers and institutes, warning about the worsening structural problems facing the Arab world and the dangerous implications they could have for its stability and human development if they are not addressed properly and immediately. A UNDP Arab Human Development Report issued in 2016⁴ indicates that 60 percent of the population is under the age of 30, with the highest regional level of youth unemployment in the world. Currently the level of youth unemployment is at 10.6 percent (almost double of the world average which is around 5.71 percent). To illustrate this problem with an example, I refer to what I witnessed in Algeria during the late 1990s, which was aggravated over time because of a dwindling return on resources on one hand and the expanding youth demography on the other hand putting more pressure on the jobs market. This is typical for most Arab countries prior to the “Arab Spring” and was aggravated further afterwards. In Algeria I could see what is called the Haytist, a French-Arab word used to describe those unemployed youngsters standing or leaning against walls, frustrated about their situation and dreaming of a way out of it usually via emigration, whether legal or illegal, across the Mediterranean Sea. Those who cannot migrate via geography to a promised and or a better future, will migrate through history, seeking refuge and salvation in a glorious Islamic past, becoming vulnerable to radical Islamist ideologies with the promises they carry. Unemployment, marginalization, and exclusion that often come together are the best path to radicalization, with all the implications such radicalization carries. Even if tomorrow a deal is reached by concerned powers to contain and settle the conflicts in certain Arab countries, the deep reasons at the basis of these conflicts, that were hijacked later by strategic confrontation over the concerned country, will remain sources of tension and possible instabilities if they are not addressed properly.

Ninth, there is a proliferation of political Islamism of different and opposing schools and policies in the Arab world. Even Arab regimes fighting Islamist movements draw part of their legitimacy from the quieter Islamist groups, whose functions are to support and confer Islamic legitimacy on the regime in their fight against Islamist forces. Most of the latter are themselves caught or involved in the geopolitical competition by regional and international powers for influence in the region at one point of time or another.

The danger that many states in the region are discovering, though a bit late, is that if you play with fire you might burn your fingers. Certain radical Islamist forces or groups used in the confrontation with enemies might at the end of the day turn against you: as many states have discovered in the region. The examples are numerous in this respect. To deal successfully with the danger of international Jihadism with all its organizations and groups, a military and security response is definitely very important and most needed but this will be addressing only the end product. One needs to focus on the different causes behind the rise of Jihadism in a comprehensive and coordinated way. These causes lie in the quality of education, especially religious education; and in cultural, social, and economic as well as political reasons, feeding into each other.

⁴ <http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/report/AHDR%20Reports/AHDR%202016/AHDR%20Final%202016/AH-DR2016En.pdf>

Tenth, one can observe the failure of the entire architecture of regional cooperation- the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council or the Arab Maghreb Union. Collective declarations are one thing, and policy implementation is another, leading to a loss of credibility of multilateral decisions and actions. Member states do not have a system of collective accountability concerning the follow-up on implementation of adopted resolutions, creating this gap between decisions and their implementation. The nature of the political systems of most countries, which does not lend itself to accepting accountability at home, lead and encourage such trends and outcomes. This weakens the much needed cooperation in many fields that serve the interests of all; not one state is able to face the challenges it needs to address for its progress and development alone. There is an absence of a political culture that considers cooperation as necessary.

My final words refer to the issue of trans-Mediterranean relations. We have a complex structure of cooperation mechanisms that developed over time and that were, despite some successes, not up to the tasks they were expected to fulfill. We are expecting in February 2019 the convening of the first EU – Arab League Summit, in Sharm Al-Sheikh, in Egypt. This will hopefully launch a dynamic tradition of regular consultations at summit level. The common challenges and the very high level of interdependence among the two shores of the Mediterranean is a fact that cannot be ignored or sidestepped. It is not a luxury to cooperate; it is a strategic imperative to do so around the sea that we share and the common destiny that we need to build together in the spirit of partnership.

Transatlantic relations: an American perspective

Dr. Juliette R. Rouge Shedd

Any discussion of an American perspective on anything in 2018, and especially transatlantic relations requires us to take up the question of “which America” or maybe more correctly “whose America”. The heightened political division in the United States emphasizes sharp divides in how the American public views the relationship with its closest historic allies, its transatlantic partners. These divides sharpen during election cycles and then relax during off years, although increasingly the country seems in perpetual election mode. The exposure of ideological rifts among the American public on this topic is interesting based on the long history of relationship between the US and Europe. Riddervold and Newsome point out, “no other regions of the world are as closely connected in economics, security and politics as Europe and the US.”¹ The American political landscape has changed dramatically in the last five to ten years and alliances previously understood as sacred to both parties have come under attack. The political parties themselves have shifted platforms and positions on the value and priority of these relationships as American reels its way through disruptive politics.

It is hard to determine if the rhetoric of the 2016 Presidential campaign reflected a broader disaffection with US relationships with NATO, the EU and other allies, or if the campaign itself caused changes in attitudes. In the run-up to the 2016 election, the Pew Institute, along with other polling groups, gauged American satisfaction with international alliances. “Just 49% of Americans had a favorable view of NATO in a Pew Research Center survey conducted in spring 2015, and those views have not changed much from previous years. Support includes 56% of Democrats but just 43% of the GOP (Republicans). Notably, U.S. backing for the security alliance is the second lowest among eight NATO nations surveyed.”² This statistic provides several points of note; first, it’s important that less than half of the American’s surveyed had a positive view of NATO. This is quite significant considering the primacy of NATO in US foreign policy for the last 70 years. Second, is the swing among the political parties. Historically Republicans have been major supporters of international alliances and military agreements. This shift toward a higher support rate among Democrats than Republicans represents a larger rhetorical and political shift among the priorities of the two major parties. On a more specific note, a study published by Pew this month (November 2018) specifically looked at the US-German relationships and what it found was an astonishing disconnect between perceptions of that relationship: “In the U.S., seven-in-ten say the relationship is good, while 73% in

¹ Riddervold & Newsome, 2018

² Stokes, n.d.

Germany say the relationship is bad.”³ This polling data reflects that there are probably at least four major political ideological movements functioning in the American political conversation today. While it is a risk to be reductionist, it will be helpful for the rest of this essay to be able to develop some shorthand to describe these political elements. First and loudest among the political movements is President Trump’s following that paradoxically enough could be labeled “conservative populism”. While promoting a sense of conservative social values this group has turned aside from traditional Republican sentiments about free trade and national security through global governance. The America first rhetoric of this group has turned their national security attention from global alliances and international issues, to a much narrower frame in which threats to the United States are almost exclusively framed in terms of the “invasion” of refugees and asylum seekers.

The second group is traditional conservative and moderate Republicans and libertarians. This group has found itself hijacked by Trump’s agenda and has watched in dismay as decades of long-standing Republican platforms focused on free-trade and global leadership has been discarded. In an interesting move the Trump camp has adopted the anti-regulation (particularly environmental regulation) elements of traditional Republican ideology, but has thrown out the free-trade, market oriented strategies in favor of overt protectionism. Leaders in this group, such as the late John McCain, occasionally Paul Ryan, and other more pragmatic politicians have found themselves in the awkward position of publically disagreeing with their President on the relationship of the US to Europe and other alliances, particularly regarding trade policy. This group is typically supportive of international security arrangements and sees a role for the US in protecting global order.

Our next group is the traditional liberal wing of the Democratic Party. This group, represented by Hilary Clinton, Barack Obama and Nancy Pelosi, has much in common with the traditional Republican establishment in a support for international institutions to provide global peace and stability. They believe in the power of the UN and multilateralism, particularly as it spares US lives and treasure from intervention around the globe. Not quite free-traders and market capitalists, this group believes in the power of effective regulation and doesn’t believe businesses can be trusted to do the right thing, particularly around the environment. They see international agreements and institutions as the way forward to solve the globe’s toughest challenges.

The fourth group is the mobilized progressive wing that used to reside within the Democratic Party, but since the 2016 election and the galvanizing effect of Bernie Sanders (as well as the backroom politics that gave Clinton the nomination) is increasingly functioning outside of traditional Democratic political structures. This group focuses on concerns about poverty, income inequality and the environment around the globe. They have far less faith that international organizations and structures can deal with these issues. They are far less concerned about traditional national security structures, and would prefer to see those resources shifted to the key issues of poverty and the environment. They have less interest in international partnerships as military and diplomatic security but are pushing for global engagement to solve environmental challenges.

While these four archetypes are just that, amalgamations of traits of complicated people’s beliefs, I think they are useful for thinking about the future of transatlantic relations. In

³ Poushter, Alex, & Castillo, n.d.

an interesting way, the threat to strong transatlantic relations is coming from both the conservative populists and the liberal progressives, with traditional Democrats and Republicans finding themselves aligned for the most part in support of international relationships and institutions.

Figure 1. below, shows how these four groups line up on the dimensions of support for change of the status quo and “liberalism” and “conservatism”.

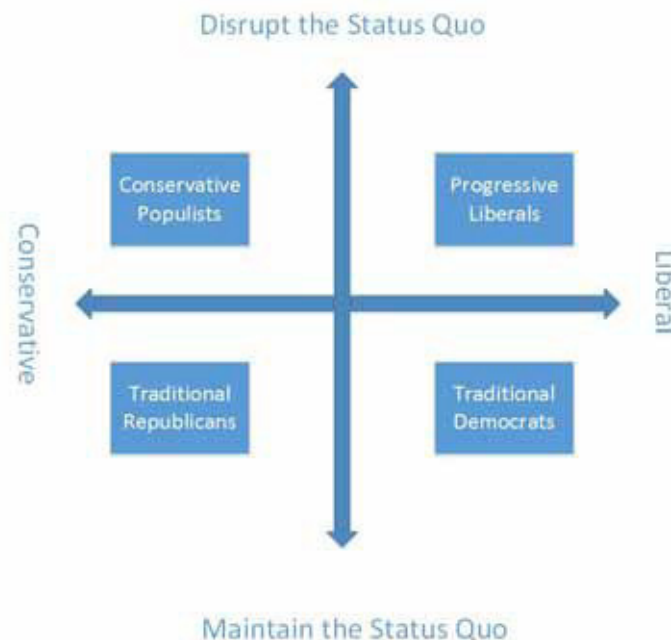


Figure 1. Political Group Line-Up

As we moved toward a mixed Congress in 2019 with Democrats in control of the House of Representatives and Republicans in control of the Senate, it will be interesting to see if the necessity of compromise to get things done will prompt additional alignment between the more traditional elements of each party.

The relationship between the United States and its European allies has been a mainstay of global political order since World War II. In 2015 and 2016 a set of scenario building exercises were developed in Berlin as the Dahrendorf Forum's foresight project⁴. These scenarios looked at the transatlantic relationships and future implications. In the preamble to the report on this event, the authors write, "Together the United States and the European Union account for 12 per cent of the world population and roughly half of global (nominal) GDP as well as military expenditures. At the same time, there is a sense that the transatlantic dominance of world politics has peaked."⁵ In this exercise, the participants developed a set of five key drivers for transatlantic relations they thought would matter for the next decade. I'll mention all five and then delve more deeply into the few that have particular relevance from an American perspective.

⁴ <https://www.dahrendorf-forum.eu/research-2017-2019-governance-institutions-and-policy-foresight-project/>

⁵ Kaufmann & Lohaus, 2018

The first two drivers represent slow changes. The first key driver is the shared liberal culture between the European and US populace with shared values. They identify that populism on both sides has taken aim at these shared values and that changes in the political landscapes have an impact as well. The increased diversification of American and European populations has also affected the sense of shared values. In the US, this is of particular emphasis where the percentage of the population with European ancestry is decreasing. An increasing part of the population no longer has personal connections to Europe. For many conservative populists, this dissolution of the European cultural hegemony is of concern, although interestingly they often bemoan democratic socialism as the source of all of Europe's problems. They fundamentally don't understand Europe's response to migration and immigration and with the benefit of oceans between the US and many of the world's worst refugee crises can aspire to keep the problems "over there".

Traditional Republicans find themselves in an uneasy relationship with their European colleagues. While sharing a similar underlying set of values around democracy and the rule of law, they are fundamentally uncomfortable with many of the social programs that European countries consider the standard role of government. They are the party of low taxes, small government, and individual responsibility so grapple with engagement with economic systems that prioritize different public goods. They believe in effective trade agreements and the EU is important for them economically. Brexit and other attempts to leave are seen as destabilizing a trade system that is significantly better for capital with a functioning EU.

Traditional Democrats look to European nations as models of what might work if the US was to take seriously improvements in the social safety net programs. Examples such as free secondary education and universal healthcare are regularly put forward as models the US should employ. In many ways this party has the most resonance with what is seen as European values (recognizing that is not a monolithic idea and that these values are also being challenged).

Progressives are on board with many European programs but would claim they don't go far enough. They would point to the responsibility of the US and Europe to deal with global challenges related to income inequality, environment and human rights and are critical of how the EU has handled migration challenges. They are deeply concerned about the rise of populist, chauvinist movements in European countries and have a rhetoric of fear about letting these ideas back into the public spaces in both Europe and the US.

An added complication to the conversation about shared values is the increased critical lens on the structures of democratic governance. In the post-Cold War era, without another viable competing political ideology to liberal democracy, the importance of international institutions as a protection mechanism for democracy has waned. There is not a recognized "other" that is the viable opposition to democratic governance; in fact, many countries that could be identified as the opposition have adopted at least nominal democratic structures. The very idea of democratic structures as a solution to social, political and security problems is complicated by this use of democratic structures in clearly undemocratic places, as well as the challenges to the legitimacy of democratic structures in established democracies. The 2018 election in the US showed this distrust quite baldly as all elements of the political system claimed voter fraud, voter suppression and the "stealing" of elections. This, and the erosion of faith in information and the news media will continue to complicate the nature of shared values between Europe and the US.

The second driver the scenario group addressed is the cohesion among EU member states.⁶ From some American perspectives, Brexit and similar leave movements provide the justification for retreating from international agreements. The EU is an important experiment in supra-national governance and the concerns about retaining EU member states have added fuel to the conservative populists' fire about the limited utility of international agreements and institutions. With a politics built by the conservative populists on bullying tactics, European cohesion is going to be essential if transatlantic relations are going to be mutually beneficial. Riddervold and Newsome preface their piece with a concern "that it is the collective weight of the multiple (both internal and external) crises that potentially is challenging the EU's ability to hang together and that in turn may affect its relationship with its core strategic partner and indeed the cornerstone of the post war international system or 'Atlantic Order'."⁷ This is particularly important because while the EU has been taking on additional challenges the US has been similarly challenged, both by a renewed Russia but also by developments in Asia. Riddervold and Newsome point out that during the Obama administration the US had already shifted emphasis from happenings across the Atlantic to events happening across the Pacific.

The third driver is an understanding of the global order and its relevance to national security interests.⁸ This conception of responsibility for global order has been complicated by the coalition wars of the last two decades. An understanding of responsibility toward a larger global order influences both a governments' willingness to cooperate and work collaboratively with other countries and a government's choices to comply or not with international legal structures. This understanding of the global order also influences government's willingness to pay for international commitments.⁹ The Trump administration and his conservative populist movement has consistently taken steps to back away from what was often already soft support by the US for collective action and international law.

It is not a new phenomenon that the US has sat back from formal participation in international collective agreements that it thought might limit US policy freedom in the future. What is new is the renewed criticism of international institutions and reversal of course on previous multi-lateral trade, arms, security and environmental agreements. The Trump administration has jumped on a rhetorical trend for the last decade or so in American politics that focuses on contribution levels to the UN and critique of its governance structure and perceived lack of capacity to effect change. This shift can be seen in the move from the multi-lateral approach at the beginning of the war in Afghanistan to the bi-lateral approach to the Iraq War in 2003. Coordination takes time and resources and the US over the past two decades has shifted increasingly toward going it alone. You can see the echoes of this in America first logic and the increasing emphasis on military spending. The perception here is that if the US needs to, it should have the capacity to on its own handle military missions. In this area the Trump conservative populists are picking up on a refrain started by more traditional Republicans since 9/11. The frustration with what is seen as international community interference in American affairs, particularly around questions of interrogation and detention have led the traditional Republican community to share suspicion about incorporation of other nations in US foreign policy.

⁶ Kaufmann & Lohaus, 2018

⁷ Riddervold & Newsome, n.d.

⁸ Kaufmann & Lohaus, 2018

⁹ Kaufmann & Lohaus, 2018

The push against globalism is one of the most powerful elements of Trump's appeal to his base. In a variety of ways it appears that Trump supporters are willing to take material losses through Trump administration policies in order to gain moral/rhetorical, potentially physical wins. Peterson puts this in context,

Poor and lower middle class – especially white – citizens in America's heartland, hit hard by the post-2008 Great Recession, intensely resented how the US had been transformed by globalization and dominated by globalist elites, mostly clustered on either coast. Trump presented himself as a conservative, but one who – in foreign policy terms – seized on 'a widespread rejection of globalization and international involvement and... a questioning of long-standing postures and policies, ranging from openness to trade and immigrants to a willingness to maintain alliances and overseas commitments' (Haas 2017)¹⁰. In foreign policy terms, Trump's election was a symptom more than a cause of disillusion with America's habitual support for liberal internationalism.¹¹

This foreign policy boils down fundamentally to three things, compensation by allies for past and future security guarantees, a rejection of every post World War II trade deal the US has signed, and an affinity for "strong men". These clearly have huge implications for Trump's vision of transatlantic relations. He has framed European allies as a net drain on the US and claims that no matter what party agreed to it, all the previous alliances and agreements need revision.

Traditional Democrats and progressives have a much more positive outlook toward global collective action and see it as a way to approach the larger social and environmental challenges they see on the horizon. They point to international legal conventions on a variety of topics as important and bemoan the lack of US participation or reversal of participation. Importantly though, these groups are often uncomfortable with the kinds of bedfellows the US does make in working toward collective action. The hand wringing that has accompanied the killing of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the hands of Saudi allies is a clear example of where the liberal and progressive wings have a critique (although often not a solution) to important alliances for global stability.

The fourth driver they identify is technological developments, specifically as it relates to EU and US cooperation on fostering technological advancements¹². As information access and use has become increasingly complicated and confrontational, this driver increases in importance. This driver is obviously at the mercy of the concerns around cyber security and information security.

Finally, the use of military force is the fifth driver.

In the aftermath of 9/11 it became evident that American and European decision-makers had different conceptions about the use of force. The US interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq were supported by some but not all European allies. Since then there have been heated debates about the appropriate course of action in Libya, Syria, Iran and elsewhere. While the United States have a long history

¹⁰ Hass, 2017

¹¹ Peterson, 2018

¹² Kaufmann & Lohaus, 2018

of military interventions abroad, the EU is increasingly perceived as a security actor in its own right. In a world of globalized threats and uncertainty, doctrines about the use of military force will evolve and adapt – making them a key driver of transatlantic relations.

The debate over legitimacy and how strategic doctrine is employed is a major driver of future US/EU Relations. We see this debate play out in the rhetoric about NATO funding. It is important to realize what the US public as a whole does or does not understand about how the NATO funding system works. Trump the candidate and Trump the President have presented his concerns about NATO funding in terms that have led most of his supporters and frankly most Americans in general to believe the issue is that literally the US is paying more for NATO than the other countries and that we are pulling the weight of countries that don't chip in. What isn't clear to most Americans is that the issue isn't the dollars the US is sending to NATO, but rather military spending as a percentage of GDP that each country is using for its own military- which then makes it prepared to assist in mutual defense for other NATO countries. Then just as easily lost in this rhetoric is that the US has been asking other NATO countries to increase their spending for decades and that some are on target to close the gaps by agreed upon times. Trump's first year in office saw significant changes in NATO military spending.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg convinced the alliance's Defence Ministers to develop plans by the end of 2017 to meet the agreed target of spending 2 per cent of annual GDP on defence. Non-US NATO defence spending increased 4.3 per cent in 2017, with Romania, Latvia and Lithuania set to join the existing 5 states – the US, UK, Greece, Estonia and Poland – that already met the 2 per cent target. France announced large increases in defence spending foreseen to equal 1.82 per cent of GDP in 2018. Even Germany ramped up military spending, although gradually and from a low base, since meeting the 2 per cent target would have meant nearly doubling its annual military spending. All told, 25 of 29 NATO member states raised their defence spend during Trump's first year in office.¹³

From a conservative populist perspective, US spending that goes on foreign aid for military and non-military purposes is taking away from the needs at home. This appears in rhetoric in social media memes that read along the lines that “we send millions in aid to foreign countries when our own veterans don't have medical care, seniors don't have health care, and our infrastructure is crumbling-share this if you think we should fix America first”. It is an interesting co-option of what has historically been a democratic or liberal message that we should spend less on military spending and more on domestic issues. For the conservative populists this has been shifted to- we should spend less on military spending that benefits others, and more on specific domestic issues (veterans, seniors) – this is certainly not generally extended to improving benefits for those in poverty or other income inequality driven responses.

Traditional Republicans are caught between the President's rhetoric of increased military spending, which has been a Republican Party platform element and a historical interest in global security alliances. They are finding it difficult to push back on the America first language while still supporting the military. And support (or not) of the military is an issue American

¹³ Peterson, 2018

politicians particularly have to dance around. The Vietnam generation is 50-70 years old and a powerful voting bloc. They are joined by a powerful lobby from Iraq and Afghanistan veterans to keep veterans' issues squarely on the table.

This is catching traditional Democrats as well. While they believe in collective global efforts to solve problems, they have seen the results of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. They have to carefully gauge any attempts to critique military intervention in order to not be seen as critical of the military itself. This is a tricky minefield to wade through. Progressives have taken a slightly different stand and in some ways are just as isolationist in terms of military interventions as the conservative populists. They don't believe the US has any business waging state building or nation building campaigns.

It is an interesting twist for the American system that while still structured around two parties; there are fundamentally at least four primary factions at work – none of which are inherently ideologically consistent within their own policies. On any facet of transatlantic relations, it is possible to look at what policies each group is advocating for, now and historically, and find inconsistencies across time and administration in what they propose and support and what they have lined up in opposition to. The polarization of American politics is taking its toll on rational decision-making.

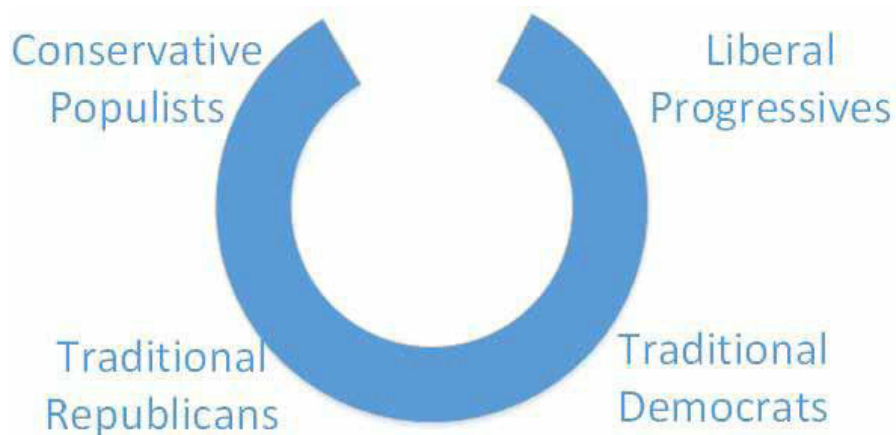


Figure 2. A More Realistic Depiction of the American Political Spectrum

It is interesting that while tempting to describe the American political spectrum on a line from left to right, it might make more sense to think of it as a circle, with the two "poles" wrapping toward each other on specific topics. The intransigent we expect from Donald Trump sounds a lot like Bernie Sanders. Both ends will dismiss the moderates as weak and non-believers and seem to have forgotten that American politics is built on civil discourse and compromise. As we move forward in relationship with our transatlantic partners, it is important to keep this in perspective.

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What prospects for transatlantic relations and the Mediterranean?

Professor Stephen Calleya

Thirty years since the end of the Cold War international relations continue to evolve in a non-linear manner that reflects the ever changing diffusion of power throughout the international system. While the United States remains the sole superpower, its willingness to assume a commensurate role is constantly being questioned. This is most evident when it comes to the transatlantic relationship between the United States and Europe, the bedrock of the Western Alliance during the Cold War.

Given this fluid reality of international relations it is important to accept that some type of change in the pattern of relations from a transatlantic perspective is inevitable. Realpolitik demands that a strategic question be asked regarding what are the future prospects for transatlantic relations and what impact will this changing relationship have on regional relations in the Mediterranean?

Are the common interests, common values and common identity that kept the USA, Canada and Europe working together for decades throughout the Cold War and during the past three decades since the end of the Cold War resilient enough to ensure that transatlantic cooperation continues albeit in a different and perhaps more agile and flexible modus of cooperation?

Since the end of the Second World War and the strategic decision taken by the Truman administration to assume the responsibilities of Britain in the Eastern Mediterranean, this region of the world has witnessed continuous transatlantic engagement. It is thus clear that the weakening or disappearance of transatlantic cooperation would impact upon the multitude of security challenges currently manifesting themselves in the Mediterranean area and also create a more conducive setting in which the emergence of a security vacuum could become a permanent feature of regional relations.

The role of extra-regional powers in the Euro Mediterranean area

An assessment of the influence that the United States has had on regional relations in the Mediterranean highlights the enormous impact that the superpower and the most powerful political and military alliance in the vicinity, NATO, are having on regional relations in the Mediterranean.

Several analysts believed that the diminution of rivalry between the two superpowers with the end of the Cold War would usher in a period where regional affairs would become

less important from a strategic perspective. While the disappearance of the Soviet Union has allowed the United States to become much more selective in its foreign policy areas of engagement, regional affairs have quite often dictated the course of such selections as witnessed in the Balkans and more recently in Central Asia.

It is also a fact that there are circumstances that have not been affected by the end of the Cold War. External powers have often intervened in a region to pursue specific self-interests. External interaction in the Persian Gulf is an example of such intrusive behaviour. External actors are attracted to this sub region of the Mediterranean because of their dependence on the reliable flow of oil and the abundance of oil reserves in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq, the world number one and number two oil reserve countries respectively.

External powers can also become involved in international regions to act as 'balancers of power'. Extra-regional powers can be invited in by any one country seeking assistance to help preserve or consolidate a balance of power within their region. The more intense the regional adversity, the more urgently external assistance will be sought. In reality, major great powers can also bully their way into regional relations, but their involvement is greatly facilitated by the presence of regional rivalries.

Wriggins classifies external involvement in international regions under two headings: 'the pull factor' and 'the push factor'. The first dynamic operates when regional actors issue invitations to non-regional powers to intervene. The second dynamic operates when competition among non-regional powers leads them to seek client-states to help bolster their position.¹

A number of factors can contribute to an increase in acts of intervention by external powers in a particular area. First, international systems encompassing large number of states which endure high levels of internal instability are likely to have a high incidence of intervention. External powers will be attracted to intervene for at least two reasons: to gain a strategic foothold in the area and to prevent any one actor from becoming a regional hegemon in the region.

Second, regional systems that are characterized by ideological divisions and competition are prone to military intervention. States within international regions seeking to become regional power centres will interfere in the affairs of their neighbours to upset the balance of power in their favour.

A third systemic factor stimulating intervention is asymmetry in the distribution of power. More or less equal states have the capacity to resist each other's attempts to intervene in their internal affairs. In such systems where distribution of power is equally shared, the incidence of intervention is likely to be low. By contrast, systems in which power is unevenly distributed will be intervention prone.

An analysis of the Mediterranean area reveals that this part of the world consists of all three characteristics that make it very attractive to extra-regional intervention. The heterogeneous make-up of the Mediterranean and the high level of instability in the different sub regions surrounding the basin are a powerful source of intrusive interest in the Mediterranean. Extra-regional actors are continuously monitoring the position of their allies throughout the world and quite often are prepared to intervene if the position of their ally is in any way threatened. The Mediterranean is also an area where the asymmetry in the distribution of power continues to grow between the prosperous North and the impoverished South.

The role of a superpower: the United States

As the only superpower in international relations at present, the United States qualifies as one of the principal intrusive actors in the Mediterranean area. It projects enough political, economic and military authority in the basin to influence the trend of relations through its strong network of bilateral contacts in the area. Key strategic relations include those with Israel, Egypt, Morocco, Portugal, Italy and Spain. The United States' primary role in international institutions such as NATO, the OSCE, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also allows it to influence the Mediterranean area from a multilateral perspective and enables it to influence sub-regional dynamics in Southern Europe, the Maghreb and the Mashreq in a more covert manner.

The United States has sustained its strong strategic position in the eastern sector of the Mediterranean and especially in the Middle East through comprehensive diplomatic intergovernmental and commercial ties with regional power players. For example, both Israel and Egypt have enjoyed extensive military and political support from the United States in recent decades. The multiplicity of economic, cultural and military ties existing between these regional power centres and Washington reflects the importance attached to Israel and Egypt as a stabilizing and friendly influence in the Middle East. Throughout the Cold War American interests in the Mediterranean area were largely shaped by the mutual rivalry it shared with the Soviet Union. In February 1947 Britain informed the United States that it was no longer able to guarantee the independence of Greece and Turkey. Confronted with the choice of filling the vacuum left by the British withdrawal or permitting the eastern sector of the Mediterranean to enter the Soviet orbit, the United States chose to protect the strategic waterway by launching the Truman Doctrine of March 1947.

This development represented the formal aspect of an American commitment to the Mediterranean. In a limited way, the American presence was reminiscent of that of Britain in previous centuries: it provided the United States with a foothold for achieving desired ends elsewhere, namely in relation to continental Europe and the Middle East region. The British structure of authority coupled with American economic and military resources provided the cornerstone of US policy that was to prevent any Soviet hegemonic threat to Europe or Africa.

At the height of its power in the Mediterranean basin the United States had the following facilities at its disposal in case a crisis emerged: military bases in Morocco, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Turkey and Greece. It could also call on British bases in Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus and Aden. Such an extensive network of facilities provided Washington with plenty of flexibility when it came to formulating strategic policies towards the Mediterranean area.

Two reasons help to explain the rationale behind American containment policy in the early years after the Second World War: to counter Soviet efforts to dominate relations in the eastern Mediterranean and in the Middle East and to counterbalance the actual projection of Soviet military power into continental Europe. The United States made use of Italy in the west and Greece and Turkey in the east to realize this policy of containment. At no time were the internal affairs of the Mediterranean countries considered as important in themselves. Washington was strictly interested in maintaining a string of bases from which it could monitor any regional patterns of interaction that could alter the balance of power against it. The Mediterranean was therefore regarded as a strategic operating theatre from which the United States could project its foreign policy goals.

The *raison d'être* of American involvement in the Mediterranean during the Cold War can be summed up in order of priority as follows:

- ensuring the free flow of oil to the Western world, particularly Western Europe;
- guaranteeing free access to the sea-lines of communication that connect the Atlantic Ocean to the Eastern world;
- enhancing the political and military cohesion of NATO and defending its continental Europe against Soviet pressure;
- countering Soviet attempts to gain influence throughout the Middle East, particularly the Persian Gulf, but also the Mashreq in general and the Maghreb.

The United States was therefore perceived as the guardian of Mediterranean stability by its allies, and the custodian of the status quo by its enemies. Although the United States was under constant pressure to monitor Soviet actions in the area, challenges to America's position in the basin tended to come from two other sources independent of Moscow: First, militant Arab nationalism which was a reflection of the Arab-Israeli conflict and, in the 1980s, manifested itself in the form of international terrorism; second, unsettling domestic trends in some NATO allies, especially the tense relationship that developed between Greece and Turkey.

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century America's foreign policy objectives in the Middle East have been both global and regional in nature.² Up to the early 1970s, East-West rivalry dictated that the support of regional actors be one of America's main concerns in the Mediterranean. This was particularly the case when both Egypt and Syria turned to the Soviet bloc for armaments in 1955, thus permitting Moscow to gain its first significant foothold in the Arab world.

American intervention in the Suez affair helped the United States shed its image as a new colonial power among some Arab states. But the Iraqi revolution in 1958, the 1967 Six Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War quickly undermined Washington's attempts to become a more effective mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although this conflict did not threaten Western European security directly, apart from the economic panic it caused after oil price hikes in 1973, the threat of a Middle Eastern apocalypse has often been a source of friction between the United States and Europe.³

Given the fact that Europe is more dependent on Middle Eastern oil supplies and more vulnerable to the threat of terrorism, and given their deeper historical links with this region, European countries have often been more sympathetic to Arab demands than their American counterparts. For example, Spain, Greece and Turkey joined members of the European Community in 1973 in refusing Washington access to their bases and facilities to support Israel.

The shifting nature of strategic alliances in the post-Cold War world and the very fluid nature of such alliances as witnessed in the build up to the attack against Iraq in the spring of 2003 allow the United States to formulate strategic alliances with European countries on a more ad hoc basis than previously the case when it comes to crisis situations in the Middle East. But the perception of America being more sympathetic than Europe in general towards Israel continues, especially after President Trump's decision to open the American Embassy in Jerusalem in 2017.

The continuous presence of the US Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean demonstrates Washington's strategic interest in this part of the world. During the Cold War the structure of the Fleet consisted of two carriers and approximately fifty surface ships. The rationale for the Sixth Fleet was traditionally based upon east-west considerations, that is, to bolster NATO's southern flank and to participate in US nuclear deterrence. On two occasions, the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973, the Americans and Soviets engaged in a fierce balance of power struggle with their respective clients in the region, and in the latter incident the United States was even put on a strategic nuclear alert.⁴

Although the United States decided initially to announce cutbacks in its deployable carrier battle groups in the aftermath of the Cold War, the Sixth Fleet continues to fulfil both military and political roles in the Mediterranean. After the terror attacks of September 11th 2001 most Mediterranean states are in favour of the Sixth Fleet remaining in the littoral as insurance against potential forces of instability.⁵

In the past decade technological developments have significantly reduced the role of sea power. Advances in aircraft and missile technology coupled with advancements in lift capabilities and progress in projecting power have resulted in a situation where land-based systems have become far more dominant in the sea combat environment. This is particularly the case in the land-locked Mediterranean.

Nevertheless the sea continues to be of strategic importance as evident during the Balkan campaign of the 1990s and the more recent Syrian campaign. During the NATO intervention in the FR Yugoslavia NATO naval forces took advantage of their positioning in the Adriatic Sea to be able to reach specific targets in Serbia. The Eastern Mediterranean was likewise of significant strategic importance when the United States launched naval based missiles into Syria to deter the aggression of the Syrian regime.

It is primarily in the 'choke' points of the basin such as the Straits of Gibraltar, the Straits of Sicily and the Suez Canal that are obligatory points of passage where maritime power, in the form of submarines, remain a dominant force. Submarines retain their comparative advantage due to the high thermal gradients, the elevated salinity of the sea, the uneven conformation of the seabed, and the heavy traffic of ships in the area.⁶

On the northern shore of the Mediterranean, American foreign policy has largely been geared towards preserving the status quo throughout NATO's southern flank. With the challenge of Eurocommunism long gone, the United States has largely focused on maintaining coherent cooperative relations between both Greece and Turkey. A combination of both stick and carrot tactics have been applied to ensure base rights in the area. Intensive diplomatic negotiations and an increase in financial assistance enabled Washington to reach agreements with most allies on a regular basis, including Socialist governments in Spain and Greece. The threat of withdrawing assistance to both Athens and Ankara has also allowed the Sixth Fleet home-porting rights for most of the latter half of the last century – Greece withdrew this right between 1974 and 1980 after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

American foreign policy at the start of the new millennium is evolving from the concept of pre-emption that is highlighted in the September 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States.⁷

American national interests in the post-Cold War Mediterranean are identified as:

- to assure security of access to oil reserves from the Persian Gulf;
- to maintain strategic and political access to Israel;
- to nurture American-Arab relations in the area along the lines of the strong relationship that exists between the United States and Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

The United States leadership role in the Kuwaiti-Iraq crisis in the early 1990s and its continuous defence of Saudi Arabia and removal of the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq in 2003 have enhanced America's reputation as a proactive player in Middle Eastern affairs. The focus of American interests since the end of the Cold War have gradually shifted to the eastern sector of the basin, where Washington has intensified its bilateral contacts with countries such as Turkey, Israel and Egypt and through NATO's AFSOUTH command and control.⁸

To date there is no clear shift away from America's long held strategic objectives in the Mediterranean. While it is evident that America has adopted a more selective approach when deciding where and when to engage it has not showed any signs of withdrawing from the Mediterranean area of operation.⁹

Whereas the challenge confronting the United States throughout the 1990s was how to justify domestically the presence of such a formidable force half way around the world, the importance of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and its counterpart, the Fifth Fleet in the Persian Gulf, are now regarded as essential components of US foreign policy in the aftermath of the 2001 terror attacks.

The United States continues to play the dual role in the littoral as a strategic guarantor and crisis manager of disputes. The more erratic nature of post-Cold War regional dynamics operating in the Mediterranean has made executing such a policy more difficult. Keeping the sea-lines open for access to and the free flow of oil remains a crucial American goal. Yet the United States has shown a readiness to share the burden of crisis management with the Europeans as demonstrated in its policy approaches towards the former Yugoslavia and Algeria.

Although the terror attacks of September 11th 2001 dictate that the United States retain a vigilante force in the Mediterranean area it is still a relevant exercise to speculate what would happen if Washington were to withdraw its forces from the Mediterranean, much like the British did in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf during the first half of the twentieth century.

An American exit from the Mediterranean would immediately result in a power vacuum in the area. Such an outcome would enable Russia and regional power centres such as Israel, Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Qatar to conduct more autonomous foreign policies than currently is the case. An American withdrawal would thus see bilateral types of external intervention in regional affairs become the dominant phenomenon replacing multilateral initiatives.

In theory, one may argue that an American exit from the Mediterranean would push countries in the area into harmonizing their foreign policies and adopting a common Mediterranean identity. In reality, a total American withdrawal would make it practically impossible to craft a credible regional security structure.¹⁰

The Gulf War in the early 1990s and the intervention in Libya in 2011 illustrated that Southern European countries are prepared to coalesce in a crisis if the United States is willing to lead such a coalition force. Without American supervision, and especially military assistance, it would be impossible that the countries of the Mediterranean could muster the necessary military and political will to act effectively in the fields of crisis management, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

In the post-Cold War era great powers have three main choices that they can adhere to when conducting their foreign policies. They can act unilaterally, they can advance bilateral relations, or they can engage in multilateral collaboration. The past two decades have seen the United States employ a mixture of all three in its foreign policy agenda, with the unilateralist streak becoming more dominant since the election of President Donald Trump in 2016.¹¹

Advocates of an American unilateral foreign policy would do well to consider the downside to such an approach in international relations. The escalation of cost in going it alone is not something that should be easily dismissed. For example, while the war against Iraq in 2003 could be regarded as a feasible economic enterprise, but the cost of keeping the peace in the same country has run into hundreds of billions of dollars and led many to argue that the entire war was a mistake.

Second, any great power acting unilaterally in a faraway region runs the risk of being isolated by other main actors in the international system. The transatlantic split that the war against Iraq caused is a clear example of such an outcome. Unilateral action should therefore be reserved to situations where a great power is under direct threat of attack, as the United States was on September 11th 2001.

An assessment of the types of interaction the superpower has with Mediterranean littoral states reveals political, economic and military ties remain the most important. Intergovernmental links are mainly concerned with these types of cooperation, with cultural ties remaining largely ad hoc. The end of the east-west confrontation has forced all regional leaders, including those in the Mediterranean, to reassess their sources of external support. The change from a bipolar to a more unipolar and multipolar international system has created a new strategic environment for external actors in different regions of the world.

External assistance has become somewhat more effective in influencing regional dynamics. In the cut-throat world of globalization only those regional actors who are deemed politically stable and economically productive are being extended lines of credit that are required to make a difference to their overall international position. The southern countries of the Mediterranean continue to attract less external capital than those of East Asia and even less than some others in Latin America. This is due to a number of reasons that include political uncertainty, administrative obstruction, a comparatively unskilled labour force and an inadequate infrastructure.¹²

The disappearance of the Soviet Union has left the United States as the predominant external military actor in the Mediterranean, and has allowed it to consolidate its position in the basin. The presence of a single superpower could help moderate local crises, as Washington mutes rivalries by cutting off supplies to mavericks in the area. As an economic hegemon in the Mediterranean, the EU could assist the United States in this sector by complementing American military power with economic support. But such coordination will not be easy to

achieve given the more competitive nature of transatlantic relations in the post-Cold War era. At a bilateral level the United States also remains the dominant great power in the Mediterranean. America is the leading external actor in the region with strong political, economic and military ties to its Southern European allies in NATO. It also has comprehensive agreements with Israel, Egypt, Cyprus, Malta, Tunisia and Morocco. The sheer economic and defensive power that the United States possesses ensures that it will continue to attract the attention of Mediterranean countries in forthcoming decades.

While contemporary international relations has seen the United States become more concerned with regional relations in the eastern sector of the Mediterranean basin, EU countries have focused a great deal of their attention on events in the western sector of the basin. As an external great power the United States can act more independently in the Mediterranean than European great powers bordering the Mediterranean, such as France which is more vulnerable to retaliation from action in the Maghreb given its geographical proximity and large Maghrebi emigrant community. In any case, although it is the leading intrusive power in the world, the fact remains that while the United States continues to influence regional dynamics, it cannot dictate patterns of relations within international regions, not even in the Mediterranean.

The state of flux that the international system has been in since the end of the Cold War has led all actors in the international system, including great powers, to be much more flexible in their foreign policy endeavours than during the period 1945–89. Such flexibility is another factor regarded by many theorists as a hallmark of effective great power concerts.¹³ In situations where the direct interests of the extra-regional states are concerned they will react decisively as demonstrated by the United States in the Gulf War of 1990–91, intervention in FR Yugoslavia 1999, and again in the war against Iraq in 2003 and in the Libya conflict of 2011.

Continued domestic and regional instability continues to impede Mediterranean littoral states from attaining far reaching agreements with great powers. Future external relations in the Mediterranean area will depend less on the activity of the non-regional powers and more on how littoral states consolidate their power and perceive their geo-strategic interests. For example, arms flows to the eastern and southern sectors of the Mediterranean continue at a steady pace due to the lack of progress registered in the Arab-Israeli peace process and other regional peace initiatives such as that concerning the Western Sahara (UN initiative led by former US Secretary of State, James Baker – Baker Plan 2000, Manhasset negotiations 2007-8). Regional powers in different Middle Eastern sub regions are even more determined than before to shore up their defences now that patron support can no longer be taken for granted.

In the post-Cold War international system the United States remains unchallenged as the only superpower. Throughout the 1990s the United States spent an average of \$280 billion annually on defence. An important outcome of the US National Security Strategy of September 2002 is that defence spending increased to more than \$400 billion a year or 3 per cent of American GDP. Even if Americans decide to dedicate 4 per cent of their GDP – a defence budget in excess of \$500 billion annually – it would still represent a smaller proportion of national wealth than Americans spent throughout the Cold War. Even Paul Kennedy who invented the term ‘imperial overstretch’ in the late 1980s, when the United States was spending around 7 per cent of its GDP on defence, believes the United States can sustain

its current military spending levels and its current global dominance far into the future.¹⁴ The Bush administration's new National Security Strategy was formulated in response to the terror attacks of September 11th 2001. President Obama and President Trump have largely left American military spending at this same level. Aside from a few references to the concept of 'pre-emption' which is not completely a new concept in any case, the strategy essentially restates the goals of American foreign policy that have been in place since the end of the Second World War. The Bush strategy to continue promoting democracy echoes the goals of presidencies such as Harry Truman, John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. The declaration to guarantee America's pre-eminent military position and to fend off challenges from other powers is the foundation stone upon which American foreign policy has been built over the last half century.

In any case, the absolute superiority of the United States air, naval and military power at this stage of the twenty first century dictates that Washington will continue to control the international sea-lines of communication across the Mediterranean. American strategic interests in the Mediterranean area will largely focus on the eastern sector of the basin, namely the Middle East region in general and the Mashreq and Persian Gulf sub regions in particular. This part of the world is crucial to stabilizing the adjacent region of Central Asia, guaranteeing the security of Israel and also access to oil resources throughout this century.

Reconstruction of Iraq, navigating complex relations with Iran and a permanent settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will remain high on the American foreign policy agenda throughout the first half of the twenty-first century. Success in Iraq is a crucial piece in the post-September 11th puzzle as it will provide the United States with a listening post and launching pad in the heart of the Middle East. A resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will also deliver geopolitical dividends and assist in repairing the perceptual rift that exists between the United States and a large segment of the Arab world.

Although some have referred to an Asian pivot being at the heart of future American foreign policy it is clear that the Mediterranean remains a top priority in American foreign policy planning. Upgrading of the Fifth and Sixth Fleets operating in the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean, respectively, will continue to take place as will the search for new strategic allies and the strengthening of old ones in the Euro-Mediterranean area. Mastery of the Mediterranean will allow the United States to project its power in proximate regions on short notice and also deter any potential aggressors that might seek to take advantage were a Mediterranean power vacuum allowed to develop.

The role of international organizations: the case of NATO

When examining the role that international organizations play in regional relations it is essential to focus on the political interests and coalitions that lie behind the strategic objectives of such international organizations.

Freedom of navigation has been a principal concern for all external actors who have an interest in the Mediterranean. Historically, the sea has been the chief medium for cultural and economic exchanges and for political and military ventures. When the basin was controlled by Mediterranean states they based their strategic considerations on the nature of their physical position and the paramount position of the Mediterranean in the international political economy. The pattern of relations between internal and external actors in the Mediterranean changed significantly in the twentieth century once the process of decolonization became

irreversible. By the mid-1950s a number of international organizations had already expressed anti-colonial tendencies. In 1918 the Covenant of the League of Nations stressed the right to self-determination and in 1945 the Charter of the United Nations reiterated this principle. Both contributed to establishing an international consensus that was antagonistic to the possession of colonial territories.

By the 1960s, Third World nationalism had gained in prominence. The two superpowers had little choice but to accommodate a third force in international affairs once the non-aligned conference was held in Bandung in 1955. Given the intersection of the East-West and the North-South divisions in the Mediterranean it perhaps comes as little surprise that two of the founding fathers of non-alignment, Tito and Nasser, came from two countries in the Mediterranean area.¹⁵

The international system experienced a sea change in structural design at the end of the Cold War as power alignments shifted. The lifting of superpower overlay has allowed for a resurgence of regional dynamics in all parts of the world including the Mediterranean. Fears that the United States would become a global hegemonic power have surfaced from time to time throughout the 1990s and have been rekindled by the proactive foreign policy stance that Washington has adopted since September 11th 2001.

The scenario of a 'back to the future' course of events emerging, with great power patron-client relationships of the past resurfacing, has also not appeared. The emergence of a 'new' hegemonic actor on the international scene also remains an illusion. Yet it is clear that international organizations such as the EU and NATO are playing a more active role in regional politics. The relegation of superpower politics to the history books has coincided with an increase in multilateral intergovernmental and transnational patterns of interaction.

The end of the Cold War has ushered in a period where the realm of external actors' ability to influence international regional relations has changed. Bilateral types of intrusive intervention are often being superseded by multilateral types of intervention as international organizations become more active in regional affairs. This is evident when one compares the nature of intrusive action during the Cold War in the Mediterranean with that of the last two decades. The disappearance of the Soviet Union and the reluctance of the United States to act unilaterally on several occasions throughout the 1990s and more recently have allowed international organizations such as the EU and NATO to play a much more active part in the Mediterranean theatre of operations. A number of other indicators also appear to support this thesis. First, the multifaceted security challenges that great powers perceive as emanating from this area are convincing them that international organizations are better equipped to contend with such risks. Second, the high cost of addressing security challenges favours a collective intrusive response that shares economic burdens.

Third, the Mediterranean remains a geo-strategic area of importance, both as an international waterway and because of its energy producing and transporting capacity. It is therefore in the interest of all international actors that sea-lines of communication in the Mediterranean remain open. A multilateral approach to such security challenges is less of a political risk than unilateral action would be.

While the United States remains the predominant military actor in the Mediterranean basin, the EU is the leading economic player in the basin through its numerous Euro-Mediterranean

policy initiatives including the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Union for the Mediterranean. This development is conducive to an increase of international organization involvement in the area. Several other international organizations also operate in the Mediterranean area. These include the United Nations (UN), the Organization on Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Arab League which includes the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Since the end of the Cold War NATO has gone through several phases of soul-searching in an attempt to identify what new roles it can play in the post-Cold War security arena. In the Mediterranean the Atlantic Alliance has sought to extend its multilateral approach in two ways: by establishing a confidence building network with non-member Mediterranean states¹ through its Mediterranean dialogue programme and by fostering a politico-security culture similar to that which exists in Europe.

Traditionally, NATO has always included the Mediterranean dimension in its forecasting. Italy was among the 12 original signatories of the Treaty. After 1949, the Alliance reaffirmed its commitment to the Mediterranean as three of the four new members of the Alliance were from Southern Europe. The significance attached to the Mediterranean and its flanking areas is further highlighted by the fact that two-thirds of the 15 Alliance-relevant regional conflicts have occurred in this area since 1956.¹⁶

NATO's approach to the Mediterranean has undergone considerable evolution since 1949. Three specific innovations took place during the Cold War which retain their significance today:

- A special group for consultations on the Mediterranean was set up in 1967 in an application of Article IV of the Washington Treaty. This consultative process promotes consensual views among Alliance members.
- In 1975 the Alliance endorsed the idea of a Mediterranean basket within the framework of the OSCE. This step is one of the first to recognize the importance of an institutional dimension to trans-Mediterranean affairs.
- In 1982 the Alliance confirmed that it was legitimate for member states to respond unilaterally to requests from third parties for assistance against aggression and that such actions would be compensated for by other NATO assets. As a result, redeployments from the Mediterranean were often replaced by those from other member states.

Throughout the Cold War both the Canadians and the Americans cooperated with their European allies to ensure strategic depth and deterrence in the geographically and geopolitically varied parameters of the Mediterranean. As a result NATO succeeded in ensuring strategic cohesion across Southern Europe and provided a security insurance that was respected. It also advanced stability and political rapprochement between countries traditionally at odds with one another and helped maintain the defence modernization of Southern European members.

In the post-Cold War world NATO has sought to transform its posture and approach in the Mediterranean. The first main change was a conceptual one. At the 1989 Anniversary Summit

¹ NATO Mediterranean member states are all EU Mediterranean member states (except Malta and Cyprus) and also Albania and Montenegro and Turkey.

and in the Strategic Concept of 1991 in Rome, the Alliance acknowledged the multifaceted security challenges confronting it. In addition to traditional threats, NATO also highlighted numerous other problems such as proliferation of WMD, terrorism, economic disparities, environmental degradation and mass migration. NATO also accepted to participate in the emerging interlocking institutional arrangement in which different security institutions such as the OSCE, the EU, the UN and NATO all contributed to the resolution of conflicts.

NATO's institutional efforts to further relations with its northern and eastern neighbours through the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and Partnership for Peace (PfP) programmes have resulted in membership invitations to the vast majority of states in this catchment area. In contrast, NATO's policy towards the south has, to date, been restricted to a dialogue with a selected number of countries in the Mediterranean. Details of the Alliance's 'southern strategy' were spelled out by NATO officials in February 1995. Five countries in the Maghreb and the Mashreq, namely Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritania, Egypt and Israel, were selected as the first countries to join this process of enhanced communication.¹⁷ Algeria and Jordan subsequently became members of the NATO-Mediterranean dialogue bringing the total to seven Mediterranean countries participating in the NATO programme towards the Mediterranean.

The second change that has taken place relates to NATO's defence reorganization. The Alliance has improved its operational mobility and flexibility. An emphasis was also put on increasing multinational operations. This experience equipped the Alliance to address the spectrum of security challenges in the Mediterranean.

NATO's third shift is linked to the practical experience that the Alliance has had in recent years in the Mediterranean. A number of particular episodes stand out. NATO's contribution to the 1991 Persian Gulf War was paradoxical in nature. Although not directly involved in the war itself, NATO played a decisive role in the successful military prosecution of the war. Consultations, information-sharing and policy concentration conducted through NATO channels helped to galvanize international support for UN resolutions against Iraq.

NATO's deployment of its mobile air force to Turkey not only bolstered the latter's defences but also enhanced intelligence collecting throughout the Mediterranean. The Alliance also supplied essential logistical and communications support to the 12 nations who actually had forces on the ground during the war.¹⁸ The 1991 Gulf War advanced the thesis that post-Cold War crises could be dealt with successfully if the indispensable importance of harmonizing the Washington treaty with the UN Charter was recognized.

This thesis was underlined by NATO's role in another episode it had to confront, the Balkan crisis. The lack of a concerted North American and European perspective on the military and political demands associated with the conflict in the former Yugoslavia is one reason that UN resolutions in the area have not been fully enforced. In an effort to contain and end the war in the Balkans, NATO adopted a series of policies that included participating in monitoring operations in the Adriatic alongside EU under UN resolutions. NATO also oversaw UN authorized no-fly zones in Bosnia increasing collaboration between the EU, UN and NATO and cooperation with Hungary and Albania. In the post-conflict phase NATO contributed directly to stability through its IFOR and SFOR missions.

NATO also continues to indirectly influence the evolution of the Middle East peace process. Although not directly involved in the regional dynamics of the Middle East, NATO is a decisive

third party that acts as a buttress to the functional EU economic role and American military role in this region. This fact was clearly demonstrated in the 1990–91 Gulf War when NATO refuelling bases and other logistical support greatly accelerated the Desert Shield build-up and the Desert Storm campaign.¹⁹

NATO's involvement in the Gulf War, its participation in the Balkan conflict and Afghanistan and constant references to a NATO peacekeeping force in the aftermath of a Middle East peaceful settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, make it highly likely that this international organization will be an active player in future crisis situations across the Mediterranean.

This more active scenario presents both risks and opportunities for countries in the basin. An increase in the emergence of failed states, as was the case in Algeria in the mid-1990s, and as witnessed through NATO's involvement in Libya in 2011 in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 could easily prompt a rapid reaction NATO response to safeguard expatriates and protect vital petrochemical installations. Conversely, countries in the Mediterranean can now take advantage of NATO's renewed interest in the area by opening wide-ranging security discussions with the Alliance. Such a process of dialogue could help dispel some of the misperceptions that exist on both sides of the Mediterranean.

In recent years a specific effort has been made to improve the level of coordination between NATO's Mediterranean policy and the EU's common foreign and security policy. This process of cooperation is being somewhat facilitated by the European Union's permanent structured cooperation mechanism (PESCO). NATO officials regularly consult with their EU counterparts to explain their respective strategic objectives towards the Mediterranean. But policy coordination remains at a somewhat embryonic stage and there is no indication that a policy harmonization process between NATO and the EU in the Mediterranean is on the cards.²⁰

- NATO's initial decision in the post-Cold War era not to set up a new security policy arm in the Mediterranean area such as a 'NACC- South' resulted in the NATO-Mediterranean Partnership emerging as the main policy mechanism.²¹ A number of indicators support the creation of such a forum:
- NATO's advanced command and control structure could serve as a vehicle for promoting a security dialogue with non-member NATO countries;
- the lessons learned through the outreach programmes such as Partnership for Peace with Central and Eastern Europe are applicable in the South as the security challenges in this region are also related to transitory post-Cold War realities;
- NATO's links with Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia through NACC-like mechanisms provide a forum through which ties between these regions and the Mediterranean could be developed;
- by extending its diplomatic and military machinery southwards, NATO, together with other European organizations such as the EU, OSCE and Council of Europe, could ensure their participation in any future trans-Mediterranean security arrangement, such as the proposal of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM).²²

The current objective of NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) continues to be to contribute to regional security and stability, achieve better mutual understanding and dispel any misconceptions about NATO among Mediterranean countries. Since its establishment in 1995 the MD has been gradually strengthened in line with its progressive character. In particular, at their Summit in July 1997 NATO Heads of State and Government decided to

establish the Mediterranean Cooperation Group (MCG) operating under the authority of the North Atlantic Council.²³

Cooperation with dialogue partners has continued to be strengthened in a number of areas including terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, crisis management, and defence reform and military-to-military cooperation. An enhanced NATO-Mediterranean co-operative security framework would assist in achieving a more secure Euro-Mediterranean area.

The post-Cold War period is proving to be a continuous test to the *raison d'être* of NATO as the dividing lines of the past have either faded or disappeared completely. While the Alliance has found common ground in the fight against international terrorism this period of rapid flux presents NATO with an identity crisis which is exacerbated when seen through the lens of such a diverse area as the Mediterranean.

Looking ahead NATO's Mediterranean policy can offer a life-line to transatlantic relations as an opportunity to forge new links with non-member Mediterranean countries. Although the financial and political costs of developing an active alliance network across the waterway will be high, the costs of failing to establish such a system could be higher in the long term, should instability from the Mediterranean spread towards the north.

NATO's successful Cold War track record and its ability to re-shape its security agenda in the past two decades makes it one of the most prominent security institutions functioning today. As transatlantic relations have evolved and at times become more strained, the transatlantic commitment to NATO has not yet wavered. Talk of a NATO collapse has proved premature. NATO Secretary General Norwegian Jens Stoltenberg when delivering a historic speech to a joint session of US Congress to commemorate the 70th anniversary of NATO's founding treaty signed in Washington DC in 1949, credited American president Donald Trump for persuading other NATO members to increase their defense spending up to the agreed spending level as stipulated in 2014 Wales Defense Investment Pledge.

Additional way to preserve the cohesiveness of the Alliance is to identify common security ground in the new security environment that has emerged. The Mediterranean and by extension, the Middle East, offer the Alliance such an opportunity.

The fact that Europe has developed a multi-level international society, in which international organizations such as the EU, NATO and the OSCE can interact with states and sub-national institutions, puts Europe in a strong position to approach security issues in the Mediterranean. Given the lack of unity in the security perceptions of the countries in the Mediterranean and those powers with an interest in the area, it is unrealistic to assume that a single international organization can address the multitude of security challenges that are present in the Mediterranean. A more realistic alternative is one in which a single international organization, such as the EU, is assisted by other transatlantic organisations such as NATO and the OSCE, who have the resources and an interest in the international relations of the Mediterranean.

American participation in NATO often makes this organization appear more like a vehicle of superpower interests than one concerned with addressing Mediterranean concerns. Absent the creation of a trans-Mediterranean international forum, that would certainly be perceived as much more representative of Mediterranean regional interests, a transatlantic strategic

approach would appear the most feasible platform upon which more intensive cooperative patterns of relations throughout the Mediterranean could be promoted.

In the decade ahead, the strategic goal of international organizations operating in the Mediterranean must be to introduce measures that reduce the regional dynamics of fragmentation that continue to dominate Middle Eastern relations and could result in the emergence of a north-south arc of instability across the Mediterranean.

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Mr. Josef Janning

Josef Janning is a senior policy fellow and head of the Berlin office of the European Council on Foreign Relations. His topics of focus include European integration, EU reform, European and German foreign and security policy, global governance and transatlantic relations.

Janning joined the European Council on Foreign Relations in April 2014 as senior policy fellow in the Berlin office. From 2013 to 2014 he was a Mercator Fellow at the German Council on Foreign Relations. Prior to that he served as Director of Studies at the European Policy Centre (EPC) in Brussels. Between 2001 and 2010, Janning led the international policy work as Senior Director of the Bertelsmann Foundation, a major private German foundation. Earlier positions in his career include Deputy Director of the Center for Applied Policy Research (CAP) at Munich University from 1995-2007. Previously, he has held teaching positions at the University of Mainz, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and a guest professorship at Renmin University of Beijing. He has worked with leading think tanks in Europe, the US and Asia, and engaged in and led various international study groups, high-level groups and commissions. Janning has published widely on European affairs, International Relations, EU foreign and security policy, German foreign and Europe policy as well as global affairs. On these issues he is also a frequent commentator with German and international media.

Dr. Antonio Missiroli

Dr. Antonio Missiroli is the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges. Prior to joining NATO, Dr. Antonio Missiroli was the Director of the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) in Paris (2012-17). Previously, he was Adviser at the Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA) of the European Commission (2010-2012); Director of Studies at the European Policy Centre in Brussels (2005-2010), and Senior Research Fellow at the W/EU Institute for Security Studies in Paris (1998-2005). He was also Head of European Studies at CeSPI in Rome (1994-97) and a Visiting Fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford (1996-97).

As well as being a professional journalist, he has also taught at Bath and Trento as well as Boston University, SAIS/Johns Hopkins, at the College of Europe (Bruges) and Sciences Po (Paris). Dr. Missiroli holds a PhD degree in Contemporary History from the Scuola Normale Superiore (Pisa) and a Master's degree in International Public Policy from SAIS/Johns Hopkins University.

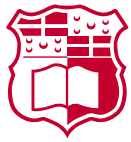
Dr. Juliette R. Rouge Shedd

Dr. Rouge Shedd is currently the Associate Dean for Administration at the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University and teaches both introductory courses and courses on terrorism, extremism, global conflicts, and ideologies. She holds a Ph.D. and M.Sc. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University and a BA in Political Science and Psychology from George Washington University. Her research includes work on the relationship of media to conflict, specifically focused on media coverage of terrorism and the role of women in political violence. She has shepherded S-CAR's efforts to increase distance education and overseen a wide range of innovations in experiential and service learning. She served as the academic project manager for the development of the school's Point of View International Retreat and Research Center.

Dr. Monika Wohlfeld

Dr. Monika Wohlfeld holds the German Chair in Peace and Conflict Prevention, established at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC), University of Malta by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. MEDAC is a regional higher education institution.

Previously she was the Deputy Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), responsible for the Organization's field operations. She served as Head of External Co-operation of the OSCE and, prior to that, as Senior Diplomatic Adviser to the OSCE Secretary General. She has been a Senior Research Fellow at the Western European Union (now European Union) Institute for Security Studies in Paris, and Researcher at the War Studies Department at King's College London. She holds a PhD in War Studies from King's College London. Dr. Monika Wohlfeld has published widely on matters related to European security, European institutions, regional co-operation, conflict prevention and crisis management.



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Postgraduate Seminar, 30th November 2018
(financed by the German Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs)
Radisson Blu Hotel, St. Julian's, Malta

Transatlantic Relations and the Mediterranean

09:00-10:15

Welcome

Prof. Stephen Calleya, Director, MEDAC

Amb. Walter Haßmann, German Ambassador to Malta

Taking stock and the way forward

Chair: Dr. Monika Wohlfeld, German Chair for Peace Studies and Conflict Prevention, MEDAC

Mr. Josef Janning, Head of the European Council on Foreign Relations Berlin Office, Berlin

10:15-10:45 *Group Photo and Coffee break*

10:45-11:45

The security dimension and emerging security challenges in the Mediterranean

Chair: Mr. Tom Mc Grath, former EU European External Action Service official, Brussels

Dr. Antonio Missiroli, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, Brussels

11:45-12:45

Regional relations in the Middle East

Chair: Dr. Derek Lutterbeck, Deputy Director, MEDAC Amb. Nassif Hitti, former Head of the Arab League Delegation to France, Permanent Observer of the Arab League to UNESCO, Paris

12:45-13:30 *Buffet Lunch*

13:30-14:30

The American Perspective

Chair: Dr. Omar Grech, Director, Centre for the Study and Practice of Conflict Resolution, Malta and Lecturer of International Law, MEDAC

Dr. Juliette R. Rouge Shedd, Associate Dean, The School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (SCAR), George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia

14:30-15:30 *Working Groups*

15:30-16:00

Reports from Working Groups

(WG1: Ms Roba Al Jamal, WG2: Mr Mohamed Wael Khammassi, WG3: Mr Luke Mintoff, WG4: Ms Hanan Abdelall)

Chair: Prof. Stephen Calleya, Director, MEDAC



Federal Foreign Office



Seminar participants.



MEDAC Director Prof. Stephen Calleya and the Ambassador of Germany to Malta, H.E. Amb. Walter Haßmann during the opening session of the seminar.



Mr. Josef Janning, ECFR Berlin, addressing the seminar. On the right, Prof. Dr. Monika Wohlfeld, Holder of the German Chair for Peace Studies and Conflict Prevention, MEDAC.



Dr. Antonio Missiroli, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges speaking during the seminar. On the left, Dr. Wohlfeld, MEDAC; on the right, Mr. Tom Mc Grath, former EU European External Action Service official.



Amb (ret.) Nassif Hitti, former Head of the Arab League Delegation to of the Arab League to UNESCO during his presentation. On the left. Dr. Wohlfeld, MEDAC; on the right, Dr. Derek Lutterbeck, Deputy Director and Holder of the Swiss Chair, MEDAC.



Dr. Omar Grech, Director, Centre for the Study and Practice of Conflict Resolution, Malta introducing Dr. Juliette R. Rouge Shedd, Associate Dean, The School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (SCAR), George Mason University. On the left, Dr. Wohlfeld, MEDAC.



Dr Rouge Shedd addressing the seminar participants.



MEDAC postgraduate students at the seminar.



MEDAC postgraduate students at the seminar.



Mr. Josef Janning and Dr. Monika Wohlfeld, MEDAC, with MEDAC students during the working group session.



Dr. Antonio Missiroli, NATO and Mr. Tom Mc Grath, former EU European External Action Service Official with students during the working group session.



Prof. Calleya, MEDAC Director, and Amb. Hitti with students during the working group session.



Dr. Rouge Shedd, and Dr. Grech with students during the working group session.



MEDAC postgraduate students and seminar working group rapporteurs (R to L) Ms. Roba Al Jamal, Mr. Mohamed Wael Khammassi, Mr. Luke Mintoff and Ms. Hanan Abdelall with Prof. Stephen Calleya (middle), Director, MEDAC.

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John A. Consiglio (2018)

Finance Readings for Diplomats

Dr. Monika Wohlfeld and Prof. Stephen Calleya (2018)

What Future for the Iran Nuclear Deal?

Amb. Ahmed Ounaïes (2018)

The Mediterranean Dimension of Tunisian Diplomacy

Prof. Bichara Khader (2018)

Shifting geopolitics in the Arab World 1945-2017

Arraiolos Malta 2017, 13th Meeting of the Heads of State of the Arraiolos Group

Dr. Miguel Angel Moratinos (2017)

Contemporary Euro-Mediterranean Relations

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OSCE Code of Conduct: Regional Conference for the Mediterranean

Monika Wohlfeld (2014)

Civil Society and Democratization in Societies in Transition

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About MEDAC



The Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC) is an institution of higher learning at the University of Malta offering advanced degrees in diplomacy and conflict resolution with a focus on Mediterranean issues.

MEDAC was established in 1990 pursuant to an agreement between the governments of Malta and Switzerland. The Academy is currently co-funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta. The Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (HEID) was among MEDAC's first foreign partners. More recently in 2009, MEDAC concluded an agreement with the German Federal Foreign Office and established a German Chair in Peace Studies and Conflict Prevention.

In academic year 2019/2020 MEDAC will celebrate its 30th anniversary. Since its inception, MEDAC has acquired a solid reputation both as an academic institution and as a practical training platform. We are fortunate to count over 800 alumni from 59 different countries who have completed successfully the post-graduate courses offered by the Academy. The EU's enlargement towards the Mediterranean, that included Malta in 2004, and the recent transformation of the political landscape throughout the Arab World have resulted in an ever increasing demand for MEDAC's programme of studies.

Academy Courses

- Master of Arts in Diplomatic Studies (M.A.)
- Master of Diplomacy (M.Dip.)
- Diploma in Diplomacy (DDS)

See details of all courses on the website:
www.um.edu.mt/medac

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