L-Università ta' Malta
**Mediterranean Academy
of Diplomatic Studies**

MEDAC
Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies
University of Malta

Med Agenda – Special Issue

Cooperative Security and the Mediterranean

Dr. Monika Wohlfeld (Editor)

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Acknowledgment

While the security situation in the Mediterranean region appears to be continuously deteriorating, through this edited publication entitled 'Cooperative Security and the Mediterranean' MEDAC attempts to step out of this dynamic to look at the broader picture and to contribute to thinking about possible ways of moving towards more peaceful and cooperative engagement on security issues among states of the Mediterranean region. This publication includes contributions to a Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC) postgraduate seminar on the same subject matter held on 28th November, 2019 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 was 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.

This publication would not have been possible without the editorial support of Thomas Attard, a MEDAC alumnus and research assistant at the Academy.

MEDAC's Academic Perspective on Cooperative Security and the Mediterranean

Professor Godfrey Pirotta, MEDAC Chairman

Since 2009, the Academy has benefited immensely from the establishment of a German Chair in Peace Studies and Conflict Prevention which is funded by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Most recently, the Academy hosted a post-graduate academic seminar on cooperative security and the Mediterranean. This international seminar brought together experts from the Euro-Mediterranean region and beyond who took stock of the current security situation in the region and examined future prospects for regional security in the Mediterranean. This academic Seminar was organized by the German Chair for Peace Studies and Conflict Prevention at MEDAC. The papers constituting this Med Agenda publication were presented by the distinguished speakers who addressed this event.

The multitude of political, economic and socio-cultural challenges currently facing the countries of the Mediterranean, particularly those countries experiencing profound transitions after the 'Arab Spring', highlights further the relevance of MEDAC's mission of promoting opportunities to further cooperation in the Mediterranean. The tumultuous developments that have been taking place across the Mediterranean since the historic moment of 2011 has further emphasized the importance of investing in diplomacy in general and in the human resources of the region in particular if cooperation, peace and prosperity are to remain achievable goals. MEDAC will continue to organize academic activities that champion 'Mediterranean thinking' at such a critical juncture in Mediterranean history.

Since opening its doors in 1990 as a joint endeavor between Malta and Switzerland, MEDAC has established itself as an academic institution championing the values of education, dialogue and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. Malta and Switzerland have been both pioneers and leading stakeholders throughout MEDAC's academic endeavors. The Academy has sought to foster cooperation and confidence in the Mediterranean through a continuous series of initiatives that include: its diplomatic training programmes, the promotion of intercultural dialogue on issues pertaining to human rights and conflict resolution and by regularly publishing academic papers that focus on different perspectives of regional relations across the Euro-Mediterranean area. MEDAC also continuously organizes conferences, seminars and workshops which bring together academics and practitioners from the Mediterranean and beyond.

As the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies is celebrating its 30th anniversary, MEDAC will continue to serve as a promoter of confidence building measures by providing numerous stakeholders from the Mediterranean opportunities where engaging in constructive

dialogue can take place. Such exchanges are a necessary prerequisite to fostering sustainable policy recommendations that seek to improve the future outlook of the people of the region. Dynamic interaction between different governmental, private sector and civil societal representatives will ensure that collective cooperative initiatives stand a better chance of being implemented in the emerging Mediterranean.

Cooperative Security and the Mediterranean, a German Perspective

H.E. Walter Haßmann, German Ambassador to Malta

I am pleased to open this German Chair for Peace Studies and Conflict prevention seminar on 'Cooperative Security and the Mediterranean'. This is an important occasion for two reasons. First of all, German foreign policy emphasizes the value and importance of an international order based on rules, multilateralism and co-operative security. Secondly, the Federal Foreign Office and MEDAC recently renewed the agreement on German support for the Academy, and the German Chair for Peace Studies and Conflict Prevention. This agreement aims at strengthening the engagement of German authorities in cooperative efforts in the Mediterranean region and underlines their commitment to provide educational opportunities to youth from the region and beyond.

When in September of last year, the German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas launched the "Alliance for Multilateralism" with his French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian at the United Nations, their aim was to halt the global tide of nationalism and isolationism. Minister Maas noted that, "we see multilateralism is under threat". The alliance's first goal is to prove that countries that "support multilateralism and support the United Nations, remain the majority in the world," said Minister Le Drian. This effort to establish a network of countries[1] who actively support multilateral cooperation, including working together to combat climate change, inequality, and social impacts of new technologies has gathered speed and numerous countries signed up to this initiative. In order to support multilateralism effectively, the first step is to formulate a response to power politics. Cooperative security, a concept which provides an alternative view of interaction between states, one that is based on cooperation among different state actors, and which rejects the use of force, is therefore one of the guiding principles for the effort to save multilateralism.

This seminar poses an important question: can the Mediterranean region develop a security culture and corresponding institutions based on the concept of cooperative security? The contributions to this seminar indicate that although the concept is under pressure, just as the concept of multilateralism is, flexible and practical co-operative endeavours related to a comprehensive approach to security in the region do provide important stepping stones toward the more elusive goal of an inclusive co-operative security framework. These co-operative endeavours require nurturing and support. The 'Alliance for Multilateralism' aims at exactly this – to say loud and clearly that all small and big steps towards the goal of a rules-based world are valuable.

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[1] https://www.dw.com/cda/en/germany-france-to-launch-multilateralism-alliance/a-48172961

It is in this context that I am pleased about the continuation of the German support for the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, a regional confidence-building effort. The Academy's engagement for diplomacy, co-operation, co-operative security and multilateralism is also a step toward the goal of a rule-based world. The Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies was established three decades ago. Throughout this period the world in general and the Mediterranean in particular have witnessed many historic developments. As an academic post graduate centre of excellence MEDAC has consistently sought to promote a more cooperative and dynamic Mediterranean region through its diplomatic training programmes, inter cultural dialogue on issues pertaining to human rights, conflict prevention and peace studies and continuous conferences, seminars and publications.

Over the past 30 years MEDAC has hosted more than 800 graduates from the Euro-Med region and beyond. Hundreds of other scholars, policy makers and diplomats have participated in MEDAC's conferences, workshops and summer schools. For more than a decade the German Chair has been instrumental in all of MEDAC's endeavors. The extraordinarily wide scope of the German Chair's activities is further evidence of the pivotal role it plays at MEDAC by supporting an annual post-graduate seminar that allows students, academics and policymakers to discuss pertinent themes related to security in the Mediterranean. Germany is proud to be a collective and collaborative partner in MEDAC and looks forward to continuing to champion constructive academic discussions that are a prerequisite to a more peaceful and prosperous Euro Med region.

The Concept of Cooperative Security

Dr. Monika Wohlfeld

Introduction

The concept of cooperative security is central to this publication. Yet, the concept is often used rather loosely in academic debate. It is for this reason that this chapter will provide a definition and main characteristics of cooperative security. A short history of cooperative security, which will include references to main examples of cooperative security frameworks will also be provided. Finally, the chapter will refer to the related concepts of cooperative security and multilateralism and introduce the concept of 'minilateralism', in order to assess the applicability of the concepts in the current climate of renationalization of security policies and what has been described as 'crisis of multilateralism'. The chapter will than turn to the situation in the Mediterranean region and present main proposals that have been put forward to address the lack of cooperative security frameworks in the region.

Defining cooperative security

So what exactly is cooperative security? Nolan provides a short and clear definition of cooperative security as 'a strategic principle that seeks to accomplish its purposes through institutional consent rather through threats of material or physical coercion.'[1] Furthermore, authors point out that cooperative security is clearly an approach that focuses on prevention of conflict and of war.[2] As such, it differs substantially from concepts such as collective security. Vetschera points out that cooperative security as a term is not precise because what it refers to in fact is a specific security policy that 'indicates a move from traditional security policy strategies based upon coercion and confrontation towards a strategy which attempts to find solutions for security problems in cooperation even with potential enemies.'[3] Waever finally suggests that cooperative security is relational, and that it 'generates a focus on the relationships'.[4] Cooperative security 'tells us to listen' – to others, in order to get the relationship right, to cooperate and to do 'stuff' together. He further suggests that cooperation means coming together from different starting points. [5]

It is worth noting that the concept of cooperative security is occasionally used imprecisely to describe situations in which states work together to solve common security issues or challenges, or to put it in different words to describe security cooperation. In some cases, it is used wrongly as an equivalent to the terms collective security, which is a system in which states act together to counter an aggressive state; common security, which is a situation in which states are affected by a common threat; or even comprehensive security, which is a broad understanding of security challenges. Thus, there is some confusion around the definition of the concept.

It is sometimes argued that in fact cooperative security is identified with idealistic or liberal theoretical approaches to security. Consequently, it is seen as an alternative to traditional approaches that could make them obsolete. Not surprisingly thus, realist critics of idealistic or liberal approaches in general and of cooperative security in particular, present it as an illusion and its supporters as overly optimistic. But some authors point out that the truth may lie somewhere along a continuum between the liberal and the realist approaches and the debate between the liberal and realist approaches hinders the development of the concept more than it clarifies it. Vetschera suggests that 'if (…) seen as complementary, rather that alternative, to traditional, 'competitive' strategies, applied in accordance of circumstances, it may also find its way into the 'realist' school of international relations.'[6] Thus, the suggestion is that even in a realist mindframe, cooperative security principles may provide beneficial strategies, which enhance security.

History of the concept

Although cooperative security is occasionally presented as a new or relatively new concept (dating back to the 1990s), it is in fact not all that new. For example, the development of arms control principles in the 1960s by a number of academic authors was based on the notion of the necessity to cooperate with real or perceived enemies in order to prevent an outbreak of conflict and war. During the late stages of the Cold War, it found its ways into European security policy debates, and fed into the Helsinki process which concluded with the creation of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe and later, in the 1990s, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The 1990s in Europe are often interpreted as the period of time when the principles of cooperative security were most relevant or most widely applied. Interestingly, this was also a period of time when some of the biggest challenges to European security emerged, in the form of conflicts and war in former Yugoslavia, but also conflicts in the new republics that emerged from the collapse of the Soviet Union. The consequences of these conflicts reverberate until today, and indicate the limits of the concept of cooperative security.

The development of the concept of cooperative security has also to be seen in the context of the 1980s and 1990s literature on the concept of security communities that is the idea that actors share values, norms, and social identity symbols and engage in interactions in many spheres that reflect long-term interest, reciprocity and trust.[7] The concept of international regimes, that is the idea that one can determine means and conditions under which states cooperate with one another[8], also contributes to our understanding of cooperative security.

Security as zero sum game?

One of the consequences of the emergence of the concept of cooperative security was the realization that relations among states on security matters did not have to be a 'zero-sum-game', as the realist paradigm suggests. In the words of the former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, '(p)eace, security and freedom are not finite commodities like land, oil or gold which one state can acquire at another's expense. On the contrary, the more peace, security and freedom any one state has, the more its neighbours are likely to have.'[9]

Vetschera suggests though that some institutions that pursue zero-sum-game strategies may also provide for activities promoting cooperation, peaceful relations and peaceful settlements of disputes among members (and occasionally also other states), and thus they may pursue cooperative security aspects.[10] The key institution of this kind is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The issue of use of force

At the core of the concept of cooperative security is thus the belief that there are alternatives to the use of force in international relations. However, the 1990s was marked by a debate of the usefulness and viability of humanitarian intervention, and later also action under Responsibility to Protect. In particular, the NATO Kosovo intervention, which was based on arguments related to grave human rights abuses by the Yugoslav forces in Kosovo, and which did not have a UN Security Council mandate, indicated the difficulties of squaring the concept of cooperative security with the use of force. Some authors, such as Michael Michalka, suggest that use of force does fit into the paradigm of cooperative security if it is action to restore human rights of a group of people (rather than if it used against a state).[11]

However, others, such as Vetschera, are of the opinion that use of force cannot be considered part of cooperative security strategies. This author points out that while cooperative security is usually seen as antithetical to traditional security concepts, in fact that approach is not logical. The antithesis of cooperative security is thus competitive security or 'non-cooperative' security strategies. Such strategies are 'primarily aimed at giving security "from" each other. '[12] This in turn points us to the notion of 'zero-sum game'. Individual defense, collective defense and deterrence, as well as alliance politics thus all fall into the category of non-cooperative strategies, or zero-sum game strategies as they all focus on coercive actions. Any use of threat or use of force is thus not part of cooperative security approaches.[13] Power politics is thus also not compatible with cooperative security.

Two dimensions of security

Even a cursory review of cooperative security strategies and frameworks leads to a recognition that cooperative security strategies continue to exist in parallel to non-cooperative strategies and frameworks. Indeed, Vetschera argues that the two types of strategies correspond to different scenarios. Thus, non-cooperative security strategies aim at dealing with adversaries ready for intentional and calculated aggression, and cooperative security strategies aim at addressing risks emerging from situations. The latter imply that not other states but coincidences and circumstances that can lead to escalation, unintended consequences and conflict are the 'enemy'. Thus, Vetschera suggests that the two types of strategies are mutually exclusive, but since cooperative security strategies are not effective in a zero-sum game setting, he sees the two types of strategies not as alternatives abut as a spectrum, or as complementary elements.[14]

Arguably, the two concepts might also correspond to the concepts of hard and soft security. Here, Julian Lindley-French suggests that 'hard and soft security and the approaches implied therein are not just about different tools for different security problems and intensities, but, rather, what constitutes a desired security end-state in the modern world and how the West can achieve it.'[15] Thus, Lindley- French acknowledges the two 'dimensions' of security, but unlike Vetschera, suggests that the key is not coexistence of both strategies, but rather, a perspective of a desired security end state. To return to the notion of cooperative security, there appears no doubt that the desired end state should be based on prevention, cooperation, and non-use of force. To take this a step further, while the non- cooperative and cooperative security strategies may coexist, and in fact, one may argue that non-cooperative strategies appear to be taking upper hand as multilaterialism loses ground, cooperative security continues to be the desired end state.

Cooperative security is often linked to the concept of multilateralism and international organizations, not least because the two key positive examples of functioning cooperative security strategies that authors point to are two large international organizations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation with Europe, with its currently 57 states and 11 partner states, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization with its 29 member states and numerous partner states. The latter is a somewhat misleading example, as cooperative security is mainly NATO's organizing principle vis-a-vis partner States, but the mainstay of the alliance is mutual defense and collective security. Nevertheless, as NATO is often presented in academic analyses as a cooperative security organization, this chapter will present both OSCE's and NATO's 'brand' of cooperative security.

OSCE as a an example of a cooperative security framework
The CSCE/OSCE was the first security organization that conceived of and adopted a concept of cooperative security, which the participating States have reaffirmed in major documents and decisions. The concept was nothing short of revolutionary at the time it was conceptualized in the 1970s.

The adoption of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 and the creation of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), which brought together all European states, United States, Canada and the Soviet Union, demonstrated that dialogue and cooperation is possible even at times of most severe confrontation. This development 'transformed the zero-sum game of the Cold War into a positive-sum game between European states'[16]. The negotiating process created a forum for discussion, negotiations and action on security, broadly defined, between the two superpowers and European countries. The key principles that guided the process were comprehensive security and cooperative security.

After the fall of the USSR and the subsequent EU and NATO enlargements, the CSCE was institutionalized and transformed into the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to address the needs of a new security environment and became a forum for resolving Cold War tensions. The OSCE today has 57 participating States and 11 partner states (in the Mediterranean, Asia as well as Australia)[17]. Inclusive in nature, consensus-based, focused on conflict prevention and soft security, the CSCE/OSCE has been understood as the primordial cooperative security framework. In fact, it has been argued that '(t)he OSCE has been playing an important role in the Euro-Atlantic security architecture since its establishment. Not only because of its comprehensive and cooperative model of security but also because it brings together on equal footing all actors: be it member states of the EU and NATO on the one hand, or CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) and other post-Soviet countries on the other.'[18] OSCE's cooperative approach to security rests on the underlying premise that security is indivisible, and key elements of that approach are anchored in various OSCE documents, which are politically, rather than legally binding. The notion that cooperation is beneficial to all participating states is relatively unchallenged among the OSCE states. However, the notions that insecurity in one state can affect the well-being of all states and that no participating state should enhance its security at the expense of the security of another participating state are perennial issues that cause occasional heated debates.

The enlargement processes of the EU and NATO, the inability of the OSCE to solve 'frozen conflicts' in the former Soviet Republics, budgetary pressures, and recurring political tensions among its participating states led some observers to speak of a crisis of cooperative security in the context of the OSCE. In particular, the tensions between Russia and 'the West', which

escalated because of Russian incursion in Ukraine, are strongly felt in the context of the OSCE, which in fact fields a Monitoring Mission in Eastern Ukraine. 'The growth of military tensions along with a resurrection of old narratives between Russia and the West in recent years both call for the revival of this platform for cooperative security.'[19] However, the general crisis of multilateralism does not bode well for such an endeavour.

The OSCE maintains special relations with six Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.[20] While the purpose of the Partnership is to work with these states as a group, bilateral (OSCE +1) approaches are also used. This partnership emerged from the Helsinki Final Act agreed upon in 1975, which asserts that security in Europe is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean area as a whole. Although numerous subsequent CSCE/OSCE documents as well as seminars and meetings have addressed the Mediterranean dimension of security, the substance of that relationship has been emerging only step-by-step through a rather slow process.

The Partnership is mostly based on providing some access (in a manner similar to observers) to regular political deliberations of the organization, high level contacts and exchanges, some operational aspects (i.e. the ability to contribute to OSCE activities) and specialized seminars and projects. Since Partner states do not sign up to nor are bound by the OSCE acquis of documents and decisions, participating States chose to encourage them to consider some aspects of the OSCE's commitments. The formulation that was developed in 2003 called for voluntary implementation.[21] Over time, specialised events on a number of selected themes proposed by the Partner States have been implemented by various specialised structures of the Organization in a decentralised way. These may have been side events, special workshops, or low-key projects involving one or more Partner States. While the dialogue with Mediterranean partners does provide access to a cooperative security framework and thus may contribute to security community building, as in the case of the NATO Mediterranean Dialogue, it does not cover all of the countries in question, does not include them as full members, and overall thus does not provide for an effective cooperative security framework for the Mediterranean region.

NATO as an example of a cooperative security framework

A number of authors point to NATO as a cooperative security framework. In fact, cooperative security has not been NATO's field until some ten years ago. The concept was elaborated in the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept, as one of several overarching core tasks of the alliance. As NATO's explanatory note suggests, '(t)he new Strategic Concept, adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, gives a new flavour to the role of the Alliance, introducing Cooperative Security (CS) as a new core task in addition to the existing collective defence and crisis management. This new task would bring a proactive stand towards achieving increased international harmony and cooperation, synchronizing efforts to deal with the new multidimensional threats and providing a better understanding of common problems. The uncertainty of geopolitical events and their possible multifaceted effects, reduced resources, shorter time frames, and ambiguous targets put pressure on NATO to balance soft and hard power and political and military leverage. To this end the Alliance advocates and coordinates a wide network of partner relationships with non-NATO countries and other international organizations around the globe in order to achieve CS and ensure Euro-Atlantic security.'[22] The significance of this development is widely acknowledged in academic literature, and NATO's outreach to non- member states and its cooperative security approaches are often seen as valuable contribution to international security.

However, some authors suggest that cooperative security, despite being used as a chapeau term in NATO, is not at the core of its functions. Writing about NATO and cooperative security, Ole Waever argues that '(t)here is a temptation to interpret NATO as primarily a political institution. It has been a recurring slogan since the end of the Cold War that NATO is now less military and more political. This is basically wrong.' [23] It continues to be primarily a military organization, and for a substantial number of its members, if not all, it is this military aspect which is the primary reason for the continued significance of the alliance.

In this context, it is worth mentioning that President Trump's critical statements on NATO, free-riding of allies, and the future US role in NATO are interpreted by some as potentially weakening the alliance. Thus, at least the military aspect of NATO is currently subject to a debate, with NATO member countries reacting nervously despite some commentators suggesting that President Trump does not want to destroy NATO but rather to coerce its members so that they will share a greater burden of the collective defence.[24]

Currently, NATO understands cooperative security largely as partnerships with third countries. NATO maintains several partnership frameworks such as Partnership for Peace, Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and so called Partners across the globe. These frameworks include non-member countries from the Euro-Atlantic area, the Mediterranean and the Gulf region, and other regions[25]. NATO pursues dialogue and practical cooperation with these partners on a range of political and security-related issues.

Waever acknowledges the role of these partnerships, but also suggests that the role of NATO in this respect is not an easy one. For example, 'the same Lisbon Summit that put cooperative security (partly with Russia) on the agenda also included decisions on missile defence as another headline issue that drove Russia away at the same time. Similarly, the same Libya operation that serves as one of the primary proofs of type 1 partnership (inclusion of surprising non-members in military operations) antagonised China and Russia (with a huge price to be paid by Syrians for the Chinese and Russian 'lesson' of not trusting again the US, NATO or the West to act on a UN mandate)'.[26]

NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue was initiated in 1994 by the North Atlantic Council, NATO's principal political decision-making body. It involves seven countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. These countries are not members of NATO, but rather are involved in a political dialogue and practical cooperation that is primarily bilateral in structure (NATO+1). The cooperation is based on annual Work Programmes. [27]

Literature suggests that the Mediterranean Dialogue does have a role in projecting stability to the South, and some argue that it plays a role in building a security community with the Mediterranean countries. However, it does not cover all of the countries in question, does not include them as full members, focuses on bilateral relations, and thus does not provide for a cooperative security framework for the Mediterranean region.

Multilateralism in crisis

Much has been written in the past years, in particular since the election of US President Trump, about a crisis of the international rule-based order and multilateralism. Recent developments, especially unilateral actions of powers such as United States, Russia and China, have reinforced the view that multilateralism is under pressure. The current climate of renationalization of security policies has been described as 'crisis of multilateralism'. The

faltering climate diplomacy, US withdrawals from a number of multilateral agreements, the fate of the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) and the difficulties the arms control and disarmament regimes encounter are key observations. Rising nationalism and populism in domestic politics plays a key role.[28] In parallel to this crisis of multilateralism, commentators see also a crisis of cooperative security in Europe.[29] The difficult annual Ministerial Council meeting in Bratislava held in December 2019 was also interpreted as 'breakdown of cooperative security'.[30]

"(M)ultilateralism is under fire precisely when we need it most," as UN Secretary- General António Guterres said recently.[31] France and Germany have called for an Alliance for Multilateralism.[32] The alliance's first goal is to assemble a group of states that actively support the United Nations and multilateralism and to formulate a response to power politics. Supporters of multilateralism point to common threats, such as climate change, migration flows, arms control and detect a rising interest in moving past the crisis of multilateralism to reinvigorate our capacity for international cooperation and collective action, particularly among middle powers and small states. There is also increased attention among commentators to the concept of cooperative security.

The concepts of minilateralism and selective or flexible cooperation that are currently being developed in the context of the problems faced by multilateralism globally may be useful in reflecting on the crisis of multilateralism. As Stewart Patrick explains, 'states increasingly participate in a bewildering array of flexible, ad hoc frameworks whose membership varies based on situational interests, shared values, or relevant capabilities. These institutions are often 'minilateral' rather than universal; voluntary rather than legally binding; disaggregated rather than comprehensive; trans-governmental rather than just intergovernmental; regional rather than global; multi-level and multistakeholder rather than state- centric; and 'bottom-up' rather than 'top down'.[33] Thus, while multilateralism is under pressure, there are possible ways of bottom-up, smaller in terms of numbers of states involved and flexible approaches to cooperative security.

The Mediterranean region is one marked by disparities between the Northern and the Southern shores, and well as deep differences among the states of the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. As Stephen Calleya writes, '(a)n analysis of the pattern of relations in the different sub-regions of the Mediterranean (...) reveals that while Southern European states have become more deeply integrated into the European sphere of influence, (...), no similar pattern of unity is noticeable across the other Mediterranean subregions.'[34] Calleya observes that the Mediterranean experiences soft and hard security challenges and conflict over 'territorial claims, the proliferation of weapons, terrorist activities, illegal migration, ethnic tensions, human rights abuses, climate change, natural resources disputes, especially concerning energy and water, and environmental degradation'.[35]

As the UNDP and the World Bank suggest, Arab countries are home to only 5 percent of the world's population, but in 2014, they accounted for 45 percent of the world's terrorist incidents, 68 percent of its battle-related deaths, 47 percent of its internally displaced population, and 58 percent of its refugees[36]. The United Nations Development Programme's Arab Human Development Report predicted in 2016 that by 2020, "(a)lmost three out of four Arabs could be living in countries vulnerable to violent conflict".[37] The World Bank/UN point out in Pathways for Peace that '(i)n 2016, more than 24 percent of all violent conflicts occurred in the Middle East, an increase from 2010, when the region experienced less than 11 percent of the total. These trends are predicted to continue.'[38]

In fact, the Mediterranean region has no effective security governance, no inclusive regional security organizations, and no framework that could advance cooperative security. Abdennour Benantar, in his discussion of possible security architectures for the Mediterranean region, analyses the security situation in the region and asks whether the concept of cooperative security, as developed in the European context, could be transposed or applied in the Mediterranean.[39] Despite the arguably Euro-centric nature of the concept and the mixed record on its application, Benantar argues in favour of creating a regime of security cooperation in the Mediterranean, while taking into account the sub-regional diversity of the Mediterranean region. Both the OSCE (or rather its more unstructured predecessor, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe) and NATO has in the recent years been presented as possible examples for cooperative security arrangements in the North Africa and Middle East region or Mediterranean region. Thus the chapter will also present the concept of a Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean and the recent American-pitched NATO ME idea. Neither of those got a lot of traction in the region so far, but they are important contributions to the debate and deserve some attention.

Conference for Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM)
When the Cold War ended, and Europe's sensitivity to Mediterranean security problems increased, Spain and Italy, but also Malta, proposed a Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) as a regional equivalent to the CSCE, more recently, in the form of a "Helsinki-like" process for the region. They began calling for an enhanced institutionalized focus on Mediterranean security within the OSCE. Drawing from the Organization's original founding documents and its acknowledgement of the indivisibility of security in the OSCE area with that of the Mediterranean, these states proposed to mirror the successful experience of the CSCE as the forerunner to the OSCE.

However, the idea of a CSCM did not gain traction. It has been argued that such a project must succeed and not precede cooperative regional dynamics it seeks. The conflictual patterns of relations which exist across the Mediterranean therefore do not lend themselves to cooperative security frameworks. The absence of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace precludes parties in the region from applying cooperative security methods that have proved effective in the framework of the OSCE.[40] Furthermore, an CSCE/OSCE-based model of cooperative security framework for the Mediterranean would have to be inclusive, open to all states in the region and possibly beyond (the Gulf states, Iran), capable of taking into account the security challenges of all its members, while remaining flexible. Consequently, new multilateral frameworks for the Mediterranean based on the CSCE/OSCE model do not appear viable in the current situation of the region.[41]

NATO ME
In early 2020, US President Donald Trump called for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to boost its role in the Middle East, and take in new members from the region, in what would be a significant shift in the alliance's mission. President Trump's name for this new framework was NATO ME (for Middle East). No further details, including potential new members have been announced to date. The initial informal feed-back by analysts and some policy makers from NATO member States to the proposal has been mostly cautiously or openly negative, including for example concerns that such a move would not only effectively end the current alliance, but also that relations with MENA countries would be focused or reduced to military and defense matters, rather than a comprehensive and balanced approach. [42] There is little in terms of information on responses of the Middle East countries. In any case, the proposal does

not focus on cooperative security aspects but rather the military role of NATO. Furthermore, it does not provide for an inclusive framework for the Mediterranean region.

The Way Forward

One key conclusion of the discussion of NATO ME and CSCM is that not extending existing European models, or exporting models of cooperative security to the Mediterranean region, but rather using such models as sources of inspiration and support to sub regional or regional cooperative security efforts is likely to be more successful[43] in establishing cooperative security principles and frameworks in the Mediterranean. A strategic foresight exercise for the MENA region in 2030 suggests there are opportunities for common approaches and cooperation on long-term challenges that affect all states of the region. Thus, there are key risks and opportunities which might enhance cooperation between individual countries of the region. 'With this as a starting point, through building single-issue institutions and multilateral trust, other chapters for cooperation might open up.'[44] This observation could benefit from being placed in the perspective of the concept of 'minilateralism', presented above. There are multiple examples of 'minilateralism' in the Mediterranean region, but none better than the rather loose and sub regional arrangement of the 5+5 Western Mediterranean cooperation framework, which among other issues brings the 10 states (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain) together, including in the framework of its 5+5 Defense Initiative.45 The 5+5 Defense Initiative identified the issues of surveillance and maritime security, air space security, the contribution of Armed Forces to civil protection and training and research as key for practical activities, knowledge exchange, facilitation of interoperability of the Armed Forces and to enhance trust and mutual understanding. Practical ways of approaching security issues such as joint exercises, aspects of training, research projects complement dialogue and exchange of information, and underpin low-key cooperative approaches to security and defense issues in the Western Mediterranean.

It is thus the creation of the lose 5+5 Defense Initiative involving 10 states of the western Mediterranean in low-key cooperative security aspects that provides an example of minilateralism that may help us to conceptualize the future of cooperative security in the Mediterranean. With multiple, flexible layers of such minilateral cooperation, and focus on issues that are of interest to all states involved, cooperative security approaches can be introduced into the various regional formats in the Mediterranean.[46] They deserve the political and financial support of all state or non-state actors that engage on behalf of multilateralism and cooperative security.

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Championing Security in the Mediterranean

Professor Stephen C. Calleya

At the start of the second decade of the twenty first century the Mediterranean continues to experience a continuous trend of instability in many different countries across the region. The multitude of security challenges requires a geo- strategic approach that is able to allow the riparian states of the Mediterranean and other international actors with an interest in the Mediterranean to address the sources of instability in a collective manner.

Throughout history, the Mediterranean has continuously been at the center of international relations. The end of the Cold War led some pundits to believe that the Mediterranean would be marginalized in global relations. The enlargement of the EU toward the east, the rise of China in Asia, and the emergence of India and Brazil as leading economic developing countries further cemented this perception.

Yet the process of globalization has not shifted international attention away from the Mediterranean. Three decades since the end of the Cold War, it is clear that the Mediterranean remains an essential strategic theater of operation linking Europe, North Africa, the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Black Sea together. Anyone questioning the strategic relevance of the Mediterranean in contemporary international relations must be careful not to confuse the rise of China and the Asia Pacific in general with a diminishment of the Euro-Mediterranean sphere of influence. While the East-West dynamic pattern of relations and the North-South dynamic pattern of relations continue to shift in different directions, the physical importance of the Mediterranean as a geo-strategic waterway remains a constant. In fact the challenge in the decade ahead is to ensure that the Mediterranean does not become more of a geo-strategic fault line between a more regionally integrated Europe and a more fragmented Arab world.

Instead of becoming a region of peace and prosperity the post-Cold War Mediterranean continues to be a source of instability in international relations. It remains the location of the more than seven-decade old conflict between Israel and Palestine. In addition, to the continuous hostilities between these two peoples, this conflict also continues to attract the attention of Euro-Mediterranean regional actors and international great powers. The Mediterranean is also the region where the Cyprus and Sahara conflicts remain unresolved. More recently the Arab Spring of 2011 has unleashed a period of further upheaval with conflicts in Syria and Libya that have further attracted additional international attention to the Mediterranean.

The post-Cold War Mediterranean is a geographical area where the majority of contemporary soft and hard security challenges are present, including ongoing conflicts in each sub-region of the basin primarily over territorial claims, the proliferation of weapons, terrorist activities, illegal migration, ethnic tensions, religious intolerance, human rights abuses, climate change, natural resources disputes especially concerning energy and water, and environmental degradation. Given the heterogeneous nature of the Mediterranean area which cooperative security modality would be the most effective paradigm to introduce at this volatile post-Cold War moment we are witnessing? Is it possible to establish a Conferenceon Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) type security arrangement that includes both the Mediterranean states plus those great powers with an interest in the Mediterranean? Or is it more realistic to adopt a number of sub regional security initiatives such as the '5 + 5' West Mediterranean Forum that each seek to address the security challenges that are prevalent in their jurisdictions? The ultimate goal in any such endeavor must be clear from the outset, namely, that of navigating through the complex sea of instability in an effort to restore political and economic stability as soon as possible.

Such a long list of security threats and risks that need to be addressed and managed in a coherent manner requires an institutional design that can cope with such a daunting agenda. The absence of a regional security arrangement in the Mediterranean that includes all riparian states continues to be a major handicap prohibiting the effective management of contemporary security challenges. With no pan Mediterranean regional security arrangement on the horizon, better coordination between the multitude of sub-regional groupings across the basin is a prerequisite to achieving a more stable security situation across the Mediterranean and preventing the emergence of a permanent security vacuum.

Since the end of the Cold War and especially after the September 11, 2001 attacks, there has been a continuous perception in Europe of an imminent threat emanating from the Middle East. Alarming headlines in the international media focusing on instability in the Middle East and the regular arrival of hundreds of illegal migrants from the southern shores of the Mediterranean to Europe have accentuated such a perception.

The flow of news reports coming from the Middle East predominantly feature threatening images such as extremists preaching hatred against the West, or terrorists displaying contempt for human rights, or brutal dictators seeking to acquire WMDs.

Such images portray the Middle East as an alien, hostile, and backward region. They also help focus attention on the large migrant communities across Europe from these countries. Xenophobia toward migrant communities across Europe has strengthened and given rise to large right-wing political movements in France, Britain, Germany and the Netherlands.

Moreover, addressing the issue of illegal migration through increased cooperation and information exchanges on policing, visa controls and asylum policies through the Schengen framework and the Frontex mechanism has so far only had limited positive results.

In reality, the economic affluence and military supremacy that Europe enjoys, especially when compared to its southern neighbours, makes the suggestion that the Middle East is a threat to Europe seem nonsensical. Yet, since the end of the Cold War, there has been an increasing perception in Europe and North America that the new enemy after communism would come from the Middle East. Alarmist propaganda fueled by the media has focused on

the emergence of an Islamic jihad against the West, particularly after the 9/11 attacks against the USA. This perception has been further bolstered by the ever-increasing number of illegal migrants that have sought to seek a better life in Europe by crossing the Mediterranean. A "migration invasion" syndrome gained ground in recent decades when tens of thousands of migrants from North and sub-Saharan Africa opted for maritime trafficking that more often than not ended up in a futile attempt to arrive in Europe.

The EU's inadequate response to the flow of a large number of people seeking political asylum or refugee status also underlines the hollow commitment that economically developed EU countries have adopted when it comes to humanitarian policies and welfare resources. To date the EU has not been able to introduce an effective migration policy that would undermine the criminal dimension of human trafficking and simultaneously cater to the economic inflow of migrant workers that EU economies require.

Economic stagnation across much of Africa and the lack of any serious political reform throughout the continent has served as a major push factor leading to millions of young Africans to pursue a different lifestyle elsewhere. The international economic downturn since 2008 has led to the introduction of more stringent criteria when it comes to administrative procedures dealing with applicants of political asylum. This is even more the case given the clear evidence available to prove that such would-be asylum seekers are economic migrants seeking a better standard of living.

When it comes to assessing military type threats large-scale aggression against any EU member states is now improbable. Instead Europe faces security threats that are more diverse, less visible and less predictable. The three main security threats that the EU faces today are terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the impact of failed states and organized crime. International terrorism is a strategic threat that everyone faces. Contemporary terrorist movements seem willing to use unlimited violence and cause massive casualties. Europe is both a target and base for such terrorists. Proliferation of WMD is the single most important threat to peace and security among states. Everything possible must be done to thwart a WMD arms race, especially in the Mediterranean. The most frightening scenario is one in which terrorist groups acquire weapons of mass destruction.

In several parts of the world, bad governance, civil conflict and the easy availability of small arms have led to a weakening of state and social structures. Somalia, Liberia, Afghanistan, Syria and Libya are the best-known recent examples. The weakness of such states is often exploited and sometimes caused by criminal elements. Revenues from drugs and other illicit activities have kept several private armies in power.

Given the indivisibility of security in Europe and the Mediterranean, the EU must continue to adopt a more proactive stance when it comes to influencing and managing the international relations of the Mediterranean area if it wants to successfully project stability in the area. Only such a strategic stance will ensure that the EU is perceived as a credible actor in contemporary global relations. Geographical proximity and stability in the Mediterranean dictates that the EU needs to try to influence regional dynamics in the Middle East more systemically than it has been in recent years. Failure to do so will continue to stifle attempts to strengthen Euro-Mediterranean relations through the Union for the Mediterranean and also have a negative impact on the European Neighbourhood Policy agenda that is currently being implemented.

The Way Forward

As we commence a new decade the ever dynamic pace of international relations demands that the European Union implements a new vision and strategy that will ensure that the EU becomes an even more relevant actor in global relations.

In order to enhance its credibility as an active player in the post Cold War international system the EU must first seek to project stability throughout its immediate vicinity. As highlighted in its global strategy the EU must adopt a number of regional strategies that seek to restore stability and offer a positive outlook along its eastern and southern borders.

The new EU Commission must manage relations with the Balkans so that the process of EU enlargement is firmly back on track. This includes providing applicant countries with a clear perspective towards membership. Such a positive outlook will assist in countering the Brexit narrative that has dominated headlines in recent years. Successive enlargements have been a positive driving force for the EU and should continue in the decade ahead.

The time has come for the EU to conduct an overhaul of its Neighbourhood Policy. This should include introducing policy measures that focus more on supporting specific political reform and economic development challenges along the eastern and southern borders of Europe. The EU should dedicate its political and economic resources to the specific necessities of its different neighbouring countries in an effort to promote stable regional relations.

A decade since the 'Arab Spring' it is imperative that the EU introduce a more robust diplomatic engagement with the Arab world. The entire MENA region should be addressed in this review but the EU should focus on promoting stronger specific subregional relations with the Maghreb and Mashreq.

A strategy that enhances Euro-Maghreb ties is long over due and urgently required if the aspirations of civil society in general and the younger generation in particular across North Africa are to be achieved. This strategy must encourage good governance at all levels and provide a substantial pro-economic growth policy framework that results in job creation across the Maghreb.

In the Mashreq the EU must be more visible as a political actor promoting diplomatic initiatives across the conflict ridden spectrum. EU credibility hinges upon it being both a player and payer. The time has come for the EU to demonstrate its leadership credentials by championing diplomacy in Syria, Palestine, Cyprus and Libya.

The huge energy discoveries throughout the eastern Mediterranean offer another opportunity to strengthen further Euro-Mediterranean relations. Energy dependence is a strategic concern for the EU. Europe is the world's largest importer of oil and gas. Imports account for about 50 per cent of energy consumption today. This is forecast to rise to 70 per cent by 2030. Most EU energy imports come from the Gulf, Russia and North Africa. A stable Mediterranean is thus crucial when it comes to ensuring that the EU maintains a economically viable energy outlook.

In addition the Euro-Africa Partnership demands a more prolific and dynamic EU policy perspective that seeks to create a functional cooperative framework to manage common challenges including that of irregular migration. With the population of sub-Sahara Africa

projected to double from 1 billion to two billion by 2050 it is essential that the European Union create and implement a more coherent strategy towards Africa that provides more opportunities throughout the continent.

Sustainable development must be the cornerstone of such a policy with the EU coupling its technological capabilities with educational training programs throughout the African continent. Looking ahead, boosting trade not aid must be the EU's mission statement towards Africa.

In conclusion a number of policy recommendations should be urgently considered if a cooperative security framework towards the Mediterranean that delivers a more peaceful and prosperous is to be achieved.

First, a regional security mechanism that allows for continuous dialogue and diplomatic initiatives to be proposed among Mediterranean states is long overdue. This can commence as a sub regional structure and be open to other states if and when they would like to join. It is essential that such a forum is inclusive in nature with all states being allowed to participate as long as they participate in accordance within internationally defined rules of diplomatic engagement.

Such a regional security process that focuses on dialogue and diplomacy along the lines of the Organization on Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is well overdue. The peoples of the Mediterranean are desperate for such a positive perspective that provides a sense of hope based on tangible political and economic support.

Second, the time has come to establish an economic development and investment fund for the Mediterranean. If the goal of fostering economic development is to take place across the MENA region then a 'Marshall Plan' type of policy framework should be created. This fund which will require tens of billions of dollars to be effective and could be financed by the G20 and include the rich Gulf States. This economic and financial mechanism will be geared towards restoring ailing Arab economies over a period of five to ten years.

Such a Development and Investment Fund would provide vital support to Arab states so that they can undertake the necessary reforms in a socially sustainable manner and ultimately help in providing economic growth and job creation. Development of the hinterland vis-à-vis the coast across North Africa is essential as the living conditions for the inhabitants in this geographical area will become more unbearable by 2025. It is imperative to develop the hinterland by upgrading the infrastructure, building schools, hospitals and housing for millions of people every year.

Third, the EU must introduce a comprehensive migration policy to manage in a much more humanemanner the phenomenon of migration through the Mediterranean towards Europe. A serious policy framework must come to terms with a series of strategic questions: how can the EU be more effective in alleviating the human suffering caused by human trafficking that we are witnessing on practically a daily basis in the Mediterranean? How can the EU contribute towards decriminalising migration by launching a legal migration policy framework? This must include introducing the necessary procedural mechanisms to identify refugees, asylum seekers and illegal migrants in a more rapid manner.

A comprehensive migration policy must also include a review of the state of play of the EU-Turkey agreement that was negotiated in 2016. Should the EU emulate this model of cooperation with other Mediterranean countries? Are Migration Partnerships with non-EU states the way forward?

Fourth, when addressing the security dimension of Euro-Mediterranean relations, the EU Global Strategy makes a reference to the EU as a Maritime Security Provider. Through maritime missions such as Operation Sophia the EU was able to start managing more effectively human trafficking across the central Mediterranean. The initiative taken by the EU Naval Force MED to train the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy upon the request of the Libyan authorities is another modality that showed clear signs of success.

Looking ahead instead of ad hoc EU maritime missions in the Mediterranean the complex web of organized criminal networks across the basin demands that a permanent Euro-Mediterranean Coast Guard be launched. Such a Coast Guard would focus on search and rescue missions and serve as a deterrent against organised crime on the high seas. Such a mechanism would also enhance Europe's border enforcement capabilities and be a tangible step towards building a cooperative security structure in the Mediterranean worthy of such a name.

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Cooperative Security in the Mediterranean: Regional or Sub-regional Approaches?

Dr. Emiliano Alessandri

During the post-WWII era and especially after the Cold War, a broad consensus had emerged that true and long-lasting security, in the Mediterranean as well as other regions of the world, could only be successfully maintained by leveraging cooperation among States, especially those that are bound together by a common geography. In recent years, both the notions of cooperative security and regionalism, which had reached wide popularity in the 1990s, have become increasingly contested. Against a backdrop of power politics, they are currently faced with what seems to be an existential test whose outcome is far from certain. At the crossroads of three continents, and for centuries a major hub of international exchanges, a more marginal and conflict-prone Mediterranean epitomizes these larger trends.[1]

Cooperation and regionalism in a crisis
The concept of cooperative security lends itself to different definitions but the notion is essentially based on the tenet that the pursuit of security is not (or ought not to become) a zero-sum game. Security is better achieved not at the expenses of others but through(often burdensome but necessary) cooperation. Although the rise of transnational threats has been often offered as the most compelling reason why states must work together to protect their interests, the notion of cooperative security pre-dates globalization and is inseparable from a state-driven, if not state-centric, view of the international system.

As developed and operationalized in inter-governmental multilateral processes, for instance in the context of the CSCE/OSCE, states decide to subscribe to a set of principles, which include traditional tenets of state relations (respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity, etc.) as well as the duty to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms (what is referred to as "comprehensive security"). Non- and sub-state actors enter the picture to the extent that states recognize their role in state and inter-state affairs, including as beneficiaries as well as providers of security.

In recent years, we have seen the powerful return of the notion that not only international security, but also international politics more broadly, are at core, a zero-sum business. Long-standing arguments in favor of international cooperation have been dismissed by a growing cohort as simply naïve or misplaced. Not only multilateralism but internationalism more broadly has been rejected as misled (possibly self-harming) attempts to replace the sovereign

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[1] Disclaimer: The views expressed in this article belong solely to the author and do not represent in any way the perspectives and policies of the Middle East Institute and the OSCE.

nation state with an abstract, artificial notion of an international community. Globalism has become a key target of nationalist movements around the world, many of which have become mainstream in their respective countries, leading to significant shifts in foreign policy postures and strategic doctrines.

Alongside the return of sovereigntism, we have seen the rise of non-state actors, often in connection with the proliferation of transnational phenomena and threats. Both non-state and sub-state actors have been increasingly dealt with as a challenge to the nation state and its sovereignty rather than as stakeholders and potential partners. Overall, the international system has become less state-driven, but it has also remained more state-centric than any theory of interdependence would have contemplated from the 1970s onwards.

Against this background, cooperative security remains nominally an important notion which is enshrined in many international agreements and deliberations and continues to inspire the mission of a number of international organizations, from the United Nations to a range of regional and sub-regional organizations. Its standing and appeal, however, have rapidly receded, as unilateral approaches have been increasingly preferred over multilateral ones. The so-called crisis of the international liberal order, which is currently widely debated among policy makers as well as experts is, at a more basic level, a crisis of international cooperation, one unlike any other since the interwar period. While the risk of new international conflicts has significantly increased, security has become increasingly zero-sum. While diverging from country to country, security perceptions and threats assessment have turned markedly negative in outlook. This applies to East-West relations, where a new "Cold War" has been pitting the US and Europe against Russia for a number of years now. But it also applies to North-South relations, where the still conspicuous gap in development is increasingly seen as a reason, in the North, for a policy of separation and neglect rather than engagement. Perhaps more notably, the same competitive dynamics have gained steam within the so-called Western world itself, which had been widely seen as the laboratory of "integration".

Nationalism and populism are increasingly driving national agendas that define state interests in a defensive and exclusivist way. This can be seen as the backlash against the idea that interdependence would change the nature of international politics by creating large dividends for all and by bringing peoples and communities closer together than ever before. As globalization has disrupted societies on many levels and created a moving map of winners and losers, States have tried to re-assert their sovereignty, possibly more so in the developed world. Unilateralism or bilateralism have become the new preferred approaches.

International institutions that had aimed to mitigate, ritualize, codify, even possibly replace power politics with a quasi-constitutional approach to it derived from the domestic realm, have been steadily eroded in their legitimacy (and sometimes resources), including those, like NATO, that have been based from the outset on the idea that the security of one is the security of all. The European Union itself, the world's leading experiment with sharing national sovereignty, has faced a brutal rendezvous with old and new detractors.

Although still facing serious challenges, neither of the two Western institutions really risks being dismantled. There are actually important signs that the EU is now largely out of the woods after years of existential peril. But the storm that battered it did not come from the outside. It is connected with the failure to embrace the vision of Europe as a single polity with a common destiny. Discrepancies have been blamed on different national cultures, not only

on different economic realities and trends. The realization that the common European boat was not as big and strong as imagined has led many to question the very need for a common platform, as if the alternative of a Europe once again coping with (and possibly drowning under) competing nationalisms was a risk that could be managed.

Solidarity has been in short supply also at the global level. All major regional and international conflicts have continued to fester in the 21st century, and new ones have broken out to the open, from Syria to Yemen. The burden-shifting on migration, to take just one example, has showed at least two things: how moral principles and international law could be sacrificed on the altar of a narrowly defined national interest; how difficult it has become for almost any national leader to look beyond the here and now, appreciating instead that world history is the story of human movements and migration is a powerful catalyst for development if properly governed.

Against a backdrop of growing skepticism about internationalism, the notion of regionalism has also been challenged. That is the case even though the new wisdom has it that "geopolitics is back", the anti-globalization backlash being accompanied by a (very sensible) re-appreciation of the role of geography in international relations. The world is no longer "flat" to use a characterization that had become popular in more optimistic times. But regions have always been cultural and political constructs, not only economic, let alone merely geographical, realities. As such, they are also often de-constructed, or at least reshaped, when international tensions are on the rise. Although regionalism has not come under the same attack as globalism, the flat world of globalization has not been replaced by a world of regions either.

The North Atlantic, for instance, was cemented in the first half of the 20th century by the experience of two World Wars and only came into being when the US reconciled itself with its never severed ties with Europe, no longer conceiving of itself as a world apart (the New World vs the Old World). Europe itself was initially largely defined by what it was not, a small peninsula on the margins of the Eurasian landmass, to use a 19th century expression, characterized by a plurality of centers of power and diversity of actors that found no equivalent further East.

Both the concepts of the Atlantic community and of a united Europe are now challenged as the North Atlantic seems to divide again America from the rest, and Europe is cut across divisions between East-West and North-South. Perhaps the future of the EU is to be seen less in terms of its fate as an institution than its outlook as a region: are commonalities among Europeans still greater than the differences that have always existed amongst them? Is the rise of China, migrations from the South, neo-authoritarian challenges to democratic governance, reinforcing the awareness of what is distinctively Western and European, or are they instead undermining, and possibly diluting, the idea of Europe – the "European way of life" as in the questioned terminology of the new European Commission?

A Mediterranean left to itself

Moving to the Mediterranean region, cooperative security and the notion of regionalism are probably nowhere more challenged than here, as evidenced, among other indicators, by the incidence of new (hot) conflicts compared to any other region of the world since the post-Cold War era. Like it or not, the Mediterranean has always been at the center of geopolitical rivalries and international, sometimes "inter-civilizational", strife. But at different turning points in history, the sea also seemed to provide the internal lake of what promised

to be a community of states in the making. This was particularly true after the end of the Cold War, which had been marked by the attempt of the two superpowers to divide the region into competing camps, rather than facilitating the post-colonial course of the local states. The Barcelona Process launched in the 1990s was inspired by the view of a Euro-Mediterranean region that would, in the security as well as other fields, benefit from the growing interconnections between states and societies that the post-bipolar international system allowed. Cooperative security was one of the key ingredients of a region- building process that promised to overcome the development gap as well as other sources of North-South tensions.

That project has unfortunately largely failed. First, it had several inherent weaknesses. It was a way for Europeans to paper over many differences and competing interests that still existed in their relationship with specific countries and areas of the region. The notion of Mediterranean was in some ways an umbrella term that allowed Europeans not to focus on Middle Eastern conflicts or to delve into the differences between the Middle East and North Africa. It also somewhat relieved Europe from thinking about geopolitics in the region, as if historical conflicts could be largely washed away by promoting region-wide approaches and solutions based on a positive sum view of the region's future.

Second, it was never clear what the Europeans would be ready to put on the table. For countries in the South, security was inseparable from development. For the EU, the Mediterranean remained the back "neighborhood", therefore something less than a common region. The Southern Mediterranean, it was thought, would feel the positive influences of Europeanization which had gained full steam on the European continent, but only up to a certain point and based on a plan (with all kinds of conditions attached) that was decided in Brussels and European capitals. "Everything but the institutions" never fully translated into actual policy as the EU remain highly reluctant to open its internal market to competitive imports, not to speak of easing the circulation of people. What Europe wanted was a "ring of well governed States" that could limit negative spillovers to Europe. Cooperation with these States would be selective. The Mediterranean would largely remain a border region.

More than twenty years later, as noted by some, the ring of well-governed states rather resembles a ring of fire, with a failed state in Libya and several other embattled regimes struggling with their survival across the MENA. No major conflict has been mitigated, let alone solved. The Palestinian issue, to take a most emblematic case, has actually regressed. Europe has moved from neighborhood policy towards retrenchment and, with the exception of a handful of European countries that continue to actively play a role in the region, energies have focused on buttressing a fortress Europe that can withstand negative pressures from the South.

For its part, the US has intervened in the region multiple times without ever fully taking into account the interests of the local populations, the neighboring and more directly affected Europeans, let alone looking at the Mediterranean as a common space whose stability could be jeopardized only at a great risk for regional and international security. After a number of costly and inconclusive, if not counterproductive wars, Washington is now in the process of withdrawing, but not without making sure that core interests are preserved, in particular Israel's security, Iran's containment, and the fight against Islamic terrorism (energy flows are somewhat less of a concern as the US economy has become less dependent on foreign sources).

The problem is that US policies in recent years have hurt all the above mentioned. Israel is divided politically and fairly isolated diplomatically, Iran's influences have grown in neighboring countries from Syria to Iraq, and Islamic terrorism has been exacerbated by post 9/11 military interventions. In a sign that cooperative security is no longer the dominant paradigm, regional and extra regional actors have also re-asserted their role in the region, either directly or through proxies. Turkey, and more recently Russia, have attempted from their different standpoints to project their influence, extending their clout at the expense of others. From within the Arab world, the Gulf Monarchies have become an ever more powerful player in North Africa and the Mediterranean. Compounding state rivalry has been the rise of non-state actors, from terrorist networks that are loosely connected to terrorist groups that have aimed to mimic the state, such as ISIS. Sub-state actors have also grown stronger as states have remained largely dysfunctional, underperforming in renovating social contracts that had never fully delivered. The paradox is that states in the region have never been more assertive and combative. But this has happened against a backdrop of non and sub state actors challenging state prerogatives and functions. The question ought to be asked whether there is actually a connection – however counter intuitive it may seem - between nationalism and state weakness, and between the crisis of cooperative security and the crisis of the state.

Sub-regionally, developments do not seem to be qualitatively different. First, what makes a sub-region begs the question. Is Southern Europe a sub- region of the Mediterranean or of the EU? Is North Africa a sub-region of the Mediterranean or should one focus on the differences between the Maghreb and Mashreq, which partly transcends this geography? No real positive dynamics let alone breakthroughs are happening at these sub-regional levels even if this fairly elusive unit of analysis is chosen. What can be instead detected are signs of possible new alignments among new geographies created by economic advantages and geopolitics.

For instance, the ever closer relationship between Greece, Cyprus, Israel, and Egypt – and perhaps Russia - on energy developments promises to be a major factor for economic security and economic development going forward, at least in an Eastern Mediterranean context. In the Western Mediterranean, there is growing engagement between Europe, the US, North Africa and the Sahel, well-beyond the 5+5 format. Whether this notion of a wider Mediterranean encompassing the Sahel reinforces or weakens Mediterranean regionalism remains an open question.

The attempt by Washington to bring together Sunni Arab States in an anti-Iran coalition is premised on a relatively new geography of relations that would overcome the preeminence of the conflict with Israel. It is an initiative, however, that has no evidence of gaining traction precisely because no progress has been made on the Palestinian question and other painful legacies that remain of the utmost significance for Arab populations across the region, particularly in the Mediterranean area.

International organizations in the new reality

What type of organizations can operate in this difficult and fast changing environment? As noted, all institutions that were created in the post WWII period are facing a reality check. Many of them have remained engaged in the Mediterranean region but their influence is arguably on the wane. It is, for instance, increasingly clear that the EU will only be able to make a difference in some contexts (in Tunisia and other countries where the geopolitical stakes are manageable and the force of attraction of the European market and European

culture remain strong). NATO is doing important work on a range of security issues and has increasingly engaged countries of the Middle East, in particular Iraq. Because of its origins and the Libyan legacy, NATO can hardly be a force for integration or a bridge builder in a deeply divided and volatile region.

Born only some ten years ago, the Union for the Mediterranean is doing important work on the project level but will continue to struggle when it comes to security issues given the divisions that run through its membership. The League of Arab States can build on strong inter-Arab solidarity but currently represents many challenged countries which are sometimes at odds with each other. As already commented, newer formats are not much realistic. The Manama Conference showed the limits of a certain US-led view that the new axis of the region should revolve around the containment of Iran. Arab countries rightly call for a solution of long-standing conflicts even as they fret about rising Iranian influence.

For its part, the OSCE continues to promote its notion of comprehensive and cooperative security in the region and stands out as an organisation providing a wealth of both positive and negative lessons that regional players may draw on. Interest in the OSCE "model" has been growing in recent years in the MENA region. The Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE has expanded as states from the Mediterranean and beyond have recognized the growing link between European and Mediterranean security. But as an organization the OSCE remains divided between East and West. Furthermore, there are limits to what it can accomplish along a North-South axis.

What may turn out to be an asset for the OSCE in this difficult international environment is exactly its internal diversity and the fact that it never represented a community of like-minded states. As such, it can continue to be a bridge- builder or at least a platform for promoting much needed inclusive discussions on Mediterranean security that are not immediately associated with the agenda of any of the regional or extra-regional players operating in the region. The OSCE's growing engagement in the region shows that the Mediterranean region has at the same time expanded and become more fragile. It is a multipolar place with no clear center of power, currently lacking a security order, and at a risk of marginalization as the center of gravity of world politics moves East towards the Asia-Pacific. Faced with these challenging conditions and a great deal of uncertainty, all actors operating in the region should face the new harsher realities but also apply clear-mindedness to whatever approaches will be found, mindful that the past has been marred by failures, sometimes tragic ones. As countries and organizations cope with a less benign environment in Europe, the Mediterranean region, and beyond, it is worth reminding that the ideas of cooperative security and regionalism were not the product of some wishful thinking at a time of idealism and optimism. They were explored after less constructive notions had proven their dangerousness. They can now be abandoned only at great peril.

Multilateralism at the Core of Europe's Foreign and Security Policies
EU Global Strategy Provides the Scaffolding for Ambitious Outreach During Difficult Times
Tom McGrath

New administration, old problems

Year 2020 heralded a changing of the guard in the EU institutions in Brussels with the arrival of a new European Commission, a new European Parliament, a new European External Action Service leader and a new European Council. In a historic departure from tradition, after 12 male presidents in 62 years, a first female European Commission President was appointed last November.

This launched the political party game of musical chairs and division of portfolios among the 27 Commissioners. Background music provided a choral symphony of reassuring noises about Europe's status in the world and its efforts to connect ever closer with its citizens. To support the traditional introspection on its various internal and external roles, a call for a Europe-wide convention on the future of the Union was also promised. Europe's population will be asked to assess and advise on, inter alia, Europe's role on the global stage and its intrinsically linked internal/external security policies.

All change then at EU Headquarters, but the same internal problems persist with its prevailing structure and governance; internal divisions on policy; nation-state supremacy in foreign affairs; smaller states' concerns about being bullied into decisions by their larger neighbours. The eternal question of values versus interests, of intergovernmental versus Community interests in policy pursuit still remains.

There has been the expected amalgam of cautious and confident noises emanating from Brussels as the new actors take up their respective roles: Ursula von der Leyen, President of the Commission calls for a stronger Europe in the world, "I want Europe to strive for more by strengthening our unique brand of global leadership. We must build on our strengths, confront and address our vulnerabilities, and enhance our legitimacy."[1]

Federica Mogherini's successor as High Representative and Vice President - Josep Borrell advises that Europe must learn "to use the language of power. We need a more united European Union approach to preserve key multilateral systems and agreements. We have to share a common understanding of the world in order to develop a stronger foreign and security policy."[2]

European Union in a troubled world

Today the EU is faced with multiple problems internationally: a revisionist Russia, an increasingly dominant China, a United States uncoupling itself from the multilateral system and a series of crises – in its near and extended neighbourhood, Syria, Libya, Turkey, Iraq, Ukraine, Iran, Yemen - that bring threats of instability to its doorstep. Also, the effects of Brexit, the loss of a strong, participating EU partner in foreign and security fields, have yet to be determined. The forecast of former HRVP Mogherini of 'predictable unpredictability' on the world stage remains valid. The global system has become more uncertain and less stable in recent years. Long-held beliefs and certainties, as well as long-standing international institutions are being questioned and undergoing existential inquiry. The rules-based international order, in place since the end of the second world war, is being constantly challenged. Trade disputes continue to stoke tensions while international mechanisms of cooperation and dialogue witness their effectiveness and credibility challenged.

At the same time, the increasing connectivity, complexity and, above all, contestation of the global environment have key implications for the EU on the global stage. The transformation of global politics and Europe's neighbourhood pushed Europe to awaken from its geopolitical slumber. Europe now has to fight for global influence. It has to try to achieve greater strategic autonomy within NATO – or post-NATO if the US commitment to the security of Europe continues to wane.

A credible global actor: armoury and ambitions

The imperative of greater unity within the EU is a prerequisite for the EU's greater capacity to be an effective global player. A united and consistent EU can ensure that multilateralism will remain the key organising principle of the international order, can continue fostering cooperative regional orders near and far, can contribute to resilience and the integrated approach in its surrounding regions east and south, and connected to this, can go a long way towards ensuring its own security.

Speaking to the European Parliament earlier this year, HRVP Josep Borrel said: "In a world of power politics the EU needs a truly integrated foreign policy that combines the power of Member States with the coordinated mobilisation of all European Union instruments. We need to strengthen the links between internal and external policies."[3]

He outlined the following priorities:
- Advance the security of the Union by deepening its work on intelligence, strategic culture, interoperability, command and control, defence cooperation, technology and cyber, civilian-military CSDP and access to routes and networks;
- Promote and protect multilateralism and support regional cooperative orders by contributing to the reform of international organizations, developing both structural partnerships and more "variable geometry" partnering with countries and regions, smartly combining flexibility and inclusivity in the pursuit of multilateral formats, and doing all this while strengthening intra- European coordination;
- Continue to invest in the resilience of states and societies and an integrated approach to conflicts and crises in our surrounding regions, aware that this is where our primary responsibility lies and that the complexity of the challenges in our region is such that unwavering patience, determination and commitment are essential.

"All this requires a significant increase of political and financial investment in our external action, including defence, greater visibility, and expanding both the joined- up approach across policy sectors and a veritable Union in action among Member States."[4]

Multilateralism and strategic autonomy
Multilateralism is an essential component of the European construct, embedded in its values, interests and DNA. Europe regards it as the best way to give a voice to all countries, all peoples, and ensure that decisions that affect the lives and livelihoods of people, are taken in the most democratic, transparent and inclusive manner. This has an intrinsic value. It is also in Europe's interests to build sustainable solutions to conflicts, crises and challenges. Thus, it encourages:

- The creation of space for multilateral dialogue – examples: International Contact Group on Venezuela; Rebuilding of Afghanistan; Quartet for Libya; nuclear deal with Iran (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action); Paris agreement against climate change; Brussels conferences on the future of Syria;
- The partnership approach with cooperative regional orders: United Nations; NATO; ASEAN: African Union: transnational military forces in the Sahel and Lake Chad regions; G5 Sahel; Mercosur; the Pacific Alliance.
- Inclusive and open dialogue with all sectors of society. Through its work with civil society and business leaders; cities and local authorities; religious communities; academia and the media it strives to open the space for diplomacy and foreign policy in a more participatory democracy.

Multilateralism is now under attack - attested by the faltering talks on the nuclear deal with Iran; similar discordant discussions on the Paris agreement on climate change; American withdrawal of funding for UNRWA and the major divergence between Europe and the US on NATO - and has inspired increasingly active diplomatic exchanges and new European thinking.

President Trump's continuing assertions that EU allies do not pay their fair share in NATO and his calling of the 70-year old NATO as obsolete has prompted a European rethink on its partnership with NATO. France and Germany have increasingly spoken of the need for European self-reliance in defence. Within the EU that is reflected in a stronger commitment to building joint defence capabilities. In 2019 Chancellor Merkel told the European Parliament that "the times when we could unconditionally rely on others is over."[5]

There is overall agreement that Europe still needs NATO for its territorial defence. Nonetheless, there is widespread recognition that the interests of the US and European pillars of the alliance have diverged.

Cooperative regional orders are increasingly recognised as essential building blocks of multilateralism worldwide. The rules-based international order, centred on International Law, is an existential interest of the Union. Consequently, the EU Global Strategy pinpointed multilateral global governance as a strategic priority. In efforts at implementing and reforming multilateralism, the EU has intensified its cooperation with international organisations and a wide variety of third countries, regional organisations and non-state actors.
Strategic autonomy is regarded as a prerequisite for European security and requires the capacity to take autonomous military action when necessary, but always in a multilateral

framework. Military cooperation with its partners - particularly the UN system and (current problems not withstanding) NATO – has grown closer in the past ten years. Military means are essential for shaping a global security environment that is also conducive to peace and security in Europe. It also goes beyond military action. It is about the ability to shape the rules of the international economic system; about having an independent and principled trade policy; about raising international standards in all fields – from labour to the environment to data protection. This is reflected in the main priorities of the European Council Strategic Agenda (2019-2024) adopted last summer: multilateralism, democracy, global trade, international security, climate change and the digital sphere.

Strategic autonomy means that the EU should be able to take full responsibility for its own security – something it has not yet achieved in its history. It also means that Europe should be able to act whenever it can provide a unique added value in responding to a particular situation. It is in possession of a particular set of tools and is witnessing a global demand for that eclectic mix of civilian and military tools that other countries do not have.

Global strategy: the essential fulcrum
All of the above are framed, collated and codified in the EU's Global Strategy. Launched in 2016, it is the outcome of two years of collective reflection across the EU institutions and Member States, along with civil society, business interests and academia. It represents a revolutionary change in the way Europe works, a rethinking of problem analysis, a redesign of programmes and instruments and assessment of the sustainability of Europe's interventions and security. With multilateralism the guiding tenet, the EU Global Strategy outlines five priorities: Security and defence; State and societal resilience; an integrated approach to conflicts and crises; support of regional cooperative regional orders; a rules-based global governance.

The security and stability in Europe's neighbourhood is a sine qua non for Europe's own security and Europe's efforts at building state and societal resilience includes an effective role for civil society in the management of the root causes of security challenges. By increasing the sense of ownership and belonging citizens feel in their communities can contribute to a more sustainable security, rather than an imposed security of power and deprivation. Sustainable security requires the empowerment of people and creation of spaces for civil society to grow, and for all sectors in that space to have a voice.

European defence: a long gestation
Building a European Defence Community was already an ambition of the founding fathers in the Treaty of Rome, but one that remained nascent for a long time until its foundation in 1999. It now plays a critical role in the EU's Foreign Policy. While a core part of the European project is that defence integration was about making war impossible between European countries in an irreversible way, that underpinning tenet has extended to take into account Europe's role in the world as a global security provider. The EU now has the possibility to intervene outside the EU for civilian and military crisis management missions and operations, aimed at peace-keeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security. In today's geopolitical world the European Union has little choice but to strengthen its capacities and capabilities to both protect itself and become a more credible security provider.

However, military means are still essential – for shaping a global security environment that is also conducive to peace and security in Europe. Europe uses its military capabilities to prevent a war, stabilise a country after conflict and train security forces of partners.

Under the Common Defence and Security Policy 16 civilian and military missions and operations are currently deployed in different regions outside the EU's borders. 25 Member States have committed to join forces on common projects, to provide troops and assets for common missions and operations in areas such as training facilities, land formation systems, maritime and air systems, cyber threats and rapid response teams, radio navigation, etc.

Defence spending of the EU member States taken together is the second largest after the United States, more than Russia or China. But it remains fragmented. And there are still internal arguments to be won in order to build consensus and overcome scepticism: whether a European army and whether strengthening a European defence would weaken NATO? Champions of national defence policies in Europe are still resistant to a common policy. Nevertheless, within the EU, co-operation on security will deepen as the boundaries between internal and external security weaken. War and migratory pressures continue to press on Europe's borders, an area that will see a further deepening of co-operation.

EU report card and future prospects
The EU's report card at the beginning of 2020 leaves room for optimism and improvement. The European Union remains the largest producer and internal market in the world and accounts for almost 16% of global imports and exports; it is the largest donor of development and humanitarian aid; it is the main proponent of conflict prevention and is committed to leading world efforts to combat climate change; the Euro is the second largest currency on international financial markets. However, it still struggles for legitimacy due to the corrosive spread of populism and the disconnect from its citizens. The Conference on the Future of Europe needs to address these problems. It also needs to examine certain institutional governance and voting issues. In CFSP matters, efforts at consensus and – by extension - a common policy are regularly thwarted by the application of the veto by Member States. Thus, the EU often operates on the line of least resistance in foreign and security policies. A consequence of this is that Europe has been consistently dubbed as an economic giant but political dwarf on the world stage. Is the EU condemned to be forever less than the sum of its parts when it comes to foreign and security policy?

The new EU budget of almost one trillion Euros for 2021 – 2027 is due for signing off at the end of February this year. Proposals for a significant scaling- up of the financial resources available for external action; more flexibility in its instruments and improved effectiveness in communication; and a more joined up foreign policy across policy sectors and institutions have all been introduced. It is now over three years since the implementation of the Global Strategy and the EU has made significant progress in turning the Strategy's vision into concrete action: a recent report from the EEAS to the European Parliament outlined the progress made on European security and defence; the work completed towards the goal of strategic autonomy as set out by the Council; the reaffirmation of the EU perspective for the Western Balkans; the investment in preserving the nuclear deal with Iran (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – JCPOA); the step change in its partnership with Africa, including in the field of migration; and strong investment in support of the UN and its reform. These are all flagship initiatives coherent with the overall vision and priorities of the Global Strategy. This may demonstrate the power and potential of Europe when it unites on strategic priorities and their delivery, but it needs to continue to invest consistently in its collective capacity to act autonomously and in cooperation with its partners. Doing so is essential to stand up effectively for its interests and principles, while being a reliable and predictable partner in the world. This will require a deft blend of assertion and pragmatism. As the convention on the future of a 'global Europe'

is launched, Dutch Prime Minister, Mark Rutte provides interesting fodder for thought for the new administration in Brussels – " If we only preach the merits of principle, and shy away from exercising power in the geopolitical arena, then our continent may always be right, but it will seldom be relevant."[6]

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What Future for Cooperative Security in the Mediterranean in the Context of Major Geopolitical Shifts?

A Reflection on the Role of the European Union
Dr. Silvia Colombo

The Mediterranean region is in turmoil. The extent of the disruptions happening in the countries of the region as a result of the so-called Arab uprisings and of ongoing regional conflicts directly impinges on the security of the European Union (EU)'s countries and citizens. Migration waves, the threat of foreign fighters returning from the battlegrounds of Libya and Syria, and the instability stemming from the popular protests in countries such as Algeria, Lebanon and Iraq have reached the European shores and penetrated into the domestic politics of the EU countries in unprecedented ways. At the same time, and perhaps most importantly, these dynamics are redrawing the political map of the region not in the sense of changing the borders but by altering the local and domestic power equilibria in the different countries. Not only in the cases of the conflict-afflicted countries, namely Libya and Syria, but throughout the whole region political forces are striving to implement their agendas and thus altering the political and institutional balance, as the cases of Tunisia, Algeria and Lebanon in 2019 perfectly demonstrate.

Against this backdrop, it is more urgent than ever to assess the availability and effectiveness of existing cooperative security mechanisms in the Mediterranean. This region, however you want to define it in geo-political terms, has always been the terrain where security strategies and policies have been tested and implemented. Most of them have originated from the EU countries' perception of having to deal with a complex set of countries, from which many challenges originate. The involvement of other external players – both at the bilateral and the multilateral levels, such as the United States, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) or NATO – have further complicated the picture. It is now time to go back to the existing pillars of these cooperative security mechanisms to assess the extent to which they are still useful to address the manifold challenges the Mediterranean is experiencing. This article aims to contribute to this complex soul-searching exercise in which the EU and its member states play a fundamental role by offering some ideas connecting the assessment of cooperative security in the Mediterranean to the changing geo-political regional and global dynamics. The future of the EU's ability to project itself beyond its borders and to ensure the security and well-being of its states, societies and citizens will to a large extent depend on the results of this exercise. This point is well understood by the EU Global Strategy released in June 2016 that frames the challenges stemming from the Union's Neighbourhood, thus including the Mediterranean, as interwoven with domestic dynamics such as the rise of nationalist-populist stances in various EU countries, the EU's retrenchment from its foreign policy ambitions and, albeit indirectly, the faltering of the EU's integration process[1]. In this context, fostering the resilience not only of its own states and societies but also in the

Mediterranean region becomes a key priority for the EU[2]. After almost four years since the adoption of the new EU's foreign and security strategy the balance sheet appears rather meagre and the challenges facing the Mediterranean from the political, security, economic and societal points of view have not gone away. On the contrary they have skyrocketed, calling for renewed efforts on the EU's side that take into account the changing geo-politics of the region.

Ten lessons on the changing geo-politics of the region
The Mediterranean is at the core of a rapidly changing geo-political region, namely the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Several transformations have taken place in it in the past decades – at least starting from the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 – and have become accelerated and more pronounced in the last few years. Capturing the full extent of these transformations and of the issues at stake is no easy task. The following points provide a snapshot of the most important geo-political transformations that are ongoing in the MENA and are arguably producing a "change within the order and not of order"[3], whose ultimate results are difficult to predict. These points are drawn from the main conclusions of the MENARA (Middle East and North Africa Regional Architecture) Project – funded under the EU's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme – that studied the MENA by mapping geo-political shifts also driven by global trends; changes and continuities in the regional order and domestic (from the local and bottom-up perspective) transformations. These main findings are based on numerous fact-finding missions (including in countries such as Syria, Libya and Iraq), almost 300 face-to-face interviews, a Delphi survey with 71 experts, 3 focus groups (Brussels, Rabat and Beirut) and 2 stakeholders meetings (Istanbul and Rome).

An increased number of armed non-state actors – transnational ethnic and sectarian groups, rebels, tribes, terrorist organizations, foreign militias and mercenaries – are challenging states' claims to the monopoly of violence and territorial control[4]. Yet, the sovereign state system and territorial boundaries are more resilient than widely assumed. At the same time, these states' capacity to hold the legitimate monopoly over the means of violence and their ability to set and enforce rules as well as to cater for the needs of their populations are steadily eroding, as the cases of Libya, Lebanon and Egypt demonstrate[5]. This creates the ground for areas of limited statehood and the emergence of intra-state contested orders[6].

Societies in the MENA have undergone processes of change and have become more complex. Intra-societal dynamics are fuelled by the existence of alternative conceptualizations and practices of citizenship centred on different collective identities. This trend encompasses the pluralization of collective identities through the coming to the fore of new, previously dormant, forms of collective identification – for example based on gender and generational identities in some parts of the region. Alternatively, the entrenchment and polarization of dominant collective identities and narratives to the detriment of plurality can be observed in other countries. Tunisia, on the one hand, and Turkey, on the other, stand at alternative ends of this spectrum[7].

The Iran-Saudi rivalry is one of the main geopolitical drivers in the MENA region. However, explaining the region on the basis of notions of Sunni–Shia antagonism is simplistic and may even lead to dangerous policy prescriptions. The risks of breaking up states along ethno-sectarian lines, fortifying autocratic governments' repressive practices or reinforcing Orientalist understandings of the Middle East as "all about religion and conflicts" are real. Moreover, some of the most salient divides in the region are not related to sectarianism but

to conflicting views regarding political transitions and socio-economic challenges, including distribution of resources and equality.

Anti-Zionism has ceased to be a major defining feature of Arab politics. Instead, shared hostility towards Iran and its allies has been forging a new rapprochement between Israel and a number of Arab states, particularly in the Gulf. However, the norm of Arab solidarity with the Palestinian cause still resonates very much with the Arab publics, pointing (once more) to the ever- growing disconnect between Arab regimes and their populations, particularly in the wake of the recent US moves vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict[8].

Since 2011, we have witnessed shifts in the centres of gravity of the MENA region. The Gulf has replaced the Mashreq/Levant as the main geopolitical centre, while the Maghreb, but also other parts of the Middle East, have been pivoting towards the African continent. At the same time, alliances limited to single issues proliferate. Such liquid alliances are not durable as the eruption of simultaneous and intersecting regional conflicts has increased the sense of unreliability of allies and prompted more assertive and often aggressive attitudes towards both rivals and friends.

The dominant vision is that the MENA region is characterised by high levels of violence – conflicts are by far the most frequently mentioned risk by the people interviewed for the project followed by terrorism. It is worth underlining that politically related risks such as authoritarianism and political instability as well as a fragile economic situation are also identified as potentially destabilising factors. Youth unemployment, bad governance and corruption, political repression and environmental degradation are seen as the four most salient factors that are creating the conditions for social unrest. Those countries suffering from a combination of environmental degradation, persistent inequalities and de-legitimised institutions are likely to witness new waves of social unrest that could be harshly repressed and put the international community in a very uncomfortable position[9].

When it comes to opportunities, the assessment is far more pluralistic and it varies a lot depending on the countries. While risks are often associated to political and security dynamics, societal and economic elements are seen as more promising. Youth and dialogue are often mentioned as the key for success. More specifically, digitalisation, the pivot to Africa, plans to foster renewable energies and economic diversification, post-sectarian political and social dynamics or sustained progress in women empowerment are among the positive developments captured by the stakeholders' consultations.

In terms of external influence in the MENA, the American unipolar moment is long gone. The 2003 US invasion of Iraq and its catastrophic aftermath, the US partial retrenchment from the region and Russia's successful attempt to fill the power vacuum in Syria and elsewhere in addition to China's flexing its economic muscles across the region have created a new reality. And yet, while the United States is only one among many global powers, Washington still has a major impact on regional politics. A major development is that states that continue to present themselves as US allies are also very much willing to strengthen links with Moscow and Beijing. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and even Israel are able to play external powers off against each other, thereby obtaining concessions and leverage.

The region is a laboratory to test the limits of the global order. For some global players, engaging with the region is a matter of choice (US, China). Others have no option but to care

(the EU is the clearest example). Russia looks at this region in an opportunistic manner. When projecting current trends into the future, Russia is considered to remain a key player all along the new decade but long-term prospects point at a growing role of China in global affairs and also in this particular region. Europe is the actor whose influence in the region is expected to remain more stable: no significant decline but no major boost either.

When it comes to the EU engagement in the MENA region, proximity is the keyword. Geopolitical shifts since 2011 have had and will continue to have a major impact on Europe. They tend to highlight the nexus between internal and external tensions as instability, conflicts and deteriorating governance in Europe's southern neighbourhood are more or less directly related to the spread of violent extremism, terrorism, migration and populist narratives in Europe itself[10].

The EU, the Mediterranean and security cooperation
The points above do not capture the full range of the transformations that have taken place in the geo-politics of the MENA region in recent years. However, they do point to the prevailing trends and to the need for external players to adapt their strategies and policies. This applies particularly to the EU that has always looked at the MENA region in general and the Mediterranean in particular as one of the most strategic terrains to project its influence and soft power. Even the way in which the EU has imagined and approached this region has given rise to different narratives and policies. During recent decades, the Mediterranean and by extension, the MENA have been framed as a threat – mainly due to their geographic proximity and the proliferation of crises; as a challenge – that is, as a space increasingly interconnected with Europe in which the EU's contribution could generate positive spillover; as a European "responsibility" – due to historical relations and the persistent legacy of colonialism; or as an opportunity – understanding the Mediterranean as an avenue to reaffirm Europe's international actorness, with the Middle East Peace Process as a litmus test[11].

Against this backdrop and with a view to contributing to cooperative security in the Mediterranean, the EU should revise its policies by taking into account that the scope, the players and the security challenges are significantly different when compared to the past. First, with regard to the scope, the definition of (in)security has largely changed in response to the emergence of new challenges and threats as well as of opportunities as some of the points above demonstrate. Economic fragility, environmental degradation, the intersecting of conflicts and the instability of alliances all make for a very volatile and challenging security landscape in the Mediterranean with important spill-overs onto the EU, its states and citizens. Talking about opportunities, Africa is becoming a major priority for the EU and this is one of the factors that will shape European policies towards the Mediterranean and the MENA region. Second, the changing meaning of (in)security also largely depends on who defines it. Given the growing complexity and activism of non-state actors – both armed and non-armed– on the Mediterranean chessboard, the EU needs first of all to acknowledge them and then take their concerns and claims into account when shaping its cooperative security instruments and policies. Inclusiveness with regard to both the scope and the players should become the new normal.

As such, the EU needs to move away from three perceived dichotomies or false dilemmas that have in the past prevented it from playing an effective and constructive role in Mediterranean security[12]. The first false dilemma concerns the need to choose between security and democratic change. Very often, and even more so in this particular region, the

EU has abandoned its normative transformative drive, as it has been perceived as clashing with short-term or pressing security needs. However, as the idea of resilience enshrined in the EU Global Strategy suggests, the absence and resistance to change may be the trigger for more insecurity and instability. The second false dilemma regards, on the one hand, the need to cooperate with state authorities in MENA countries and, on the other, the willingness to work with the full range of societal actors, some of which may not be positively perceived by their governments. Cooperating with societal actors is not an obstacle to government-to-government relations per se. It only becomes so if and when partners oppose such a possibility, in which case this should be seen as a reason to downscale the relations altogether. On the contrary, when relations between societies are strong, it should be easier to accompany intra-governmental ones. Finally, the third false dilemma the EU has fallen prey to is that between multilateralism and bilateralism. The tensions between the recourse to multilateral or region-making policies and tools, on the one hand, and purely bilateral relations – including those cultivated by its member states – on the other, has always tended to exist in the EU's broad cooperation frameworks towards the Mediterranean. Recently, a gradual but steady drift towards more robust bilateralism in the name of differentiation and pragmatism can be observed particularly in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings. This should not be taken as a given. The existence of multilateral frameworks should be seen as a platform where bilateral relations could expand and, by the same token, bilateralism could in certain circumstances create the conditions for enhancing trust and for launching coalitions of players that could positively boost multilateralism. To escape these false dilemmas, the EU has to remain steady in pursuing its principles and values and has to acknowledge and accommodate to the region's transformations by staying ahead of the curve. If it fails to do so, the EU further risks losing relevance and leverage which will in turn contribute to more insecurity.

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The Turkish Cross-Border Offensive in Syria: Reshuffling Cards, Changing Frontlines, Shifting Alliances

Professor Bichara Khader

Code-named 'Peace Spring', the third Turkish offensive in North Syria, on 9 October 2019 is no surprise. It follows two previous incursions targeting Kurdish enclaves in the West side of the Euphrates river: 'Shield of the Euphrates' and the 'Olive Branch'. The first took place from August 2016 until March 2017, targeting ISIS fighters, but also the US-backed Kurdish militias in Manbij and Jarabulus. While the second operation, called 'Olive Branch', was carried out in January 2018 in the Afrin district, another Kurdish enclave. Both offensives came amid tension between the Turkish and the American governments, as Turkey accused the USA of arming the People's Protection Units (PYD), a Kurdish organisation which Turkey considers to be an offshoot of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a Kurdish military organisation labelled as a terrorist group by Turkey, the USA and the European Union[1].

The last offensive 'Peace Spring' is simply a continuation of a consistent Turkish policy whose aim is to prevent the establishment at its southern border with Syria of a so-called 'Kurdish corridor of terror'. But this time, the offensive targets the territory, east of the Euphrates River, stretching some 460 km, from Ain El Arab (Kobané) to the Iraqi border. By contrast to the first two offensives, this last one is set to reshuffle the geopolitical cards in Syria.

This paper aims to shed some light on the developments of this operation, the objectives pursued by main actors, the possible consequences for the parties involved, and the way forward, with special emphasis on EU-Turkish relations.

American precipitous withdrawal
Prior to the Turkish offensive, President Trump ordered to pull out American troops from their bases in Northern Syria. The move was expected: President Trump has repeatedly called, since 2018, for pulling out US ground forces from Syria. To those American officials who advocated strategic patience and leadership, President Trump objected that he wants to disentangle the US from regions enmeshed in endless, confessional, ethnic and tribal wars, where there are no vital American interests at stake. Moreover, President Trump believes that the main purpose of American presence in Syria was to defeat ISIS and this objective has been achieved.

But on the very day of the launch of the Turkish operation, Trump sent an unusual letter to Erdogan urging him to act in a "humane way", adding: "Let's work out a historic deal ... History will look upon you forever as the devil if good things don't happen. Don't be a tough, don't be a fool". The language was very hard to swallow. "A big insult", Erdogan told reporters on 18 October [2].

As expected, the hasty American troops withdrawal has sparked global outcry and outrage at home and abroad, mainly in Europe. Not only was the President lambasted for not listening to the advice of his inner circle but also for giving the green light for the Turkish offensive. By doing so, the critics denounced his betrayal of the Kurdish partners and a total disregard of their sacrifice as the Kurds paid a heavy price with 11,000 dead and more than 20,000 injured in the fight against ISIS. Adding insult to injury, Trump said in one of his stunning declarations that the Kurds did not liberate Normandy and during a meeting with the Italian President Sergio Mattarella, in the Oval Office he declared "If Turkey goes to Syria, that's between Turkey and Syria, it's not between Turkey and the United States".

Bewildered by such erratic decision-making process, Ahmad Ilham regretted, in an article published in the Washington Post[3], that the Kurds have been abandoned: "We fought ISIS side by side with the Americans. Now they are leaving us to our fate". Hilary Clinton was even tougher accusing the President of turning his back to his loyal allies, preferring to side with the "authoritarian leaders of Turkey". Nicky Halley, the former US Ambassador to the United Nations, described Trump's move as "irresponsible and short sighted".

American media described the move as a "strategic blunder", as it creates a void that will be filled by the Russians and the Iranians, a reckless gamble which makes the region more vulnerable, and a humanitarian disaster as the offensive may result in huge human loss, significant displacement of population and physical devastation. Other critics pointed to the possibility of resurgence of ISIS as the Kurds who are holding ISIS fighters (some 10,000) and their families (some 80,000) could lose control over these detainees or threaten to let them free.

Although the compassion for the Kurds is legitimate and even necessary, there is a reality which cannot be ignored: Turkey is a NATO member, with the second largest army, it hosts 3.6 million Syrian refugees, and it plays a pivotal role in the volatile region of the Middle East. Erdogan knows well that he has many trump cards in his hands and he is convinced that the sympathy for the Kurds will not prevail on the imperatives of geopolitics.

Turkey's objectives

In less than a week, the Turkish army and its proxies, mainly the Syrian National Army representing Syrian opposition groups, conquered an 87 km stretch of territory extending from Tal Abyad to Ras el Ayn in Northeast Syria (see Map).

Turkey has no territorial claims in Syria and has repeatedly affirmed its stance on the territorial integrity of its neighbour. But Turkey remains obsessed with the Kurdish question in general, and particularly with the Syrian Kurds of PYD. Having carved for itself a Kurdish autonomous administration (called Rojava) in an extended territory at the East of the Euphrates stretching from Kobane to the Iraqi border (460 km; See map on the next page), the PYD is perceived by Turkey as a security threat for different reasons:

1. The PYD, which is believed to be connected with PKK, may use the Syrian border as a launching pad for a guerrilla war against Turkey. That is why Turkey seeks to establish a buffer zone in North-East Syria and push Kurdish militias 30 km to the South;

2. The Rojava project, which has been put in place by Syrian Kurds, may lead to an Iraqi model of a regional Kurdish autonomy and this perspective is a major concern for Turkey as its own Kurdish minority (20 million out of 80 million) may seek a similar status;
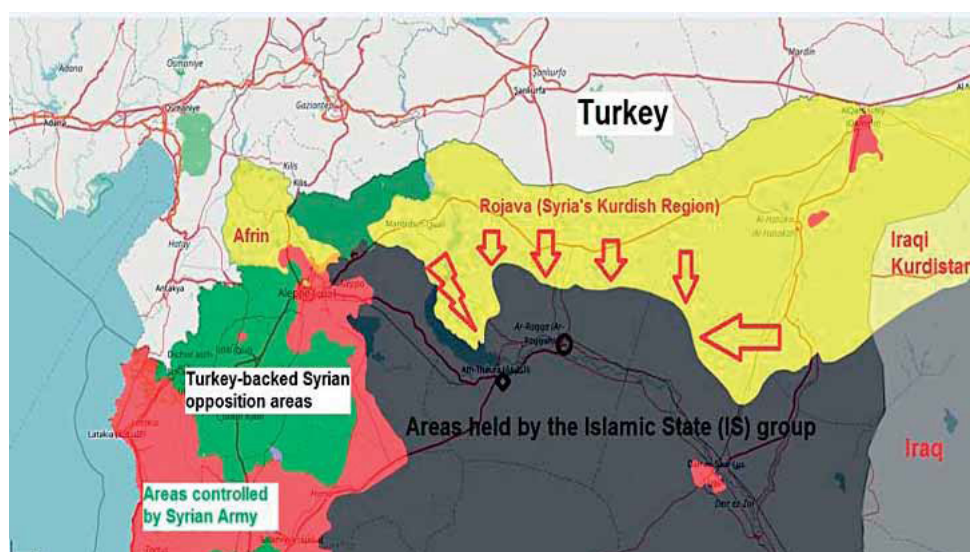

3. The Rojava project may change the demographics of the territory under Kurdish control. As the Kurds represent only 2.5 million in a region inhabited by 6 million, Turkey is convinced that the Kurds may be tempted to forcefully cleanse the region from its Arab and Turkmen inhabitants, as it happened in the past, and bring in other Kurds from Iraq or even Turkey. Such a grim scenario, in Turkish eyes, would be threatening as the Kurds who represent some 10 % of the total Syrian population already hold one third of its territory, including its most fertile region and almost all the oil fields of Deir Ezzor. Should the Syrian Kurds be allowed to control one third of Syrian territory, then they will have sufficient resources to sustain their aspirations for independence.

4. Turkey seeks to repatriate and to re-settle in Syria one to two million Syrian refugees as these refugees constitute a heavy financial burden on the flagging Turkish economy, besides the hostility that their presence is causing in Turkey. By relocating one or two million Syrian refugees in the buffer zone that Turkey wants to establish in North Eastern Syria, Turkey may achieve another unavowable objective: which is to change the demographics to its own benefit, thus halting the Rojava project.

In summary, Turkey denies any hostility towards the Kurdish population but sees the PYD as a terrorist group that threatens its security. This security argument has been put across

in Ankara, during the Pence-Erdogan meeting on the 16th of October. The joint statement issued after the meeting underscored Turkish security concerns. The statement starts by reaffirming "the strong alliance between the USA and Turkey" and goes on saying that "the two sides agree on the continued importance and functionality of the safe zone in order to address the national security concerns of Turkey, to include the re-collection of YPG heavy weapons and the disablement of their fortifications and fighting positions". In a window-dressing message, the statement adds that "the two countries reiterate their pledge to uphold human life, human rights and the protection of religious and ethnic communities".

Source: Conflict Monitor by IHS Markit, Reach, 16 October 2019
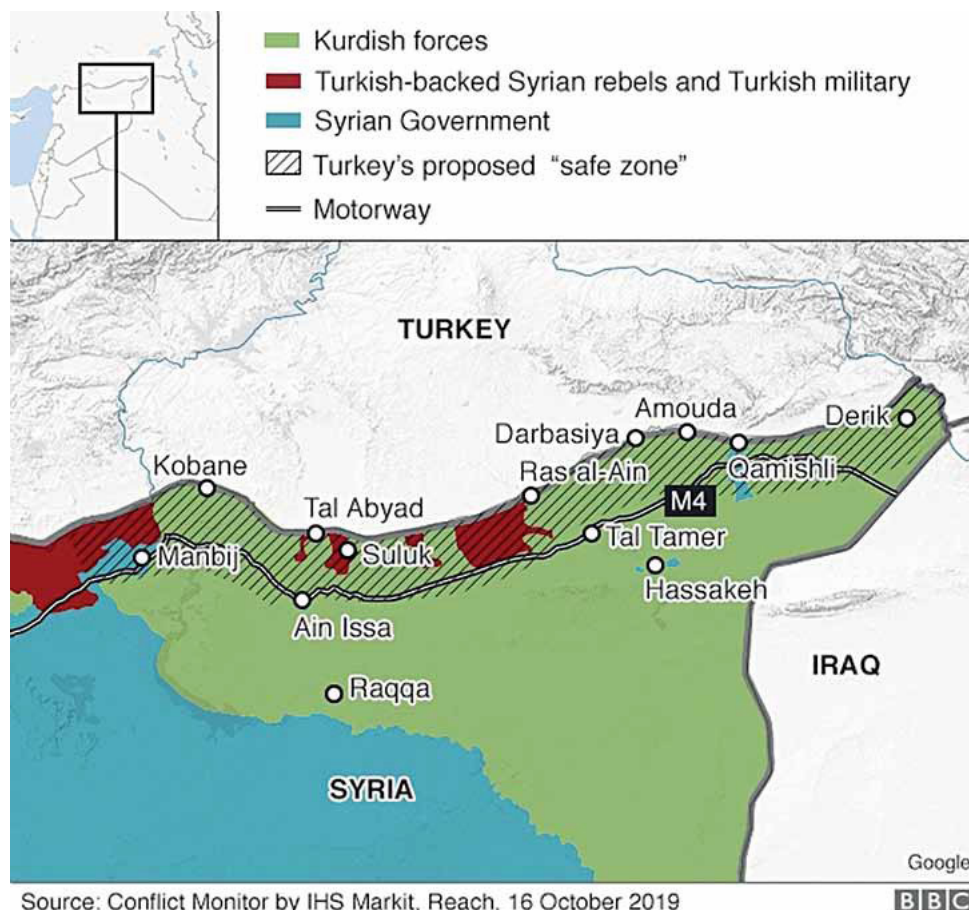
Turkey did not conceal its satisfaction with the Erdogan-Pence statement. Understandably, pro-government Turkish media boasted a "big victory" and lauded President Erdogan who "won at the table and on the field"[4].

Winners
No doubt that the first winner in this geopolitical chess game is Erdogan himself. In spite of the chorus of critics (the USA, the European Union and the Arab League), and the imposition of sanctions and arms embargos, he went on with the offensive, setting up a 87 km safe zone between Tel el Abyad and Ras el Ayn, sweeping away the Kurdish militias, thus achieving his main objective.

At home, Erdogan whipped up a renewed nationalistic fervor, and tightened his grip on power by silencing his critics: Turkish prosecutor opened an investigation against MP's Sezai Temelli and Pervin Buldan , co -leaders of the pro-Kurdish party HDP , the People's Democratic Party.

Tens of others were arrested on the allegation that they have shown sympathy for the PKK or just because they expressed doubts about what they called "an adventurous foreign policy"[5].

By reuniting the nation behind the army, Erdogan appeared as another Ataturk - the father of the Turks-seeking to reverse his tottering popularity by diverting attention from economic slump, high rates of inflation, weakening of the Turkish lira and loss of key mayoral elections in Istanbul and Ankara.

Erdogan was successful on another front: by partnering and cosying up with Putin, he proved an ability to act independently of Washington but without breaking the ties with the West. The policy may seem opportunistic but it paid off, as Erdogan's successes have been harvested without engaging in direct confrontation with the Russian military in Syria, or incurring the wrath of the American Administration, or alienating its fellow members of NATO, as Turkey brings to NATO, territory, capabilities, access, deterrence and intelligence gathering. To put it in a nutshell: the Turkish offensive was carried out with no or little cost. At least for the moment.

The second winner is Russia. Undoubtedly, the American troops redeployment tilted the balance in Russia's favour. The Russians did not hide their satisfaction to see the American troops pulling out from Manbij and other bases in North Syria. The Russians always considered that American military presence in Syria does constitute a breach of international law as it was not authorized by the Syrian regime.

On the other hand, the Turkish offensive offered President Putin another golden opportunity to present himself as power-broker and game-changer, thus "bolstering Russia's broader influence in the Middle East"[6]. Indeed, the Erdogan-Putin deal in Sochi, on the 22nd of October, has underscored Russia's emergence as a powerful player in the Middle East, and cemented Putin's strategic advantage, and manoeuvring abilities.

The Erdogan-Putin deal reaffirmed the importance of the Adana Agreement signed by Syria and Turkey in 1998 which provided Turkey with a legal right to hunt PKK fighters up to 5km in Syrian territory. But the contextual difference between the present and the previous situations is that Syria, in 1998, was bullied by Turkey, while today it is Putin who appears to be the main driving force, dictating conditions. Thus the Sochi agreement imposed on Turkey certain limitations: joint Russian-Turkish military patrols in the region to the East of Ras el Ayn but also and more importantly, the Russians proposed the redeployment of the Syrian army in the very heart of the Kurdish-dominated region east of Ras el Ayn, and the establishment of 15 military outposts of the Syrian regime in the Turkish-controlled zone, tasked with verifying the withdrawal of PYG's militias. By acting so, Russia achieved another objective very dear to the Russians and to the Syrian regime alike which is the preservation of Syrian territorial integrity. "Only if Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity is respected can a long-lasting peace and solid stabilization in Syria be achieved", Putin said alongside Erdogan after the six-hours meeting.

The Sochi deal was celebrated in Turkey as a victory for Erdogan. The reality speaks otherwise as the alliance between Putin and Erdogan remains a volatile alliance of necessity, not a "strategic choice". Not long ago, Turkey has downed a Russian jet in November 2015 and the Russian Ambassador to Turkey has been assassinated by a Turkish policeman, in 2016. While Russia, since 2015 until today, is bombarding Syrian opposition militias supported

by Turkey. Yet, this did not prevent Turkey from participating in the Astana and Sochi Talks and even purchasing S-400 Russian air-defence system. This is to say that we should not take Russian-Turkish new friendship for granted, as things may get sour. Already, we can see the premises of possible conflict in Libya where the Russians are shouldering the rebellious General Haftar in Benghazi while Turkey has just signed an agreement (December 2019) with the internationally-recognized Sarraj government in Tripoli.

The third winner is the Syrian regime. Not only the Kurds will have to forget about the Rojava project, but also the deal struck between Erdogan and Putin in Sochi, on the 22nd of October, confirmed the solidity of the Russian alliance as Putin stuck with Bashar el Assad, allowing the Syrian Regime to retake control of the region extending from Ras el Ayn to Qamishli and to establish 15 military outposts in the Turkish-controlled area between Tel Abyad to Ras el Ayn.

The return of the Syrian army in the Kurdish-controlled area may lead to the dissolution of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and eventually to the possible merger of Kurdish militias in the Syrian army, although this remains a remote possibility.

Without shooting one single bullet, the Syrian regime has redeployed the army in Syrian Kurdistan. It is true that the regime has often vowed to reconquer every inch of Syrian territory but it never dreamt of a swifter outcome. Undoubtedly, by launching its offensive in northeast Syria, Turkey, indirectly, allowed Bashar al Assad to win a war he didn't wage. Gone the time when Turkey was the most vocal advocate of "regime change" after Syria became a "killing field"[7] in 2011. But the Syrian regime cannot sleep on its laurels, as things may evolve to its disadvantage. Indeed, if the Syrian regime intends to subdue the Kurdish fighters in the long run, it needs not only to restore its political and military capacities, but also to ensure the Russian green light, and none is guaranteed.

What about Iran? The Islamic Republic of Iran does not stand to benefit from the Turkish offensive but it seems that ridding Syria from Iranian fighters and proxies is no more a strategic goal of the United States and its allies.

In summary, in the Syrian quagmire, shifting geopolitics are common place. While Europe and the USA have been vacillating on the Syrian Question, Putin has outmanoeuvred and outsmarted Western powers and emerged as the major player in the field. Erdogan was not less successful: By partnering with Putin, he proved an ability to act independently of Washington but without breaking the ties with the West. The policy may seem opportunistic but it paid off. While Bashar al Assad has won without fighting: but in the long run, he still has to win the war of peace, and this may prove to be an uphill, if not impossible, task.

Losers
No doubt that the Americans, the Kurds and the Arab League are the major losers, without forgetting the civilian population which has borne the brunt of years of war.

America lost clout and credibility. The American military redeployment from northern Syria, and the relocation of few hundred soldiers around the Syrian oil fields, has roused an uproar in the USA and has been perceived as a "stab in the back" and a "debacle": the images of Kurds stoning American military vehicles- while redeploying their troops or crossing to Iraq and chanting "cowards and traitors" speak volumes about Kurds' disenchantment and puzzlement. At home, American military "redeployment" triggered massive outrage. The killing of the ISIS

leader, Al Baghdadi in a context of looming impeachment, will probably not serve to reverse the plummeting popularity rating of the President. Abroad, American allies in the region are no less bewildered by the Tweet of President Trump: "Going to the Middle East is the worst decision ever made in the history of our country" and wondered if the US would rush to their support in times of need. Thus, the unfolding events in Syria led many governments in the region to "doubt the value of American security guarantees"[8]. "Who would sign for the Americans going forward", wondered Ian Bremmer in Time Magazine[9]. What puzzles many observers and analysts, is that the US has committed billions of dollars more than Russia, "while remaining a minor player in Syria's future[10]".

Although losing clout, the US still remains a main security provider, mainly in the Gulf but many Gulf States are responding to the US policy shifts and twists and start to think about diversifying their security partners, opening up to China and Russia: Putin's visit to Saudi Arabia after the start of the Turkish offensive offers ample proof of shifting policies in the region. Some Gulf countries are even cozing up to Israel, running the risk of putting themselves at odds with the popular sentiment.

The second loser is Syrian Kurdistan. Not only the PYG's fighters had to retreat southward, far from the Turkish border, but also, they had to accept the Russian mediation allowing the Syria regime to retake full control of their region.

Moreover, beyond the immediate human loss (133 killed and hundreds injured) and the displacement of almost 300,000 people, the last Turkish offensive produced a deeper loss: the Rojava experiment, which is the Kurdish name for the autonomous region of North-East Syria[11]. Born in 2013, in the midst of war, Rojava was set up by a coalition called "movement for Democratic Society", a multi-ethnic and confessional movement, in which the Kurds played a leading role. Two militias had been set up to protect the Rojava region: The People Protection Units (YPG) and the Women's militia (YPS). These militias partnered with the United States in the fight against ISIS, to the great displeasure of Turkey. The USA found itself entangled in a dilemma: it needs the Kurds out of necessity but at the same its policy antagonizes an important NATO member: Turkey. In an appeasement gesture, both Kurdish militias merged and the PYD has been rebranded as Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) composed of Kurds, Arabs, Yezidis and Christians. Armed and trained by the United States and other members of the International Coalition, the SDF have been instrumental in the defeat of ISIS, thus attracting world-wide sympathy.

But as Ulrich von Scheverin[12] remarked: the Rojava was admired for another reason: it was the embodiment of direct democracy, bottom-up governance and gender equality. In a region characterized by authoritarianism, Rojava was perceived as a "revolution".

And precisely it was this "revolution" that the Kurds wanted to protect. So, they called on the US and other members of the International Coalition, to institute a no-fly zone in order to protect them, but their pleas fell in deaf ears. The Kurds realized that they cannot rely on the West and understood that the West was not willing to antagonize a NATO member. They had no option but to cut "a deal with the devil"[13], and accept the return of the Syrian army to their region. This will be recorded as the sounding of the death knell of Rojava, which was hailed, mainly in the West, as a model for the future of Syria. After having been betrayed by the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 which deprived the Kurds of an independent Kurdish state, after being repressed, for many decades, by all the states where they lived, the end of the Rojava

experiment seems to confirm the Kurdish saying "the Kurds are a people with no friends but the mountains". The saying is "poetic, poignant and tragic but not quite true" comments Omar Ahmad, as "the Kurds do have Israel"[14] and top Zionist activists as friends.

Israel's support of the Kurds goes back to the sixties of the last century, not only because some 20,000 Jewish Kurds immigrated into Israel but also because of the strategic importance of "independent Kurdish states" for Israel, as this perspective may weaken its geopolitical rivals such as Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. No wonder if after the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, Israel established bases in Iraqi Kurdistan to train Kurdish militias.

In 2017, two top American Zionist activists, Alan Dershowitz and Erwin Cotler, set up a Brussels-based Jewish Coalition for Kurdistan[15] of which the French Bernard-Henry Levy is an active member. The complicity between Zionists and Kurds is so strong that Israeli flags appeared flying at several Kurdish rallies in Iraq in the lead-up to the Referendum on self-determination of Iraqi Kurdistan, in 2017, prompting the Iraqi parliament to criminalize flying the Israeli flag.

Here lies the very irony of history: Israel which has expelled two thirds of the Palestinian population in 1947-1949, which still denies the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, humiliates them on a daily basis, imprisons their militants and their human rights activists, and colonizes their territory in total impunity, portrays itself as the champion of the "gallant Kurdish people" (declaration of Netanyahu), condemns "the Turkish invasion of the Kurdish areas in Syria", and warns against "the ethnic cleansing of the Kurds by Turkey".[16] The Kurds are well advised to think about this paradox.

The third loser is the League of Arab States. The Arab League condemned the Turkish "military aggression in Syria" during its emergency meeting of foreign ministers in Cairo, on Sunday 12th of October, warned to take retaliatory measures against Turkey unless it withdraws its forces from Syria, and called on Turkey to end "the immediate and unconditional withdrawal" from the Syrian territories.

The General Secretary of the League, Ahmad Aboul Gheit, described the Turkish offensive as "invasion" and an "aggression" as it seeks to occupy an important part of Syrian soil. He added that "the Kurdish people are an important part of the Syrian nation and they suffered a lot from ISIS terrorism during the last years, and we won't accept any ethnic cleansing or displacing them. We demand Turkey to stop all the military operations and withdraw its troops from Syria".

As expected, the Turkish government slammed the League's declaration. The spokesman of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Hami Alsoy, said that the Arab League has betrayed the Arab World and the League's statement "does not reflect the voice of the Arab World and the Arab streets"[17]. Some Arab foreign ministers, such as Gebran Bassil of Lebanon, seized the opportunity of the emergency meeting to recommend the re-integration of Syria in the League.

The League's declaration, however, was not unanimously endorsed. The Libyan government of Tripoli rejected the wording of the statement. Qatar and Somalia, two close allies of Turkey, put reservations. Morocco declared, after the emergency meeting, that the declaration does not reflect the official position of Morocco. And although Saudi Arabia endorsed the League's

declaration, few days later, Saudi King and Crown Prince sent congratulatory messages to Turkish president on the anniversary of the Turkish Republic.

Enmeshed in bloody conflicts (Libya, Yemen), in civil protests (Sudan, Algeria, Iraq and Lebanon), and faced with Israeli continued occupation of Palestinian territories, the Arab League has almost no say in Syrian affairs. Having banned Syria from its membership, the Arab League found itself stripped of any possibility to mediate or to make a significant contribution to end the bloody internal war in Syria, thus leaving Iran, Turkey and Russia to fill the vacuum. No wonder therefore if it has not been invited to the Astana Talks (Russia, Turkey and Iran).

EU – Turkish relations: strained but not derailed
Since 1950, Turkey has been firmly anchored in the Western camp, becoming member of the Council of Europe (1950) and of NATO (1952). Until the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkey has assumed a double role: the role of "regional pivot" in the volatile region of the Middle East, and the role of "buffer" preventing the URSS from frog-leaping into the volatile Arab region where the West has vested interests ranging from the "sanctuarisation" of Israel to the control of Arab oil resources.

The EEC signed the first preferential trade agreement with Turkey in 1963 and integrated the country in its Global Mediterranean Policy as of 1972. Later the EU included Turkey in the Euro-Med partnership (1995) signing with it a Customs Union Agreement (1996). Few years later, the EU took a step further and accepted Turkey as candidate to membership and on 3 October 2005, the EU opened accession negotiations related to the adoption of the EU body of law (known as Acquis communautaire).

Unfortunately, to the dismay of the EU, the internal situation in Turkey did not evolve in the right direction, with a clear drift towards an "authoritarian regime". Unsurprisingly, the EU General Affairs Council, observed, on 26 June 2016, that "Turkey was moving further away from the EU", bringing the negotiations to a standstill, thus straining relations with Turkey.

Yet, two months earlier, on 18 March 2016, the EU struck a deal with Turkey aiming at stopping the flow of refugees from Turkey to Europe in exchange of an aid package of 6 billion Euros under the Facility for Refugees, visa liberalization for Turkish citizens, upgrading the Customs Union and re-energizing the accession process.

It is against this backdrop, that the Turkish military offensive took place, topping the agenda of the EU. In a press release, on the 9th of October, the European Council called on Turkey "to cease the unilateral military action", and added that "renewed armed hostilities in the north-east will further undermine the stability of the whole region, exacerbate civilian suffering and provoke further displacements. Unilateral action by Turkey, went on the statement, "threatens the progress achieved by the Global Coalition to defeat Daesh", risks "protracted instability in north-east Syria, providing fertile ground for the resurgence of Daesh". Regarding the "safe zone" that Turkey intends to establish in north-east Syria, the EU warns that it will not "provide stabilisation and development assistance in areas where the rights of the local population are ignored". The EU recognizes Turkey's security concerns but insists that they should be "addressed through political and diplomatic means". And finally, the EU "remains committed to the unity, sovereignty and integrity of the Syrian State".[18]

As Turkey did not budge, some European states, mainly France, Germany, the UK, Spain, Finland and Netherlands announced plans to suspend exports of arms to Turkey. Italy agreed not to sign new licences of arms sales. Other sanctions were brandished but not carried out such as sanctions over the country's oil and gas drilling near Cyprus.

In reaction to European criticism, President Erdogan said, on October 10, that he would "open the gates" and send 3.6 million refugees to Europe. The threat prompted an immediate rebuke from the President of the EU Council, Donald Tusk: "We will never accept that refugees are weaponized and used to blackmail us… That's why I consider yesterday's threats made by President Erdogan totally out of place"[19].

Other European officials echoed Tusk's warnings. Speaking in the EU Parliament, Jean-Claude Juncker, warned that "military actions would not lead to good result". Frederica Mogherini issued a similar statement. After his meeting with Chancellor Merkel, on Sunday October 13th, President Macron condemned the Turkish military offensive that "risks creating an unsustainable humanitarian situation and helping Daesh to re-emerge". Later, France called for a ministerial meeting of the International Coalition against ISIS to address how to pursue its efforts in the current context. Indeed, the conference took place at the American State Department on November 14th, 2019.

This litany of declarations does give the impression that the EU and its members states are taking the issue seriously and trying to use their leverage to pressure Turkey. But Turkey remained un-impressed.

Thus, the EU found itself caught between the devil and the deep blue sea: It has not sufficient leverage to force Turkey to change course but, at the same time, it cannot remain silent in face of what it perceives as a security threat not only for the Middle East but also, at home, as the Turkish offensive exacerbates relations between Turkish and Kurdish expatriates in Europe, mainly in Germany. The threat is real as we saw, in the last weeks, a spate of attacks on Turkish businesses, restaurants, and individuals in many German cities.

Caught in a transition period between an old and a new commission, complicating collective decision-making, the EU is left with little margin of manoeuvre. Not only it is blackmailed on the question of refugees, but it is faced with another harassing dilemma related to ISIS detainees in Kurdish-controlled camps in Syria. Not only these detainees may escape from their overcrowded camps, but also Turkey is threatening to send them back to their countries of origin. Indeed, on the November 5th, 2019, Turkish Interior minister Suleiman Soylu said his country will send back some 1,200 Daesh members to their countries "whether or not their citizenship has been revoked"[20]. In another declaration, he warned that Turkey will not tolerate to be "a hotel for ISIS fighters".

For many European countries, the repatriation issue is a nightmare scenario, as these countries, strongly believe that the repatriation of these Jihadists constitutes a serious security threat and, therefore, stick to the idea that these Jihadists should be tried in Iraq and Syria where they are supposed to have committed their crimes. Undoubtedly, this is an easy escape as the European countries are simply discharging themselves of a cumbersome burden. But it is not a demonstration of statesmanship[21].

Left with little leverage, the EU's reaction remained vocal and measured. The restrictions on arms sales have little impact as Turkey has become more self- reliant in defence. Economic sanctions have not even been envisaged as Turkey is an important trading partner, with a global trade with the EU oscillating around 100 billion Euros (and a trade surplus for the EU of no less than 25 billion Euros). While diplomatic pressure obviously does not bite, as the EU member states do not speak with one voice. It is symptomatic that, in the midst of EU- Turkey tensions, Erdogan made a state visit to Hungary, on November 8, 2019, where he was warmly welcomed by the Hungarian prime minister, Victor Orban. "Turkey can count on our support within the best of our abilities", said Orban during a joint press conference in which Erdogan repeated his threat to "open the gates" to flood Europe with millions of refugees.

The German minister of Defence, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer offered another example of solitary manoeuvres by proposing, without previous coordination with other EU members, to "establish an internationally controlled safe zone in Northern Syria".[22]

Yet, in spite of the fact that EU's Syria policy has been uncoordinated and erratic, no doubt that the Turkish offensive, facilitated by American gradual disengagement, opens a new window of opportunity. Indeed, Erdogan may seem arrogant and stubborn, but he knows well that he cannot push his luck too far as his policy may backfire. That's why it is possible that he will seek European diplomatic, financial and military help, to take up the role of the Turkish army in the "safe zone". The proposed meeting, in few weeks' time, between Turkey and three major European countries, France, Germany and United Kingdom, will probably relaunch the debate on future EU role in Syria.

The way forward
The Turkish offensive has reshuffled all cards in Syria. What will happen in Syria, in the coming weeks and months, will reverberate beyond its borders.

The US troops' redeployment from bases in the West and East of the Euphrates, cleared the way for Turkish army to launch its offensive "Peace Spring", and establish an 87 km long 'safe zone' between Tel Abyad and Ras el Ayn, pushing Kurdish militias southward. The USA endorsed Turkish policy (Pence-Erdogan deal) leaving the Kurds unprotected, and went even further by receiving Erdogan at the White House on November 13, 2019. In the news conference, Trump hailed "US-Turkish alliance" which can be a "powerful force for security and stability not only in the Middle East but beyond". He also expressed hope to increase trade to $100 billion and promised to "open a new chapter" in the American -Turkish relations.

The visit came amid tensions not related to the Turkish offensive as such, due on the one side, to the House Resolution that recognizes the killing of Armenians during the Ottoman Empire as "genocide", and on the other side, to the purchase by Turkey of the Russian air -defence system S-400. Neither the House revoked the resolution on the Armenians, nor Turkey scrapped its deal with Russia. And yet, Trump declared himself a "big fan" of Erdogan, adding that he is "doing a great job for the Turkish people"[23]. Nevertheless, Erdogan should not rejoice too soon. The display of Trump's friendship may become a "poisoned gift", as Turkey may have been lured into a trap.

Unsurprisingly, the mood in Turkey remains euphoric: in less than 10 days, since the October 9, 2019, the map of Syria has shifted dramatically. For the third time, Turkey has boots on the Syrian ground. Russia put Bashar al Assad back in the saddle and allowed him to contain

or even to crush the Rojava experiment. The USA redeployed some 500 troops around the oil fields of Syria," to protect them from ISIS as well as from the Syrian government and its Russian partners"[24] and redeployed other 500 in Iraq. The EU reacted in a measured way but has almost no say in the unfolding events. The Arab League condemned the invasion but it is spineless and toothless, and, obviously, the Turks do not seem to care a fig about the Arab League's reactions.

But Turkish victory on the ground may not be a healthy walk in the park as Turkey may find itself stuck in a strategic impasse. Let us admit that this military campaign has boosted the popularity of President Erdogan but what it is the long-term strategy behind his adventurous move?

Undoubtedly, the "buffer zone" may become costly. Apart from the direct costs, linked to the stationing of thousands of Turkish troops, Turkey will have to administer, provide services for hundreds of thousands, perhaps for millions of civilians in the areas under its control. All this may become an unbearable burden.

At home, support for the offensive may falter. It is symptomatic that a former Prime Minister and ex-member of Erdogan's Party, Ahmet Davutoglu, has unveiled, on December 13, 2019, his breakaway 'Future Party', with platform based on equal rights and freedoms, and a new democratic order, "cleansed from every type of tutelage"[25]. As expected, Erdogan slammed the initiative and denounced it as a "betrayal". But he got the message: he will be challenged in the 2023 presidential elections.

On the other hand, the resettlement of refugees won't be easy. Firstly, out of the 3.6 million refugees hosted by Turkey, how many want to go back to a war zone? Although their stay in Turkey is increasingly unwelcome, at least they feel that they are safe and Turkey cannot relocate them against their will. On numerous occasions, the UN highlighted the principles of a "voluntary, safe and dignified return of refugees".

Secondly, relocation programme is costly and the EU has already warned that it will not pay. Left alone, Turkey simply cannot do it. Thirdly, how Turkey can resettle one or two million Sunni Arab refugees who fled to Turkey from all regions of Syria in a region that is already densely inhabited? Therefore, there is a serious risk of ethnic cleansing to make room for resettled Arab refugees who may be used as a "buffer" separating Syrian Kurds from Turkish Kurds.

Although weakened, the Kurdish militias will not surrender: the Syrian Democratic Forces are well-trained and highly motivated and they still have the capabilities to inflict serious casualties on the Turkish invading army. And if Turkish-Kurdish fighting spins out of control, the USA may reverse its policy and step back in.

But the Kurds harbour no illusion: the future of Rojava looks very bleak. The Kurds looked to Moscow to broker a short-term agreement with the Syrian regime, and accepted the return of the Syrian army in North-East Syria. For the time being, the Syrian regime allowed them to continue to administer parts of the areas under their control. But how long that will last? For sure, the Syrian regime will not tolerate any Kurdish autonomy that may threaten Syrian territorial integrity.

ISIS fighters may well take advantage of the chaos to escape from their prisons, to re-emerge and reconstitute. Although the reconstruction of the Caliphate – with territorial base- seems unconceivable, yet small groups of radical jihadists can constitute major terrorist threat. We witnessed in the last days car bombs exploding in Ras El Ayn, which lies in the Turkish "safe zone"

Russia has proved to be a major player in Syria. The evacuation of American bases has created a void that Russia hurried up to fill, allowing Putin to become a "game-changer". What will happen in the coming weeks and months will probably determine the fate of Syria. Two scenarios are possible:

Scenario one: The Russian partnership may vacillate as Russia does not want Turkey to be too successful. Tensions may arise in the areas where there are joint Turkish-Russian patrols in North East Syria. Clouds may gather elsewhere, mainly in Libya where Russia and Turkey are at loggerheads, with Russia siding with the dissident General Haftar and Turkey partnering with the internationally- recognized government of Tripoli.

Scenario two: Putin may seek to build on his increased statesmanship by reconciling Erdogan with Bashar al Assad. As a matter of fact, what worries the Russians most is the prospect of a large-scale military confrontation between the Syrian and the Turkish armies. That "would force them to choose sides, potentially destroying everything that they have achieved in Syria and wrecking the political process they are overseeing"[26].

Undoubtedly, the Turkish offensive in Syria has been a blessing for Putin: he struck a deal with Erdogan in Sochi but lowered his ambitions by proposing joint-patrols covering a stretch of territory 87km long and only 10km deep. Russia will not allow a permanent Turkish military presence in Syria, as the ultimate objectives of Russia and Turkey, in Syria, diverge: Turkey backs rebels seeking to oust the Syrian Regime, while Russia is against regime change. How Turkey can solve this contradiction without alienating either its proxy militia (the rebels) or the Syrian regime? The answer is not easy. Unless Turkey reconciles with the Syrian regime, which is a Russian objective, it could end up stuck in North East Syria for months or even years, wasting lives, money and military resources.

But Putin will be ill-advised to take victory for granted as Syria is not only an opportunity, it is also a burden. It is true that Syria allowed Russia to establish maritime and air bases in Tartus and Khmeimim, on the Mediterranean shore and offered Russia a chance to boost its status as a "great power" and to be perceived as a "reliable ally", But in the medium and long-run, Russia cannot afford to financially shore-up an impoverished regime that has ruined his country and is unable to finance its reconstruction. So Russian military power may be real but Russia seems to punch above its real weight as its diplomatic and military power remains constrained by limited economic resources. This explains the repeated calls of Putin asking the EU and the International Community to participate in the reconstruction of Syria, in order to allow for the return of the refugees and to build a viable future for the country.

Is there a role for the EU in Syria?
Although affected directly by the uncontrolled flow of refugees and Jihadi terrorist attacks, European countries have remained bystanders on the question of Syria or played second fiddle to the USA. It is ripe time to reverse this course of action and to adopt a pro-active policy in Syria. The Turkish offensive offers the EU an opportunity to do so.

The EU can adopt the proposal of the German Defence Minister to establish "an internationally controlled safe zone in North East Syria" but such initiative, to be successful, should be coordinated with the Russians, the Turks and the Americans. If the EU succeeds in convincing the main stakeholders, then the initiative should be presented to the Security Council. Blue Helmets, with significant European participation, would be deployed in North Syria. Gradually, Turkey would pull back its troops from Syria and displaced people allowed to return to their homes.

In order for this initiative to succeed, it has to be tied "to a viable political track that provides a realistic path forward"[27]. Otherwise, the whole initiative will transform into a crisis management exercise. It is time for the EU to engage decisively in conflict resolution, and not in solitary manoeuvres or piecemeal initiatives.

The question of the refugees hosted by Turkey should also be addressed. Turkey cannot afford that temporary stay becomes permanent. The EU should increase its financial assistance to Turkey: the 6 billion Euros promised to Turkey cover only a tiny share of the 30-35 billion Euros that Turkey has so far spent on the refugees. The EU should work on a resettlement programme that does not collide with the rights of local residents or alter the religious or ethnic composition of the population.

Finally, European countries should repatriate their ISIS jihadists. The conditions of their detention in Syria or Iraq are intolerable from the point of view of human rights. European countries should assume their responsibility and avoid procrastination or false pretexts. Citizenship stripping is unacceptable and the EU cannot outsource justice to Syria and Iraq, two countries with abysmal human rights record. Sweden has proposed a 'regional tribunal'. Why 'regional'? What law should be followed? What crimes could be pursued? Who will finance the tribunal? The proposal is problematic. An international law framework is better suited. The EU should push in that direction.

Understandably, the repatriation of ISIS fights raises legitimate concerns, but why the procrastination regarding women and children? Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan repatriated hundreds of people, mainly women and children with humble budgets and experience in counter-terrorism. So "what's stopping Western nations"[28]?

It is ripe time for Europe to bridge the credibility gap and prove to its citizens that it is not doomed to impotence. As normative power, the EU should pressure the Turkish regime to restore democratic order, but the EU, governments and media, should avoid demonizing Turkey as a country. Turkey is not a lost case. It will not leave NATO and it will not drift away of the West. It may seek to diversify its partnerships and open-up to Russia and China, but none of these two powers can constitute a credible substitute to the EU, the US, or NATO.

In spite of engaging in solitary manoeuvres, EU member states should seize the opportunity offered by the Turkish offensive in Syria, to "assemble scattered efforts in a more structured plan"[29]. In summary, Turkish offensive may be a bane or a boon. A bane if the EU sits on the fence and watch. A boon, if it is willing and capable of showing leadership and unity of purpose.
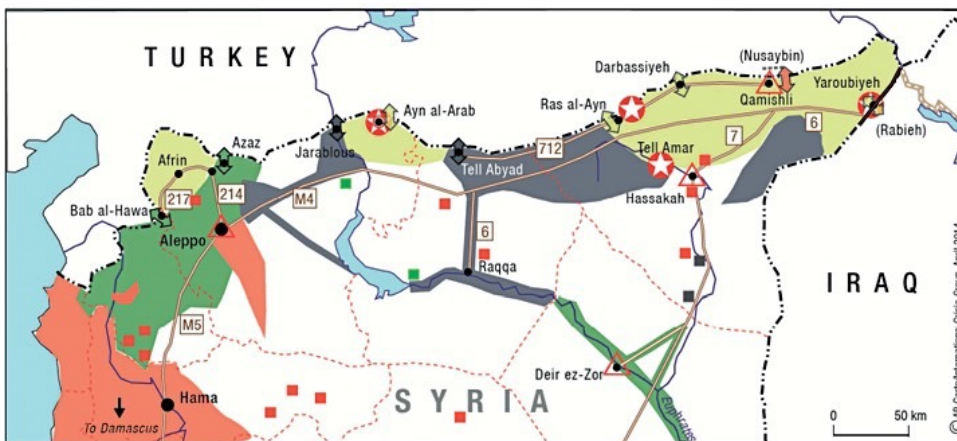
Prof. Bichara Khader, Prof (ret.) Universite catholique de Louvain, Louvain, Belgium, presenting his paper at the third panel on Cooperative Security in the Mediterranean: Regional or Subregional Approaches? Next to him (L to R) Dr. Omar Grech, Director, Centre for the Study and Practice Conflict Resolution, University of Malta, Malta and Dr. Emiliano Alessandri, Senior External Co-operation Officer, Office of the Secretary General, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Vienna, Austria.

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Energy Security and Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation: A Historical and Conceptual Map

Dr. Andrea Prontera

Energy has long been very important for understanding Mediterranean politics. Traditionally, oil and natural gas have been the core resources over which cooperation among European consumers and producers in the south of the Mediterranean took place. This cooperation has been mainly in the hands of national governments and their energy companies. In the 1990s, however, this original pattern of diplomatic interactions has been complicated by the EU's internal and external energy policy as well as by the multiplication of actors and issues which can be linked to Mediterranean energy governance. In what follows, I present a historical and conceptual map that can help in understanding the development of Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation since the 1970s and highlight some interesting emerging dynamics. This map is organised around two key notions: energy security and energy diplomacy. It considers three key periods in Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation, which will be briefly presented and discussed.

What is energy security?

Energy security has been a concern for scholars of international affairs and policy makers over a century. At least since the famous decision of Winston Churchill, as First Lord of the Admiralty, to power the British navy's ships with oil - which came in large part from what was then Persia - instead of coal from Wales[1]. This issue has then periodically emerged as a prominent area for attention both in academia and policy circles in conjunction with the occurrence of oil price shocks, supply disruptions or during periods of tight energy market conditions. The last wave of attention traces back to the beginning of the 2000s, when rising oil prices and the prospect of a structural shift of demand towards emerging economies (mainly China and India), coupled with the instability instilled in world politics by the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, brought this 'old' issue back onto the international agenda. In Europe, this trend received additional reinforcement from the gas disputes between Russia and Ukraine and, more generally, from the more assertive foreign policy pursued by Moscow since the mid-2000s. With this last wave of attention, however, the analysis of energy security has become more sophisticated, and different dimensions of the concept have been highlighted. This 'new' conceptualisation of energy security, in particular, differs from the perspective of the 1970s, when the oil shocks had a key role in defining the contours of the energy question. The focus of energy security at that time was on the oil market and on the concerns of security of supply of the consumer countries in the West. The main issues addressed under the notion of energy security included the 'cartelisation' of the oil market and the use of the 'oil weapon' by the Arab members of the OPEC; the stability in the producer regions (mainly the Middle East); access to the oil reserves by the Western oil majors; the oversight (also in military terms,

especially for Washington) of the main routes and chokepoints of the oil market; and the risk of inter-state and intra-state conflicts for the control of energy resources. Obviously, these issues are still important elements of the current debates on energy security. However, the new conceptualisation has innovated in many respects from the old one[2]. First, in terms of focus, apart from oil, also natural gas, electricity, renewables, nuclear energy and energy grids and networks have been included in the study of energy security. The externalities on the environment and climate related to fossil fuel consumption are also covered now under the energy security debate. In addition, not only the perspective of the Western consumer has to be taken into consideration. The points of view and interests of the producers are factored in the new conceptualisation of energy security, which covers both security of supply and security of demand. The perspective of several non-state actors and the very meaning of energy security in different contexts and according to different frames has also become a key element. In terms of issues, finally, the new conceptualisation extends the analysis of energy security to innovative aspects such as environmental stewardship, climate security, sustainable energy, energy poverty, natural disasters and terrorist attacks, to name a few.

Energy diplomacy and its forms
Another important aspect that has been underlined by the recent literature on energy security is the varieties of forms, or modes, of energy diplomacy[3]. At a basic level, the idea of energy diplomacy serves to describe several patterns of cooperative dynamics that involve both state and non-state actors and that are activated for addressing energy security issues. More specifically, however, it is possible to differentiate among four basic forms of energy diplomacy that differ in terms of actors, actors' type and the main purpose of the diplomatic practices (Table 1). The first form – bilateral energy diplomacy – involves few actors, mainly states (typically a producer and a consumer), which interact with the goal of establishing 'strategic partnerships'. A good example is the historical partnership between Washington and Riyadh, which relies on US efforts to support and assist, in military terms, Saudi Arabia and its ruling elite. Triangular (energy) diplomacy still involves few actors. However, along with governments, energy companies – the so-called 'national champions' – are key players in the diplomatic interactions. These companies (often state-owned) are backed by national governments in their commercial negotiations, which have important political and geopolitical implications. Examples of triangular energy diplomacy are the diplomatic interactions developed in the oil and natural gas sectors by the Western European consumers and prominent producers in the MENA region during the Cold War. Multilateral (energy) diplomacy, on the other hand, describes a very different set of practices and patterns of international interactions. This form of diplomacy resonates with the so-called market approach to international energy governance, which stresses the role of multilateral international organisations (IOs) and governance arrangements in creating and promoting rules for energy transactions and market liberalisation. Finally, network (energy) diplomacy describes patterns of interactions that involve wider numbers and types of actors. Besides, in this latter case, the very purpose of the diplomatic activities is to facilitate policy processes and the implementation of specific investment projects.

Table 1: Forms of energy diplomacy

Forms	Actors	Actors' type(s)	Main purpose
Bilateral	Few	Governments	Forge 'strategic partnerships'
Triangular	Few	Governments, Companies	Back national companies
Multilateral	Many	Governments, IOs	Rules creation, rules diffusion, (and treaty negotiations)
Network	Many	Governments, IOs, Companies, Other non-state actors	Facilitate policy process and project implementation

Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation: The past, the present and the future

Taking into consideration the transformation of the very meaning of the notion of energy security, as well as the different forms of energy diplomacy, it is possible to illustrate a conceptual and historical map of Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation (Figure 1). This map proposes a schematic way of understanding the development of Euro-Mediterranean energy relations in the last decades and thinking about their future evolution. It considers two key dimensions. The first, 'institutional complexity', refers to the coexistence of different forms of energy diplomacy, with a higher complexity as the number of forms increase. The second, 'issues', points to the number of questions (few/many) that constitute the core of Euro-Mediterranean energy relations. By combining these dimensions, it is possible to offer a periodisation of Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation structured around three periods (Figure 1). In what follows, each of these periods is briefly analysed, offering some practical examples.
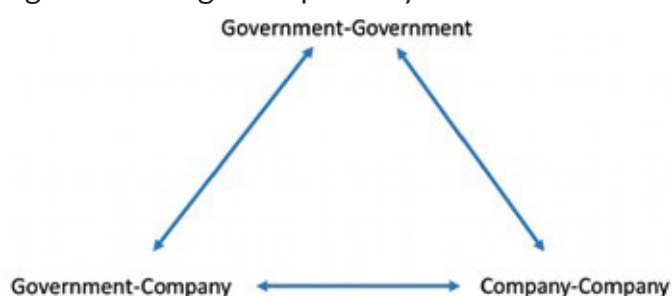
Figure 1: Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation: An historical and conceptual map
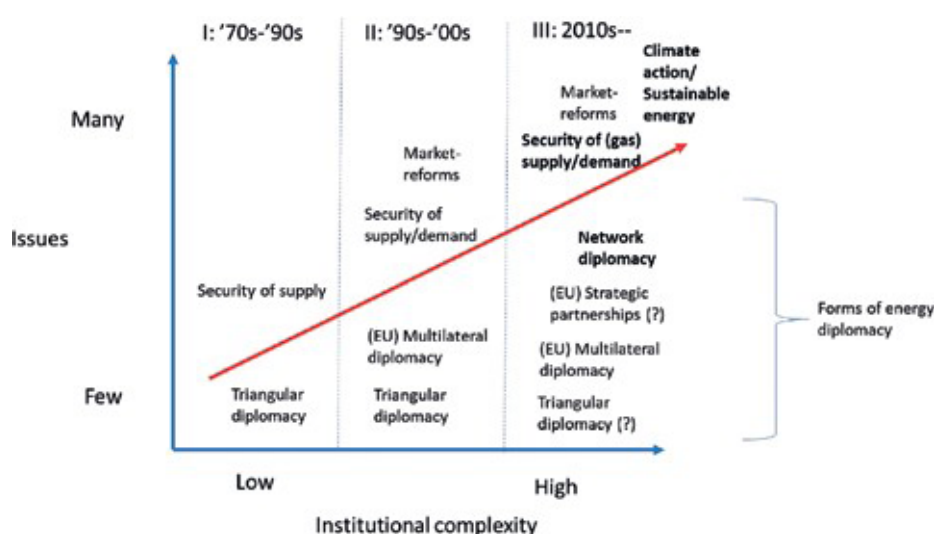
Period I (1970s–1990s):
Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation and triangular diplomacy
In this first period, Euro-Mediterranean energy relations were mainly in the hands of the national governments of the consumer and producer states and their state-owned companies. These relations developed according to the triangular diplomacy framework, with governments interested in backing their national companies in their commercial negotiations and with parallel negotiations between governments and companies (Figure 2). The focus was on security of supply, which in the late 1970s was the main concern for (Western) European consumers like Italy, France and Spain. In the wake of the oil shocks, these countries wanted to diversify their suppliers and reduce their dependency on the Middle East. Along with oil, the exploitation of the fields of natural gas in countries like Algeria and Libya became the core element of energy cooperation in the Mediterranean. This cooperation, in turn, was instrumental in the structuration of rentier forms of state in the south of the Mediterranean. Another key aspect of Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation in this period regards the construction of those large infrastructural systems that were necessary to connect the gas fields in the south with the centres of consumption in the north. The diplomatic interactions around these infrastructures well illustrate the idea of triangular energy diplomacy. Examples include the so-called 'Transmed pipeline' connecting Algeria with Italy, crossing Tunisia and the Mediterranean Sea. This pipeline – also known as the Enrico Mattei pipeline – entered into operation in 1983. It was developed by the Italian ENI and the Algerian Sonatrach and was possible thanks to the support of national governments in Rome and Algiers. Similar patterns of triangular energy diplomacy were also behind the development of the Liquefied Natural Gas terminal realised in the 1970s and 1980in Italy, Spain and France to import gas from Algeria and Libya. In addition, this layer of energy diplomacy continued in the following periods as illustrated, for example, by the realisation of the Gazoduc–Maghreb EuropePipeline (in 1996 by Gas Natural, Enagas and Sonatrach) and the Green Stream (in 2004, by ENI and the Libyan National Oil Company).

Figure 2: Triangular diplomacy

Period II (1990s-2000s):
Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation and the EU multilateral (regional) approach
The second period of Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation is marked by the emergence and consolidation of a second layer of diplomatic activities. These are represented by the multilateral and regional approach promoted by the EU. The first efforts in this direction were realised in 1996 with the launch of the Euro-Mediterranean Energy Forum in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). From the late 1990s to the late 2000s – in parallel with the enhancement of the Internal Energy Market (IEM) – market reforms and approximation to EU rules in the gas and electricity sectors became the major goals of EU engagement in the region[4]. The idea was to export the EU's 'domestic' model based on the regulatory state approach. In terms of rule promotion, hence, the content of the EU's actions

focused on network unbundling, a regulated Third- Party Access regime, the establishment of independent regulatory authorities and an incentive-based tariff system[5].

In 2006, in the wake of the first Russia–Ukraine gas dispute, the European Commission proposed expanding the Energy Community Treaty to the Mediterranean. However, major gas producers like Algeria, Libya and later Egypt, were not eager to enter legally binding commitments or adopt market reforms that could challenge the system of rents and energy subsidies supporting the stability of the ruling elite.

Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation was hence channelled through a new regional political framework that upgraded the EMP, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), trans-governmental networks that mirrored the internal governance of the IEM and gathered regulators and Transmission System Operators (Medreg, established in 2007, and Med-TSO, established in 2012), and the bilateral relations implemented in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)[6]. These initiatives shared the same set of common goals: promoting convergence and harmonisation towards EU rules and exporting the EU model of energy market governance. These goals were pursued both at regional and bilateral levels, where the ENP Action Plans envisaged assistance for reforms in the energy sector focused on liberalisation and the establishment of independent regulators[7]. Regulatory approximation also aimed to promote energy infrastructures and interconnections between the two shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

Period III (2010s-2020s):
**Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation: EU strategic partnership and network diplomacy**
Despite the very poor achievements in rule export and the plan for interconnectivity, the EU approach based on multilateral diplomacy changed only slightly in the aftermath of the Arab Spring[8]. At the beginning of the 2010s, however, the promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency entered more prominently onto the scene of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. Several projects involving experts, regulators and companies were proposed (e.g., Medgrid, Desert Tech Initiative, Med-Enec), and the Mediterranean Solar Plan (MSP) was launched as a flagship initiative of the UfM (the MSP eventually failed in 2013 due to changing market conditions and opposition from EU member states).

After the war in Eastern Ukraine, the security of gas supply issues was more firmly anchored to the ENP bilateral and multilateral framework, which also incorporated the energy (and climate) objectives of the Energy Union. Three new platforms (on natural gas, electricity and renewables) were established in 2015 in the framework of the UfM. However, rather than focussing on regulatory harmonisation, they prioritised a more pragmatic approach, a technical and voluntary form of convergence, which involves both energy companies and national representatives. This more pragmatic approach to energy cooperation and investment projects has also been adopted with the major producers of the region. The EU has engaged bilaterally, especially with Algeria and Egypt. A Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of a 'strategic energy partnership' covering the security of supply/demand, market reform and sustainable energy was signed with Algeria in 2013. Further, in 2018, a new Memorandum of Understanding for 'strategic energy partnership' was signed with Egypt. This new bilateral deal, which replaced the one signed in by the EU and Egypt in 2008, covers market reforms and energy security (e.g., infrastructure, gas hub) but also climate action and energy transition.

It is worth noting that despite the label 'strategic partnership', these new agreements promoted by the EU are very far from the ideal type of the bilateral energy diplomacy discussed above. They are not underpinned by a coherent European action towards Algeria and Egypt, nor by the integration between the EU external energy policy and security and defence matters. In this respect, obviously, the EU approach cannot mirror that of the US with its strategic partnership with Saudi Arabia. These bilateral deals serve to reinforce the other policy objectives pursued by the EU in the region, although their practical effect is not entirely clear.

On the other hand, an additional layer of diplomatic activity for Euro- Mediterranean cooperation has emerged in this third period. This layer, which is replacing and contaminating the multilateral and triangular approaches, is in line with the idea of network energy diplomacy (Figure 3). This new pattern of diplomatic activities can be seen at work both with regard to more traditional issues like security of gas supply and infrastructure, and new ones like climate action and sustainable energy. As suggested, network diplomacy is characterised by the interaction between several types of actors – including the EU institutions and non-state actors – and aimed at facilitating the implementation of specific investment projects. In this regard, of particular interest is the involvement of actors like international financial institutions (IFIs) and national and EU development banks like the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). These actors play an important role in supporting project implementation along with more traditional players like governments and energy companies. An example of network diplomacy in the area of security of gas supply is illustrated by the EU's efforts to develop the Southern Gas Corridor and the TransAdriaticPipeline, which has been financially supported by the EIB. However, similar dynamics are also visible in the case of the EastMed Pipeline and the European efforts to develop the gas resources in the Eastern Mediterranean. With regard to climate action and sustainable energy, examples of emerging forms of network diplomacy, including the activism of development banks, can be found by looking at the EU External Investment Plan. This plan, launched in 2017 and backed by the European Fund for Sustainable Development, aims at promoting actions in the Southern Mediterranean countries in areas such as 'sustainable cities', 'sustainable energy and connectivity' and 'sustainable agri-business'. It is supported by leveraging and blending facilities that should facilitate the realisation of specific investment projects by catalysing the activities and financial resources of several public and private actors. An example of this is the support granted to the 'Moroccan Solar Plan', which sees the involvement of the Moroccan Agency for Solar Energy, the EIB, the German KfW and the French AFD.

Figure 3: Network (energy) diplomacy
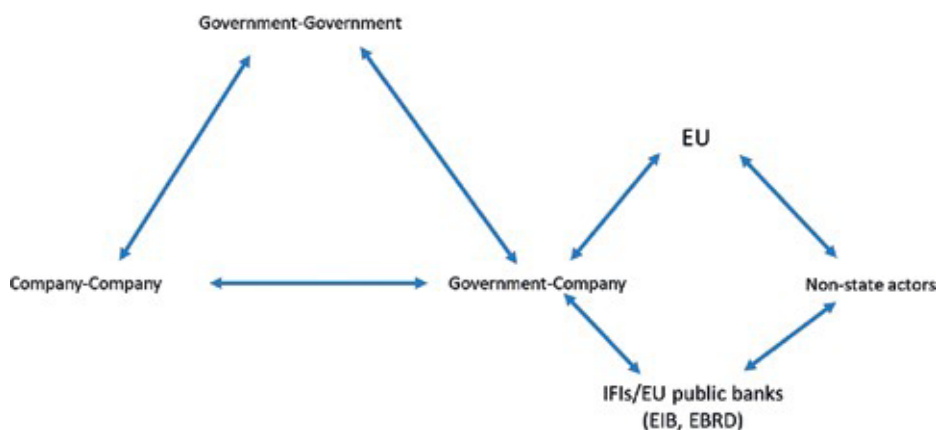
Concluding remarks

Oil and gas, and national governments and their companies, have traditionally been at the core of Euro-Mediterranean energy relations. This is true also today. More than 60% of the exports of the Southern Mediterranean countries to the EU are represented by these energy resources[9]. However, by adopting the new conceptualisation of energy security and considering the varieties of forms of energy diplomacy, I have sought to present a more complex picture of Euro- Mediterranean energy relations. According to this representation, understanding the current dynamics is important for taking into account the different layers of diplomatic activities as well as the different issues which nowadays constitute the contour of the Mediterranean energy conundrum. Looking at future developments, the notion of network diplomacy seems especially important to make sense of the varieties of actors and patterns of interaction that are consolidating between the two shores of the Mediterranean sea. Network diplomacy is replacing the previous forms of multilateral and triangular diplomacy. In addition, this notion calls experts and practitioners to rethink the very idea of energy politics, beyond the more traditional image offered by inter- state cooperation/ competition for hydrocarbon resources.

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Migration and the Failure of EU's Cooperative Frameworks in the Mediterranean

Dr. Omar Grech

Introduction

Migration is one of the phenomena which, as politicians and policy makers keep reiterating, requires a cooperative approach. The mantra is that migration is a complex phenomenon which no single state, no matter how large or small, can deal with effectively single-handed. This is an unremarkable statement to the extent that it is self-evident that dealing with the root-causes of migration, managing migratory flows across maritime and land borders, and efforts towards a fair, efficient and humane settlement of substantial migratory flows requires large scale cooperation. This cooperation is required among a range of actors; be they countries of origin, transit countries or destination countries.

The Mediterranean region is one of the hotspots in terms of migratory flows. Since the beginning of this decade (at least) migratory flows across the Mediterranean have become consistent and persistent with arrivals from Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East through land and sea routes into Greece, Italy, Spain and Malta amongst others. The question that this essay will examine is whether the Mediterranean region has witnessed regional and/or sub-regional cooperation in the context of the management of migratory flows.

This essay will argue that notwithstanding, the abundance of political rhetoric and policy documents establishing cooperative frameworks for the management of migration in the Mediterranean region, migratory flows have led to rather more conflictual than cooperative relations amongst EU Member States while cooperation by the EU and its member states with North African states (which are both countries of origin as well as transit countries) may at best be described as insufficient.

The consequences of these failures in cooperation have been to accentuate unrest with migration amongst significant portions of the EU public, the rise of political parties and particular politicians on the wave of anti-immigration sentiment and, most importantly and tragically, thousands of human lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea.

Large Scale Migratory Flows in the Mediterranean

According to the UNHCR's data, as of the middle of December 2019, arrivals in European Mediterranean states (defined as Italy, Spain, Greece, Cyprus and Malta) for 2019 numbered 120,243 with 97,906 by sea and 22,337 by land. The organisation also estimated a death

toll of 1,277[1]. For the 6-year period between 2014-2019, the total number of arrivals was 2,078,369 with the estimated number of lives lost (defined as dead or missing by the UNCHR) amounted to 19,098 for the same period[2]. The total number of arrivals of just over 2 million is certainly a substantial figure although this number should be put into the perspective of the EU's total population, which currently stands at 513 million[3]. The number of arrivals was especially high in the 2015 with over 1 million arrivals registered in the EU for that year alone[4].

The number of arrivals into the EU after the 2015/6 spike decreased in the past 3 years primarily as a result of the EU-Turkey deal that sought to seal off the EU's eastern flank. However, some EU politicians have been warning that there could be a return to 2015 numbers if the EU as a whole failed to agree a comprehensive and shared migration policy. The German Interior Minister warned in October 2019 that "if there is no common European asylum policy, there is a danger that uncontrolled immigration will once again take place, throughout Europe"[5].

The geographical spread of the arrivals is unsurprising in that it focuses on the southern and south-eastern perimeter of the EU. By far the lion's share of arrivals in 2019 was in Greece with over 71,000 arrivals, Spain with 30,000 and Italy with over 11,000. Significant numbers of arrivals were also registered in Bulgaria with over 2,000 and Malta with over 3,000. This imbalance in the numbers of arrivals as between EU Member States is one of the cleavages which is creating tension at the intra-EU level[6].

All told, the flow of migrants into the EU is not as voluminous as political rhetoric and public sentiment may lead us to believe. Migrant arrivals in the last 5 years (at just over 2 million) account for slightly less than 0.4% of the EU population (513 million). However, the 2015 influx which was larger than anything seen in Europe since the end of the Second World War did create logistical challenges which heightened the emphasis of the numbers. The 2015 influx also created a narrative of mass migration which has been continuously and dexterously woven in significant segments of traditional and social media as well as by a number of political actors. The perception of very large migratory flows has thus continued unabated and this has led to immigration being considered as the main concern for EU citizens in the Eurobarometer polls. In the Spring 2019 Eurobarometer findings, migration was still the main concern for EU citizens with a 34% score although this was a drop of 6% from 2018[7].

The high levels of concern generated by migration amongst EU citizens and the tragic loss of human life which we have witnessed in the Mediterranean are abundantly clear. These factors should have led the EU and its member states to redouble their efforts at cooperating with each other and with countries of origin and transit countries to deal with this phenomenon

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[1] UNHCR Operational Portal, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterra-nean

[2] Ibid.

[3] EU in Figures, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/figures/living_en

[4] UNHCR, https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2015/12/5683d0b56/million-sea-arrivals-reach-europe-2015.html

[5] Gabriela Baczynska, Germany warns of repeat of 2015 EU migration chaos, Reuters, 8 October 2019 available at https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-ministers/germany-warns-of-repeat-of-2015-eu-migration-chaos-idUSKBN1WN16N

[6] https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-france/france-lam-basts-italys-hysterical-migrant-policy-rome-fires-back-idUSKCN1TX13C

[7] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_4969

comprehensively and effectively. In the next section a brief analysis of the EU's policy responses will give a clear indication as to whether this has been the case.

EU Policy Responses

The EU's initial response to the 2015 migration crisis came in the aftermath of the maritime tragedies of April 2015 which "were among the worst in terms of loss of lives in the Mediterranean"[8]. In 2015 the EU adopted its Ten-Point Plan immediately after the April tragedies, with the adoption of the European Agenda on Migration following soon after, while at the end of the year it held a summit meeting in Malta together with African partner countries where the Valletta Summit Action Plan was adopted.

The Ten-Point Plan was a somewhat knee-jerk reaction by the EU with most of the plan aiming at targeting the smugglers who ferried migrants across the Mediterranean. There was nothing in the plan which addressed the root causes of migration as the emphasis was almost exclusively on stopping migrant crossings. In terms of cooperative frameworks there was no mention of established frameworks in the context of EU-Africa cooperation or Euro Mediterranean partnerships.

Hot on the heels of the Ten-Point Plan came the European Agenda on Migration adopted on the 13th May 2015. From a human security perspective, this is a more helpful policy agenda as its language demonstrates a degree of commitment to the human rights values which should lie at the heart of the EU's internal and external policies[9]. The European Agenda on Migration also acknowledges the collective failure of the European approach to migration with a recognition that the "collective European policy on the matter has fallen short." However, notwithstanding the improvements which the Agenda promoted in terms of a more comprehensive approach to the management of migration, it still fell short in terms of setting out clear, measurable and achievable objectives in terms of cooperation with countries of origin and transit countries. The Agenda, in fact, has four key dimensions: reducing incentives for irregular migration, border management and saving lives at sea; a common asylum policy; and a new policy on legal migration. It also failed to deal with the single most contentious issue within the EU itself in terms of migration management i.e. the Dublin II Regulation which places the responsibility for each migrant arriving in the EU on the first member state where the migrant arrives.

The Agenda, as mentioned, did not seek effective engagement with the EU's regional partners in the Mediterranean or in Africa more broadly. However, on the 11 and 12 November 2015 the EU hosted the Valletta Summit which brought together the EU and African Heads of State and of government "in an effort to strengthen cooperation and address the current challenges but also the opportunities of migration"[10]. The EU stated that at the summit the parties "recognised that migration is a shared responsibility of countries of origin, transit and destination and that the "EU and Africa worked in a spirit of partnership to find common solutions to challenges of mutual interest[11]".

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[8] Omar Grech, Monika Wohlfeld, Managing Migration in the Mediterranean, Policy, Institute for Peace Research and Security, OSCE Yearbook 2015, Nomos, 2016.

[9] Respect for human rights and the rule of law are founding principles of the Eu- ropean Union as the Treaty on the European Union makes clear.

[10] European Council of the European Union2, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ en/meetings/international-summit/2015/11/11-12/

[11] Ibid.

The Valletta Summit produced an Action Plan based on 5 main pillars and with 16 priority areas. The language used in the Action Plan is an improvement on the Ten Point Plan and the Agenda on Migration in terms of elaborating a comprehensive migration and mobility partnership and also understanding the complexity of migration and its human dimension. The Valletta Action Plan referred, inter alia, to shared responsibility, addressing root causes, taking action to promote stability in countries of origin, preventing new conflicts, supporting rule of law etc. It also promised more opportunities for mobility into the EU for African students, researchers and entrepreneurs. The Valletta Summit included the establishment of an EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa intended to help tackle the root cause of migration.

The extent to which these fine words have been translated into effective action in terms of mobility is, in some ways, questionable. Although the EU has launched an enhanced Erasmus+ programme catering for greater participation from African students, a 2018 report on the success of this initiative has noted "cumbersome and slow visa issuance procedures" as a continuing challenge which has hampered the initiative[12].

If one looks at the priority of enhancing rule of law, resilience and preventing new conflicts, the success is altogether more dubious. At the time of writing the security situation in Libya (one of the main transit points for irregular migration into the EU) has deteriorated sharply with a (so far) low intensity military conflict taking hold. In this context, with one of the EU's closest southern neighbours on the verge of collapse and with foreign forces likely to intervene in Libya directly or through proxy actors, the EU's response has not been formidable. The EU's approach to Libya since the 2011 uprisings has not been characterised as a success. In fact in this Libyan context it has been argued that the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy has collapsed: "Ultimately, national preoccupations, concerns and interests gained the upper hand, expressed their disinterest in a common action within the EU framework and conveyed a sense of a collapsed CSDP"[13].

Moreover, the EU's cooperation with Libya to manage the migration crisis involves spending large sums of money to support the Libyan coast guard to prevent migrant crossings. Sally Hayden states that "since 2017, the Libyan coast guard has been supported with equipment and training worth tens of millions of dollars by the European Union. This money comes from the Trust Fund for Africa—a multibillion-dollar fund created at the height of the so-called migration crisis, with the aim of preventing migration to Europe by increasing border controls and funding projects in 26 African countries."[14]

NGOs in the human rights sector have criticised this approach as they argue that "the EU is supporting the coast guard with the aim of circumventing the international law principle of non-refoulement"[15]. The principle of non-refoulement is a fundamental principle of international human rights law which prevents states from returning persons to places they are fleeing from.

The situation in Libya is grave on two fronts in terms of migratory flows. Firstly, the dire situation faced by migrants currently in Libya is likely to be exacerbated by the ongoing conflict. As the Libyan conflict escalates the migrants transiting in Libya may very well bear

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[12] https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20180424133008985
[13] Marchi, Ludovica, The EU in Libya and the collapse of the CSDP, US-China Law Review, 2017
[14] Hayden, Sally, The U.N. Is Leaving Migrants to Die in Libya, Foreign Policy, 2019
[15] Ibid.

a disproportionate burden of the conflict. In fact, the military operations by the forces of General Haftar have already caused tragic loss of life in Tripoli with around 45 killed in an airstrike that hit the Tajoura detention centre[16]. The pressure to cross into the EU at all costs (including the cost of their own lives) is only likely to increase in this scenario. Moreover, as with any conflict, pressure will also build for Libyans themselves to leave Libya in search of more stable and secure environments within the EU.

A failure of European cooperation
The failure in Libya reflects a broader malaise within the EU, which is visible in a number of sectors but, perhaps, most keenly felt in areas where the EU itself has limited competence vis-à-vis its member states, such as external relations and security. EU member states have lost the sense of solidarity and cooperation which characterised its formation and its first decades of operation. Increasingly Member States are unable or unwilling to think in European terms instead focusing on narrow self-interest. Furthermore, the EU's member states have failed to live up to their values enunciated in the constitutive act of the EU: The Treaty on European Union.

The focus on narrow self-interest in the context of the failure of the CSDP was mentioned above. In Libya there are opposing interests of France and Italy which have been widely reported[17]. In the context of migratory flows there are the opposing interests of EU southern member states who have shouldered most responsibility for managing migrant arrivals and Visegrad countries who mostly refuse any form of so-called 'burden sharing'. In 2018 the Visegrad countries 'en bloc' refused to agree to relocation quotas being discussed within the EU[18].

In terms of the EU's respect for its own fundamental values, the situation is equally concerning. The EU's deals with Turkey and Libya have been roundly criticised by human rights organisations since the basic human rights guarantees that migrants are entitled to are seriously imperilled. Reference has already been made to the EU's deal with Libya in terms of supporting its coast guard to effectively return migrants leaving the Libyan shores to Libya. The 2016 EU deal with Turkey has been characterised by the UNHCR as being of concern[19] while human rights organisations such as Amnesty describe it as a "historic blow to rights"[20].

All told, migration in the Mediterranean has seen a failure of cooperation both by the EU and its neighbours and also within the EU internally. Until the EU member states rediscover a sense of European solidarity and a sense of their own fundamental values, the situation is unlikely to improve. The losers are first and foremost those migrants whose lives are lost or who must endure an undignified existence. Europeans however are also losers; they are losing a sense of what European identity should be about.

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Cooperative Security and Border Control: Mediterranean Perspectives

Dr. Derek Lutterbeck

The changing function of state borders

One of the most significant transformations of the security landscape of the post-Cold War era has been the profound change in the nature of state borders. Long seen primarily as military defence lines, where states would fend off military incursions by other states, state borders have increasingly become policing or law enforcement borders aimed at excluding 'undesirables', such as irregular migrants, transnational terrorists, or drugs. Thus rather than having become obsolete, as claimed by some proponents of 'globalisation' (Ohmae 1990), state borders—in their changed function—remain key features of the international system. Indeed, in many places they have become flashpoints of policy-making, as evidenced, for example, by the high levels of concern with, and the considerable build-up of, the outer borders of the European Union (EU) or the US-Mexico border in recent years (Andreas & Snyder 2000, Bigo 2005, Lutterbeck 2006).

It is, however, not only the changing function—and continued or even enhanced relevance—of state borders but also the increasingly cooperative nature of borders controls which is noteworthy. As aptly pointed out by Matthew Longo, the '21st Century Border' is no longer an 'oppositional' or confrontational border, but rather a 'cooperative' or 'bi-national' one, where border control increasingly takes the form of joint activities by states on both sides of the border, in the form for example of information sharing, or coordinated or joint operations (Longo 2016). Border control has thus increasingly become part of another key trend of the post-Cold War era: the growing importance of 'cooperative security'. Indeed if cooperative security is understood as instances 'where states work together to deal with non-state challenges and threats' (Mihalka 2005), then contemporary border controls are very much in line with this general trend.

The aims of this article are twofold. First, it examines the evolution of border controls in the Mediterranean region—an area which as pointed out by Omar Grech in this volume has seen a significant expansion of (irregular) migration in recent years—highlighting in particular the growing importance of 'cooperative border controls'. Second, the article also offers a critical perspective on such 'cooperative border controls'. While the increasing collaboration between states in border enforcement can be seen as a positive development, at least as far as the effectiveness of border controls is concerned, this article also argues that the seemingly benign discourse of 'cooperation' may mask underlying power asymmetries and 'hegemonic' practices, in particular between migrant receiving and sending or transit countries. Moreover—and perhaps even more importantly—it might also obscure the fact

that increasing cooperation between states in border control may come at the expense of migrants' basic human rights.

Cooperative border controls within the EU: the creation and evolution of FRONTEX

One of the implications of the lifting of border controls among European countries under the so-called Schengen arrangement is that the external border of this area has become a common external border. As state borders within the Schengen area are (in principle) no longer controlled, the external border remains the only location of control. As a consequence, cooperation between Schengen countries in controlling this external border has gradually increased over the years, even though ultimate responsibility for border control remains with the member states. Up until the early 2000s, this cooperation mainly took the form of temporary (manpower and financial) support for frontline countries which were experiencing a sharp growth in 'migratory pressure'.

Since 2005, however, cooperation in border control has taken on a more institutionalised form with the creation of the EU border control agency FRONTEX[1]. The main task of FRONTEX is to coordinate and organise 'joint operations and rapid border interventions to assist member states at the external borders'. Noteworthy is the massive expansion of FRONTEX since its inception, which testifies to the agency's growing importance. Thus while FRONTEX's initial budget in 2005 amounted six million EUR, by 2018 this had increased to 320 million EUR. Moreover, in 2019, it was decided to dramatically increase FRONTEX staff from 750 to 10,000 and to turn it into the EU's first uniformed service.

While FRONTEX can become active at any section of the EU's external border which might face increased 'migratory pressure', the Mediterranean has been a focal point of its operations in recent years. Indeed in 2019, all of FRONTEX's main operations took place in the Mediterranean: Operation Indalo in the Western Mediterranean, Operation Themis in the Central Mediterranean, and Operation Poseidon in the Eastern Mediterranean. A total of 139,000 irregular migrants were intercepted by FRONTEX at the EU's external borders in 2019, the large majority of which took place along its Mediterranean borders (European Border and Coast Guard Agency 2020).

Cooperative border controls beyond the EU

At least equally important as this increasingly cooperative approach to border security among EU countries has been the growing collaboration between European and neighbouring countries (as well as countries further afield) in border and migration control. The Mediterranean region, again, provides ample evidence of this general trend. One of the first examples of such cooperation in border and migration control between an EU and a neighbouring country was that between Italy and Albania beginning in the early 1990s. At that time, the Adriatic Sea between Italy and Albania was one of the main 'hotspots' of irregular migration into the EU, also as a result of the economic (and political) collapse of Albania, which drove large numbers of Albanians across the Adriatic to Italy. In response, Italy engaged in very close collaboration with Albania in border and migration control, which also involved the presence of Italian law enforcement agencies on the Albanian side of the Adriatic (Lutterbeck 2006). Another early example of cooperative border control between an EU and a neighbouring country can be found in the Western Mediterranean between Spain and Morocco, which involved mainly the carrying out of joint operations between Spanish and Moroccan authorities along Morocco's Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts in order to prevent departures of seaborne migrants towards Spain (Carling 2007).

In more recent times, the cooperation between Greece and Turkey, under the so-called EU-Turkey deal on migration, or that between Italy and Libya could be mentioned as cases of cooperative border control. Part of the EU-Turkey deal (or 'statement') on migration concluded in 2016 has been that Turkish border control authorities would cooperate more closely with their Greek counterparts in preventing migration across the Aegean sea (and in ensuring returns of migrants from Greece back to Turkey). Italy for its part has in recent years stepped up its cooperation on migration control with Libya. In 2017, the two countries concluded an MoU on collaboration in the fields of migration control, as well as countering human trafficking and oil smuggling. The EU as a whole has also been active in this field: since 2017, it has reportedly spent more than 90 million EUR in training the Libyan Coast Guard under its Operation EUNAVFOR Med – Operation Sophia.

The evolution of the migratory flows across the Mediterranean suggests that such cross-border cooperation with countries neighbouring the EU has been a key factor in effectively preventing irregular migration. Thus, for example, the aforementioned collaboration between Italy and Albania effectively led to the shutdown of the 'Adriatic route' by the late 1990s. Similarly, the close cooperation between Spain and Morocco in migration control led to a sharp decline in seaborne migration along the Western Mediterranean route. Telling in this respect are also the fluctuations in migration across the Central Mediterranean, i.e. from (or through) Libya towards the EU (mainly Italy and Malta). Up until 2009, irregular migration from Libya across the Mediterranean increased steadily, as Libya under its then ruler Muammar Gaddafi refused to cooperate with EU countries in migration control. However, when Italy and Libya concluded the so-called Treaty of Friendship, which also included provisions on joint measures to prevent irregular migration, the flow of migrants from Libya towards Europe declined dramatically, practically from the next day. In 2011, as the Gaddafi regime was overthrown by the popular uprising in Libya, and the cooperation initiated in 2009 also came to an end, boat migration from Libya towards the EU again resumed, reaching more than 170,000 by 2014. Since the conclusion of the aforementioned MoU between Italy and Libya on migration control, irregular migration in the Central Mediterranean has again declined considerably, with around 20,000 seaborne migrants intercepted along this route in 2018 (Baldwin- Edwards & Lutterbeck 2019).

Critique of cooperative border controls
The increasingly cooperative approaches to border security, as documented above, can in many ways be seen as a positive development. After all it testifies to the fact that security concerns are increasingly shared between countries, and that they are able to address common (cross-border) challenges jointly rather than unilaterally. Moreover, there is clear evidence that border and migration controls are most effective, or perhaps even only effective, if based on cooperation between agencies on both sides of the border.

However, the seemingly benign discourse of 'cooperation' also has its dark sides. First, it can be argued that it inadequately captures, or even obscures, underlying power asymmetries between states which are involved in such cooperative endeavours. Contemporary cooperation in border and migration control often takes place between (very) unequal parties and the effective results typically reflect these imbalances. This even applies to the collaboration between EU (or Schengen) countries in border control. Thus while the external border of this area is increasingly being controlled through joint efforts, in particular in the form of FRONTEX, this cooperation (so far) does not translate into a 'fair' distribution of migrants and refugees among EU countries. Typically, it is the 'frontline' states which bear

a disproportionate burden, not only because under the so-called Dublin regulation they—as countries of first entry—are responsible for processing asylum claims, but also because many of these countries are in a relatively weak bargaining position vis-à-vis other EU states, either because of their small size (such as Malta) or because of their dependence on the EU in other areas (such as Greece). Even though countries such as Italy or Greece have long been calling for a mechanism of 'burden' or 'responsibility sharing' among EU states, the redistribution of migrants and refugees arriving in the EU still occurs on a very limited and largely ad hoc basis.

Second, there is typically also a sharp power asymmetry between migrant receiving (EU) countries and countries of origin or transit, which are often (relatively) poor developing countries. Cooperation between EU member states and neighbouring countries (or countries further afield) essentially results in migration controls being 'externalised' and the burden of dealing with migrants shifted towards these countries. Even though countries such as Turkey or Morocco may be able extract financial and other concessions from the EU in doing so, it remains a fact that they are generally in a rather weak bargaining position vis-à-vis EU states, which moreover often act as a collective bloc. Such imbalances can be seen in the (highly) unequal distribution of migrants and refugees during (and since) the so-called migration crisis of 2015, which to a large extent was driven by the ongoing conflict in Syria. Thus while in 2015, the EU as a whole received around one million migrants and refugees, much smaller and (infinitely) poorer countries in the EU's neighbourhood (and beyond) have been much more severely hit by the 'crisis'. Turkey, for example, received around twice as many migrants and refugees in 2015 as the EU as a whole, and—also as a result of its 'migration deal' with the EU, is currently home to an estimated four million refugees, making it the country with the largest refugee population in the world. Lebanon is estimated to have received around one million refugees from Syria, and Jordan around 700,000. Cooperation with these (and other) countries in border and migration controls has thus resulted in migrants being stuck in these countries, which despite receiving financial compensation from the EU, are hardly able to cope with such large numbers of migrants and refugees on their territories. While the critique sometimes levelled against these externalisation policies as 'neo-imperialism' might be exaggerated, it is not entirely off the mark either.

Finally, the cooperative approach to border controls, and in particular the aforementioned externalisation of migration controls —as has been pointed out by numerous human rights organisations—can also be (highly) problematic from the perspective of migrants' fundamental rights. Firstly, enlisting neighbouring countries in the EU's border control operations often means that migrants and refugees are unable to access EU territory and apply for asylum there, something which is commonly considered inconsistent with the principle of non-refoulement as enshrined in the Geneva Refugee Convention. Second, the externalisation of migration controls in some cases occurs towards countries with a (very) poor record when it comes to protecting migrant's basic rights. Libya is arguably the most extreme example in this regard, as abuses—including torture and executions—of migrants in the country have been well documented by a number of human rights organisations in recent years. Despite this, however, EU countries and Italy in particular, have been stepping up their cooperation with Libya in border and migration control.

Conclusions: the need for 'solidarity'

While this article has documented a trend towards increasingly cooperative approaches to border security, it has also shed some critical light on this development both when it comes to inter-state relations and the treatment of migrants and refugees. This however is

not to suggest that cooperative border controls should be abandoned. Just like the increase in cooperative security in recent decades more generally, so can the growth in cooperative border controls be seen as a generally positive development. This is arguably nowhere more evident than in the Mediterranean, where cooperation in border and migration controls is not only needed to prevent irregular migration, but also to save migrants' lives at sea.

What is necessary, however, is a form of cooperation which—although this might sound somewhat utopian—displays more solidarity than is currently the case in (at least) three different ways.[2] Firstly, more solidarity is needed among EU member states in order to arrive at a more equal distribution of migrants and refugees arriving in Europe. Second, more solidarity is needed between EU states, migrant sending and transit countries so as to limit the effects of 'externalisation' of migration controls on these countries and to provide them with more financial and other support in coping with migrants and refugees on their territories. Finally, more solidarity is needed with the migrants and refugees themselves so that that their fundamental human rights be respected both within Europe and beyond.

References
1. Frontex is now officially called the EU Border and Coast Guard Agency.
2. The author is indebted to the Malta-based academic and activist Maria Pisani who has made this point very convincingly on: https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=Bw7UMIT_nDo.

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Seminar on Cooperative Security and the Mediterranean
28 November 2019
Westin Hotel, St. Julian's, Malta

Welcome Coffee
09:00-09:15 Welcome
Prof. Stephen Calleya, Director, MEDAC, Malta
Ambassador Walter Haßmann, German Ambassador to Malta

09:15-09:30 Group Photo

09:30-10:30 What future for cooperative security in the Mediterranean?
Chair: Dr. Monika Wohlfeld, MEDAC, Malta
Dr. Silvia Colombo, Head of the Italy's foreign policy programme and Senior Fellow in the Mediterranean and Middle East programme, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome, Italy

10:30-11:00 Coffee break

11:00-12:30 Cooperative Security in the Mediterranean: Selected key issues
Chair: Mr. Tom McGrath, former EU European External Action Service official, Brussels , Belgium
Energy security: Dr. Andrea Prontera, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the Department of Political Science, Communication and International Relations of the University of Macerata, Italy
Maritime Pollution: Mr. Gabino Gonzalez Deogracia, Head of Office, Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), Malta Research and Innovation: Mr. Ian Gauci Borda, Deputy Director Internationalisation, Malta Council for Science and Technology, Malta

12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-14:45 Cooperative Security in the Mediterranean: Regional or Subregional Approaches?
Chair: Dr. Omar Grech, Director, Centre for the Study and Practice of Conflict Resolution, University of Malta, Malta
Prof. Bichara Khader, Prof (ret.) Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain, Belgium Dr. Emiliano Alessandri, Senior External Co-operation Officer, Office of the Secretary General, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Vienna, Austria

Federal Foreign Office

MEDAC
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Seminar participants.

Students and speakers at MEDAC's 30th academic seminar on Cooperative Security and the Mediterranean.

Ambassador of Geermany to Malta, H.E Walter Haßmann, MEDAC Director Prof. Stephen Calleya and MEDAC Chairman Prof. Godfrey Pirotta during the opening session of the seminar (L to R).

First panel on What future for cooperative security in the Mediterranean? with (L to R) Dr. Silvia Colombo, Head of Italy's Foreign Policy programme and Senior Fellow in the Mediterranean and Middle East programme, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome, Italy and Dr. Monika Wohlfeld, Holder of the German Chair for Peace Studies and Conflict Prevention, MEDAC.

MEDAC's Post Graduate students at the seminar.

MEDAC's Post Graduate students at the seminar.

Second panel on Cooperative Security in the Mediterranean: Selected key issues with (L to R) Mr. Ian Gauci Borda, Deputy Director Internationalisation, Malta Council for Science and Technology, Malta; Mr. Gabino Gonzalez Deogracia, Head of Office, Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), Malta; Mr. Tom McGrath, former EU European External Action Service official, Brussels, Belgium and Dr. Andrea Prontera, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the Department of Political Science, Communication and International Relations of the University of Macerata, Italy.

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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.

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