DYNAMICS AND EVOLUTION OF EUROPEAN UNION'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY

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ABSTRACT

DYNAMICS AND EVOLUTION OF EUROPEAN UNION'S
MIDDLE EAST POLICY

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This thesis aims to analyze the development of the collective policies of the European Union towards the Middle East by focusing on the reasons behind the formulation of these policies, and the degree of success, failure and prospects of these policies. The general success of the European Community in the 1970s created a desire for European states to form a coordinated European foreign policy. Since the 1970s, the Community started to show willingness to shape international events and to strengthen its international role. The Middle East was one of the leading regions to which the Community turned in the early 1970s, an area, which, for historical and geographical reasons, is of vital interest to it.

EU has been becoming a coherent and strategic actor in the Middle East since the 1990s. It has secured an important presence in the Middle East Peace Process and it has further strengthened its role in the Middle East through the adoption of a common, comprehensive regional strategy called the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and developed it with the initiation of the European Neighborhood Policy. However, the European Union's presence is still limited due to its institutional weaknesses, the lack of political unity among its member states, lack of political instruments and military capabilities.

Keywords: European Union, Middle East, Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, European Neighborhood Policy, Middle East Peace Process

ÖZ

AVRUPA BİRLİĞİ'NİN ORTA DOĞU POLİTİKASININ
DİNAMİKLERİ VE GELİŞİMİ

Dersan, Duygu
Yüksek Lisans, Orta Doğu Araştırmaları Bölümü
Tez Yöneticisi : Doç. Dr. Ayşegül Kibaroğlu

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Bu tez, Avrupa Birliği'nin Orta Doğu'ya yönelik ortak politikalarının gelişimini, bu politikaların oluşturulmasının altında yatan nedenler, başarı, başarısızlık derecesi ve geleceğine odaklanarak analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Avrupa Topluluğu'nun 1970'lerdeki genel başarısı, Avrupa devletleri açısından koordineli bir Avrupa dış politikası oluşturma isteği yaratmıştır. Topluluk, 1970'lerden itibaren uluslararası olayları şekillendirme ve uluslararası rolünü kuvvetlendirmeye yönelik isteklilik göstermektedir. Tarihi ve coğrafi nedenlerden dolayı Topluluk açısından büyük bir öneme sahip olan Orta Doğu, Topluluk'un 1970'lerin başlangıcından beri ilgilendiği bölgelerin başında gelmektedir.

Avrupa Birliği, 1990'lardan itibaren Orta Doğu'da daha tutarlı ve stratejik bir aktör haline gelmektedir. Avrupa Birliği, Orta Doğu Barış Süreci'nde önemli bir yere sahip olmuş ve Orta Doğu'daki rolünü Avrupa-Akdeniz Ortaklığı adlı genel ve kapsamlı bir bölgesel strateji ile kuvvetlendirmiş ve bunu Avrupa Komşuluk Politikası ile geliştirmiştir. Ancak, Avrupa Birliği'nin Orta Doğu'daki varlığı,

kurumsal eksiklikler, üye devletler arasında siyasi birliğin olmayışı, siyasi araçlar ve askeri yetenekler konusundaki eksikliklerden ötürü hala sınırlı düzeydedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupa Birliği, Orta Doğu, Avrupa-Akdeniz Ortaklığı, Avrupa Komşuluk Politikası, Orta Doğu Barış Süreci

To My Family

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CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DOP	Declaration of Principles
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EIHDR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
EMP	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
ENP	European Neighborhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESDP	European Security and Defense Policy
EU BAM Rafah	EU Border Assistance Mission at the Rafah Crossing Point in the Palestinian Territories
EU	European Union
EUJUST LEX	EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq
EUPOL COPPS	EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories
FTA	Free Trade Area
EUGAERC Council	European Union General Affairs and External Relations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMEI	Greater Middle East Initiative
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference

MEDA	Mediterranean Economic Development Area
MEPP	Middle East Peace Process
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIP	National Indicative Program
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PHARE	Poland, Hungary, Aid for Reconstructing of the Economies
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PSC	Political and Security Committee
REDGW	Regional Economic Development Working Group
SEA	Single European Act
TACIS	Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States
TEU	Treaty on European Union
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

INTRODUCTION

When the European Economic Community (EEC) was founded in 1957, the principal aim was to achieve economic and then political integration among its member states. Up to the 1970s, the Community's attention was directed inwards rather than outwards. In the mid 1970s, the Community managed to achieve remarkable economic growth and became an important actor in world economic affairs. The general success of the European Community (EC) in the 1970s created a desire for European states to form a coordinated European foreign policy. Since the 1970s, the EC started to show willingness to shape international events and to strengthen its international role. The Middle East was one of the leading regions to which the Community turned in the early 1970s, an area, which, for historical and geographical reasons, is of vital interest to it.

The first collective European initiative towards the Middle East was the "Global Mediterranean Policy" adopted in October 1972 which sought to bring various southern and eastern Mediterranean states individually into a single framework. The institutionalization of the relations between the Community and the countries of the Middle East continued with the "Euro-Arab Dialogue" concluded in July 1974. The early initiatives of the Community were limited to cooperation in economic and commercial fields, excluding the political dimension. The Community's primary motive was to secure the oil coming from the Middle East, particularly after the 1973 oil crisis. However, Arab partners wanted the Community to take the political dimension into consideration when dealing with the region; in particular, they expected the Community to take a pro-Arab stance in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Different approaches of the Community and the Arab partners prevented the formation of important results from the early initiatives of the Community related to the Middle East.

With the end of the Cold War, the Community became ambitious to play a more prominent part and to fill the vacuum left by the Soviet withdrawal from the

international scene. The Community's involvement in the Middle East and the attempts to form a common foreign policy in the region therefore increased after the end of the Cold War. The EC started a new, more influential relationship in the newly emerging order in the Middle East. The end of the Cold War was one of the turning points of the Community's Middle East policy. During the Cold War, the Community was primarily motivated in its dealings with the Middle East by economic concerns such as increasing the volume of trade and to secure energy supplies. However, after the Cold War ended, the Community began to consider the issues of "low politics" such as mass migration, overpopulation, underdevelopment and political violence which were mainly arising from the Middle East. The post-Cold War period has also brought the Arab demand for a more active role on the part of Community to balance that of the US. A thorough assessment of the Community's policy towards the region came in 1990 with a series of Commission policy papers and eventually they formed the "Renewed Mediterranean Policy" in 1990. The Renewed Mediterranean Policy did not foster regional cooperation in the Middle East; it only provided bilateral trade agreements between the Community and the Mediterranean partners.

The major transformation point of the European Union (EU)'s Middle East Policy was the launch of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in 1995. After more than 20 years of bilateral trade cooperation, the EU Member States and twelve Middle Eastern states which have shores on the Mediterranean, namely Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey collectively articulated a multilateral policy. This policy-articulation process culminated in the Barcelona Declaration comprises political, economic and cultural objectives. In addition to its importance in developing relations between the EU and the partner countries through providing common institutions and association agreements, it also provided a forum for dialogue for the Mediterranean Partners involved in the Middle East Peace Process. The Partnership still remains the only multilateral context where all the parties affected by the Middle East conflict meet regularly.

Another initiative of the Union related to the Middle East came with the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) adopted by the Thessalonica Council of 20-21 June, 2003 which has a broader context encompassing both the southern neighbors (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria and Tunisia) and the eastern neighbors (Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine). The idea behind launching a neighborhood policy arises from the perception that the EU and the neighboring states are mutually dependent to achieve security, stability and development and in line with these ideas the long term objective of the ENP is the establishment of a common economic area. The main objective of the ENP "is to ensure the creation of a secure, stable and prosperous environment in the EU's Eastern and Southern Neighborhood as well as in the Southern Caucasus without necessarily integrating these neighboring countries into the European Union."[1] European security and its connection with its neighborhood is of primary importance for the EU. In the past, the most effective instrument of the EU to pursue reforms was the prospect of membership. In this case, the EU has not chosen to offer a prospect for membership. The ENP does not grant neighboring countries integration. In some circles, it is argued that the ENP is designed to correct a number of shortcomings of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

In addition to the initiatives of the EU related to the Middle East, the EU's role in the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) constitutes one of the most important pillars of the Union's policy on the Middle East. The MEPP has always been an important political program for the EU through which it has tried to find solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict by means of a common policy. The attempts of the Union to adopt a common policy towards the Middle East apart from the superpowers go back to the 1960s. The Arab-Israeli conflict is one of the most important issues on which the historical evolution of the European political integration can be tested. Since the beginning of the 1990s the EU has become a

[1] Michele Comelli, "The approach of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP): distinctive features and differences with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership" paper presented at the IGC Net conference in Brussels on 17 November 2005 (in cooperation with the IEP Paris and TEPSA), p.3.

more noticeable presence in the MEPP, in parallel with the developments in the formation of a common European security and defense policy. However, the EU's credibility in the MEPP has been weakened by the lack of political unity and by institutional weaknesses.

Examining the Middle East policy of the Union leads to a comparison of US policies and initiatives with the EU's pertaining to the region. Analysts are divided over whether there exists a cooperation or convergence between the EU and the US in the Middle East. Although the US and the EU share certain key interests in the Middle East, the affairs of the Middle East have been a matter of controversy between the European countries and the US for many years. These common interests can be listed as a desire for a stable Middle East (combating terrorism, halting the weapons of mass destruction), protecting the free flow of oil from the Middle East at reasonable prices, protecting the commercial interests in the region, and supporting the spread of market economies and democracy. However, there are some diverging elements in the EU and US approaches to the Middle East. A combination of factors lying at the root of US-EU tensions in the Middle East include history, geographic/demographic differences, the nature of the EU's ties with the Middle East, and different threat perceptions and conflicting approaches to managing threats.

At the outset, as opposed to the "forward strategy of freedom" that the US envisages, the EU prefers a common perspective for political, social and economic changes in the Middle East. Secondly, the US administration foresees regime change in the Middle East; however, the EU is skeptical about bringing a new order to the Middle East. Thirdly, democracy is not a prerequisite for political engagement from the European perspective, whereas according to the US, countries of the Middle East have to be democratic for the peace efforts to be successful in the Middle East. Fourthly, in dealing with the Middle East, the EU generally puts the emphasis on institution building, while the US focuses more on the persons in charge. Fifthly, while the EU deals with the region through multilateral frameworks such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the US has

often favored engaging states bilaterally. Finally, the EU tends to favor constructive engagement with the problematic countries of the Middle East, whereas the US follows coercive diplomacy, such as sanctions and isolation.

This thesis aims to analyze the development of the collective policies of the EU towards the Middle East by focusing on the reasons behind the formulation of these policies, and the degree of success, failure and prospects of these policies. Four main questions will be posed: What is the European Union's overriding objective in its relations with the Middle East? How has the European Union's relationship with the Middle East been shaped in the past? What are the recent initiatives of the European Union towards the Middle East? And what are the differences between EU and US policies in the Middle East?

The definition of the "Middle East" as a political geographic term changes from study to study. The term "Middle East" generally refers to the region it traditionally signifies (the Mashriq, the Gulf, and the Arabian Peninsula) plus the Arab states of North Africa (the Maghreb). The newly defined 'Greater Middle East Region' covers a huge area from North Africa through Egypt, Israel and the Tigris-Euphrates valley, through the Persian Gulf region into Turkey and on to the Caspian basin and Central Asia. In addition to the Arab states, it includes Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and Israel.[2] In this study the Middle East will be defined as encompassing Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, the Palestine Authority, Israel, Jordan and Lebanon. During the preparation of the thesis, it was seen that the standard terminology of EU development policy separates the Mediterranean countries from the remainder of the Middle East. The Mediterranean refers to those littoral states on the southern shore with which the Union has had a structured relationship. Countries that this thesis covers are all included in the initiatives of the EU related to the region such as the EMP and the ENP; however, Iran, Iraq and the Gulf countries have not been the subject of these major EU initiatives. Hence, the EU's relations with Iran, Iraq and the Gulf countries are not examined in this thesis. The term "Mediterranean" or "Southern

[2] Jeremy M. Sharp, "The Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative: An Overview, CRS Report for Congress, RS22053, 15.02.2005.

Mediterranean" could be used in the work; however, since the thesis analyzes the EU's role in the MEPP, it was thought that the usage of the term "Middle East" would be more appropriate. However, the term "Mediterranean" is also used in the work, if it signifies a special initiative such as "the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership" or "The Renewed Mediterranean Policy." Moreover, this study examines in particular the policies of the EU as a supranational institution. Individual policies of the European Union member states as regards to the Middle East do not constitute the primary research area of this study.

During the compilation of the relevant literature, it has been observed that two issues are generally lacking in the analysis of the EU's Middle East policy. First, parallelism between the developments in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Middle East policy of the Union are not examined in depth in the works devoted to this subject. However, the Middle East could be considered as a region in which the evolution of the CFSP can be observed. Thus, in this thesis, there is an attempt to demonstrate the close linkages between the two processes, namely the formation of the Union's CFSP and the EU initiatives related to the Middle East. Hence, it is argued that the cornerstones of the Union's policy towards the region were set in place during the formulation of the EU's common foreign and security policies. Accordingly, it would be impossible for the EC to issue the Venice Declaration, which reflects the basic position of the Union on the MEPP, without the simultaneous establishment of the European Political Cooperation (EPC). Similarly, the launching of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which institutionalizes the Union's relations with the concerned countries stands as a subsequent initiative of the EU that follows the signing of the Maastricht Treaty (Treaty on European Union) in 1993. The emergence of the Common Strategy on the Middle East that covers all the EU's relations with all its partners in the Barcelona Process could only be came into the scene with the adoption of the Amsterdam Treaty. In light of these correlations, the first chapter of this thesis examines the evolution of EU policies towards the Middle East and its interfaces with the Union's common foreign and security policy at large.

Another significant issue that was seen to be lacking in the literature is a thorough examination of different strategies and initiatives of the EU on the Middle East and the analyses of the relations among these policies. The process which was started with the "Global Mediterranean Policy" and currently continues with the "Euro-Mediterranean Partnership" and the "European Neighborhood Policy" has had permanence and all the initiatives have had an impact on the other. This thesis examines all these initiatives in their historical context and points up the similarities and differences between them. In addition, as opposed to the general tendency to evaluate the role of the EU in the Middle East Peace Process separately from the other initiatives of the Union in the region, this work highlights the ties between the initiatives such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Middle East Peace Process. Since the Partnership still remains the only multilateral organization where all the parties affected by the Middle East conflict meet, hence they both affect each other positively and negatively.

The thesis seeks to demonstrate that the EU has been becoming a coherent and strategic actor in the Middle East since the 1990s. It has secured an important presence in the Middle East Peace Process and it has further strengthened its role in the Middle East through the adoption of a common, comprehensive regional strategy called the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and developed it with the initiation of the European Neighborhood Policy. However, the EU's presence is still limited due to its institutional weaknesses, the lack of political unity among its member states and the lack of political instruments and military capabilities. The European Union is known as a "soft power" and its policies related to the Middle East are mostly shaped by its "soft power" characteristics.

The thesis consists of four chapters. In the first chapter, a brief historical analysis of the evolution of the EU's political identity from the European Political Cooperation (EPC) to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) will be carried out with specific references to the EU's Middle East Policy. These introductory historical analyses and description of the capabilities of the EU as regards to the common foreign and security policy are deemed necessary for

dealing with the EU's Middle East policy in the following parts of the thesis. The constraints derived from these analyses on the formation of a common foreign policy on the Middle East are also scrutinized in the first chapter. The underlying reasons for the formation of a common foreign policy on the Middle East are evaluated as well. US views on the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy are also studied.

In the second chapter, initiatives of the European Union in the Middle East will be analyzed. This chapter is mainly divided into three sections. In the first section the early initiatives of the EU within the period of 1970-1995 will be evaluated. A thorough assessment of the institutionalization of the relations with the Middle East within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership will be dealt in the following section. Finally, the recent initiative of the EU, the European Neighborhood Policy and its implications for the EU's policy strategy towards the Middle East will be analyzed. A general assessment of these initiatives will also be made.

In the third chapter, the role of the European Union in the Middle East Peace Process will be examined in its historical context. The relationship between the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Middle East Peace Process and the strengths, weaknesses of the EU's role in the peace process will also be dealt with in this chapter.

In the fourth chapter, a comparison will be made between US and EU policies towards the Middle East. Common points and divergences in their approaches will be examined through two pivotal issues of the region, namely the Israel-Palestine conflict and their relations with Syria. Hence, the policies of the EU and the US within the context of these protracted disputes will be evaluated in a comparative manner. The reason for conducting a comparative analysis of EU-US policies in the Middle East stems from the importance of the US presence in the Middle East. The aim of this study is to examine the strategies and the policies of the EU. However, it is imperative to evaluate the EU policies towards the Middle East in

their interfaces with US policies since EU policies in the Middle East have been associated with US policies since the 1960s.

The thesis adopts a descriptive methodology in general and employs historical analyses of the EU's Middle East policy from the 1970s to 2006. Since the thesis reflects the institutional vision of the EU regarding the Middle East, primary resources of the Union on the subject in question were compiled during the preparation of the thesis. These include EU Council Presidency Conclusions, Communications and the declarations of EU officials. Furthermore, literature including books, articles, newspapers and journals were all used as secondary resources. Since the subject also covers recent developments, extensive use of the Internet was made during the study.

CHAPTER 1

EMERGENCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AS A GLOBAL PLAYER

In order to examine the European Union's policy concerning the Middle East, its successes and failures, it is necessary to deal with the Union's global influence through a brief historical analysis of the developments from European Political Cooperation (EPC) to Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), their impacts on the Middle East Policy of the Union and an analysis of obstacles for the formation of a common EU foreign policy. The Middle East has been one of the main sources of concern for the CFSP. The problematic situation in the Middle East not only threatens the stability of the Union but "it also questions the values upon which the EU aims to build its global role."[3]

Today, all the Union's efforts to articulate a common foreign policy could be considered as a step forward towards a more effective assertion of its international identity.[4] The Union's international identity and its global influence are generally compared with the USA's and so leads to the conclusion that the EU lacks the qualities to be a global player. However, the European Union has to be evaluated more independently from the individual states due to its *sui generis* nature as a supranational entity. It is also necessary to assert that even though the EU may not exercise influence to the extent that the United States does, it has become an increasingly important international player in spite of the deficiencies in the formation of a common foreign and security policy.

According to Gunnar Sjöstedt, "a structural requirement for 'international actor capability' is the existence of commonly accepted goals, along with a system for

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[3] Ana Palacio, "The European Common Foreign and Security Policy: Projecting Our Shared Values", The *Brown Journal of International Affairs,* Volume IX, Issue 2, (Spring 2003), p.76.

[4] Karen E. Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy in a Changing World*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), p.9.

mobilizing resources in order to meet these goals."[5] In the beginning, when the European Community was established, it had some general objectives such as maintaining peace but it did not have specified goals. Over the years, the Union tried to form common objectives and the member states are considering now what they want to achieve collectively on the international stage. However, in order to analyze how well the EU is capable of fulfilling these objectives, its decision making mechanisms and its instruments have to be considered. The EU has devoted considerable resources towards meeting these common objectives, although it is not always successful in pursuing them consistently or coherently.

1.1. European Foreign Policy and its Repercussions on the Middle East Policy

Attempts at forming a common European security policy go back to the post-Second World War period. Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom established the Western European Union (WEU) through signing the Brussels Treaty on 17 March, 1948. The WEU was conceived as a response to Soviet moves to establish control over the countries of Central Europe and represented the first attempt to translate into practical arrangements some of the ideals of the European Union. Its main feature was the commitment to mutual defense. A plan for mutual defense was adopted, involving the integration of air defenses and a joint common organization. In December 1950, the Brussels Treaty powers decided to join their military organization into North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which had become the central element in the West European and North Atlantic security system.[6] Afterwards foreign policy and defense of western European states have been coordinated within the framework of North Atlantic Treaty, under American leadership. An intergovernmental compromise transformed the 1948 Treaty of Western Union into the seven-

[5] Gunnar Sjöstedt, *The External Role of the European Community*, (Westmead: Saxon House, 1977), p.75.

[6] Western European Union, http://www.weu.int/

member Western European Union (WEU), bringing in Germany and Italy in 1954. The WEU had a ministerial council, a small secretariat, a consultative assembly and an armament agency; however, its military functions were explicitly integrated into NATO.

Attempts to form a common European policy mainly focused on reshaping the WEU as a vehicle for a more independent European defense by remaining outside the NATO structure. Foreign policy cooperation was perceived as an arena in which to challenge the American hegemony, especially by French President Charles De Gaulle in the 1960s.[7] Attempts to form a common defense policy were regarded as a challenge to NATO and the USA in the following years. However, these efforts towards greater foreign and security policy cooperation in the Community were welcomed by the United States, especially after the Cold War. The US had perceived increasing role of EU in security domain as sharing defense burden. From the US's point of view, if the EU could develop a successful foreign policy with credible military capabilities it could become a strong partner for the United States in addressing global problems.[8] However, the main area of disengagement occurred between the EU and the US around the relationship of the WEU to NATO.

Europeans agreed to the idea of cooperation in foreign policy with the establishment of European Political Cooperation (EPC), the precursor to the CFSP. EPC, for the creation of a separate framework for foreign policy cooperation, was suggested by the French President George Pompidou at the Hague Summit in December 1969. The founding documents of EPC - the 1970 Luxembourg Report, the 1973 Copenhagen Report and the 1981 London Report - did not express the main objectives of the EPC; they are instead concerned with the setting out of the basic principles of cooperation, coordination and collective

[7] Hellen Wallace and William Wallace, *Policy-Making in the European Union*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.464.

[8] Rockwell A. Schnabel, "US Views on the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy", *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Volume IX, Issue 2, (Winter/Spring 2003), p.101.

action.[9] In the 1970s and 1980s, there were attempts to define common interests and objectives of the member states. In December 1973, the foreign ministers of the nine EC member states published a document called the "Document on European Identity" emphasizing that the member states intended "to contribute ensuring that international relations have a more just basis; that prosperity is more equitably shared; and that the security of each country is more effectively guaranteed."[10] More specifically, they agreed that they could not solve international problems on their own and they must act as a unit if Europe were to play a greater role in the world.[11] All these declarations and the formation of EPC were responding to the needs of the nine member states to speak with a common voice in international activities.

EPC was an entirely intergovernmental process, outside the EC treaties, agreed upon among governments and managed by diplomats. It provided an informal forum for consultations on foreign policy (but not defense issues), independent of the economic goals of the European Community.[12] EPC consisted of regular meetings of foreign affairs ministers, which were prepared by the Political Committee. Until 1987, there was no available secretariat to give administrative back-up and this task was provided by the state holding the Presidency.[13]

Through the EPC, the Community looked for raising its political profile and organized intergovernmental meetings at which the Member states sought to identify the Community's political interests and prepare the ground for common

[9] Smith, op.cit., p.10.

[10] Christopher Hill and Karen E. Smith (eds.), *European Foreign Policy: Key Documents*, (London: Routledge, 2000), p.95.

[11] Michael Smith, "Understanding Europe's "New" Common Foreign and Security Policy", Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, University of California, Policy Paper No.52, (March 2000),p.3.

[12] Smith, op.cit., p.2.

[13]Wallace and Wallace, op.cit., p.464.

foreign policy positions.[14] One area for such consideration was the Middle East. The very first EPC Ministerial Meeting's agenda, in November 1970 included the Middle East and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.[15] EPC's Middle East-related output was the "Global Mediterranean Policy" decided at the 1972 Paris Summit which called for the formulation of a systemic policy towards the Mediterranean. In addition, the Community adopted the Venice Declaration in 1982 which stated the basic position of the Community on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although EPC created a global policy for the Middle East region, it was criticized for revealing just a "declaratory diplomacy." From 1970 to 1987, around ninety declarations related to the Middle East were adopted.[16] The majority of these declarations were related to the Arab-Israeli conflict which tested the Community's political will throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Despite its focus on the Middle East, EPC did not change the Community's status as a peripheral actor in the region. Differences between the foreign policies of member states remained particularly contentious on the Arab-Israeli conflict when it came to taking action.

Another important step in developing a common foreign policy came in 1986 with the Single European Act (SEA). The SEA gave EPC a written basis for the first time within the treaty context of the EC and formally brought EPC together with the EC "single" framework of the European Council. Thus, it reduced the differences between the instruments of EPC and the EC. It provided a framework for further development of concerted action in the area of foreign policy. The most important result of the SEA was the establishment of a permanent secreteriat in Brussels.[17]

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[14] Ricardo Gomez, "The EU's Mediterranean policy: Common foreign policy by the back door?" in John Peterson, Helene Sjursen (ed.s*), A Common Foreign Policy for Europe?: Competing Visions of the CFSP*, (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), p.135.

[15] Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*, (London: Routledge, 1999), p.175.

[16] Gomez, op.cit., p.137.

[17] Marit Sjovaag, "The Single European Act" in Kjell A. Eliassen, *Foreign and Security Policy in the European Union*, (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998), p.23.

The Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) planned for 1990-91 was initially intended to deal with the monetary union and its institutional consequences, not with foreign and defense policy. However, the revolutions in central and eastern Europe, and the German unification in 1990 brought the foreign and security policy to the IGC agenda. At that time, the USA offered the reformulation of the idea of an Atlantic political community by proposing a redefined Atlantic bargain to reflect the end of western Europe's security dependence, to be based on both North Atlantic and European pillars. However, western European governments resisted the idea of incorporating this redefined relationship into a treaty.[18]

In March 1990, the Belgian government proposed an IGC on "political union." Germany and France endorsed the Belgian initiative and demanded that IGC formulate a joint CFSP as a central feature of the European Union.[19] Strengthening the EC through formulating a common foreign policy was associated with containing the potential hegemony of a united Germany. Thus, a formal link was acknowledged between German unification and political union.[20] The IGC of 1990 witnessed the discussion between Germany and Benelux states to bring foreign policy within the integration framework of the EC and France, Britain resisting the transfer of authority over foreign policy and the weakening of the NATO framework. These dicussions on the political union and a common foreign policy continued during the 1991 IGC. Negotiations mainly focused on the links between the EU and the WEU. During the negotiations, Britain and the Dutch perceived the WEU as a bridge linking the EU and NATO whereas France offered the transfer of defense functions from NATO to the WEU. These discussions on the WEU continued until the NATO Rome Summit of 7-8 November, 1991 which built the basis for a compromise. It formed the new NATO "Strategic Concept" which approved the development of European multi-

[18] Wallace and Wallace, op.cit., p.467.

[19] F. Laursen and S. Vanhoonacker (eds.), *The Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union*, (Maastricht: European Institute of Public Administration, 1992), p.52.

[20] Wallace and Wallace, op.cit., p.467.

national forces, but also reaffirmed the primacy of NATO as the forum for defense cooperation.[21]

Another major attempt to specify foreign policy objectives was made during the Maastricht negotiations in 1991. In February 1992, the member states signed the Treaty on European Union (TEU) (Maastricht Treaty) and a new mechanism for foreign policy cooperation and the CFSP was established. CFSP objectives listed in the TEU are: to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests and independence of the Union, to strengthen the security of the Union in all ways, to preserve peace and strengthen international security, to promote international cooperation, to develop and consolidate rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.[22]

With the TEU, instruments of the EC and the CFSP were fully combined but institutional distinctions were maintained through a "pillared" structure. It merged the General Affairs Council and the EPC and the EPC Secretariat to the Council Secretariat. Directorate General for International Affairs (DGIA) and a Commissioner created for External Political Affairs. The CFSP's decision-making provisions were intended to improve on those of EPC.[23] Firstly, the Commission could propose actions, alongside member states. Secondly, two new procedures were added: the Council could agree on a "common position" or a "joint action." Thirdly, qualified majority voting was slipped into decision-making procedures. With the intention of providing an international role for the EU, the TEU provided for CFSP activities to be funded through the Community budget.[24]

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[21] Sjovaag, op.cit., p.30.

[22] Treaty on European Union, 24.12.2002, Official Journal of the European Communities, C 325/5, TITLE V, Provisions On A Common Foreign And Security Policy, Article J-2

[23] Arnhild and David Spence, "The Common Foreign and Security Policy from Maastricht to Amsterdam", in Kjell A. Eliassen (ed.), *Foreign and Security Policy in the European Union*, (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998), p.43.

[24] Smith, op.cit., p.38.

The TEU gave the European Council the responsibility for providing the "general political guidelines" of the Union. The 1993 Brussels European Council, in consequence, set out five priority areas for CFSP joint actions in which the Middle East is involved. In the declaration accompanying support for the Middle East Peace Process through political, economic and financial means is provided by the Union in support of a comprehensive peace plan.[25] Entry into force of the TEU in 1993 provided impetus for an explicitly political dimension.[26] The creation of the CFSP directed member states' attention to examine the Union's security interests in the Middle East and it had an impact upon the Middle East policy in the form of several joint actions. In 1994, a joint action was adopted on the Middle East peace process. This decision included the Community's demand that the Arab boycott of Israel be lifted, provided for its participation in the Regional Economic Development Working Group (REDGW) and International Ad Hoc Liaison Committee to coordinate aid to the Occupied Territories and offered EU financial assistance for the first Palestinian elections and for its new police force.[27]

Moreover, the adoption of the CFSP with the TEU made the formulation of a comprehensive policy named the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in 1995 possible. The multilateral nature of the Barcelona process made Middle East security a joint undertaking. A number of measures envisaged as part of the security pillar under the Barcelona Declaration were characterized as possible areas for joint actions under the CFSP. In other words, the Barcelona process gave the EU an opportunity to pursue a pro-active security policy.[28]

Although it created significant enthusiasm when it was first signed, the TEU and the CFSP did not produce important results. The transition from EPC to CFSP did

[25] Brussels European Council, 29 October 1993, Bulletin of the European Communities, No. 10/1993.

[26] Bretherton and Vogler, op.cit., p.156.

[27] Brian White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p.103.

[28] Gomez, op.cit., p. 149.

little in contributing to the creation of a meaningful politico-security dimension to Middle East policy. The introduction of the CFSP did not have much effect on the Union's credibility in the international arena. While the EU had participated in some important international actions such as humanitarian aid for the West Bank and Gaza, or monitoring elections in Palestine, it appeared that there were weaknesses in the CFSP. Under the pressure of events in eastern and south-eastern Europe, the WEU ministerial meeting in Bonn in June 1992 outlined a distinctive role for the WEU in undertaking peace-keeping and peace-making operations. However, it was clearly seen during the Yugoslavia crisis that the WEU lacked the command and the control structures required to intervene in the crisis. The evolution of the Yugoslav crisis was a painful experience for both the European Union and the USA.[29]

Disappointment with the Maastricht Treaty contributed to a more substantial revision of CFSP provisions with the Amsterdam Treaty, signed in October 1997. The Amsterdam Treaty added some provisions related to two central problems affecting external policy. These were the coordination problem affecting policy formulation and implementation within and across the Pillars and the visibility problem affecting the ability of the EU to assert its identity as an actor in global politics.[30] Thus the intention of the Amsterdam Treaty amendments is to increase the effectiveness of policy formulation in the CFSP process through clarifying and strengthening the provisions of the TEU.

With the Amsterdam Treaty, the European Council had been given a role to "decide on common strategies to be implemented by the Union in areas where the Member States have important interest in common." The concept of "common strategies" requires that the European Council "set out their objectives, duration and the means to be made available by the Union and the Member States."[31] To

[29] Wallace and Wallace, op.cit., p.477.

[30] Bretherton and Vogler, op.cit , p.189.

[31] The Amsterdam Treaty, 10 November 1997, Official Journal of the European Communities, C 340, (Art. J. 3.2. [13.2])

affect a common strategy, once adopted, the Council is charged with adopting joint actions and common positions. Three common strategies were adopted in the year after the coming-into-force of the Amsterdam Treaty on Russia, Ukraine and the Middle East.[32]

The Amsterdam Treaty created the post of the High Representative for the CFSP to help formulate, prepare, and implement policy decisions, and head the Policy Unit. The High Representative participates in a new troika, with the current and incoming presidencies in association with the Commission. The intention was to give the CFSP more continuity in its international representation and providing a representative for the third countries. The Amsterdam Treaty also provided a formal basis for the practice of appointing "special representatives" or envoys with a mandate to represent the Union on particular issues.[33] Through this provision, appointment of a special envoy to the Middle East Peace Process gained legality and continuity.

Although the Amsterdam Treaty does not resolve the central problem of incoherence between the Pillars, it has strengthened the CFSP mechanisms. Its most important impact on the Middle East Policy of the Union was to adopt a common strategy on the region. However, it has been criticized as constituting not much more than a continuation of the strategies that already existed before the Amsterdam Treaty,[34] and as bringing all the strategies and the visions of the Union related the Middle East region together. Common strategies on Russia, Ukraine and the Middle East also paved the way for the formation of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). The value of these more recent strategies

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[32] Fraser Cameron, "The Future of the Common Foreign and Security Policy", *The Brown Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. IX, Issue 2, (Winter/Spring 2003), p.116.

[33] The Amsterdam Treaty, 10 November 1997, Official Journal of the European Communities, C 340, (Art. J. 3.2. [13.2]),

[34] Stephan Keukeleire, "The European Union as a Diplomatic Actor: Internal, Traditional and Structural Diplomacy, *Diplomacy &Statecraft*, Vol. 14, No.3, (September 2003),p.47.

and partnerships and of EU's foreign policy in general will become apparent in the years to come.

Another important turning point came at the Pörtschach informal European Council meeting in October 1998, when Britain under the leadership of Prime Minister Tony Blair declared its support for a more independent security role for the EU and thus abandoned its position as defender of the political independence of the WEU.[35] In the Council meeting, Blair introduced a number of proposals on closer defense cooperation. This was followed by the St-Malo Declaration of December 1998 in the Franco-British Summit. They declared that the EU must be able to respond to an international crisis by taking autonomous action, backed up by credible military resources. There are certain differences in the British and French visions: for Britain, the EU can act when NATO does not wish to do so; for France, NATO does not have such a primary role. However, for the time being the two countries agreed to develop the EU's military capabilities.[36] The USA under the Clinton Administration supported the greater Europeanization of NATO, but warned of the danger of such an initiative being misconceived or mishandled.

In the first half of 1999, a consensus was reached on CFSP. The June, 1999 Cologne European Council repeated the language of the St-Malo Declaration and its communiqué stated that "we are now determined to launch a new step in the construction of the European Union ... our aim is to take the necessary decisions by the end of the year 2000. In that event, the WEU as an organization would have completed its purpose."[37] In December, 1999 the Helsinki European Council set a deadline for that goal: by 2003, the EU must be able to deploy within sixty

[35] Helene Sjursen, "Understanding the common foreign and security policy: Analytical building blocks" in Michele Knodt and Sebastian Princen (eds.), *Understanding the European Union's External Relations*, (London: Routledge, 2003), p.35.

[37]Cologne European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 3-4 June 1999 http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/Cologne%20European%20Council-Presidency%20conclusions.pdf

days, and sustain for at least one year, military forces of up to 50,000-60,000 persons.[38]

The Nice treaty, which was adopted by the EU Heads of State or Government on 11 December, 2000 made a number of changes to the treaty on the European Union, especially in the security domain. The Nice Treaty amends certain provisions on the EU's CFSP. Firstly, it provided the transferal of defense responsibilities, including peacemaking, from NATO's WEU to the EU. Secondly, the Political and Security Committee ('PSC', a new designation of the political committee in the Treaty) was authorized by the Council to take the appropriate decisions in order to ensure the political control and strategic leadership of the crisis management operation. The Committee is permanently established in Brussels and consists of one representative from each EU Member State.[39]

In June 2001, at the Gothenburg summit, the European Union program for the prevention of conflicts was approved, and in December the Laeken European Council adopted a declaration to implement the Common Foreign Security and Defense policy. Since then, all the European Councils have made an effort to improve and develop the tools of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) with the goal of making it fully operational in 2003.

The security provisions of the EU's CFSP were mostly concentrated in the Balkans and it was served as a tool of crisis management there. Operations that were conducted in the Middle East under the ESDP were EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS), EU Border Assistance Mission at the Rafah Crossing Point in the Palestinian Territories (EU BAM Rafah) and the EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (Eujust Lex).

[38] Smith, op.cit., p.46.

[39] http://www.eu2003.gr/en/cat/78/

The Council established an EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories under the ESDP on 14 November 2005. The operational phase started on 1 January, 2006 and will have an initial duration of three years. The EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories, code-named EUPOL COPPS, has a long term reform focus and gives support to the Palestinian Authority in establishing sustainable and effective policing arrangements.[40] On 15 November, 2005 Israel and the Palestinian Authority concluded an "Agreement on Movement and Access," including agreed-upon principles for the Rafah crossing (Gaza). The Council of the EU welcomed the Agreement and agreed that the EU should undertake the Third Party role proposed in the Agreement of 21 November, 2005. It therefore decided to launch the EU Border Assistance Mission at Rafah crossing point, code-named EU BAM Rafah, to monitor the operations of this border crossing point. The operational phase of the Mission began on 30 November, 2005 and will have duration of twelve months.[41]

1.1. Obstacles to the Formation of a Common Foreign Policy on the Middle East

In terms of EU foreign policy, there is a division between its external relations, which operates within the partially supranational decision-making of the European Union, and the foreign and security policy, which lies within the intergovernmental framework of CFSP.[42] Formally, there are four institutions which are involved in foreign policy: the European Council, the General Affairs Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament. It is not so easy to determine who runs the EU foreign policy over the Middle East since the High Representative, several commissioners including the commissioner for external

[40] The European Council, EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS), http://ue.eu.int/showPage.asp?id=974&lang=en

[41] The European Council, EU Border Assistance Mission at Rafah Crossing Point in the Palestinian Territories (EU BAM Rafah), http://ue.eu.int/showPage.asp?id=979&lang=en

[42] Jörg Monar, "Institutional Constraints of the European Union's Mediterranean Policy", *Mediterranean Politics* Vol.3, No.2 (Autumn 1998), pp.39-60.

affairs, the special envoy to the peace process and twenty-five foreign ministers deal with this subject. There has been much debate whether the EU will end up with a "single telephone number."[43] In a region where personalized diplomacy is so important, existence of many actors taking part in the same scene complicates the task of diplomacy. The institutional complexities also create an image of the EU as lacking credibility and transparency in the Middle East. When ambitious projects such as the Barcelona Process are undermined by bureaucratic complexities, this creates a sense of disillusionment. Poor coordination between the institutions also creates an inter-institutional rivalry. As an example, the appointment of M. Moratinos as CFSP Special Envoy to the Middle East met with considerable suspicion by Commission officials and this was reflected at several levels including the reluctance of EC Delegation staff to provide logistical support on the ground.[44] This example highlights the lack of overall coherence in policy formulation under the CFSP.

The consensual nature of CFSP, on the other hand, poses a major constraint on its effectiveness. Unanimity, which is required for common strategies, is an obstacle especially in issues that touch upon the national interests of member states. Theoretically, joint actions and common positions may be determined by a qualified majority; however, in practice consensus is sought wherever possible. The small budget of the CFSP also poses obstacles. Without a sizeable budget, it is hard for the CFSP to move beyond a reactive policy-making style.[45]

It is argued that the "Union's lack of military instruments also blocks the development of a common foreign policy although since 2002, it is supposedly ready to deploy forces for peacekeeping, humanitarian and crisis management talks."[46] According to that view, the Union cannot exercise much influence

[43] Schnabel, op. cit, p.97.

[44] Bretherton and Vogler, op.cit., p.187.

[45] L. Cram, D. Dinan and N. Nugent; *Developments in the European Union* ,(London: MacMillan Press, 1999), p.238-240.

[46] Smith, op.cit., p.3.

without using force and cannot form a coherent and common foreign policy. The inability of the EU to intervene militarily in the crises close to it prevents it from developing a common foreign and security policy. Events in Bosnia and Kosovo showed that European security still very much depends on the contribution made by NATO and the US.[47] Failure of the EU in responding to the crises in the middle of Europe also led to the argument that it is impossible to expect the EU to intervene in the Middle East should there be a crisis.

The most important constraint is that external political relations have largely remained in the realm of sovereign member states. National governments' insistence on pursuing their foreign policy interests separately decreased the success of implementing a common foreign policy. It is argued that the member states do not share common interests on foreign policy issues. Philip Gordon asserts that the member states "will only take the difficult and self-denying decision to share their foreign policy sovereignty if it is worth it, or if their interests converge to the point that little loss of sovereignty is entailed" and he maintains that "these conditions have not held in the past, do not currently hold, and are not likely to hold in the future."[48] This can be illustrated by Europe's relations with Israel. France, with its historical ties with Syria and Lebanon and its close linkages with Maghreb, is inclined to take a pro-Arab stance. Other Mediterranean EU states, such as Spain, Greece and Italy have a similar tendency to support Palestine. The United Kingdom tries to differentiate itself from the critical stance taken by France towards Israel and usually supports the policies of the USA in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On the other hand, Germany has ideological and historical reasons to be considerably more supportive of Israel.

Some theorists focus on the lack of a common European identity as an obstacle to a common European foreign policy. It is argued that foreign policy is the

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[47] Mesut Özcan, "European Union's Middle East Policy and Turkey", *Avrasya Etüdleri*, Sayı 27-28,(Sonbahar-Kış 2005),p.161.

[48] Philip Gordon, "Europe's Uncommon Foreign Policy", *International Security*, Vol.22, Issue 3, (1997-98), p.81.

expression of identity and the interests of a particular community which the Union lacks. Hill and Wallace state that "effective foreign policy rests upon a shared sense of national identity, of a nation state's place in the world, its enemies, its interests and aspirations...The European Community rests upon a relatively weak sense of shared history and identity."[49]

Another important obstacle to the formation of a CFSP is the lack of visibility of EU initiatives. The EU's efforts in the Middle East Peace Process could be given as an example of the visibility problem. Although the EU's Special Envoys to the Middle East, especially M. Moratinos, gained the confidence of the parties through promoting themselves as intermediaries and the EU was the principal donor to the Palestinian Authority, providing financial aid almost twice that of the US, the EU effort has gone almost unnoticed while the US gets all the recognition. Thus, it is argued, the peace process might be likened to "a ship with the US on the bridge and the EU in the engine room, shoveling coal."[50]

In spite of the obstacles to the formation of a common foreign policy, member states still develop mechanisms for foreign policy cooperation and they declare that they share common interests and objectives. Common objectives do not always translate into common actions but there are pressures inside the Union for collective action and developing foreign policy instruments which can result in common foreign policies. It is in relation to the Middle East that the EU/EC involvement has been one of the most significant in the region but the least acknowledged. Reflecting considerable European interests in the region, and long term EC and EPC involvement, it was inevitable that dealing with the Middle East region would be a priority of CFSP.

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[49] Christopher Hill and William Wallace, "Introduction: actors and actions" in Christopher Hill, (ed.), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*, (London: Routledge, 1996), p.8.

[50] Bretherton and Vogler, op.cit., p.186.

1.3. Need for a Common Policy on the Middle East: Major Interest Areas

Obviously the European Union is trying to formulate a common foreign policy on the Middle East. Before analyzing the initiatives and the institutions that the EU tries to establish in the Middle East such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, European Neighborhood Policy and the Middle East Peace Process, the reasons which prompted the EU to deal with this region should be examined.

The involvement of the Community in the Middle East goes back to the 1960s. However, during the Cold War the European Community played a secondary role because of its inability to create a coherent foreign policy. During this period the Community conducted an economy-based dialogue with the Middle East, leaving issues of "high politics" to national governments. The end of the Cold War, the loss of Soviet aid and the appearance of the USA as the sole superpower brought the Community to the scene to provide a counterweight to the USA in the Middle East. After the Cold War, parameters of the European security measures shifted from "high politics" to "low politics" such as mass migration, overpopulation, underdevelopment and political violence which mainly arose from the Middle East.

Both Europe and the United States have vital national interests in the Middle East. Throughout the history of the Occident, the Middle East has played significant strategic, cultural, and religious roles as the gateway to trade in the East, the birthplace of Christianity and more recently as a primary energy supplier to the West.[51] The West's interest in helping to reduce the instability in the Middle East is clear in issues of oil supplies, the acquisition of markets and the avoidance of spill-over effects of regional Middle Eastern conflicts. Europe has a further reason for concern in the issues of immigration and refugee pressures. Europe's proximity to the Middle East and North Africa, coupled with its large Muslim immigrant population, ensures that the region occupies a top spot on the European

[51] Robert D. Blackwill and Michael Stürmer (eds.*), Allies Divided: Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East*, (Cambridge: Center for Science and International Affairs, 1997), p.2.

Union's foreign policy agenda.[52] It is argued that historical responsibility and the geographical proximity give Europe the right to expand its role in the Middle East. Europe will often be considered a more acceptable partner than the U.S., especially in the non-military spheres where the EU potentially has much to offer; for example, in assisting with reconstruction, regional integration and economic development.[53]

Regional stability has become a matter of increasing priority for Europe. Europe's geographic location, unlike the distant position of the United States, separates it from the Middle East only by the Mediterranean Sea and Turkey. The Strait of Gibraltar, the narrowest point between North Africa and Spain, is just about 16 kilometers wide. Commentators have noted that an interdependent relationship exists between two regions, but also that the primary threats to Europe are not derived from inside but rather from the southern and eastern Mediterranean. The interrelated sources of instability include economic problems, control of key energy supplies, demographic change and population movements, Islamic revivalism and cultural difference, terrorism, drugs trafficking, depletion of natural resources, and conventional and conventional weapons proliferation.[54] There exists a common perception of potential security threats from the Middle East to Europe in major European institutions. NATO, WEU and the EU have each identified a security interest in the region.

The presence of millions of Arab, Turkish and Iranian immigrants in Europe gives the European Union much cause for concern about peace and stability in the region.[55] The Southern European states (France, Spain, Italy, and Portugal) are

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[52] Mona Yacoubian ," Promoting Middle East Democracy: European Initiatives", United States Institute of Peace,, no:127,(Oct 2004).

[53] Gary Miller, "An Integrated Communities Approach" in Gerd Nonneman (ed.), *The Middle East and Europe: The Search for Stability and Integration*, (London: Federal Trust for Education and Research Publications, 1993) ,pp.3-24.

[54]Richard G Whitman. , "Five Years of the EU's Euro-Mediterranean Partnership:progress without partnership?", Panel TC18:The European Union's Mediterranean Enlargement, ISA 2001, Chicago.

[55] Ibid.

concerned about the impact of instability in the area, in North Africa in particular, and the possibility that political unrest and economic failure could lead to massive immigration across the Mediterranean. Europe is afraid that the inability of its Mediterranean neighbors to cope with their massive socio-economic and political challenges may affect its own international security through the inflow of illegal immigrants, the destabilization of its population of Maghreb nationality, and through a further rise of illegal drug smuggling from the region.[56] For the United States, regional stability in the Middle East does not have the same quality of intensity. Europe recognizes that the best way to curb the flow of illegal immigration from the Middle East into Europe is to encourage economic development and modernization in the region. Initiatives such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the European Neighborhood Policy are part of this program. Europe has taken steps in pursuit of this goal, but in the end its efforts have been undermined by the challenges that European policy has not sufficiently addressed so far.

After the September 11 attacks, Europeans began to perceive international terrorism as the most serious threat to their security. Currently, an estimated 15 million Muslims reside in EU member countries. Over the past decade, anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic sentiments and incidents have increased in many European countries. There is a general growth in verbal abuse against Muslims as well as physical assaults on property owned by Muslims throughout the European countries. Europeans see Muslims as an internal security danger and threat to their cultures. Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that European politicians increasingly have to take into account the Muslim factor when dealing with Middle East.

Another area of interest for the European Union is its dependence on external sources of energy. Energy supplies from the Middle East and North Africa are more critical to Europe than to the United States, which imports 20 percent of its total energy consumption compared to 50 percent for the EU. Europe's indigenous

[56] Blackwill and Stürmer (eds.), op.cit., p.50.

energy supplies could not meet growing demand. Already, 50 percent of oil and gas needs were met by daily imports.[57] If no measures are taken, EU will import 70 percent of its energy requirements within the next 20 to 30 years. In light of these figures, the Middle East region holds a specific importance for the EU since 45 percent of oil imports come from the Middle East.[58] Undersea oil and natural gas pipelines already connect North Africa with Europe. Maintaining access to Algeria's gas reserves is of primary importance to the EU if it wants to keep its dependency on energy imports from Russia to a minimum.[59] Close to 40 percent of Algeria's total gas production is sent via pipeline to Italy, Portugal and Spain. Libya is North Africa's major oil exporter to Europe, selling 90 percent of its current production to European countries.[60] Because of its higher dependence on outside sources, Europe seems more ready to pay a higher price for energy than the United States.

[57], "Energy Security: A European Perspective", European Policy Center, , Communication to Members S9/05, Policy Briefing - 17 February 2005 http://www.euractiv.com/29/images/EPC%20-%20Energy%20Security%20-%20A%20European%20Perspective%20-%2017%20February%202005_tcm29-142715.doc

[58] Green Paper of 29 November 2000 "Toward a European strategy for the security of energy supply", COM (2000) 769.

[59] Geopolitics of EU energy supply, http://www.euractiv.com/Article?tcmuri=tcm:29-142665-16&type=LinksDossier

[60] Geoffrey Kemp, "Europe's Middle East Challenges", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 27, Issue 1, (Winter 2003), p.164.

Table 1: Crude Oil Imports EU-15, 2004 (in million tones)

Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	Share 2002 (%)
Former USSR	89.5	101.2	123.2	140.1	26.0
Norway	114.8	107.2	101.6	104.5	21.5
Saudi Arabia	65.1	57.5	53.1	61.2	11.2
Libya	45.5	43.1	38.8	44.9	8.2
Iran	35.5	31.4	25.9	34.9	5.5
Middle East not spec.	13.1	18.7	19.6	11.9	4.1
Other origin	121.5	122	110.7	94.5	23.4
Total Imports	485.0	481.1	472.9	492.0	100.0
in Million Barrels	3540.5	3511.8	3452.2	3591.4	

Source: European Union, Energy and Transport in Figures, 2004 edition, Directorate General for Energy and Transport[61]

Table 2: Gas Imports EU-15, 2004 (in million cubic meters)

Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	Share 2002 (%)
Former USSR	78 484	73 909	68 807	74 169	32.7
Norway	46 714	49 925	61 351	64 746	29.1
Algeria	56 644	50 364	53 162	54 431	25.2
Non spec. origin	6 808	8 575	15 966	43 171	7.6
Nigeria	4 283	5 369	6 276	9 013	3.0
Qatar	293	646	2 070	1 893	1.0
Other origins	1 857	2 457	2 972	1 666	1.4
Total Imports	195 083	191 245	210 604	29 089	100.0

Source: European Union, Energy and Transport in Figures, 2004 edition, Directorate General for Energy and Transport[62]

[61] http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/figures/pocketbook/doc/2004/pb2004_part_2_energy.pdf

Europe not only buys oil from the Middle East; it is also the major market for the subtropical agricultural produce of many of the southern and eastern Mediterranean states, and increasingly for their industrial products and textile exports as well. In return, Europe supplies most of the latter's needs for manufactured goods and technology: The EU is a major trading partner for every country in the region, with the exception of Jordan. The EU share of total imports for the Mediterranean countries were 49.50 percent and the EU share of total exports were 45.95 percent in 2004[63] (Table 3). The EU exports primary products (agricultural products, energy), and manufactured products (machinery, transport equipment, chemicals, textile and clothes) (Table 4) to Mediterranean countries and imports agricultural products, energy, non-agricultural raw materials, office equipment, power, transport equipment, chemicals, textiles and clothing, iron and steel from the Mediterranean countries[64] (Table 3). Leaving oil and gas out of equation, the EU has substantial trade surpluses with most countries in the region. It has also been the major supplier of development aid. With the exception of the oil-rich states of the Arabian peninsula, many of the countries of North Africa and the Middle East are poor and in need of European aid and cooperation as well as trade.[65]

[62] http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/figures/pocketbook/doc/2004/pb2004_part_2_energy.pdf

[63] http://trade-info.cec.eu.int/doclib/docs/2005/july/tradoc_113485.pdf

[64] http://trade-info.cec.eu.int/doclib/docs/2005/july/tradoc_113485.pdf

[65] Christopher Piening, *Global Europe: The European Union in World Affairs*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 1997), p.70.

Table 3: Middle Eastern Countries* Trade with the European Union (million euros)

Year	Imports	Yearly % Change	EU Share of total imports	Exports	Yearly % Change	EU Share of total exports	Balance	Imports+ Exports
2000	52 381		46.81	42.597		50.02	-9 785	94 978
2001	49 139	-6.2	47.06	39 551	-7.1	47.68	-9 588	88 691
2002	50 571	2.9	46.17	39 737	0.5	46.96	-10 834	90 308
2003	50 125	-0.9	48.46	38 778	-2.4	47.64	-11 347	88 903
2004	57 296	14.3	49.50	41 245	6.4	45.99	- 16 051	98 540
Average Annual growth		2.3			-0.8			0.9

Source: Eurostat

Table 4: European Union's Imports from the Middle Eastern Countries (2004)

Products (Sitc Sections) by order of importance	Mio euro	%	Share of total EU imports
TOTAL	**44 381**	**100.0**	**4.3**
Mineral fuels, lubricants and rel. materials	15 638	35.2	8.6
Miscall. manuf. articles	7 722	17.4	5.0
Machinery and transport equipment	5 445	12.3	1.5
Manuf. Goods classif. chiefly by material	4 056	9.1	3.8
Chemicals and related products	2 841	6.4	3.3
food and live animals	2 596	5.9	5.0
Crude materials inedible, except fuel	1 183	2.7	2.8
Animals, vegetable oils, fats, waxes	508	1.1	13.9
Commodities and transactions n.e.c	211	0.5	0.7
Beverages and tobacco	56	0.1	1.0

Source: Eurostat

* *Algeria, Cisjordanie Gaza , Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia.*

Table 5: European Union's Exports to the Middle Eastern Countries (2004)

Products (Sitc Sections) by order of importance	Mio euro	%	Share of total EU imports
TOTAL	**53 541**	**100.0**	**5.6**
Machinery and transport equipment	21 345	39.9	4.9
Manuf. goods classif. chiefly by material	11 417	21.3	9.3
Chemicals and related products	7 001	13.1	4.6
Miscell. manuf. articles	4 631	8.6	4.1
food and live animals	3 177	5.9	9.5
Minerals, fuels, lubricants, rel. materials	2 028	3.8	7.3
Crude materials inedible, except fuel	1 197	2.2	7.1
Beverages and tobacco	364	0.7	2.5
Commodit and transactions n.e.c	300	0.6	1.3
Animals, vegetable oils, fats and waxes	250	0.5	10.6

Source: Eurostat

In addition to trade, Europe is the recipient of Middle East investment capital and a major supplier of aid to the poorer economies in the region. The EU disbursed aid to countries around the Mediterranean both collectively and in bilateral donations by its members. Europe's comparative weight in this area continues to grow. As the largest single aid donor to the Palestinians, Europe's stake in the Arab-Israeli peace process is direct and material. Europe wants to be a major player in the region.[66]

Some members of the European Union (i.e., France) have an ambition of playing a major role on the international stage, supporting, "balancing," or, in some cases, challenging what is often seen as American hegemony in the post-Cold War era. Events in the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli peace process are central factors in the international arena, and a major role in this activity would symbolize or reflect the "arrival" of Europe as a major power broker.

[66] Rosemary Hollis, "Europe and the Middle East: power by stealth?" in *International Affairs*, Volume 73, No.1, (January 1997 ,p.22.

European interests in the Middle East are, however, not fully homogenous. They continue to be influenced by specific national preferences and shaped by geography, history, and economic links. Geographic proximity or distance certainly carries its weight within the European context. Different European countries do not share the same focus when it comes to individual Middle East countries. Lebanon has a higher priority for France; the same goes for Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco, even if Spain and Italy compete with France for more economic and even political presence there.[67] France is far more focused on immigration from North Africa than is Great Britain, Germany and so than are the Scandinavian countries.[68]

The combination of these interests has prompted the European Union to develop a series of policies that have increasingly engaged it in the region. The importance of this growing perception of a common European interest implies a significant European role in the region and reveals the need to take a position on the critical issues to protect and advance these interests.[69] These policies have included the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, European Neighborhood Policy, Middle East Peace Process and the trade agreements of various kinds with the countries in the region that will be examined later in this work.

[67] Christopher Piening, *Global Europe: The European Union in World Affairs*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 1997), p.51.

[68] Kenneth W. Stein, "Imperfect Alliances: Will Europe and America Ever Agree?", Middle East Quarterly, Volume 4, Number 1, (March 1997), pp. 42.

[69] "Elusive Partnership: US and European Policies in the Near East and the Gulf", German Marshall Fund of the United States, Policy Paper, (September 2002), p.4.

CHAPTER 2

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE MIDDLE EAST:

A CONCERT OF INITIATIVES

2.1. Setting the Stage: Early Initiatives

2.1.1. The Global Mediterranean Policy (1972)

The first collective European approach towards the Middle East was the Mediterranean Trade Policy adopted in 1972. The European Community (EC) launched its Global Mediterranean Policy at the Paris summit of October 1972.[70] The policy sought to bring the agreements that existed between the European Community and various southern and eastern Mediterranean states individually into a single and coordinated framework. Concluded on the basis of Article 238 of the EC Treaty, the accords were known as "cooperation agreements." The Commission signed accords with the three Maghreb states of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria in 1976 and the Mashriq states of Egypt, Jordan and Syria in 1977 and Lebanon in 1978. The Commission had claimed that each one would be tailored specifically to the needs of the partner country concerned.[71] The Community applied similar financial instruments and criteria in the implementation of all these agreements, and each one followed a similar legal and institutional model. At five–yearly intervals it reviewed its total funding commitment and policy and then negotiated a series of additional protocols. These agreements offered:

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[70] Bretherton and Vogler, op.cit., p.153.

[71] Saleh A. Al-Mani, *The Euro-Arab Dialogue: A Study in Associative Diplomacy*, (London: Pinter Publishers, 1983), p.82.

- Trade preferences, opening EC markets to all industrial products with the exception of certain "sensitive" products such as textiles and refined petroleum and offering considerable concessions on agricultural produce. In return, the partners gave most-favored nation treatment to Community exports.
- Financial and technical cooperation (aid).
- Common institutions in the form of a Council of Ministers, which holds annual meeting. This is backed up by a committee at the ambassadorial level to assist the council. The Commission has opened permanent delegations in each of Maghreb and Mashriq countries.
- In the case of the Maghreb partners, migrant workers residing in European Union countries are given privileged status, particularly with regard to eligibility for social security benefits.[72]

This "overall approach" developed since 1971-1972 created a variation in the type of agreement and development assistance given. There was a big difference between the agreement offered to the northern littoral states – association - and those offered to Mashriq and Maghreb – cooperation –. The northern states including Spain and Greece were offered close economic cooperation,[73] common bilateral institutions and trade liberalization. The negotiations with the southern littoral states offered something slightly less, which was named "cooperation agreement." Israel was made a special case because of its relatively high level of development. The remaining overall cooperation agreements with Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria and Jordan included two distinct elements: development assistance as well as preferential trade agreements, offering these countries' exports a certain degree of access to the Common Market.

[72] Christopher Piening, *Global Europe: The European Union in World Affairs*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 1997), p.73.

[73] Rory Miller and Ashraf Mishrif, "The Barcelona Process and Euro-Arab Economic Relations, 1995-2005", *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol.9, No.2 ,(June 2005), p.94.

These trade agreements under the framework of Global Mediterranean Policy had little impact on economic development in the Arab world. Preferential treatment and access for Arab-manufactured goods into the EEC markets offered by the agreements did not increase the volume of Euro-Arab trade. In fact, some analysts argue that the limited scope of financial and technical assistance protocols included in these trade agreements hindered Arab economic development.[74] The Global Mediterranean Policy promised to deepen and broaden the Community's involvement in the region. However, it sounded more impressive than it really was.[75]

2.1.2. The Euro-Arab Dialogue (1974)

The institutionalization of the relations between the EC and the Maghreb and Mashriq countries began before and continued through and beyond the events of 1973. Until the 1973 October War between Israel and its Arab neighbors, the Community's motivation was primarily economic in nature, an attempt to regulate relations with close neighbors with a view to the creation of a Mediterranean free trade area. The 1973 War, which resulted in the Arab oil embargo, prompted the European Community to rethink its political as well as economic relationship with the Middle East and with the Arab-Israeli conflict. The War and the oil weapon used by the oil-rich Arab states created a sense of vulnerability in the Community since it was highly dependent on the oil coming from the Middle East. The Community decided to play a more prominent role in the Middle East in order to protect its interests and the Euro-Arab Dialogue came into the scene.

The Euro-Arab Dialogue, as it became known, officially came into being on 31 July, 1974 at a meeting between the President and Secretary General of the Arab League and the presidents of the Commission and the Council. An agreement was

[74] Ibid.

[75] Desmond Dinan, *Ever Closer Union: An Introduction to European Community*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), p.459.

reached to establish an institutional structure for ongoing discussions on a range of economic, technological and cultural issues.[76] The agreement was followed by the EC summit in Copenhagen in 1973, which was attended by five Arab foreign ministers, and a series of further consultations including a March, 1974 meeting of Community foreign ministers, and a meeting of the Arab League in Tunis later that same month.[77]

Almost two years passed before the first meeting of the general commission took place in Luxembourg in May 1976. The delay was due in part to the EC's refusal to accept the formal presence of a distinct Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) delegation on the Arab side. The problem of the representation of the PLO was solved by constituting a unified Arab delegation. Between 1976 and 1978, four general commission meetings were held dealing with both political and technical issues.

The Euro-Arab dialogue has been plagued with difficulties since its inception in 1973 and the framework was completely suspended following the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Camp David Peace Agreement and the expulsion of Egypt from the Arab League.[78] There have been three main problems. From the beginning both sides have had fundamentally different perceptions of the nature and purpose of the dialogue. The nucleus of the difficulties has been the Arab-Israeli conflict and the rights of the Palestinian people, advocated from the Arab side as a necessary condition for cooperation. On the other hand, the European Community wanted to limit the cooperation to the economic and commercial fields, excluding any political consideration.[79] Europeans wanted to secure the oil supply whereas on the Arab side the main concern was to mobilize support for the Palestinian

[76] Tareq Y. Ismael, *International Relations of the Contemporary Middle East, (*New York*:* Sycrause University Press, 1986) p.106.

[77] Piening, op.cit., p.74.

[78] Miller and Mishrif, op.cit., p.95.

[79] Werner Weidenfeld, *Europe and the Middle East*, (Güterloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers,1995),p.21.

question. The Europeans were unable to satisfy the Arabs in the dialogue. Secondly, institutional weakness combined with a lack of consensus and political will have contributed to an inability to deliver results. Furthermore, both parties were affected negatively by the external events and political interference. Consequently, the Euro-Arab Dialogue did not succeed in creating a comprehensive political relationship and a number of Arab countries (Libya, Syria and Iraq) excluded themselves from the dialogue.[80]

2.1.3. Renovated Mediterranean Policy (1990)

The end of the Cold War has changed the international environment considerably, affecting regional and international relations. Beginning with the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, major geopolitical shifts prompted Europe and southern Europe in particular, to reorient its strategic landscape toward the Middle East. These changes have had an impact on both Europe and the Middle East and in particular on the nature of the relationships between these regions.[81] The end of the Cold War has given the EC the opportunity to start a new, more influential role in the newly emerging order in the Middle East. Thus the EC began to search for a new approach to the Middle East. European governments asserted their willingness to form an independent policy from the United States in their relations with the Middle East. There was an agreement among member states on three fundamental guidelines of the European Middle East policy: to create greater social and economic stability in the Mediterranean region; to establish peace and cooperation between Israel and the Arab world; and to secure Europe's long-term energy supply.

The beginning of a real assessment of Community policy toward the region came in 1990 with the first series of Commission policy papers in the form of

[80] Piening, op.cit., p.78.

[81] B.A. Roberson (ed.)., *The Middle East and Europe: the power deficit*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p.1.

communications to the Council and the European Parliament**.** Throughout the early 1990s, the European Union continued to signal the importance of human rights and democracy in its foreign policy. The European Parliament launched the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIHDR) in 1994, bringing human rights-promotion line items together under a single budget heading. Most important, in May 1995, the European Union developed a democracy and human rights clause governing relations with third countries that stipulated the suspension of aid and trade in the event of serious human rights violations.[82] The clause was to become standard language in contracts between the European Union and its southern neighbors.

In June 1991 the European Union asserted that the promotion of human rights was an essential element of its foreign policy and a "cornerstone" of European cooperation. At that time, a European Council declaration[83] stressed the role of human rights and the rule of law as critical components of development initiatives. The council adopted a resolution in November 1991[84] that established guidelines and procedures for a consistent approach towards countries attempting to democratize. Although the policy revealed in these papers reflects the Europe's preoccupation at that time with the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, it laid the groundwork for putting democracy and human rights in a broader context. This new approach was soon adopted toward the Arab states of the Mediterranean and new resolutions were formulated regarding this policy.

Entitled "Redirecting the Community's Mediterranean Policy" (Renovated Mediterranean Policy), it stressed the importance of the social and economic development of the region for the Community's security in the broadest sense.[85] This policy introduced several important innovations, most notably the notion of

[82] Commission Document, COM (95) 216, 23 May 1995

[83] http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/doc/hr_decl_91.htm

[84] http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/doc/cr28_11_91en.htm

[85] Commission Document, SEC (90) 812, 1 June 1990, p.2.

partnership with Mediterranean countries and structural adjustment support for those countries engaged in liberalization and economic reform. Significantly, the revised policy also stipulated that the European Parliament could freeze the budget of a financial protocol in the case of serious human rights violations. For a brief period in 1991, the European Parliament withheld aid to Syria and Morocco on human rights grounds.[86]

A second Commission communication on the future of relations between the Community and the Maghreb followed in 1992.[87] It proposed a new regional framework with the Maghreb countries leading to a "Euro-Maghreb partnership" and a free trade area. The Commission's ideas were endorsed at the Lisbon European Council meeting in June 1992. The Maghreb was declared to be a geographical area of common interest under the new Common Foreign and Security Policy.[88] The Lisbon meeting illustrates an early attempt by the Union to draw together both the external relations of the Community and Common Foreign and Security Policy.[89] The Mediterranean was dealt with under both the Community's external relations and under a CFSP heading with the breakdown of the region between the Maghreb and the Middle East (meaning the countries of the Mashriq and Israel). A distinction between the Maghreb and the Middle East was followed in the report approved by the European Council and the Presidency's conclusions on the Community's external relations focused upon both.[90]

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[86] Mona Yacoubian, Promoting Middle East Democracy: European Initiatives, United States Institute of Peace, no:127, Oct. 2004.

[87] Commission Document, SEC (92) 401, 30 April 1992.

[88] Piening, op.cit., p.79.

[89] Richard G. Whitman, "Five Years of the EU's Euro-Mediterranean Partnership:progress without partnership?", Panel TC18:The European Union's Mediterranean Enlargement, ISA 2001, Chicago.

[90] *Conclusions of the Presidency* Lisbon, 26-27 July 1992 , Commission of the European Communities, London, BIO/92/166 2. The report on the development of the CFSP was contained in Annex I and Declarations on the Middle East Peace Process and relations with the Maghreb in Annexes III & IV respectively.

The 1994 Commission Communication entitled "Strengthening the Mediterranean Policy of the European Union: Establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership" declared that the Mediterranean basin constituted an area of strategic importance for the Community. The Community saw the region as highly susceptible to a common EU approach under its new CFSP. It was declared that a massive effort needed to be made to help reduce the economic gap between Europe and its southern neighbors. The Commission proposed establishing a MEDA (Mediterranean Economic Development Area) program, modeled on the PHARE (Poland, Hungary, Aid for Reconstructing of the Economies) program, with an initial endowment of ECU 5.5 billion ($6.9 billion) over a five year period, renewable for a further five years.[91] The policy of review of the relations resulted in an increase in the financial resources allocated to the region. For the 4th financial protocols covering the period 1991-1996, the Community allocated to the eight countries in the Maghreb and Mashriq and Israel a total of ECU 2.375 billion, of which ECU 1.075 billion were grants and ECU 1.3 billion were European Investment Bank loans.

The Renovated Mediterranean Policy had some shortcomings which failed to encourage regional cooperation and closer integration. One of the reasons for these shortcomings is that the Union could not encourage inter-state cooperation in the region. An indicator of the low level of inter-state cooperation was the percentages of total trade between the countries of the region. The effects of political tensions between the Maghreb countries, between Turkey and Cyprus, and between Israel and its Mashriq neighbors, and the unwillingness of the states to share their resources with the neighbors within the framework of development assistance programs, are the two main reasons for this failure. The Mediterranean policy also did not reach a uniform treatment of states concerned despite its claims to a global or overall approach. On the economic level, The Mashriq and Maghreb states did not enjoy complete freedom of access to the Community market for their industrial goods and agricultural produce. On the political level, a closer form of relationship was formed with the countries perceived to be more

[91] Piening, op.cit., p.80.

"European" or "Western," while the relations with the Arab states were kept limited. Continued reliance on bilateral cooperation made implementation of the Renewed Mediterranean Policy more difficult.

2.2. Institutionalization of Relations: Euro-Mediterranean Partnership - The Barcelona process

The initiatives of the EU in the Mediterranean region before 1995 did not foster regional cooperation and remained on the bilateral level. The EU tried to articulate a multilateral policy through bringing the Mediterranean partners into a single framework. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) can be regarded as a turning point in the EU's policy with regard to the region as it adopted a different strategy compared to the previous initiatives.[92] After more than twenty years of intense bilateral trade cooperation, the EU Member States and the twelve Mediterranean Partners, namely; Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey launched the EMP in Barcelona in 1995 at a Conference of Foreign Affairs, which is therefore also known as the Barcelona Process.[93] This initiative is the first attempt in the history of the European Union to create strong and durable bonds between the shores of the Mediterranean.

The Barcelona Process was intended to be Europe's answer to growing concerns about instability on its southern flank. It was formed in the need for balance in the post-Cold War expansion to the east and by the alarm caused by the socioeconomic gap dividing Europe and North Africa. The European Commission

[92] Stephania Panebianco, "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in Perspective: The Political and Institutional Context" in Stephania Panebianco (ed.), *A New Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Identity*, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), p.4.

[93] Cyprus and Malta have since acceded to the EU and Turkey has opened accession negoitations in October 3, 2005. Libya's full integration into the Barcelona process is currently under discussion. The Barcelona Process formally adopted its new composition with the accession of the new EU Member States, thus bringing the total number of the Euro-Mediterranean partners to 35: 25 European and 10 Mediterranean countries.

noted that European-Mediterranean income disparities stood at one to twelve and would increase to one to twenty by 2010 if no measures were taken.[94] The Commission also estimated that the Mediterranean countries' populations would grow from 220 million in 1995 to 300 million by 2010.[95] The Euro-Mediterranean Process can be considered as the European Union's response to the challenges presented by its Mediterranean neighbors. The response to the challenges came from the Commission in its proposal stating that "the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean as well as the Middle East are geographical areas in relation to which the Union has strong interests both in terms of security and social stability."[96] The EU's desire for a role in the Middle East Peace Process inaugurated by the 1991 Madrid Conference also played a role in the creation of the EMP. Europe managed the multilateral Regional Economic Development Working Group (REDWG) and the Barcelona Process was launched using the momentum of the 1993 Oslo Accords.

The European Council meeting in Essen on 9-10 December, 1994 approved the recommendation of the Council supporting the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and endorsed the proposal for a Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference in the latter half of 1995.[97] However, it was not easy to bring all the parties together under a common framework and several difficulties arose in the preparatory work for the Barcelona Conference. Syria and Lebanon showed unwillingness to participate in a ministerial meeting with Israel. Morocco attempted to maintain a privileged status in the negotiations for an Association Agreement. Adoption of a common stance by the Arab Maghreb Union on the participation of Libya in the process while the opposition of the majority of EU states led to tension between

[94] Mona Yacoubian, Promoting Middle East Democracy: European Initiatives, United States Institute of Peace, no:127, Oct. 2004.

[95] Ibid.

[96] 'Strengthening the Mediterranean Policy of the European Union: Proposals for Implementing a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership', COM (94) 427 final, 19 October 1994.

[97] Essen European Council Presidency Conclusions, SN, 300/94, 9-10 December 1994.

the parties.[98] Differences among EU members, each with its own agenda, prevented the formation of a collective common position. Before the conference started, a number of issues in the EU draft of the declaration were subjected to criticism by the Mediterranean partners. Egypt wanted a clear reference to a Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in the declaration, the Palestinians demanded recognition of the right to self-determination, and the Syrian-Lebanese delegation insisted that an official distinction be made between terrorism and the right to defend itself, all of which created difficulties.[99]

2.2.1. The Content of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

In spite of the unresolved issues, the Euro-Mediterranean conference was held in Barcelona between 27 and 28 November, 1995. The 26 pages of the Declaration agreed on at Barcelona comprised chapters and an annex setting out the priorities for the work program. A Work Program was annexed to the Declaration consisting of 13 areas of cooperation. The Declaration established three chapters of activity that comprised:

- The definition of a common area of peace and stability through the reinforcement of political and security dialogue (Political and Security Chapter).
- The construction of a zone of shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free trade zone (Economic and Financial Chapter).
- The rapprochement between peoples through a social, cultural and human partnership aimed at encouraging understanding between cultures and

[98] The General Affairs Council reached a general position on the conference on 31 October 1996 that the conference should be limited to 27 countries and Libya remained uninvited.

[99] Richard G. Whitman, "Five Years of the EU's Euro-Mediterranean Partnership:progress without partnership?", Panel TC18:The European Union's Mediterranean Enlargement, ISA 2001, Chicago.

exchanges between civil societies (Social, Cultural and Human Chapter)[100].

Conceptually, the Barcelona Declaration is divided into three "baskets" of issues: political, economic and cultural.

2.2.1.1. Political and Security Cooperation

The political basket aimed to establish a Euro-Mediterranean area of peace and stability based on common respect for human rights and democracy. In the declaration of principles, the participants undertook a number of commitments which, if implemented, would totally banish conflict and human rights abuses from the Mediterranean basin.[101] The signatories pledged to honor the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and guarantee the effective legitimate exercise of such rights and freedoms. Each will respect the territorial integrity and unity of other partners, and disputes will be settled through peaceful means. The parties also undertook to pursue a verifiable "Middle East Zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological."

The political and security partnership included a wide range of issues dealing with "hot" issues such as terrorism. A clear cut definition of terrorism was avoided. A pragmatic approach was adopted and actions were taken step by step when there was a common perception of a specific threat.[102] One of the most innovative aspects of the Barcelona Declaration was the definition of security itself. The redefinition of security that emerged in the post-Cold War world, stemming not

[100] The Barcelona Declaration adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of 27-29 November 1995. Text found in http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/bd.htm .

[101] Ibid.

[102] Panebianco, op.cit., p.13.

just from “hard security” but also “soft security” was reflected in the EMP. A broad definition of security was adopted to prevent illegal migration, terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking.

A major source of frustration has been the work done in the security domain to develop confidence-building measures, including the draft of the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability. It was intended to institutionalize the political dialogue among the partners and establish crisis prevention and crisis management. An agreement was reached on the contents of the draft Charter in 2000. However, after the collapse of the Middle East Peace Process, foreign ministers decided to defer its adoption *sine die* in November 2000.

2.2.1.2. Economic Cooperation and the MEDA Program

The second (economic) pillar of the Barcelona Declaration was designed to create an area of shared prosperity through economic and financial partnership. The creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by 2010 constituted the principal goal of the economic basket, taking as its long-term objectives the acceleration of the pace of socioeconomic development, improving the living conditions of the region’s people, increasing their employment opportunities, and reducing the wealth gap.

The free trade area was to be phased in gradually over a fifteen-year period, with 2010 set as the target date. Each of the bilateral Association Agreements contained a tariff reduction schedule in line with this objective**.** The signatories agreed to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade in manufactured goods on the basis of timetables negotiated. Agriculture was excluded from the remit of free trade area, and quotas in traditional sectors such as textiles have remained restrictive. Estimates of the impact of the free trade area have varied, but most have predicted that something of the order of one third of local south

Mediterranean firms will be forced out of business.[103] Yet, partly, in response to EU protectionism, countries such as Jordan and Morocco have recently moved to negotiate new free trade agreements with the United States.

Another aspect of economic and financial partnership is aid. Based on the European Council decisions in Essen (1994), on 23 July 1996 the Council approved the MEDA (Mediterranean Economic Development Area) regulations as the basis for the main financial instrument of the partnership approach.[104] The MEDA program is the principal financial instrument of the European Union for the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. MEDA funding occurs in seven-year cycles, MEDA I (1995-1999) and the current cycle, MEDA II, covering the period 2000-2006. The program offers technical and financial support measures to accompany the reform of economic and social structures in the Mediterranean partners. The program may apply to states, their local and regional authorities as well as to their civil society organizations.

The legal basis of the MEDA Program is the 1996 MEDA Regulation (Council Regulation no. EC/1488/96). This Regulation was amended in November 2000 and is usually called MEDA II. The main areas of intervention and objectives are directly derived from those of the 1995 Barcelona Declaration. MEDA was a departure from the previous means of funding the Mediterranean non-Member States in that there were no fixed country financial allocations - these were replaced by National Indicative Programs (NIPs).[105] It established the MEDA Committee to allow EU Member States to advise the European Commission in implementing the MEDA Program. The Committee gives its opinion on the programming documents.

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[103] Richard Youngs, "European Approaches to Security in the Middle East", *Middle East Journal*, Volume 57, No.3, (Summer 2003), p.428.

[104] H.G. Brauch, A. Marquina, and A. Biad (eds.), Euro Mediterranean Partnership for the 21st Century, (London: Mac Millan, 2000), p.322.

[105] Richard G. Whitman, "Five Years of the EU's Euro-Mediterranean Partnership:progress without partnership?", Panel TC18:The European Union's Mediterranean Enlargement, ISA 2001, Chicago.

From 1995 through 2001, MEDA accounted for €5.1 billion of the total €6.4 billion of budgetary resources allocated for financial cooperation between the European Union and its Mediterranean Partners. Over this period, 86 percent of the resources allocated to MEDA were channeled bilaterally, whereas 14 percent were devoted to regional activities. For the period 2000-2006 an indicative figure of €5.4 billion has been earmarked.[106]

Most of the MEDA funds have been spent on the EMP's second basket, economic and trade assistance. The economic basket has not only enjoyed the most financial support but also achieved the most progress to date. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership also encouraged the efforts of Arab governments to liberalize inter-Arab trade. The Agadir Agreement concluded in March 2004 and signed by Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Egypt made a commitment to regional trade liberalization and marked an important step toward building a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Zone, creating an integrated market of more than 100 million people in the four signatory countries.[107]

The MEDA regulation established the principles of political and economic conditionality. Funding can be suspended in the case of a violation of democratic principles and the rule of law, as well as human rights and fundamental freedoms. In a number of cases the EU has reacted to such violations by modulating the allocation of the funds without activating the formal provisions of the regulation. The allocations may be influenced by "progress towards structural reform." But overall these potentially important conditionality provisions have hardly been activated.[108]

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[106]"The EU, the Mediterranean and the Middle East A longstanding partnership, EU Focus, No.1, Volume 1, (May 2004).

[107]Miller and Mishrif, op.cit, p.98.

[108] Michael Emerson and Gergana Noutcheva, "From Barcelona Process to Neighbourhood Policy: Assesments and Open Issues", CEPS Working Document, No.220/ (March 2005), p.3.

2.2.1.3. Social and Cultural Partnership

The institutionalization process encounters difficulties not just because of political reasons and economic disparities but also as a result of cultural differences. The scope of the EMP is much broader than the previous initiatives. Uniquely, its comprehensive approach puts economic, political and human affairs on the same level as the major components of the process. Intercultural dialogue and understanding are the principles of the social and cultural basket. The aim of this aspect of the program is to create a wider process of social changes that includes the human dimension. In fact, after making the obligatory references to "dialogue and respect between cultures and religions" as a necessary precondition for bringing people closer, this chapter of the Barcelona Declaration goes on to identify the need for a strengthened program of exchanges of young people and students, teachers, clerics, journalists, scientists, business people, as well as political leaders. This part of the program involves a wide circle of community activists and leaders outside the central governments. It also spells out priority people-related areas, where strengthened cooperation can have an impact on migration, illegal immigration, terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime, corruption, and the fight against racism and xenophobia. The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, based in Alexandria, became operational on July 1, 2004 and seeks to fulfill the third basket's imperatives of developing a dialogue between cultures and civilizations within the framework of the Mediterranean region.[109]

2.2.2. Bilateral and Regional Dimensions of the EMP

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has a bilateral and a regional dimension. The bilateral dimension of the Barcelona process has resulted in more concrete achievements. In terms of bilateral dimension, the EU carries out substantial co-

[109] "The EU, the Mediterranean and the Middle East A longstanding partnership, No.1, Volume 1, EU Focus (May 2004).

operative activities bilaterally with each country, the most important being the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements. The association agreements serve as the European Union's principal instrument for promoting democratic change in the Mediterranean. Mediterranean partners became obliged to endorse the human rights clause when signing association agreements. In theory, the European Union could invoke the clause when governments commit serious human rights offenses and withhold aid or suspend aid. The regional dimension is one of the most innovative aspects of the partnership, covering the political, economic and cultural areas of regional co-operation.

Following the launch of the Barcelona Process in 1995, the main action consisted of negotiating a new set of bilateral agreements with the partner states, and replacing the prior generation of cooperation agreements with the much more extensive and ambitious Euro-Med Association Agreements. While the agreements with Turkey, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan and Egypt, Algeria and Lebanon have come into force, the agreement with Syria is signed but awaits ratification.[110]

2.2.3. Institutions under the EMP

There are three main institutions of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, namely the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process, and the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly. The implementation of the Work Program is given impetus and monitored by the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process (the Euro-Med Committee). Both are chaired by the EU presidency (i.e. the member state holding the rotating presidency of the Council of Ministers). Euro-

[110] "EU and Syria mark end of negotiations for an Association Agreement", 19 October 2004. http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/syria/intro/ip04_1246.html.

Mediterranean conferences take place at the level of Foreign Ministers (top steering body of the Barcelona Process), sectoral Ministers, government experts and representatives of civil society.[111] The Committee, set up at senior official level, consists of the EU troika and a representative from each of the Mediterranean partners (sometimes referred to as "Misters Barcelona"). Meeting six times a year, the Euro-Med Committee mainly discusses and reviews the agenda and the work program of the Partnership. Ad hoc sectoral meetings of ministers, senior officials and experts provide specific impulse and follow-up for the various activities listed in the work program. With the agreement of the participants, other countries or organizations may be involved in actions contained in the work program. Mauritania, Libya, as well as the Arab League and the Union du Maghreb Arabe have been invited to attend a number of Euro-Mediterranean ministerial meetings as special guests. The US government initially expressed interest in attending those meetings but was never invited. No "Barcelona secretariat" as such was established. Preparation and follow-up work for the meetings are largely in the hands of the European Commission. At the country level (member state or Mediterranean Partner), the "Mr. Barcelona" is generally backed by a "Barcelona team" whose size fluctuates over time.[112] In March 2004, a Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly was set up with a consultative role, further promoting the political dialogue between the members of parliaments representing the parliaments of the Mediterranean partner countries of the Barcelona Process, the national parliaments of the Member States of the EU and the European Parliament, thus enhancing visibility and transparency.[113]

[111] The Euro-Mediterranean Conferences of Foreign Ministers held; Barcelona, 27-28 November 1995; Malta, 15-16 April 1997; Stutgart, 15-16 April 1999; Marseilles, 15-16 November 2000; Valencia, 22-23 April 2002; Naples, 2-3 December 2003; Luxembourg, 30-31 May 2005.

[112] Eric Philippart "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Unique Features, First Results and Future Challenges", Working Paper No.10 of the CEPS Middle East&Euro-Med Project,(April 2003), p.2.

[113] "The EU, the Mediterranean and the Middle East A longstanding partnership", EU Focus, No.1, Volume 1, May 2004.

2.2.4. General Assessment of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

In order to develop a common foreign and security policy, the Union sought to develop common strategies for certain regions in the beginning of the 2000s. One of the regions for which the Union tried to achieve that was the Mediterranean. In June 2000, five years after the launch of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the European Council adopted a "Common Strategy of the European Union for the Mediterranean Region," which reconfirmed the strategic objectives of the EMP. The Common Strategy builds on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and it covers all the EU's relations with all its partners in the Barcelona Process and with Libya.[114]

On the parallel track, the December 2003 European Council asked the Presidency and the Secretary General/High Representative, in coordination with the European Commission, to present concrete proposals on a strategy toward the Middle East. An "Interim Report on an EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East" was adopted by the European Council on 22 March 2004. This report put forward eleven key objectives and principles in EU's relationship with the Middle East. It provided an update on the development of the EU's Middle East strategy and emphasized the need to consult directly with the countries in the region.[115]

For most scholars, the EU has failed to implement its own declared commitment related to the Mediterranean and the Middle East through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. One critique put forward within Europe, which was also articulated by the Mediterranean partners as well as by the US, is that the Barcelona Process is still almost invisible, leading to the conclusion that it has not been very

[114] "Common Strategy of the European Council of 19 June 2000 on the Mediterranean Journal", Official Journal of the European Communities, 183/5, 22.07.2000.

[115] "Interim Report on an EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East", 7498/01/04, The Council Secretariat, 7498/01/04, Brussels, 19 March 2004.

successful.[116] It is argued that European policy since 1995 has been a more short-sighted and defensive toward the Mediterranean.[117] The attacks of September 11, 2001, the intensification of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iraqi crisis have together rendered European policies towards the EU's southern Mediterranean periphery of even more acute strategic importance. It is argued that the "securization" of the perceptions regarding the Mediterranean took the Partnership further away from some of its key founding principles.[118] In this sense, the EU policy has most commonly been seen as misguided and counter-productive, and the Euro Mediterranean as a largely unmitigated failure.[119] The EMP's shortcomings are listed as "relative complexity, limited visibility"[120]

The tenth anniversary of the EMP was celebrated on 27-28 November, 2005 in the city of its birth. The summit was clouded with disappointment and disillusion and this led the sides to reassess the Barcelona Process and its achievements. There is a general view that the "EMP has helped neither governments to development and grow their way to modernization, nor civil society forces to pressure their way to reform."[121]

One of the most notable criticisms of the EMP is the asymmetry in the structure of the process that contradicts the partnership spirit. Phillipart expresses this asymmetry as "in line with the strong dependence of the Mediterranean partners and the unfavorable income distribution, the nature of the relationship often

[116] Andreas Marchetti, "Barcelona, Neighbourhood and beyond- the EU's long-term strategies for democracy and security in the Wider Middle East" for ARI Movement's 7th International Security Conference: "Democratization and Security in the Wider Middle East", İstanbul, 23/24 June, 2005.

[117] Youngs, op.cit., p.414.

[118] Fernandez Haizam Amirah and Richard Youngs, (eds.) "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Assesing the First Decade", Real Instituto Elcano, (October 2005), p.159.

[119] Ibid.

[120]Emerson and Noutcheva,op.cit., p.4.

[121] Amirah and Youngs, op.cit., p.158.

corresponds more to a soft form of hegemony than to a partnership."[122] This reality undermines the idea of partnership and creates a suspicion on the part of many Mediterranean countries. They know that the EMP is not a partnership among equals and they have little room to maneuver. However, the Euro-Med Agreement is called "a partnership," a term which implies equality and mutual benefit.

The EMP's scope of action has been criticized for being too wide or too narrow. For some the EMP package embracing 39 branches of policy is too wide and some issues have to be removed from the EMP agenda. The weakness of its performance in political and security spheres because of the difficulties in the Middle East Process that limited the extent of cooperation, has led to the proposal of abandoning the security aspect of the Barcelona Process. In spite of failures in the security and political domains, the three aspects of the EMP are closely interrelated and progress on all fronts is needed. Another argument in favor of the narrowing-down option derives from the claim that the "EMP puts the EU in a situation where it has to take sides."[123] According to this view, the EU reveals its pro-Arab stance and disqualifies itself as a mediator in the Israeli-Arab conflict. Contrary to this argument, in order to keep the EMP going, the EU is obliged to come up with conclusions acceptable to all parties in the region.

The issue of the geographic scope of the Barcelona Process and the possible use of subsidiary groups for closer cooperation has been debated. This involved the extent of the Barcelona group and its sub-regional formats as for the Maghreb and Mashriq groups and the Agadir group (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan). On the issue of scope, there is the question of whether it would have been better to include Arab states and/or to exclude Israel.[124] The present view on the EU side is

[122] Eric Philippart, "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Unique Features, First Results and Future Challenges", Working Paper No.10 of the CEPS Middle East&Euro-Med Project, April 2003, p.11.

[123]Ibid, p.5.

[124] Noutcheva and Emerson, op.cit., p.6.

that Barcelona should not include the Gulf States and non-Mediterranean African Arab states. The idea behind this is to make the group homogenous. If Gulf States or non-Mediterranean African Arab states were included in the partnership, it would pose a problem of the main reference for the partnership. Use of the term"Euro-Arab partnership" instead of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership would be problematic because of the existence of large non-Arab populations within the boundaries of the partnership, including Berbers and Jews.[125] Accordingly, "Mediterranean" is the preferred term for the partnership.

The economic dimension of the EMP has also been subjected to considerable criticism. The economic policies of EU have been judged to reinforce rather than mitigate security concerns. It is also argued that the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's harsh imposition of economic liberalization in fact risks destabilizing the Mediterranean.[126] The levels of EU investment into the non-Member Mediterranean States remain low and the trade between the partners has not increased. EU agricultural protectionism has not been eliminated in spite of the constant requests by the partner countries.

It is argued that the commitment made in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to establish a Free Trade Area (FTA) by 2010 will not create an equal income distribution for the Mediterranean Partners. According to R. Whitman, Mediterranean Partner countries will lose tariff revenue presently collected from EU imports – an estimated 50 percent of imports - when they enter into a Free Trade Area with the EU. Furthermore, they will not gain visa-free population movement and thus will not solve their problems through the migration of labor.[127] No firm commitment to liberalization in agricultural products has been offered. It is stated that keeping the agricultural sector out of the free trade

[125] Phillipart, op.cit., p.11.

[126] V. Nienhaus, "Promoting Development through a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Zone?, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 4, (1999), pp.501-518.

[127] Richard G. Whitman, "Five Years of the EU's Euro-Mediterranean Partnership:progress without partnership?", Panel TC18:The European Union's Mediterranean Enlargement, ISA 2001, Chicago.

demonstrates the EU's aim to secure the privileged position in the highly asymmetrical trade system between the two Mediterranean shores.[128] Analysis by certain economists reveals that the economic standards of the Mediterranean Partners will not be substantially ameliorated through entering into an FTA. It is estimated that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Morocco and Tunisia (two star performers in terms of growth) may rise by 1.5 percent and 1.7 percent of GDP respectively if the FTA is established.[129] Therefore, it could be said that the aid packages and the subsidy vary according to the interests of the EU and some of its member states.

Although the European Union's democracy-promotion strategy is characterized by a long-term strategy, its main objective is to preserve short-term stability. The European Union, like the United States, has not translated its calls for the promotion of democracy and human rights into concrete action. EU democracy-programs have relied on more indirect methods, such as increasing support for "democratic values" and promoting cross-cultural dialogue. The European Union has generally adopted a top-down approach, conducting most of its activities on a government-to-government basis. Among the three baskets that constitute the EMP, the political reform portfolio has registered the least success. Arab states of the Mediterranean still continue to be ruled by autocratic governments. The lack of achievement is related with the modest nature of the European Union's efforts to promote political reform in the region. This is because of the Europeans' general choice of short-term stability and a preservation of status quo and giving less importance to the progress in governance in spite of the recent efforts to re-base its policy on the positive correlation seen between good governance and stability.[130]

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[128]Fulvio Attina, "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Assessed: The Realist and Liberal Views", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Volume 8, Issue 2 , (Summer 2003), p.186.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Marchetti, op.cit., p.10.

A variety of reasons explain this failure, including differing interests among EU members, the great reluctance of EU members to use the principle of conditionality, and the fact that the original intent of the Barcelona Process was not to promote political reform.[131] As a result, a successful European democracy-promotion in the Middle East is far from assured. There are four main reasons for this failure: first, neither the European Union nor its individual member states have demonstrated sustained commitment to using conditionality as an instrument for reform. The human rights clauses written into the association agreements are rarely invoked. Only one country, Tunisia has had its MEDA aid reduced because of its human rights record. In general, there is no parallelism between reform and funding. For example, Egypt despite its poor record on reform, has received a disproportionate amount of aid over the years because of its critical role in the Middle East Peace Process.[132]

Second, governments in the region have not signaled their willingness to pursue genuine reform.[133] The original intent of the Barcelona Process was not to promote political reform. Europe launched the Barcelona Process in order to protect itself from potential instability in the southern shores of the Mediterranean. The impetus for the creation of the EMP was more directly related with the threat of massive illegal immigration. The Barcelona Process initially focused almost exclusively on trade and aid.

Third, EU members have differing interests in, and differing goals for, the Middle East. Southern-tier countries in the European Union have been less willing than their northern neighbors to push for reform. Their proximity to the southern Mediterranean increases their concerns over illegal migration and instability and

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[131] Yacoubian, op.cit.

[132] Committee on Human Rights-Case Information: Sa'ad Eddin Ibrahim, http://www7.nationalacademies.org/humanrights/Case_Information_Ibrahim.html
The EU did not suspend bilateral funding when the Egyptian authorities imprisoned the sociology professor Sa'ad Eddin Ibrahim who was conducting a MEDA sponsored human rights project. Among other things, the professor was accused of embezzling EU funds (which the EU denies) and besmirching Egypt's name internationally.

[133] Yacoubian, op.cit.

makes them uncomfortable with the notion of conditionality. In contrast, northern-tier countries such as Britain and Germany have pushed for the strong implementation of the human rights clause embedded in the association agreements.[134]

Fourth, European democracy-promotion efforts risk being drowned in a sea of bureaucracy. With its multiyear budget cycles and volumes of paperwork, the EMP is exceptionally cumbersome bureaucratically. When policies and programs need to be redefined, the process is extremely difficult to redirect. Decision making is slow and can be prevented by an individual member state looking to protect its own interest. Complicated procedures often hamper implementation of MEDA programming. Conflicting loyalties between the European Council, which represents the interests of individual member states, and the European Commission, whose mandate is tied to the interests of the European Union as a whole, can also add to bureaucratic tensions.[135]

In spite of all above criticisms on the EMP, its successes have to be stated as well. In terms of regional dialogue, one of the key successes of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is to have provided a forum for dialogue between Mediterranean Partners involved in the Middle East Peace Process. The Partnership still remains the only multilateral context outside the United Nations where all the parties affected by the Middle East conflict meet. The Palestinian Authority is recognized as an equal Mediterranean Partner. The Barcelona Process is open for Libya to join if the country accepts the Barcelona acquis. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is the only political institution in the region "where competence, legitimacy and resources are present."[136]

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[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

[136]H.G. Brauch, "The Mediterranean Space and Boundaries" in M. Antonion and H.G.Brauch (eds.), *The Mediterranean space and its borders: Geography, politics, economics and environment*, Collection Stramend No.14, Madrid, UNISC, 2001.

Other attempts to bring countries of the Mediterranean have been disbanded or have no other ambition than developing a dialogue. As E. Philippart states "Most attempts to bring together countries from different sides of the Mediterranean were either still-born or quickly abandoned, such as the Council of the Mediterranean or the Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean."[137] The "5+5" West Mediterranean Forum established through the initiative of France regrouping five Southern European countries - France, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain - and the five Arab Maghreb Union countries - Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia - launched in 1990, frozen in 1992, re-launched in 2001, has the sole ambition of developing a dialogue and consultation. NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue and its Mediterranean Dialogue Work Program launched in December 1994 are mainly aimed at dispelling misunderstandings about NATO's intentions in the region, and their budget is very small. The institutional features of the EMP have been fairly stable and the only major changes have been made in the management of the EMP financial package.

In conclusion, there is the general view that European Union's policy towards the Mediterranean through EMP has failed to realize the expectations of its instigators. It is frequently stated that the EU has focused too hard on economic liberalization, and not hard enough on political change. At the same time, in spite of some weakness in its policy, through adding important political, social and economic dimensions to the relation, the EU has developed a more comprehensive strategy than the US in the region. The main problems within the EMP would be overcome if the EU would focus more on the explicit interests of partners and address not only its own external security issues, but also the internal integration in the Mediterranean partner countries.

[137]Philippart, op.cit., p.9.

2.3. The European Neighborhood Policy and its Implications for the EU's Policy towards the Middle East

The origin of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) is linked to the 2004 enlargement which brought new neighbors into the EU area. It was mainly designed to address the challenges arising from the Eastern neighbors. It was later extended to the southern neighbors under pressure from southern EU Member States. The idea behind the European Neighborhood Policy including eastern (Belarus,[138] Moldova, Ukraine) and southern neighbors (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya,[139] Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria and Tunisia) was officially adopted by the Thessalonica European Council of 20-21 June, 2003 which endorsed the Conclusions on the European Neighborhood of the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) of 16 June, 2003.[140] Three southern Caucasus countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) were included in the ENP in June 2004. The title 'Wider Europe' was discarded in favor of European Neighborhood Policy.

2.3.1. The Launch of the European Neighborhood Policy

The idea that there was a need for a new policy towards those neighbors that have no immediate prospect for membership after the "big bang" enlargement started to emerge in early 2002. Among the first documents that revealed the necessity of a new policy towards the neighbors were: the proposals sent by the member states

[138] Belarus is not officially part of the ENP, but it will benefit from some programmes that will be carried out in the framework of this policy.

[139] Libya will be able to become part of the ENP if it first adopts the entire acquis of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

[140] These conclusions drew mainly on the Commission Communication. "Wider Europe-Neighbourhood: a new Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours", COM (2003) 104 final/11.3.2003. The Commission Communication "European Neighbourhood Strategy Paper" COM (2004) 373 final /12 May 2004 reformulated some of the objectives of the ENP.

to the Presidency of the European Union at the time held by Spain;[141] the Work Program of the European Commission for 2002;[142] a speech by Commission President Romano Prodi in late 2002;[143] a joint paper by the Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) Javier Solana.[144]

On January 2002, British Foreign Minister Jack Straw expressed his concern for the situation in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova and proposed to offer them some incentives in a letter sent to the Spanish Presidency. The letter sent by Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh and Trade Minister Leif Pagrotsck on 8 March 2002 contained a similar proposal but its geographic scope was extended to include Russia and southern Mediterranean states, in accordance with the "from Russia to Morocco" formula.[145] The Commission Work Program for 2002 also called for a single-framework approach for EU relations with neighboring countries. In December 2002, the Commission President, Romano Prodi, declared: "We have to be prepared to offer more than partnership and less than partnership, without precluding the latter."[146] In Prodi's view, all countries surrounding the Union should become a "circle of friends rather than a threat and, in order for this to happen, the EU should offer them concrete prospects, going as far as to share

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[141] Letter by UK Foreign Minister Jack Straw to the Spanish Presidency of the EU, 28 January 2002; Letter by the Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh and Trade Minister Leif Pagrotsck, 8 March 2002.

[142] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. "The Commission's Work Programme for 2002", COM (2001) 620 final, Brussels 5 December 2001.

[143] Romano Prodi, "A Wider Europe-A Proximity Policy as the key to stability", speech given at the Sixth ECSA World Conference on peace, stability, and security, SPEECH/02/619 Brussels 5 December 2002.

[144] Joint Letter by EU Commissioner Chris Patten and the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, August 2002 http://europa.eu.int/com/world/enp/pdf/_0130163334_001_en.pdf

[145] Michele Comelli, "The Challenges of the European Neighbourhood Policy", *The International Spectator*, Vol. XXXIX, No.3, (July-September 2004), p. 99.

[146] Romano Prodi, A Wider Europe-A Proximity Policy as the key to stability, speech given at the Sixth ECSA World Conference on peace, stability, and security, Brussels, 5 December 2002.

everything but institutions." Finally, Commissioner Patten and High Representative Solana divided the Union's neighbors into three main regional sub-groupings: the Mediterranean, the Western Balkans, Russia and the other Eastern neighbors.

After the various documents concerning the need for a comprehensive neighborhood policy approved by the European Council and the External Relations Council in late 2002, in March 2003 the Commission published a fuller Communication to the Council and the European Parliament entitled "Wider Europe-Neighborhood: a New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbors. It provides a number of proposals defining the future of relations. The foreign ministers meeting in the Thessalonica European Council, in June 2003, responded to the Commission paper and the outcome of the Council was drafted as a paper on European Security Strategy, prepared by Javier Solana and his secretariat entitled "A Secure Europe in a Better World."[147] This strategy paper sets out three objectives for the EU: stability and good governance in the immediate neighborhood, extending the zone of security around Europe, and promoting a ring of well-governed countries to the East of the European neighborhood and on the borders of the Mediterranean.

2.3.2. The Content of European Neighborhood Policy

The main objective of the ENP "is to ensure the creation of a secure, stable and prosperous environment in the EU's Eastern and Southern Neighborhood as well as in the Southern Caucasus without necessarily integrating these neighboring countries into the European Union." European security and its connection with its neighborhood have a primary importance for the EU. In the past, the most effective instrument of the EU to pursue reforms was the prospect of membership. In this case, the EU has not chosen to offer a prospect for membership. European

[147] European Security Strategy, (June 2003), "A Secure Europe in a Better World", presented by Javier Solana at the Thessaloniki European Council.

Neighborhood Policy does not grant neighboring countries integration. As the "Wider Europe-Neighborhood" communications asserts, the aim of the ENP is the development of a relationship which would not, in the medium term, offer a perspective of membership or a role in the Union. It also reveals that the framework under ENP should be seen separate from accession to the EU. The main reason for the decision not to offer the prospect of membership is related with the problems facing EU today as a result of the latest wave of enlargement, which has been called "*enlargement fatigué*".[148]

The idea of separating ENP from accession is reflected in the instruments established under the neighborhood framework. Like the accession negotiation process, the method of Action Plans is bilateral and differentiated according to the ambitions and capabilities of individual neighboring states. Action Plans are comprised of a comprehensive set of chapters including in the first place the Copenhagen political criteria for democracy and human rights, covering the subjects of the acquis such as the EU norms for the four freedoms of movement of goods, services, capital and labor, law of the single market policy. The Action Plans will be layered on top of the existing Association Agreements under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership framework, rather than replacing them. The Action Plans are political agreements, not legally binding treaties and they do not undergo national ratification procedures. The specific contents of the Action Plans[149] are formed with the principle of joint ownership that commitments have to be taken with the consent of both sides. There are differences in the precise agendas of each partner state, but the general structure is the same for all. Thus, while the ENP's general structure is multilateral, it is implemented bilaterally. Progress in meeting the objectives to be monitored in the association or partnership councils established by the existing agreements, and the Commission will publish regular progress reports. On the basis of these reports, the EU could

[148] Comelli, op.cit., p.104.

[149] Seven ENP Action Plans have been negoitated and formally adopted-with Israel, Jordan, Moldova, Morocco the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine. Five more are under preparation with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia and Lebanon.

decide to offer a neighbor more wide-raging contractual framework, which is called a 'European Neighborhood Agreement'.

Action Plans are criticized for having long lists of 'priorities for action' across a wide variety of issues arising from political cooperation to single market legislation. According to Emerson and G. Noutcheva "given the virtually encyclopedic agenda, the degree of specification of many of the bulleted action point is short and banal, as shown by the examples of 'continue progress with the privatization program' or 'strengthen banking regulation and supervision.'"[150] On the other hand, K. Smith criticized the action plans mainly for three reasons.[151] According to the Smith, first, action plans are not clear in terms of who is supposed to be carrying out the action, the EU or the neighboring country. It is not always equally clear how progress will be judged and there is no time span for meeting particular objectives. Secondly, given the political objectives including the specific human rights and democratic principles, Smith asks if it is logical to press governments to implement democratic reforms. Finally, she argues that the action plans reflect the EU's self-interest with the exception of Israel's action plan, which is less a list of things for Israel to do, more a list for the EU and Israel to do together; that is the indication of the more equal standing of the two sides. In the other Action Plans, the asymmetrical relationship between the EU and the neighboring countries can be clearly seen.

The Commission has introduced a financial instrument for all neighboring countries which is called the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), while both candidate countries and potential candidate countries will be covered by a Pre-Accession Instrument.[152] The ENPI will be used in the framework of the bilateral agreements between the Union and the neighboring

[150] Emerson and Noutcheva, op.cit., p.7.

[151] Karen E. Smith, "The outsiders: the European neighbourhood policy", *International Affairs*, Vol. 81, Number 4, (July 2005), p.764.

[152] Michele Comelli, "The approach of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP): distinctive features and differences with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership" paper presented at the IGC Net conference in Brussels on 17 November 2005 (in cooperation with the IEP Paris and TEPSA), p.6.

countries under the framework of Action Plans. The ENPI is to assist harmonization with the EU acquis and support cross-border cooperation between enlarged EU and its new, old neighbors. ENPI will become effective with the new financial perspectives (2007-2013) and replace all the existing financial instruments; TACIS (Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States) and MEDA that EU is currently using to assist its neighbors. If it is approved by the Council and Parliament, the assistance approved by the ENPI could represent an important step forward with respect to present levels of funding. While the ENPI should amount to the total of TACIS and MEDA funds combined in 2007, by 2013 it is expected to rise progressively to double that sum.[153]

The idea behind launching a neighborhood policy arose from the EU's perception that the EU and its neighboring countries are mutually dependent in achieving security, stability and sustainable development. Therefore, several measures to enhance integration and liberalization are included in the framework of ENP. The long-term objective of the ENP is to establish a common economic area with the neighbors. A common economic area will bring the EU and its neighbors closer and the neighboring countries will undertake considerably broader obligations.[154] In order to upgrade political and economic relations, a new policy based on a benchmarking approach proposes 'a stake' to the neighbors in the EU's internal market under the ENP framework. However, in order to obtain such a stake, neighbors has to comply with the thousands pages of the EU acquis and the offer such as "a stake in the single market" is not realistic.

[153] Nathalie Tocci, "Does the ENP Respond to the EU's Post-Enlargement Challenges?", *The International Spectator*, Vol.XL, No.1, (Jan-March 2005),p.24.

[154] Pardo Sharon, "Europe of Many Circles: European Neighbourhood Policy", *Geopolitics*, Vol. 9, No.3 (Autumn 2004), p.733.

2.3.3. From Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to European Neighborhood Policy

The Commission has repeatedly claimed that the neighborhood policy is not going to override the existing framework for EU relations with its neighbors and the scheme is compatible with, and complementary to the Barcelona Process. The Council states that the European Neighborhood Policy will not override the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership[155] and the Commission Strategy Paper[156] makes clear that the ENP relating to the Southern Mediterranean will be implemented through the Barcelona Process and the bilateral Association Agreements with each Southern Mediterranean country. However many scholars have emphasized the change from the EMP to ENP. According to Del Sarto and Schumacher, the EU's Neighborhood Policy constitutes an important policy shift within EU policy towards the south which is a clear reflection of the EU's internal dynamics.[157] Comelli also asserts that "the application of the ENP to Southern Mediterranean countries appears artificial, and the relationship between the ENP and EMP seems difficult because of the two initiatives' different origins and rationales."[158] It can be argued that the ENP mainly differs from the EMP in three important points with regard to the Middle East.

First, there is the shift in the ENP from the principles of multilateralism and regionalism that characterize the Barcelona Process to the principle of differentiated bilateralism. Although the Barcelona Process includes a bilateral dimension through the Association agreements, its main objectives were to be achieved multilaterally such as "the creation of an area of peace and stability in the Mediterranean and the establishment of a free trade zone in the Mediterranean

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[155] *General Affairs and External Relations Council, Presidency Conclusions,* June 2003.

[156] COM (2004) 373 final, cit, p.6.

[157] Raffaella A. Del Sarto and Tobias Schumacher, "From EMP to ENP: What's at Stake with the European Neighbourhood Policy towards the Southern Mediterranean?", *European Foreign Affairs Review,* Vol. 10, Number 1, (2005) p.19.

[158] Comelli, op.cit., p.14.

in 2010." It was related with the nature of EMP which was inspired by the positive developments in the Middle East Peace Process of the early 1990s. Conversely the ENP adopts a differentiated and bilateral approach in which EU treated all twelve non-EU Mediterranean countries differently, whereby the EU's treatment of its neighbors would vary in accordance with each neighbor's particular peculiarities and needs.[159] While the general aim of the ENP is to create a zone of security, stability and prosperity on the eastern and southern periphery of the EU, 'wider Europe' no longer relies on the EMP's idea of encompassing the 'Euro-Mediterranean region'.[160] The difference between EMP and ENP in terms of their dimension can be used in a way in which they can generate positive results in the Mediterranean through providing regional cooperation mainly through the EMP and political and economic reforms through the ENP.

The second peculiar feature of ENP is related with the principle of conditionality. While the EMP introduced the principle of negative conditionality, the ENP is based on the principle of positive conditionality. The principle of conditionality relates with the differentiated bilateralism existent in the ENP. In the framework of the Barcelona Process, the EU used theoretically negative conditionality in Association Agreements through stating that the agreements may be suspended if the respective partner state violated the respect for human rights, even though the EU has never be used this clause. Conversely, the "Wider Europe-Neighborhood" communication explicitly endorsed the principle of positive conditionality, saying that "in return for concrete progress demonstrating shared values and effective implementation of political, economic and institutional reforms, including aligning legislation with the acquis, the EU's neighbors should benefit from the prospect of closer integration with the EU."[161] In this framework, the "EU does

[159] Guy Harpaz, "The Obstacles and Challenges That Lie Ahead for a Successful Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy as a Social Engineering and Peace-Promotion Instrument, The Israeli Association for the Study of the European Integration, Working Paper 2/04, p.10-11.

[160] Del Sarto and Schumacher, op.cit., p.6.

[161] COM (2003) 104 final, cit, p.10.

not seek to impose conditions or priorities on its partners;"[162] instead the ENP relies on a benchmarking approach. Through this benchmarking approach, the EU explicitly states that only the countries actively meeting the targeted reforms defining in the Action Plans will gain from the European Neighborhood Policy.

Third, in the framework of the ENP, "the EU is much more straightforward regarding the question of what its genuine interests are."[163] Although the security and economic interests of the member states motivated the formation of the Barcelona Process, the main reason to launch a neighborhood policy is defined in more concrete terms: to cope with the effects of the "big bang" enlargement. When the Commission documents are examined, it is seen that the EU states the issues that are in its interest. Thus, the ENP was not designed to address socio-economic problems in the EU's periphery in the first place; it was rather launched in order to respond to the challenges arising from the new neighbors through defining the EU's interests.

2.3.4. General Assessment of the European Neighborhood Policy

However, it is not possible to evaluate thoroughly the results of the ENP yet even though a variety of studies have been devoted to the analysis of the new policy. Some scholars criticize the shift from EMP to ENP for departing from logic of multilateralism and regional cooperation in the Mediterranean to logic of differentiated bilateral relations. However, some literature claims that the ENP approach, based on conditionality and bilateralism, might inject a new driving force into Euro-Mediterranean relations and could be positive for the role of the EU in the Mediterranean.[164]

[162] COM (2004) 373 final, p.8.

[163] Del Sarto and Schumacher, op.cit., p.25.

[164] Emerson and Noutcheva, op.cit., p.7.

First of all, it is argued that the ENP is a result of a process in which the EU is primarily concerned with itself, not with the realities of its southern periphery. The ENP was mainly motivated by the internal dynamics and not external factors since it responds to the challenges arising from EU's changed composition and geo-strategy in view of the last round of enlargement. The ENP reflects a shift within the EU's perspective and self-perception and reveals a new dimension of how the EU considers itself and its neighbors. Thus, the ENP scheme was not aimed at addressing the socio-economic development, stability or regional security of the EU's Mediterranean partners. As opposed to the EMP framework which stressed the importance of north-south and south-south co-operation, the ENP explicitly forms a centre-periphery approach. It is criticized that, with the ENP, the EU openly acknowledges the unequal power relations between itself and its neighbors.[165]

In relation with the unequal relationship setting under the framework of ENP, Emerson argues that none of the clients seem happy with the ENP, especially the Mediterranean states which consider it smacks too much of Euro-centrism. According to Emerson, the ENP's aim is the Europeanization of the EU's neighbors through the transformation of national politics in line with modern European values and standards.[166]

In general, most authors are critical of the idea of putting Eastern and Southern neighbors in a single basket. It is seen as a challenge for the EU to connect the disparate countries and regions under the same framework. It is a policy to strengthen the bilateral links between the EU and each neighbor. K. Smith defines ENP as "a policy for neighbors rather than a neighborhood policy".[167] Having no defined framework providing for regular meetings or contracts among all of the

[165] Del Sarto and Schumacher, op.cit., p.25.

[166]Michael Emerson, Deepening the Wider Europe, Centre for European Policy Studies, January 2005, http://www.ceps.be/Article.php?article_id=17

[167] Smith, op.cit., p.771.

neighbors reflects the geographical extent of the neighborhood.[168] Comelli asserts that addressing eastern, southern Mediterranean and Caucasian countries irrespective of their differences could cause disappointment in those countries that have clearly stated desire to join the Union, even if only in the long term.[169]

Another challenge that the ENP includes is related with the lack of clarity in what is being offered to the neighboring states in exchange for their co-operation in carrying out economic and political reforms. Neighboring countries are interested in access to the negotiations, but it is not sure if the EU will be willing to start the negotiations The EU and particularly the neighboring states are reluctant to grant concessions. A related problem is whether the conditionality principle can be applied to neighboring countries or more specifically to the Southern Mediterranean countries.

It is argued that the downgrading of the Barcelona Process' regional dimension and strengthening the bilateral relations with the single Mediterranean countries is likely to result in a slowdown in regional cooperation at the political, security and trade levels. Thus the ENP might hinder some of the main aims of the EMP. However, most scholars shared the idea that the ENP could also have positive results in some other respects. Although the EMP set very ambitious policies, it has so far failed to achieve most of its commitments with regard to the regional co-operation and to the bilateral relations with the EU. With a differentiated approach depending on a bilateral relationship, individual countries may upgrade their relations with the EU.

With regard to the Mediterranean, the ENP corrects a number of problems of the EMP, at least theoretically. First, the bilateral and differentiated approach may be beneficial for the EU and Mediterranean partners. For the EU, it provides more leverage to exert its political and economic influence in the neighborhood. On the

[168] *Ibid*

[169] Comelli, op.cit., p.107.

other hand, for the southern partners, the ENP's bilateral and differentiated focus responds to their particular needs and increases the opportunity to increase their concerns. Second, the introduction of the principle of "joint ownership" is certainly a positive development. The joint ownership principle provides the involvement of partner states in the determination of the priorities, termed "Action Plan"; however, it is questionable if this principle will be implemented. Third, related to the "positive conditionality," states willing to reform will benefit from aid or trade concessions and this will force resistant states to pursue reforms. Finally, with regard to the EU's role in the Middle East Peace Process, it is argued that the ENP's individual benchmarking approach could increase the chance of EU's ambition of being an even-handed broker in the peace process.[170]

In spite of assessments on the positive and negative sides of the ENP, it seems too early to assess its impact. Time will show if the ENP is adequate to deal with the neighbors, if it will foster a friendly neighborhood and a "ring of friends" and if it will correct a number of shortcomings of the EMP. However, it is clear that the ENP should help the partner countries to reform their political and economic systems through the Action Plans but it must also cover a regional dimension in order to foster the regional co-operation contained in the EMP.

[170] Comelli, op.cit., p.16.

CHAPTER 3
THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) has always been an important issue on the political agenda of the European Union, in which the Union tried to articulate a common policy while finding solutions to the conflict. Since the beginning of the 1990s the EU has secured a more notable presence in the MEPP, from which it had earlier been excluded. This is due to the strengthened role of the EU in the Middle East through the adoption of a comprehensive regional strategy, as outlined in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. However, the EU's credibility in the solution of the conflict continues to be weakened by the lack of political unity, institutional weaknesses and bureaucratic complexities. In this context, the United States protects its dominant position in the MEPP because of its strong political and military capabilities. However, Europe has certain strengths such as greater economic penetration, geographical proximity and more intensive relations with some of the Arab parties involved in the dispute. The EU's strengths provide an important complementary role to US efforts to secure an enduring peace settlement.

3.1. Evolution of the EU's Role in the Middle East Peace Process

3.1.1. The Brussels Declaration

The European Union's attempts to play, collectively, a role independent of the superpowers in the Arab-Israeli peace process, can be traced back to the 1970s. In October 1973, Egypt and Syria launched the Yom Kippur War against Israel. The reactions to the war did not come from the EC, but from the separate member states. Whereas the US gave its full support to Israel, the European states showed a pro-Arab orientation. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC) oil embargo of 1973 was important in setting this orientation since

Europe depended for 80 percent of its energy supplies from the region, as compared to only 12 percent for the United States.[171]

Following the oil embargo, the EC agreed on a common declaration named the Brussels Declaration on 6 November, 1973. In the Declaration, the EC member states declared that a peace agreement should be based on the following points:

- the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force;
- the need for Israel to end the territorial occupation, which it has maintained since the conflict of 1967;
- respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries;
- recognition that in the establishment of a just and lasting peace account must be taken of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians[172]

Following the Brussels Declaration, a delegation of Arab Foreign Ministers met at a Summit of Community Heads of State in Copenhagen in December 1973 and they proposed a dialogue and cooperation with the Community in the hope of using Europe against the USA. However, the EC rejected any attempt to discuss the issue within the Euro-Arab dialogue framework. Even so, the Community's efforts to play a mediatory role in the Arab-Israel conflict after the oil crisis was perceived from the Israeli and US perspective as an attempt to place its interests in energy security before those of peacemaking.[173]

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[171] Roland Dannreuther, "Europe and the Middle East: Towards a Substantive Role in the Peace Process?", Geneva Center for Security Policy, Occasional Paper Series, No.39, (August 2002), p.4.

[172] Christopher Hill, Karen Smith, *European Foreign Policy: Key Documents*, (London: Routledge, 2000), p.300.

[173] Dannreuther, op.cit., p.4.

3.1.2. The Venice Declaration

The European Union's basic position on the MEPP was first formulated by the European Council in its Venice Declaration of 13 June, 1980. The Venice Declaration marked the emergence of a distinct and common European stance towards the Arab-Israeli conflict and outlined a collective position for a peaceful resolution. The Community repeated its call for a comprehensive solution to the conflict and committed itself to work in a more concrete way towards the peace process. The Venice Declaration was the strongest, clearest and the most advanced position adopted by the Community on the Middle East question, and was perceived as a major step in shaping European foreign policy; and it still constitutes the basic principles of European policy towards the peace process.[174] The Declaration gave notice of Europe's willingness to become more involved in the peace process.

In the preamble to the Declaration the member states of the EC stated that "the traditional ties and common interests which link Europe to the Middle East" obliged them to play a "special role in the pursuit of regional peace." The Declaration prepared the ground for a distinctive European approach on Palestinian rights by stating that the Palestinian problem was not simply one of refugees, and that the Palestinian people must be placed in a position to exercise fully their right to self-determination. Significantly, the member states called for the inclusion of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in any negotiations for a settlement. The Declaration stressed that the Israeli settlements constituted a serious obstacle to the peace process and that these settlements were illegal under international law. The EC also stated that it would not accept any unilateral initiative designed to change the status of Jerusalem.[175]

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[174] Piening, op.cit., p.75.

[175] "Declaration of the European Council on the Euro-Arab Dialogue and the Situation in the Middle East", European Council, Venice, 12-13 June 1980.

The Venice Declaration seriously damaged Israel's relations with the European Community, from which it has never fully recovered. From the issuing of the Declaration in June 1980 to the convening of the Madrid Peace Conference in November 1991, Israel opposed any European attempt to play a significant role in the peace process and accused Europeans of solely representing the Arab position. In terms of providing an assertive European role in the peace process, the Declaration proved to be a failure. For Israel, the Declaration confirmed Europe's anti-Israel bias.[176] The Israeli cabinet issued a statement, as a response, two days after the Declaration:

> "Nothing will remain of the Venice decision but a bitter memory. The decision calls on us and other nations to bring into the peace process that group of Arabs which calls itself "the Palestinian Liberation Organization"... all men of good will in Europe, and all men who revere liberty, will see this document as another Munich-like capitulation to totalitarian blackmail and a spur to all those seeking to undermine the Camp David Accords and deny the peace process in the Middle East".[177]

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon on 6 June, 1982 which aimed to eliminate the PLO as an independent political force, and to cut Syria down to size and neutralize it as a threat to Israel, made the Community even more critical of Israel's policies. EU member states endorsed the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination and the PLO as the representatives of the Palestinian people.[178] Over the next few years, the Community adopted a pro-Arab position in the conflict, and moreover it asserted its willingness to play a significant role in the resolution of the conflict. However, its voice was completely ignored by Israel. The position of the Community in its declarations was perceived by Israel as mirroring that taken by the Arabs, therefore effectively removing Europe as a

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[177] Joel Peters, "Europe and the Middle East Peace Process" in Stelios Stravridis et al *The Foreign Policies for Southern European States*, (London: Macmillan, 1999), p.299.

[178] Ibid, p.300.

potential mediator between the two sides.[179] The criticism of Israel in Europe increased with Israel's forceful response to the Palestinian Intifada initiated in December 1987.

The positions and diplomacy adopted by the European Community during the 1980s did not result in an important role for the Community in the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arab states expressed their satisfaction by the position taken by the European states. On the other hand Israel denounced European diplomacy for its one-sidedness, in which Europeans were making increasing demands upon Israel without making equal demands on the Arab side. Because of the Community's pro-Palestinian position, it effectively removed itself as a potential mediator between the two sides.

3.1.3. The Madrid Peace Process and the Oslo Accords

International efforts to re-launch the Arab-Israeli peace process were intensified with the end of the Gulf War in 1991. There were hopes that an international conference under the auspices of the UN would be convened. By this route, the European Community would be able to play a key role in the peace process. However, the United States alone took it upon itself to set up an institutional conference to deal with the Arab-Israeli conflict. In the Madrid Conference convened by the United States and co-sponsored by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) on 30 October, 1991, the European Community was offered only a minor role. The Community played no part in the bilateral negotiations that followed the Madrid Conference. Instead, it was invited to participate only in the multilateral talks, which were set up by the meeting in Madrid. It was not given a seat in the bilateral negotiations held in Washington under the auspices of the United States; instead the members of the Community were given the role of operating within the framework of five working groups of the multilateral talks set

[179] Joel Peters, "Europe and Arab-Israeli Peace Process: The Declaration of the European Council of Berlin and Beyond" in Behrendt and Hanelt (ed.), *Bound to Cooperate: Europe and the Middle East*, (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 2000), p.156.

up by the Madrid Conference. The multilateral talks, comprising five working groups covering arms control and regional security, water, environment, refugees and regional economic development were designed to bring together Israel, its Arab neighbors and the other Arab states in the Maghreb and Gulf.[180]

The European Union ran the Regional Economic Development Working Group (REDGW), the largest of the five working groups and the one which reflected the broader goals of the multilateral track. The EU has been active in promoting ideas and ventures for future economic cooperation among the parties of the region. The experience of the EU was taken as an example in which functional cooperation spilled over into the regional peace. The first three of these talks held in Brussels (May 1992), Paris (October 1992) and Rome (May 1993) focused on areas such as communications and transport, energy, tourism, agriculture, financial markets, trade, training, networks, financial markets, trade, training, networks, institutions, sectors and principles.[181]

The fourth round of talks took place in Copenhagen after the signing of the Declaration of Principles between Israel and Palestinians on 13 October, 1993. European states felt a sense of satisfaction that a policy they had been advocating since 1980, namely the necessity of involving the PLO in negotiations, had finally been adopted by Israel. However, it could be argued that the strategies adopted by the Union since the Venice Declaration had little impact on the Arab-Israeli conflict or in bringing Israel and the PLO together. Whilst the European states have drawn the right conclusions, they have not been successful in turning these declarations into an effective strategy.

Negotiations were continued with bilateral and multilateral talks concluded at Oslo in August 1993. A key promise of the Oslo talks was that the formal peace

[180] Joel Peters, "The Arab-Israeli Multilateral Peace Talks and the Barcelona Process: Competition or Convergence?", *The International Spectator*, Volume XXXIII, No.4, (October-December 1998), p.65.

[181] Ibid.

agreements would produce greater trust and security for both sides.[182] On 13 September, 1993 the agreed-upon formula called the Declaration of Principles (DOP) was signed by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Perez and PLO Executive member Mahmud Abbas, in the presence of Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, PLO Chairman Arafat, USA President Clinton and the Russian Foreign Minister. By the DOP, Israel and the PLO formally recognized each other via exchanged letters. The mutual recognition is one of the important steps in the peace process.

The breakthrough between Israel and Palestinians in Oslo led to a boost in the activities within the multilateral framework and also increased the role of the EU in the peace process and in shaping the regional economic order. Thirty-three new ventures were outlined in the newly adopted Copenhagen Action Plan, which formed the basis of the activities of the REDGW. New initiatives were announced in the Rabat (June 1994) and the Bonn (January 1995) meetings within the sphere of the Copenhagen Action Plan. The working group also agreed in Rabat to establish a smaller monitoring committee. Multilateral talks as a whole slowed down in 1996, in parallel with the stalemate in bilateral negotiations; however, the Union furthered its goals of regional economic integration and development via the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Program.

After the signing of the Declaration of Principles the European Union announced that it would be releasing an immediate aid package of thirty-five million ECUs for the PLO. At the donors' conference held on 1 October, 1993, member states of the European Union collectively pledged an additional 500 million ECUs, spread over a period of five years, for the economic recovery and the development needs of the Palestinian territories. The financial assistance had been impressive: the EU has provided over 50 percent of the international community's assistance coordinated by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee co-chaired by the EU and Norway.

[182] David Malkovsky, "Middle East Through Partition", *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 80, No.2, (March/April 2001), p.28.

Grants and loans from the EU and its member states amounted to 3.47 billion ECUs between 1994 and 2001.[183]

The influence of the EU on the peace process gradually grew both politically and economically, and it gave its full support to any peace initiatives and plans such as the Cairo Agreements between Israel and the PLO on Palestinian authority (May 1994), to the installation of the Palestinian Authority (July 1994), and the signature of the Peace Treaty between Israel and Jordan (October 1994). In 1994, EU continued to be the main economic contributor to the Palestinian territories with US $ 450 million.[184]

3.1.4. Joint EU-US Action Plan

Although the US is regarded as the main arbiter in the Middle East Peace Process, it has tried to strengthen the dialogue with the EU in relation to this issue. These attempts were formalized with the Transatlantic Declaration on 21 November, 1990. After that the basis of EU-US political relations was strengthened in the New Transatlantic Agenda and the Joint EU-US Action Plan adopted on 3 December, 1995 in Madrid.[185] The Joint Action Plan confirmed the importance of the Middle East for both sides of the Atlantic. However, the EU remained only an economic donor and could only attend the Oslo Agreement and the Interim Agreement, which developed the Middle East Peace Process, as a special witness.

The Joint Action Plan included the common EU-US commitments to work together to make peace, stability and prosperity in the Middle East a reality. The transatlantic relations have been improved with the New Transatlantic Agenda

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[183] Alain Dieckhoff, "The European Union and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict", *Journal Inroads*, Issue No: 16, (Winter-Spring 2005), p.55.

[184] Pedro Lopez Aguirrebengoa, "Transatlantic Coordination and the Middle East Peace Process", in Jörg Monar (ed.), *The New Transatlantic Agenda and the Future of EU-US Relations*, (London: Kluwer Law International Press, 1998), p.38.

[185] Ibid.

and Joint Action Plan. The decision of the US and the EU to work together in the solution of the conflict, and their satisfaction with the signature of the Interim Agreement between Israel and PLO in Washington in September 1995 increased the hopes for a peaceful settlement. However, the general elections in Israel of 29 May, 1996 and the coming into power of Benjamin Netanyahu slowed down the Middle East Peace Process.

3.1.5. Pro-Active Policies of France and the Increased Role of the EU in the Peace Process

France, under the presidency of Jacques Chirac, has sought to exert a proactive role in the resolution of the conflict independent of the United States and Europe. Throughout his trip to Syria, Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon in April and October 1996, Chirac called for the creation of the Palestinian state and the total withdrawal of Israel from the Golan Heights and Lebanon. He also suggested that total involvement of the European Union should be included with the US and Russia as a co-sponsors of the peace process. Chirac antagonized Israeli sensibilities by snubbing the Knesset in favor of the Palestinian Council, and by complaining that Israeli security was preventing him from having direct contact with Palestinians in Jerusalem.[186]

The French Foreign Minister Herve de Charlette's shuttle diplomacy in response to crisis following Israel's April 1996 "Grapes of Wrath" operation in Lebanon led to the institutionalization of a French role in the cease-fire monitoring commission along with the US, Syria, Lebanon and Israel that evolved out of the operation. In this mission, the French succeeded in staking a claim to involvement in the process based on its historic links with Lebanon, despite US and Israeli reservations and against a backdrop of EU inactivity.[187]

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[186] Joseph Alpher, "The Political Role of the European Union in the Arab-Israel Peace Process:An Israeli Perspective, *The International Spectator*, Volume XXXIII, No.4 (October-December 1998), p.82.

[187] Ibid.

In the beginning, France's "go it alone" policies were opposed by the member states who rejected France's attempts to speak on their behalf. However, in the following days French activism in the region led to increased diplomatic activism in the MEPP by the European Union. One of the outcomes of the decision by the EU to play a more visible political role was the decision taken in Luxembourg at the end of October 1996 by the Ministers' meeting of the General Affairs Council, to appoint a special European envoy to the peace process. Miguel Angel Moratinos[188] - at that point serving as the Spanish ambassador to Israel - was appointed to this position. It was decided that the special envoy would be guided by the authority of the President of the General Affairs Council and he would report to the Council's bodies. The decision to appoint a European envoy to the Peace Process was seen by Israel as a sign of European efforts to support the Arabs by exerting public pressure on Israel. The USA was also against the EU's involvement in the peace process through the appointment of a special envoy, not to the nomination but because, from the American perspective "it could prove to be a self-defeating move for the EU".[189]

The EU Special Envoy M. Moratinos was empowered by the EU not only to monitor the actions of the parties and observe peace negotiations, but also to offer good offices, contribute to the implementation of agreements, and discuss problems of good compliance. Moratinos successfully filled the vacuum created by the stalemate in the process and the reduced activity of US mediator Denis Ross. Although he was helpful at various times in maintaining momentum between Israel and PLO, particularly by providing additional assurances for the January 1997 agreement, his mission never challenged the American supremacy nor sought in any way to pressure Israel. Moratinos believed that the EU would be increasingly involved in the peace process, though always in a secondary role.[190]

[188] On 14 July 2003, Ambassador Marc Otte succeeded him in this post.

[189] Aguirrebengoa, op.cit, p.43.

[190] Ibid.

The activist role taken by the EU states, the Israeli "Grapes of Wrath" operation in Lebanon, the election of the Netanyahu government in March 1996, the opening of a tunnel near Arab holy places in Jerusalem in November, and the decision to construct a new Israeli settlement in East Jerusalem in February 1997 led to the deterioration of Israeli-EU relations.[191] The EU's response to Israel's aggressive policies produced numerous angry declarations, the most significant one being the Luxembourg Declaration of October 1996, all of which were highly critical of Israel.[192]

The European Council of Luxembourg of 12-13 December, 1997 had established a frame of orientations for an EU policy directed at reestablishing confidence among the parties and facilitating the peace process. At the Cardiff European Council on 15-16 June, 1998, the Heads of State and the Government of the European Union underlined the need for all concerned to show courage and vision in search for peace, based on the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the principles agreed on at Madrid and Oslo, including full implementation of existing commitments under the Israeli/Palestinian Interim Agreements and the Hebron Protocol. In this context, the Union repeated its opposition to Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and it called upon the Palestinian people to reaffirm their commitment to the legitimate right of Israel to live within safe, recognized borders.[193]

3.1.6. The Berlin Declaration

Under Netanyahu, relations between Israel and the European Union deteriorated, reaching its lowest level in March 1999 with the issuing of the Berlin Declaration in which Europe came out with its most explicit statement in support of

[191] Dannreuther, op.cit, p.9.

[192] "EU Declaration on the Middle East Peace Process", *European Union Press Release*, No.59/96, 1 0ctober 1996.

[193] Pedro Lopez Aguirrebengoa, op.cit., p.45.

Palestinian statehood. The EU reaffirmed "the continuing and unqualified Palestinian right to self-determination including the option of a state." It looked forward "to the early fulfillment of this right" and declared "its readiness to consider the recognition of a Palestinian state in course."[194] Netanyahu denounced the Berlin Declaration and Europe by stating that "it is a shame that Europe, where a third of the Jewish people were killed, should take a stand which puts Israel at risk and goes against our interest."[195] Israel dismissed the Berlin Declaration as an attempt to dictate the outcome of negotiations with the Palestinians. The EU had provided substantial funds to the Palestinians, and appointed a special coordinator to assist the PA in the area of security. Although it was dismissed by Israel, it was argued that the diplomatic purpose of the decision to support a Palestinian state was coordinated with the United States to dissuade Yasser Arafat from unilaterally declaring a Palestinian state.[196]

3.1.7. A More Political Role for Europe

The period between 1998-2000 can be seen as the historic high point of an intensive and constructive EU presence and role in the MEPP. Successful EU initiatives and institutional developments led the Clinton administration to give the EU a more intensive diplomatic role in the peace process. This was a role in which EU would not try to balance the US role in the region but could complement the efforts made by the US leaders. This modest role assigned to the EU decreased the transatlantic tensions and created some advantages for the US in utilizing the EU's good offices while searching for a settlement. In particular, the US realized that it could use the EU as a third party in its contacts with the Palestinians. When US-prompted agreements between Israel and the Palestinians

[194] "European Summit in Berlin", March 1999. Text found in Le Monde Diplomatique, http://mondediplo.com/focus/mideast/a2310

[195] Joel Peters, "Europe and Arab-Israeli Peace Process: The Declaration of the European Council of Berlin and Beyond" in Behrendt and Hanelt (ed.), *Bound to Cooperate: Europe and the Middle East*, (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 2000), p.157.

[196] Dannreuther, op.cit, p.9.

were reached, such as the Hebron Protocol of 1997 or the Wye River Memorandum of 1999, both the US and the EU signed letters of reassurances in support of the implementation of these agreements.[197]

In general, the EU has developed new instruments in the sphere of its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and has been able to achieve a stronger presence in the peace process through the activities of its Special Envoy, and the High Representative Javier Solana, since 1999. The introduction of the office of High Representative has contributed to giving a greater visibility to the EU's CFSP towards the region.

With the election of Ehud Barak as the Prime Minister in May 1999, hopes for the peace process increased. The parties came together in Egypt and signed the Sharm al Sheikh Agreement in September 1999, and in May 2000 Israel withdrew from Lebanon. In the next months Barak and Arafat met at Camp David twenty-two years after the negotiations between Israel and Egypt. However, negotiations for a final settlement ended in a deadlock in July 2000. The visit of opposition leader Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount Haram al-Sharif on 28 September 2000 led to the beginning of Palestinian uprising known as the *intifada*.[198]

Since the collapse of the Oslo process and the outbreak of the second, or Al-Aqsa Intifada, the EU and its member states have become increasingly active in crisis management, and have assumed a more active role in the resolution of the conflict.[199] The EU has realized that its support for peace building and economic development cannot produce results without a genuine peace process. It has assumed more of a political role and searched for a way out of the cycle of violence. During the violent confrontations of the intifada, the EU became

[197] Ibid.

[198] Ron Pundak, "From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?", *Survival*, Vol.43, No.3, (Autumn 2001), p.31.

[199] Muriel Asseburg, "From Declarations to Implementations? The Three Dimensions of European Policy Towards the Conflict" in Martin Ortega (ed), *The European Union and the Crisis in the Middle East*, Institute for Security Studies. Chaillot Papers, no:62, (July 2003), p.13.

increasingly engaged in efforts at crisis management. Even though these activities have not been publicized by the international media, there have been a quite number of cases in which the EU has been successful in de-escalating tensions. Nevertheless, in the absence of political will on the part of conflicting parties, EU activities have had only limited and temporary effect.[200]

After the Camp David talks collapsed, the US tried to bring the parties together and re-activate the peace process. The US offered proposals to bring the parties closer but in practice the parties came together in the semi-official meetings at Taba in January 2001 in which there was no US presence. The only outside observer was the EU's Special Envoy, Miguel Moratinos who was asked by both parties to listen to their respective points of view. His "non-paper" became the jointly recognized record.[201] An international summit in Sharm al-Shaykh, Egypt on 16 December 2000 set up a commission under former Senator George Mitchell to look into the violence and High Representative Javier Solana participated into the Commission.[202] Representation of the EU by Solana was very important for the EU in that its efforts related to the peace process were taken into consideration and this paved the way for the Union's greater involvement.

3.1.8. The Quartet and the Road Map

After the September 11, 2001 attacks, US-EU differences over the Arab-Israel conflict became clearer. The terrorist attacks changed the political priorities of US and it swiftly turned to the Middle East. In the framework of the new doctrine of "pre-emptive action" which was declared on 1 June, 2002, the US decided to attack Iraq and change the vision of the Middle East through implementing

[200] Ibid.

[201] Miguel Moratinos, " Les minutes des négociations de Taba ", Le Monde Diplomatique, January 2001.

[202] Carol Migdalovitz, "The Middle East Peace Talks", Congressional Research Service, received through the CRS Web, February 2005.

reforms. For Europeans, the most urgent problem to be solved in the region was the Arab-Israeli conflict and they put the resolution of the conflict as a precondition for successful reforms to be implemented in the region and for its stability. Contrary to Europe, the US has become convinced that the road to Jerusalem leads through Baghdad.[203] However, in order to build a broad international coalition in its struggle, the US could not leave aside the Arab states in the region and had to take into account their concerns about the ongoing violence in the Middle East.

In a speech of June 2002, George W. Bush was the first serving US president to make Palestinian statehood alongside Israel, the officially preferred US recipe for conflict resolution. The president made realization of his vision conditional on political reforms that would remove Palestinian leader Yassir Arafat from the centre of power in the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza.[204] In spite of the fact that Arafat had been elected president of Palestinian Authority in an election largely funded and monitored by the European Union in 1996 under the Oslo Accords, the EU decided to go along with this requirement to reactivate the peace process.[205] However, the EU, so far, has always recognized Arafat as the elected leader of the Palestinian people.[206]

Representatives from the EU, the UN, Russia and the USA formed a group known as the Quartet which would prepare the "Road Map" for the resolution of the conflict on 10 April, 2002. In order to operationalize President Bush's vision for Middle East peace, put forward in the June 2002 speech, a three-phase Road Map was finally agreed upon at the informal meeting of EU foreign ministers in Elsinore on 30 August, 2002. In the Road Map, the international community led

[203] Felix Neugart, "The Future of European Policies in the Middle East after the Iraq War", Discussion Paper, presented by Bertelsmann Group for Policy Research to the VIII.Kronberg Talks, Bertelsmann Foundation, Gütersloh, (2003), p.3.

[204] www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/print/20020624-3.html

[205] Rosemary Hollis, "The Israeli-Palestinian road block: can Europeans make a difference?", *International Affairs*, Vol. 80, No.2 (March 2004), p.193.

[206] Sharon Spiteri, "Muted Response to US Proposal to Replace Arafat", Euobserver, 26.06.2002.

by the United States, the EU, the UN and Russia proposed a plan envisioning a Palestinian State and a peace settlement by 2005.[207] The Road Map has replaced the Oslo process as the internationally supported route to peace.

The Road Map brought forward by the Quartet in October 2002 is generally seen as an important success for European diplomacy. It is argued that the statements of the EU criticizing the Israeli-American "security first" approach had considerable influence on the formation of the Road Map. The EU was also successful in pushing its approach by expressing the need for a realistic political perspective and making it a joint US/UN/EU/Russian initiative. The EU worked with the US in spite of the different priorities.

The EU and other partners of the Quartet worked together to persuade the US to become more engaged in the peace process. However, the US was totally focused on its military intervention in Iraq. While the US was dealing with Iraq, other Quartet members focused on the realization of reforms in Palestinian Authority and a Palestinian Task Force worked with EU and World Bank officials throughout 2002 and 2003. At the same time, the EU was pushing the US to launch the Road Map. The US administration, however, refused to declare the Road Map before the Israeli elections of January 2003 and before the end of war in Iraq.[208]

Finally, the Road Map was formally launched by the United States on 30 April, 2003 -- just one month after Mahmud Abbas (Abu Mazen) was appointed Palestinian Prime Minister. Mahmud Abbas, a veteran negotiator, was supported by the US and Israel on the grounds that he could confront the Palestinian militants. In the Aqaba Summit held on 4 June, 2003 Prime Minister Mahmud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon pledged to fulfill the conditions of the Road Map before US President George W. Bush. Despite his considerable contribution, High Representative Javier Solana was not invited to this important

[207] "Middle East Road Map: Plan for a Permanent Two-State Solution", *International Debates*, May 2004, pp.136-139.

[208] Hollis, op.cit., p.194.

meeting, but the European Commission declared that it would be delivering €100 million for the Palestinian Authority to support the implementation of the Road Map.[209] In the Aqaba meeting, Mahmud Abbas committed himself to unify the Palestinian security services and to put an end to terrorist attacks on Israelis. Indeed, a period of calm did follow agreement by leaders of the Islamist movement Hamas to a temporary truce -- or *hudna* -- which Abbas promoted. However, in the late summer of 2003, hopes to restart the peace process were lost and the *hudna* failed to prevent other Palestinian suicide bombings against Israel.[210] It was also realized that the Road Map would not bring the expected solution to the conflict since it was declared only after the scheduled date for the completion of first phase had already passed.

3.2. Recent Developments in the Peace Process

Towards the end of 2003, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon declared that "to ensure a Jewish and democratic Israel," he would unilaterally disengage from the Palestinians by re-deploying Israeli forces and relocating settlements in the Gaza Strip. He also said that Israel would intensify construction of security fence and that Israel would co-ordinate "to the maximum with the United States."[211]

While giving its support to dismantle the settlements in Gaza and parts of the West Bank, the EU expressed its concerns over Israel's settlement plans and the "separation fence." The EU issued a strong statement expressing "deep concern" over Israel's settlement expansion plans, saying that it violated international humanitarian laws, the relevant UN resolutions and the Road Map peace plan. The EU also issued statements on the separation fence by indicating that the

[209] Richard Carter, "EU in fresh bid to boost Mid East role", Euobserver, 18.07.2003.

[210] Hollis, op.cit., p.194.

[211] For text of Sharon's speech, see http://www.israelemb.org/current_events.html

construction of a separation barrier by Israel, extending deep into the Palestinian Territories, was a major obstacle to progress in the peace process.[212]

However, it was asserted by the European authorities that the disengagement plan should include important steps towards withdrawal from the occupied territories. The European Council has set five elements that parties will follow for the initiative to work in the Brussels European Council meeting (25-26 March 2004). In the meeting, the Council noted the proposals for an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and it stated that such a withdrawal could represent a significant step towards the implementation of the Road Map, provided that the initiative takes place in the context of the Road Map, that it is a step towards a two-state solution, that there is no transfer of settlement activity to the West Bank, that there is a negotiated handover of responsibility to the Palestinian authority, and that it facilitates the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Gaza by Israel.[213]

In April 2004, Sharon went to the US to present his unilateral disengagement plan to President Bush. The President welcomed Sharon's disengagement plan and called it "historic and courageous."[214] Contrary to Bush's statements on the disengagement plan, the EU has reacted with wariness because until that date, the US had viewed Jewish settlements as an obstacle to peace. The EU Commission perceived this as a different position unanimously agreed on by the EU and called the Quartet to meet as soon as possible on this shift on the US's part.[215]

The President of the Palestinian Authority, Yassir Arafat died on 11 November, 2004. Authorities of the Union expressed their deep condolences on the demise of Arafat and offered support for the electoral process for the election of a new

[212] Statement by Minister Roche at the European Parliament, on behalf of the Council of Ministers, on the EU position on the hearing at the International Court of Justice on the Israeli wall , 11 February 2004 http://www.eu2004.ie/templates/news.asp?sNavlocator=66&list_id=240

[213] Brussels European Council Presidency Declarations, 9048/04, Brussels, 25-26 March 2004.

[214] Migdalovitz, op.cit.

[215] Honor Mahony, "EU down on Sharon-Bush Agreement", Euobserver, 15.04.2004.

President.[216] As promised, the EU deployed its biggest observation mission of 260 members to monitor the presidential elections held in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on 9 January, 2005. The Commission has provided longstanding support to the electoral process, with support and technical assistance since 2003 amounting to €14 million.[217] Mahmoud Abbas was elected as the President of the Palestinian Authority and he was welcomed by the EU which expressed the wish to work closely with the new Palestinian leadership.

With the election of new President Mahmoud Abbas, prospects for making progress to end the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians have risen significantly. On the eve of the Sharm el Sheikh Summit that was held on 8 February, 2005 the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighborhood visited Israel and Palestine and met with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and President Mahmoud Abbas. Sharon and Abbas verbally agreed on 8 February, 2005 to end a cease-fire deal at Sharm el-Sheikh to end more than four years of bloodshed which has claimed over 4,000 lives. Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner strongly welcomed the cease-fire declaration and signaled to both parties that the European Commission was ready to support the next steps with concrete help worth €250 million.[218]

Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in August 2005 was welcomed by the European Union. The Union commended "the Israeli Government and Palestinian Authority for their commitment to overcome the difficult challenges they face and applauds close coordination between both sides and encourages them to continue on this

[216] Message of President Prodi to Ahmad Qurai, Prime Minister of Palestinian Authority and Rawhi Fatouh Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council on the death of President Yasser Arafat, Brussels, 11 November 2004. http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/mepp/index.htm

[217] "European Union Congratulates Mr Mahmoud Abbas on his election as President", 10 January 2004 http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/mepp/index.htm

[218] "Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner responds to Middle East Declaration", 8 February 2005 europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/ mepp/news/bfw_080205.htm - 22k –

path."[219] Withdrawal from Gaza was perceived by the Union as progress in implementing the Road Map. The EU wanted to use the new opportunities presented by the withdrawal and increased the help given to Palestinians. In order to realize these objectives, the European Commission has adopted a Communication to the Council and the European Parliament entitled "EU-Palestinian Cooperation beyond Disengagement - Towards a Two-State Solution." The aim is explained as setting a comprehensive, medium strategy for the EU's support to the Palestinians. This strategy focused on the actions required to create a Palestinian state which is viable politically and economically. In the Communication, the Commission proposed mobilization of additional funds, supporting elections, the judicial system and the rule of law, promoting the reform of Palestinian Authority and reconstructing the infrastructure of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.[220]

In November 2005, an agreement was reached by Israel and the Palestinian Authority on arrangements for the movement of people and goods in Southern Gaza and a request came from both parties that the EU should provide a third party presence at the Palestinian border with Egypt, to facilitate the early opening of the Rafah crossing point. This request was accepted by the Union and made it much closer to the resolution of the conflict.[221]

For the Palestinian Legislative Presidential Elections held on 25 January, 2006, the EU deployed 240 observers and the European Union Election Observation Mission has been present in the West Bank and Gaza since 13 December, 2005

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[219] Statement by EU Presidency on Behalf of the European Union on Israeli Disengagement, 27.08.2005.
http://electronicintifada.net/bytopic/historicalspeeches/396.shtml

[220] "European Commission proposes comprehensive EU strategy for support to Palestinians", Brussels, 5 October 2005 europa.eu.int/.../05/1224&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en - 37k

[221] "Ferrero-Waldner on Gaza border crossing agreement", Brussels, 10 November 2005. europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/ mepp/news/bfw_151105.htm - 22k

following an invitation from the Central Election Commission of Palestine.[222] Hamas gained a victory through obtaining 55 percent of the votes. European Union foreign ministers called on Hamas on 30 January, 2006 to recognize the state of Israel, renounce violence and disarm. The EU foreign ministers were to maintain funds to the Palestinian Authority for the time being and awaited the decisions taken by Hamas during the formation of a new Palestinian government before deciding if aid would continue to be sent. Then the decision to suspend aid to the Hamas government - but not to the Palestinian people - was taken. The EU declared that it supported the Palestinian Elections and respected the outcome. However, the problem is the emergence of a Palestinian Authority whose government is led by the members of an organization included in the EU's terrorist list and which continues to justify suicide bombings in Israel.[223]

3.3. The Middle East Peace Process and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), which includes Israel and five Arab countries that have no diplomatic relations with the Jewish state, would not have been possible without the Oslo Process. The decision of the European Union to include Israel as a member of the Barcelona Process marked a significant departure from the previous policies. It was based on the assumption that "a fundamental change in Israeli-Arab relations had occurred, and that the Arab states of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership were now prepared to accept Israel as a partner."[224] The EU stressed that the Barcelona Process was not intended as an alternative framework to the peace process but rather it was a separate process which would bolster efforts for peace in the region. A strict formal distinction was

[222] Statement of Preliminary Conclusions and Findings,European Union Election Observation Mission, West Bank and Gaza 2006, Jerusalem, 26 January 2006. europa.eu.int/.../human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/ westbank/legislative/statement_260106.pdf

[223] Benita Ferrero Waldner, "Suspension of Aid to the Palestinian Government", SPEECH/06/260, European Parliament Plenary, Brussels, 26 April 2006.

[224] Joel Peters, "Europe and the Middle East Peace Process" in Stelios Stavridis et *al The Foreign Policies for Southern European States*, (London: Macmillan, 1999), pp.300.

made between the two processes with different institutions and actors within the EU holding primary responsibility for these two policy areas. However, the Union explicitly acknowledged the linkage between the Middle East Peace Process and the Barcelona process by hosting a meeting between Yasser Arafat and the then-Israeli Foreign Minister, David Levy, in Valetta on 15-16 April, 1997 during the Euro-Mediterranean Conference.

The diplomatic breakthrough with the Oslo Process allowed for a more effective action on the part of the five working groups participating in the multilateral talks. Thus, by the time of the Barcelona conference, Israel and the Arab partner states of the EMP had already been engaged in a regional dialogue for the previous years. It was expected that the working relationships developed in the multilateral talks would spill over into the Barcelona framework. An additional note of optimism was elicited by Syria's willingness to attend the meeting in Barcelona. Syria and Lebanon had consistently boycotted the proceedings of the five Arab partner states and Israeli multilateral working groups.

Although it was designed to bolster efforts for peace in the region, it has been argued that the spillover from the multilateral talks into the Barcelona process proved to be negative rather than positive. The EMP could function as long as the MEPP was proceeding. In practice, it has been difficult to disentangle the two processes. This close relationship has meant that whenever the Peace Process has been in crisis, the EMP has also suffered. The problems at the Malta ministerial conference in April 1997 largely resulted from the stalemate of the peace process after Benjamin Netanyahu's election. The Marseille meeting of November 2000, convened in the shadow of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, was boycotted by Syria and Lebanon and so the adoption of a Charter for Peace and Stability had to be postponed.[225] Thereafter, it became impossible for the European Union to separate future progress in the Barcelona process from the MEPP.

[225] Ibid.

Despite all these problems associated with the Barcelona Process, its overall impact has been to improve Union's role in the peace process. First, the EMP provided a forum in which Israel, the Palestinians and the front-line Arab states came together. Syria and Lebanon agreed to participate in the EMP and not in the Multilaterals.[226] Second, the EMP has raised considerably Europe's economic and political stakes in overseeing the success of the peace process.[227] The EMP made the Union acutely aware of its stake in the security of the Middle East and an enduring Arab-Israeli peace settlement has become more urgent.

3.4. Strengths and Weaknesses of the European Union's Role in the Middle East Peace Process

When the EU's role began to increase with the 1991 Madrid Conference, everyone asked if Europeans could make a difference in the resolution of the conflict. The EU has a higher profile than ever before in the peace process; also, the forum of the Barcelona Process, of which both Israel and the Palestinian Authority are members, has kept meeting even when the peace process has broken down.[228] From 1991 onwards, the EU's involvement has increased and the EU has remained financially committed to the Palestinians. However, the main negotiations related to the peace process have still been conducted with the USA.

One of the major weaknesses of the EU in playing an active role in the peace process is its institutional constraints. The EU differs from a superpower when it comes to formulating a common foreign policy because the European Union, unlike the United States, is not a unified power and therefore does not have a common European Middle East policy. The problem of the divergences between

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[226] Volker Perthes, "The Advantages of Complemantarity: The Middle East peace process" in Hall Gardner and Radoslava Stefanova (eds.), *The New Transatlantic Agenda:Facing the Challenges of Global Governance*, A (Ashgate : Aldershot, 1999), p.114.

[227] Dannreuther, op.cit., p.7.

[228] Dana Scheiner, "The European Union and the Middle East Peace Process, The Institute for Counter Terrorism, 6 April 2005.

the European states, especially on foreign policy issues, is increased by the institutional complexities of the Union. There are an abundance of declaratory statements on the EU side which lack the necessary mechanisms for implementation. As a result, the EU cannot effectively put pressure on either the Israelis or the Palestinians.[229]

A second reason for the EU's weakness is the historical legacy, deeply embedded, of Israeli distrust of European intentions and good faith. The Israeli leadership refuses to accept European criticism of its policies as anything other than anti-Semitism, which prevents the formation of normal diplomatic relations.[230] These perceptions create suspicion towards the Europeans, and the Israelis argue that Europe has disqualified itself from a broker role. As J. Alpher argues "there are seven main reasons which explain the Israeli objections to a primary mediatory role in the peace process." First; as a close strategic ally of the US, Israel reflects American wishes on the issue. Since the US wants the European role to be kept limited in the peace process, Israel objects to European mediation. Second, Europe does not have America's clout, and it rarely behaves like a superpower. Third, the Europeans take pro-Arab positions in the declarations and in UN votes. Fourth, Europe is preoccupied with economic issues, and does not appreciate Israel's security concerns. Fifth, the fundamental Israeli world view is that Europeans can't be trusted. Thus for European initiatives to be increasingly effective and influential, the EU has to improve its political image in Israeli eyes. Sixth, Europe is motivated by economic greed. Finally, the EU seeks to channel its energy to the Muslim Middle East in part in order to mask its own abject failure to come to terms with its Muslim problems at home, and the EU's involvement in the peace process should be understood within this purpose.[231]

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[229] Shlomo Avineri, "The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and the EU-the need for caution", European Policy Center, Issue 9, 16.03.2003.

[230] Hollis, op.cit., p.193.

[231] Alpher, op.cit.,p.85.

These weaknesses in Europe's engagement in the Middle East peace process are certainly significant obstacles. However, these weaknesses could be counter-balanced with Europe's strengths which give it a comparative advantage in relation to the United States. One such strength is that the Middle East is geographically closer to and economically more dependent on Europe than the United States. Europe is the main trading partner of all the Middle Eastern states, including Israel. However, Europe's position as the principal donor to the Palestinians and most important trading partner of Israel create some debates. EU is called a "payer" and not the broker of the political agreements because of the financial assistance given to the Palestinian Authority. Through the economic commitment to the Palestinians, Europe has acquired a direct interest in the negotiations between Israel and Palestine. However, from 1991 to 1995, the EU limited itself to a "money-lending strategy." There were two main reasons behind this. First, the EU had been left out of the political negotiations and second; because it had not institutionally adopted a common foreign policy. Things began to change with the 1993 Maastricht Treaty forming the European Union, and which introduced a common foreign and security policy. It could also be argued that the Union's financial support of the Palestinians has made it a "player" within the Middle East peace process.[232]

On the other hand, the European parliament has discussed using trade relations between the Union and Israel as leverage to apply pressure on Israel.[233] So far this approach has produced some results, but nothing decisive for peace. Applying economic sanctions against Israel is an Arab demand. However, results of this decision would be counter-productive both for Israel and the European Union. Such a decision would increase the Israeli distrust of European intentions. Also, given Europe's highly favorable trade balance with Israel, this would be economically counterproductive for the EU. Hence, the EU keeps using its close

[232] Scheiner, op.cit.

[233] Rosemary Hollis, "The Israeli-Palestinian road block: can Europeans make a difference?", International Affairs, Vol. 80, No.2 (2004), p.197.

economic relations both with the Palestinian Authority and Israel in a positive way to use it as leverage in the peace process, but not as a sanction.

Other programs and institutional structures that the EU has promoted in the region such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the European Neighborhood Policy will tend to enhance its links with the sides of the conflict. As was seen before, when negotiations for the peace process entered into deadlock, the EU managed to bring Israel and Palestine into the EMP meetings. The Partnership still remains the only multilateral context outside the United Nations where all the parties affected by the Middle East conflict meet.

As shown, the Union's lack of political unity and military capability and its pro-Arab position inhibit its peacemaking prospects. But the EU could counter-balance these problems with the strengths that it possesses such as its geographical proximity, close economic relations and institutional presence in the region. The experience and the impetus that the EU brings to the region are key elements in promoting stability in the conflict in the longer-term. From this perspective, the Union's role in the peace process will increase rather than diminish.

CHAPTER 4

THE EU & THE US IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

CONVERGENCE OR DIVERGENCE?

Although most analysts agree that the United States and the European Union share common interests in the Middle East, the affairs of this region have caused controversy between them for over 50 years. In spite of the special relationship that binds Europe to the Middle East, such as its geographic proximity, historical familiarity, and privileged trade links, European policies in the Middle East are associated with the United States during the Cold War. After the Cold War, Europe began its search for a new approach to the Middle East independent of the United States.[234] The emergence of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union and a growing awareness of a broader common European interest in the region based on history, proximity, trade, migration and the changing role of Islam prompted the European Union to engage increasingly in the region and to seek an active position by not being perceived as a 'donor' or a 'payer' but as a 'player'.[235]

The terrorist attacks of September 11 and their aftermath have further complicated the transatlantic dialogue. After the attacks, European governments and the US sought to present a united front against terrorism and prioritized defensive measures. However, European countries did not accept the conclusion drawn by the US that the terrorist attacks represented a fundamental transformation of the international order.[236] Many European leaders were alarmed by President Bush's

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[234] Ghassan Salame, "Torn Between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean: Europe and the Middle East in the Post-Cold War Era", *Middle East Journal*, Volume 48, No.2, (Spring 1994), p.226.

[235] "Elusive Partnership: US and European Policies in the Near East and the Gulf", German Marshall Fund of the United States, Policy Paper, September 2002, p.1.

[236] Ibid, p.6.

characterization of Iraq, Iran and North Korea as an "axis of evil"[237] and were inclined to believe that the "you are either for us or against us" policy in the campaign against terrorism was not a helpful way to address the problems. Different priorities and perceptions led to different policies on Iraq, Iran, Syria, the Israeli-Palestine conflict and combating terrorism, and created a general vision that there are deep divergences between EU and US in the Middle East; as Archick says, "over the years, nowhere have tensions between the United States and its European allies and friends become more evident than on a range of issues related to the Middle East".[238]

4.1. Mutual Interests

Despite all their differences, the United States and Europe share key interests with regard to the Middle East. The first and most important common concern related to the Middle East is strategic interests. Both parties express their desire for a stable Middle East since instability and domestic conflicts in the Middle East interrupt commerce, create refugees and generate domestic pressures. In order to maintain stability in the Middle East both Europe and the United States share common interests in combating terrorism and halting proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.[239] The EU has also prioritized defensive measures, most notably since 9/11. Also, any comparison between the US National Security Strategy and the European Security Strategy would reveal that their assessments of global threats and of risks in the Middle East are not so different.[240]

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[237] Kristin Archick, "European Views and Policies Toward the Middle East", CRS Report for Congress, March 2005.

[238] Ibid.

[239] Völker Perthes, "America's "Greater Middle East" and Europe: Key Issues for Dialogue, *Middle East Policy*, Vol XI, No.3, (Fall 2004), p.86.

[240] Ibid, p.96.

Second, the United States and the European Union have a vital interest in protecting the free flow of oil from the Middle East at reasonable prices. While the EU is more dependent than the United States on Middle Eastern supplies, any fluctuation of Middle Eastern oil supplies will affect global prices. Oil prices rising beyond an acceptable range will affect both sides of the Atlantic politically and economically. It has been seen in the past decade that both the US and the EU are ready to engage in military actions in the Gulf to protect this vital trade.[241]

Third, the US and the European states have strong commercial interests in the Middle East. Both depend on the sale of military and civilian goods to offset oil purchases. In an era of increased economic competition, keeping Middle Eastern markets open is a strong shared interest.[242]

Lastly, the United States and Europe share an important interest in supporting the spread of market economies and democracies. This goal sometimes conflicts with other interests such as stability, and causes them to support authoritarian regimes in vital regions to help further interests such as the oil flow. However, both parties support liberal economies and governments in practice, where they do not conflict with more vital interests.

4.2. Divergences in EU-US Approaches to the Middle East

In order to analyze US-EU frictions over the Middle East, it is necessary to examine the underlying drivers of European views. A combination of factors lies at the root of US-EU tensions on the Middle East including history, geographic/demographic differences, the nature of the European Union's

[241] Phebe Marr, "The United States, Europe and the Middle East: Cooperation, co-optation or confrontation?" in B.A. Roberson, *The Middle East and Europe:the power deficit*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p.82.

[242]Ibid.

economic ties with the Middle East, divergent threat perceptions, different approaches in managing threats and growing EU ambitions.

The different historical relation of US and Europe with the region is one of the important reasons for the different approaches. Europe's long and complex history with the Middle East shapes its views towards the region that are distinct from those of the United States. Europe is likely to continue to have a more sustained and durable presence in the region than the United States.[243] Europe's ancient crusades and more recent colonial experiences in the Middle East shape Europe's perceptions toward the region. Colonial experiences created a "sense of guilt" for the Europeans that cause them to approach the Middle East more carefully especially in the matters of imposing security and democracy. This "sense of guilt" may be observed in EU policy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict; as K. Archick states, "residual guilt about Europe's colonial past causes many of its citizens to identify with what they perceive as a struggle for Palestinian freedom against Israeli occupation; at the same time, the Holocaust engenders European support for the security of Israel, but Europeans believe that this will only be ensured by peace with the Palestinians."[244] Europe's own colonial history has also produced a European aversion to the use of force and generates a general preference to solve conflicts peacefully.

Europe, given its geographical proximity to the Middle East has always been interested in preserving regional stability because, among other things, instability leads to large-scale emigration and a large inflow of migrants leads to political instability and economic hardship for the European Union. Migration has in fact led to substantial Arab populations in all the key European countries, with important political consequences. Islam has become a vital force in European domestic politics which makes European politicians more cautious about supporting US policies that could inflame the Arab population in their countries.

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[243] Salame,op.cit., p.228.

[244] Archick, op.cit.

Europe's extensive economic tie with the Middle East is also a key reason for differing US-European perceptions. The EU is the primary trading partner of the region. Access to Middle East oil has always been an important factor in its relations with the Arab world since Europe is more dependent on oil coming from the Middle East than the US. European economic interests are more integrated with the region. EU exports to the Middle East, for example, are almost three times the size of US exports.[245] The absence of an independent military option is also an underlying cause of Europe's emphasis on economic ties to the region as a means of mitigating security interests.[246] Economic dependence of the EU on the Middle East led to the argument that the EU is primarily motivated by the need to protect commercial interests. European reluctance to apply sanctions against Syria or Iran as opposed to the US's willingness to do so is also explained by these commercial interests.

Some observers assert that since the end of the Cold War, American and European threat perceptions have been diverging.[247] It is also stated that the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 exacerbated this gap in US-European threat perceptions. While Europeans view terrorism as a threat, Americans perceive the threat as being much more severe. As a result of the difference in threat perceptions, policies also differ. The European Union is also more prone to emphasize multilateral solutions based on the international rule of law and shy away from the use of force to manage conflicts and place greater emphasis on "soft power" tools whereas the US does not hesitate to use force.

It is also asserted that the EU's aspirations to play a larger role on the world stage led to different policies related to the Middle East. For many years, the EU has been seen as just a donor of financial assistance and has sponsored region-wide developmental programs. However, the EU's recent attempts in developing a

[245] International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade Statics Yearbook 2001, pp.48-53.

[246] Phebe Marr, "The United States, Europe and the Middle East: An Uneasy Triangle", *Middle East Journal*, Volume 48, No.2, (Spring 1994), p.215.

[247] Archick, op.cit.

CFSP have led the EU to seek a higher-profile role in the region. This has made the EU member states more confident and more assertive about confronting those US policies with which they do not agree, such as those in the Middle East which make most Europeans uneasy.[248]The US government decided to bring a new order to the "Greater Middle East" beginning with the Afghanistan war. In order to realize this, it has announced the Greater Middle East Initiative (GMEI) and sought trans-Atlantic approval at the June 2004 G8, US-EU and NATO summits. The G8 Summit's declaration of a "Partnership for Progress and a Common Future with the Region of the Broader Middle East and North Africa" was worded diplomatically, and the EU found itself obliged to back the initiative.[249] In reality, Europeans have reacted to the initiative with unease and the EU became determined to stake out a distinctive approach to the Middle East.[250] In order to understand the EU's reservations on the US-led GMEI it is necessary to examine the distinctive elements of European and US approaches to the Middle East.

The United States and the EU agree that a democratic transformation of the Middle East is a goal that should be pursued. The EU pursued this goal even before the September 11 attacks; however, the US has become acutely aware of the lack of democracy in the Middle East in the context of its struggle against international terrorism.[251] As a result of this fact, the EU has formulated the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which has the key elements of building democracy, supporting civil society, the rule of law and human rights. European policy-makers feel a certain concern at the US tendency to overplay the link between 9/11 and the promotion of democracy in the Middle East.[252]

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[248] Richard Youngs, "Trans-Atlantic Co-operation on Middle East Reform: A European Mis-judgement?", The Foreign Policy Centre, November 2004, p.1.

[249] Ibid.

[250] Richard Youngs, "Europe and the Greater Middle East Initiative", Arab Reform Journal, April 2004. http://www.mafhoum.com/press7/189p10.htm

[251] Perthes, op.cit., p.86

[252] Richard Youngs, "Trans-Atlantic Co-operation on Middle East Reform: A European Mis-judgement?", The Foreign Policy Centre, November 2004, p.5.

The EU adopted a common perspective for political, social and economic change in Europe's neighborhood as opposed to the "forward strategy of freedom" of the US. In addition, Europeans point out that democratization is not a linear process but rather a complicated undertaking full of contradictions.[253] However, the US does not share the European view that reform policies require a gradual and comprehensive process of reform, and the Europeans criticize the US because, as former EU Commissioner Chris Patten stated, "developing democracy is not like making instant coffee."[254] Europeans have also warned the US that democracy cannot be imposed by force and that an internal effort of will is necessary to establish democratic systems and institutions in the Middle East.

In order to establish democratic institutions and structures, the US administration foresees a regime change in the Middle East, as happened in Iraq. European policy-makers are skeptical about wide-ranging plans to bring a "new order" to the Middle East. They tend to establish regional structures and increase the prospect of change within the countries rather than relying on the threat of regime change from the outside. Although democratic transformation of the Middle East is a common goal, it is not a prerequisite from the European perspective for political engagement, especially not for a serious engagement in the Middle East peace process. According to the American perspective, only democratic states can make peace and it is necessary for the Arab states to turn democratic in order for the peace efforts to be successful in the Middle East.[255] This perception affects the US's approach towards the Middle East and creates a sense of distrust of the efforts Arab are making toward peace.

In dealing with the Middle East as well as other regions, Europe generally puts the emphasis on institution building, while the United States focuses more on the persons in charge. This is related with the political structures. In the US, politics is

[253] Perthes, op.cit., p.87.

[254] Chris Patten, "Islam and the West: At the Crossroads", speech at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, SPEECH/04/256, 24 May 2004.

[255] Perthes, op.cit., p.88.

much more personalized and the prime decision maker is much more important, whereas in European states institutional structures are important and individual persons do not make so much of a difference. The clearest example of this difference in approach could be seen in the debate between the EU and the US about how to deal with the former Palestinian president, Yassir Arafat. While the US administration boycotted him and stressed the importance of changing Palestinian leadership in order to make the peace efforts successful, the EU maintained relations and stressed the importance of doing so.

Another important difference in EU-US approaches towards the Middle East is that while the EU deals with the region through multilateral frameworks such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the US has often favored engaging regional states bilaterally. This is related with the EU's greater concern for the stability in the region. The EU prefers to deal with the region through multilateral frameworks in order to foster regional peace and cooperation in the Middle East. Across North Africa and the Middle East, Europe has been more favorably inclined towards government-led initiatives and more open to dialogue as a confidence-building measure.[256]

Finally, Europeans tend to favor constructive engagement with the problematic countries such as Iran and Syria, whereas the United States follows coercive diplomacy such as sanctions, and isolation. In addition to Europe's stance as a "soft power" not using force and coercive diplomacy, the EU's strong economic relations and more specifically its economic dependence on the Middle East, especially on the importation of oil, has an important effect on this. The EU follows a "pragmatic" policy towards these problematic states. European policy makers are prepared to support minor reform measures in a country like Syria, although they are not satisfied with the level of political developments in the country.

[256] Ian O. Lesser, "The United States and Euro-Mediterranean Relations: Evolving Attitudes and Strategies", EuroMescobrief, July 2004.

4.3. Contentious Issues

4.3.1. EU and the US Positions on the Israel-Palestine Conflict

It is argued that the Israel-Palestine conflict provides a case study of European-American differences. While agreeing that the Arab-Israeli conflict should be resolved through negotiations, and that those negotiations must not stagnate, the European Union and the US part ways over the methods to achieve that objective.[257] Since the 1960s, the transatlantic approach towards the peace process has been characterized by two main features. Firstly, due to its global power status and military power, the USA is the pre-eminent outside arbiter in the conflict, whereas the EU plays a secondary role in the peace process through providing funds. The second feature is that the while Europeans have taken a pro-Palestinian stance, the US has completely allied itself with Israel.

Since the 1967 War and the passage of Security Council Resolution 242[258] in 1967, there has been a broad understanding on both sides of the Atlantic that a settlement must be reached between Israel and its neighbors. However, the European side insists that the settlement should be provided by the US putting pressure on all parties to reach an agreement. By contrast, the US shares the Israeli view that only when there are Arab parties clearly committed to real peace with Israel should Israel be expected to engage in serious negotiations.[259] In the

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[257] Kenneth W. Stein, "Imperfect Alliances: Will Europe and America Ever Agree?", *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol 4, No:1, March 1997, p.41.

[258] United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (S/RES/242) was adopted unanimously by the UN Security Council on November 22, 1967 in the aftermath of the Six Day War. Adopted under Chapter VI [1] of the United Nations Charter, it calls for the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict" (see semantic dispute) and the "[t]ermination of all claims or states of belligerency". The "territories" here refer to the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights. It also calls for the recognition of all established states by belligerent parties (Israel, Egypt, Syria, Jordan) of each other and calls for the establishment of defensible boundaries for all parties. It is one of the most commonly referenced UN resolutions in Middle Eastern politics. It was reaffirmed and made binding by UN Security Council Resolution 338, adopted after the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

[259] "Elusive Partnership", p.1.

1970s, European leaders sometimes rationalized Palestinian terrorism and refused to take effective steps to stop it. During the 1973 War, every European country except Portugal denied the US refueling or over-flight rights for the re-supply of arms and equipment to Israel.[260] As a consequence of these differences, for much of the period since 1967 the US has sought to keep European governments at arm's length in terms of bringing the parties into serious negotiations.

The 1990s were, however, an unusual interlude in these disagreements. The invasion of Kuwait led to cooperation between the allies. This cooperation between the EU and the US was reflected in the Oslo peace process which created a division of labor. This meant that while the US took the primary responsibility for external mediation in the negotiations, Europeans provided financial and political support to the Palestinians.

The atmosphere of cooperation among the transatlantic allies in the peace process began to deteriorate by the late 1990s. The collapse of the Camp David peace process and the change in policy by the new administration after the September 11 attacks led to a return to the usual friction on the Middle East. In addition to the differences between the European governments and the Bush administration in their approach to the peace process, institutional changes of the EU had an impact on these frictions. Creation of a position such as the High Representative and the development of common foreign and security policies through the Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam increased the growing awareness among the EU of clearly defined European interests in certain areas including the Middle East.

The main difference between the EU and the US is the EU view that resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the key to reshaping the Middle East, providing stability and eliminating the threat posed by Islamic militancy. The EU's Security Strategy released in December 2003, cites resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a top EU priority. This approach also includes equal emphasis on the security, political, and economic development agendas that is necessary for a lasting peace.

[260] Stein, op.cit., p.42.

European officials indicate that to create a viable Palestinian state is the key to guaranteeing Israel's security. This is the main reason that the EU sought to support the Palestinian Authority financially and provide humanitarian aid. In contrast, the US administration believes that terrorism and weapons of mass destruction are the primary threats and must be confronted; peace and stability in the region will not be removed until these threats are removed.[261] In addition, European leaders have a greater sense of urgency about making progress in the peace process than the US. Many European leaders charge that US has focused too much on Iraq and does not understand the urgency of the settlement of the dispute. European leaders have clamored for the United States to "do more" to get the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations to continue, because they believe that only US engagement will force the parties, especially Israel, to go back to the negotiating table.[262]

Another important difference in US-EU approaches to the Israel-Palestine problem is that while Europeans believe that Palestinian recourse to terrorist means is directly linked to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the US declares the means illegal. In other words, the EU rejects as unreasonable the Americans placing the burden of guilt on the Palestinians. According to the European view, progress must be made in parallel by two sides.

In contrast to the US, in the European Union's view Yassir Arafat was the undisputed leader of the Palestinian people. From the US perspective, Arafat was the main obstacle to reaching a settlement in the peace process, and changing the Palestinian leadership was a prerequisite for political progress. Although European leaders, like their counterparts, had also lost faith in Arafat's willingness to reach a settlement with Israel, they emphasized that the key to reform was not simply to change the leader, but to create new institutions.[263] The

[261] Archick, op.cit.

[262] American Council on Germany, "The Future of Transatlantic Security: New Challenges", Occasional Paper, December 2002; Interviews of European officials, January-March 2003.

[263] "Elusive Partnership", op.cit., p.11.

U.S. pressed EU members not to meet with Arafat, who was not a useful interlocutor as seen from the US perspective.[264] However, the EU's informal consensus was to continue to meet with Arafat and it did so until his death.

As a consequence of these differences, the US tried to limit the EU's role in the peace process. US policymakers sought to protect their primary role in the peace process and to minimize the EU's, hoping that it would just provide funds. The US seemed to have put Europe in a leading role in peace keeping but not in diplomacy. The unease of the US about the appointment of a European Special Envoy for the MEPP confirmed US intentions about the role of the EU in the peace process. After the appointment of Moratinos as the European Special Envoy to the MEPP, Europeans were forced to make clear that they would not compete with the US. In order to prevent US objections to this mission, Ireland's Foreign Minister Dick Spring noted that Moratinos "will fulfill his mandate in close cooperation with all parties in the region and complementary to the important role which the US plays in the peace process."[265]

President Bush's vision of two states, Palestine and Israel living together side-by-side in peace and security, impressed the European governments. This speech generated a considerable shift in Europe into the same direction into which Bush had embarked. They understood that the reform of the Palestinian Authority and its leadership was an indispensable element of progress towards a settlement. A second element of agreement between the EU and the US was the proposition that terrorist methods must be condemned and rejected in all places and at all times. European leaders began to make this point to the Palestinians.[266] However, considerable differences still remain between the EU and the US on the settlement of the conflict. Many Europeans question whether Bush's vision of a Palestinian

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[264] The Middle East Peace Process at a Crossroads, Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, 108. Congress, 11 June 2003, Serial No:108-42.

[265] Stein, op.cit., p.42.

[266] "Elusive Partnership",op.cit., p.11.

state is the same as that of the Israeli government. The EU supports the reform of the Palestinian state but believes that anything less than a permanent state in all the territories occupied by the Israel in 1967, including part of Jerusalem as its capital, will not be a solution. Europeans doubt if this is the kind of Palestinian state that US would wish to see.

The EU's approach is similar to that of the United States in the final outcome, but differs concerning the method, timing and priority of policy. From the European perspective, the reform, security, political and humanitarian agendas need to be addressed in parallel, whereas US is in favor of pursuing different agendas. If the peace process moves forward, few differences are likely to emerge between the US and the EU. But if the negotiations fail, divergences could emerge on both sides of the Atlantic.[267]

4.3.2. Syria: A Case of Ever Growing Divergences

The European Union's policies toward Syria have been more inclined toward engagement than the US policy of containment or isolation. The EU has defined its policy toward Syria as one of "critical and constructive engagement."[268] EU relations with Syria date back to the 1970s. Several European countries, especially France, have long-standing and historical relations with Syria. Syria has participated in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership program since its inception in 1995. The EU has sought to improve its relations with Syria through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, although more slowly than the EU's relationship with other Arab countries.[269] This is due to the EU's concerns about the seriousness of Syria's commitment to undertake political and economic reforms and protect human rights.

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[267] Marr, op.cit., p.89.

[268] "The EU Proceeds with Syrian Trade Agreement", *Jerussalem Post*, May 14, 2004.

[269] Alfred B. Prados and Jeremy M. Sharp, Syria: Political Conditions and Relations with the United States after the Iraq War", CRS Report for Congress, last updated on 10 January 2005, p.24.

Since 1997, the EU and Syria have conducted negotiations for an Association Agreement which includes a number of bilateral issues such as foreign aid, trade and human rights promotion. While Association Agreements with all other Mediterranean partner countries have been signed or entered into force, negotiations with Syria were particularly slow and were only finalized at the end of 2004. The Agreement has not yet been formally approved, however, by either the EU member states, the European parliament, or by the Syrian government. The main problem with the signing of an Association Agreement with Syria was the issue of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The conclusion of the Association Agreement was delayed for almost a year because of Syria's reluctance to accept the WMD clause. The original text, which the European Commission negotiated with Syria in December 2003, says that WMD are not part of the EU's concern, but that text was opposed by Britain, Germany and Holland. The decision to add a clause prohibiting the use of WMD had been rejected by Syria on the grounds that the EU did not impose such a condition on other Mediterranean countries such as Israel, which has a large nuclear arsenal.[270] After tough negotiations, the EU and Syria have managed to complete the negotiations by initialing the text on 19 October, 2004. After the US decided to apply sanctions against Syria in November 2003 and in May 2004, Syria returned to Europe. The Syrians accepted the language in the proposed text of its EU association agreement concerning WMD. The agreement included essential provisions on cooperation to counter the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery.[271] The final signature of the Association Agreement was postponed after the killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005, in which Syria was accused of involvement. The EU had made the deal conditional on a full Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon and on non-interference in the Lebanese parliamentary elections.[272] After a long break, Syria and the EU began

[270] "Europe seizes on Syria's accountability law to request stronger commitment on the weapons of mass destruction, Arabic News, 27.05.2004. http://www.arabicnews.com/ansub/Daily/Day/040703/2004070312.html

[271] "EU and Syria mark end of negotiations for an Association Agreement", 19 October 2004. http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/syria/intro/ip04_1246.html.

[272] "Syria chides activists over EU pact comments", Daily Star, 23.06.2005.

to hold talks to facilitate the final approval of an Association Agreement in March 2006.[273]

One of the most important reasons behind the "constructive engagement" policy of the EU toward Syria is trade relations. The EU is Syria's biggest trading partner, accounting for just over 40 percent of its trade in 2003. 87 percent of EU imports from Syria consist of energy, making the country the EU's ninth largest source of imports in this sector. The remaining 13 percent consist mainly of textiles and agricultural imports.[274] Strong economic ties and mutual interests made it hard for the EU to impose sanctions on Syria as the US has done.

The European Union is also Syria's main donor, having allocated over €259 million in the framework of the MEDA program since 1995, with the European Investment Bank contributing a further €580 million in loans. The Commission adopted the Syria Country Strategy Paper (CSP) for 2002-2006 in December 2001. The CSP is the basis for two National Indicative Program (NIP), the first one covering the period 2002-2004 and the second one adopted by the Commission.

In contrast, US-Syrian relations have always been tense and occasionally hostile. Washington has imposed a range of political and economic sanctions on Syria. Syria has been accused of getting involved in a number of US policy issues in the Middle East, including the war on terrorism, turmoil in Iraq and tensions in Lebanon. First, the US Department of State has listed Syria as a state sponsor of terrorism since 1979, when the list was first created.[275] All the perceptions of the US related to Syria are shaped by their vision of Syria as a "sponsor of international terrorism." The EU does not have such an approach to Syria, and in

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[273] "Syria, EU hold talks on partnership association pact", Xinhua, 01.03.2006.

[274] "EU policy toward Syria", http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/syria/intro/index.htm

[275] Claude Salhani, "The Syria Accountability Act: Taking the Road to Damascus", *Policy Analysis*, No: 512, 18 March 2004.

fact is reluctant to add Hezbollah (which is based in Lebanon but backed by Syria and Iran) to the EU's common terrorist list.

Second, in spite of problems with the Saddam Hussein regime, Syria improved its relations with Iraq in the late 1990s and opposed the US military campaign in Iraq. Syria has been following moderate policies since the overthrow of Saddam and has had cool relations with the US-sponsored interim regimes in Iraq.[276] However, the US administration has accused Syria of making insufficient efforts to close its 375-mile border with Iraq and charged that Syria is providing sanctuary for former Baath officials coordinating insurgent activities in Iraq. Syria denies it allowed fighters to cross the border into Iraq.

Third, US officials believe that Syria has an arsenal of chemical weapons and surface-to-surface missiles. According to reports from the Central Information Agency (CIA), Syria is building up a domestic missile industry working on both solid propellant and liquid propellant capabilities.[277] However, the EU has not declared clearly that Syria possesses WMD because it has some doubts on this issue. This is why the conclusion of the Association Agreement was postponed for several years.

Finally, the US had concerns regarding Syria's 14,000-strong military presence in Lebanon and its heavy involvement in Lebanese politics. The EU also sees the military presence of Syria in Lebanon as a key to instability. In early September 2004, France and the EU co-sponsored a U.N. Security Council resolution calling on all foreign forces in Lebanon to withdraw, although it did not directly mention Syria by name. The EU in December 2004 essentially endorsed this U.N. resolution.[278]

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[276] Alfred Prados, "Syria: US Relations and Bilateral Issues", CRS Issue Brief for Congress, updated 25 March 2005, p.6.

[277] Patrick Clawson, "Making Syria's Choices Starker", Statement for the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearing on Syria-US Policy Directions, 30 October 2003.

[278] Archick, op.cit.

The assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005 has increased US-EU cooperation to pressure Syria to completely withdraw from Lebanon. The European Parliament has warned Syria that if it does not comply with the September 2004 U.N. Resolution, ratification of the Association Agreement will enter into a deadlock.[279] On March 5, 2005, Syria announced that it had withdrawn its troops from Lebanon to the Syria- Lebanese border. The UN confirmed that Syria had pulled out completely from Lebanon in May 2005, though the US remains skeptical.[280]

Because of the reasons listed above, the US has applied economic and political sanctions against Syria. For some years, the US has banned the sale of military munitions, and restricted other bilateral trade on the ground that Syria sponsors terrorist organizations. A more comprehensive list of sanctions came with the "Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act" on 12 October, 2003. This act included imposing penalties on Syria unless it gives up its support of international terrorist groups, ends it occupation of Lebanon, ceases the development of WMD, and ceases to support or facilitate terrorist activity in Iraq. Sanctions include bans on the export of military items and of dual use items (items with both civil and military applications) to Syria. It also requires the imposition of two or more of the following sanctions on Syria:

- a ban on all exports to Syria except food and medicine
- a ban on US businesses operating or investing in Syria
- a ban on landing in or over-flight of the United States by Syrian aircraft
- reduction of diplomatic contacts with Syria
- restrictions on travel by Syrian diplomats in the United States

[279] "EU Parliament Demands Syrian Pullout from Lebanon", Agence France Press, 25 February 2005.

[280] "EU cautions EU over Syria deal", Reuters, 05 June 2005.

- blocking of transactions in Syrian property[281]

President Bush also imposed sanctions in accordance with the Accountability Act in May 2004 that banned many US exports to Syria and prohibited Syrian aircraft from flying to or from the United States.[282] The threat of economic sanctions worry the Syrians but the level of trade between Syria and the United States is not all that important in the first place Exports to Syria from the United States in 2002 amounted to only $274.2 million and US imports from Syria for the same year were only $169.9 million.[283] Thus the Syrian Accountability Act had no impact in encouraging cooperation or in bringing the Syrians to the negotiating table.[284]

The analyses of US and EU policies toward Syria clearly show the differences in their approaches, which lie in their visions of world politics. The US administration believes that the stick is far more effective than the carrot in achieving American security objectives and does not hesitate to use power or economic and political sanctions. On the other hand, the EU prefers to use the carrot and tries to form constructive relations with the problematic states through integrating them into global politics, as happened in the EU's relations with Syria. The EU has offered certain positive incentives to Syria in order to cooperate so far. However, the EU and some European governments have hardened their views on Syria recently. As mentioned before, the EU (especially France) and the US were united in their support for the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon.[285]

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[281] "Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Act" of 2003. Text found in http://www.2la.org/lebanon/syriaac2003.htm

[282] Alfred Prados, "Syria: US Relations and Bilateral Issues", CRS Issue Brief for Congress, updated 25 March 2005, p.15.

[283] US Census Bureau, "Trade (Imports, Exports and Trade Balance) with Syria", http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5020.html

[284] Claude Salhani, "The Syria Accountability Act: Taking the Road to Damascus", Policy Analysis, No:512, 18 March 2004, p.3

[285] John O'Sullivan, "A Cowboy in Brussels", National Review, 14 March 2005, pp.35-37.

Transatlantic cooperation has also benefited from Franco-American cooperation on Syria.[286]

[286] Stephen J. Flanagan, "Sustaining U.S.-European Global Security Cooperation", Strategic Forum, Institute for National Strategic Studies, No.217, September 2005.

CONCLUSION

Up until the end of the Cold war, the European Community's initiatives pertaining to the Middle East region did not produce results. This was due to the deficiencies in the formation of a common European foreign and security policy and the expectations gap between the Community and the countries of the Middle East. Internal and external changes in the early 1990s favored the restructuring of the EU's Middle East Policy. Since the 1990s, the EU has been an important actor in the Middle East with its initiatives and common strategies. Yet the EU's role in the region is still limited because of the shortcomings in political instruments, political unity, military capabilities and institutional weaknesses.

There is a strong parallel between the evolution of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the developments in the EU's Middle East policy. The Middle East was one of the first regions where political cooperation was put to the test. The creation of the EPC directed the Community's attention outwards and the member states came to identify with common policy interests. One area for such consideration was the Middle East, resulting in the Global Mediterranean Policy launched at the 1972 Paris Summit. However, the EPC did not change the Community's status as a secondary player in the Middle East. The reshaping of EU external policy with the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty and then of the CFSP, increased the Union's profile in the region. After Maastricht, the EU formed a more cohesive CFSP and launched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The Amsterdam Treaty, which made some corrections to the Maastricht Treaty, paved the way for the formation of a Common Strategy on the Middle East and then for the adoption of the European Neighborhood Strategy. In spite of the positive contributions of the CFSP to Middle East policy, the EU still has problems in the formation of a common policy for the region.

The strength of the linkages between developments in the CFSP and the Union's policy towards the Middle East reveal that the region has a crucial importance for

the EU. Europe's interest in the Middle East is not a new phenomenon. Throughout history, the Middle East has had a strategic, cultural and religious value for Europeans. However, after the Cold War ended new internal and external factors increased the Union's willingness to protect its interests there. At this time the EU departed from its economy-based policy to adopt one of political engagement. Changes in the parameters of the European security measures which were shifted from "high politics" to "low politics" also increased the Union's engagement with the region. The main issue of concern for the Union was to reduce the social and political instability in the Middle East, primarily to protect the flow of oil, to acquire new markets, avoid the spill-over effects of the conflicts in the region and prevent illegal immigration and refugees coming from the Middle East.

EC/EU initiatives from the 1970s on display continuity since each initiative was formulated in order to correct the deficiencies of the former. The main reason for formulating a Euro-Arab Dialogue in 1974, for example, was to add a political dimension to the relationship established in the Global Mediterranean Policy adopted in 1972. Similarly, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership transformed the bilateral relations under the Renovated Mediterranean Policy into a more comprehensive, regional framework. It is expected that the latest initiative of the Union, called the European Neighborhood Policy, will improve the deficiencies of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

While the Community's early initiatives pertaining to the Middle East did not attract much attention, the EMP has become the subject of a number of analyses. For most of the analysts the EU has failed to implement the political, economic and cultural commitments made in the Barcelona Declaration, or to foster regional cooperation which was the main goal of the partnership when it was first formulated. Although the EU has not been successful in fulfilling its economic commitments and in creating strong cultural and political bonds between itself and the partners under the EMP framework, the EMP should not be seen as a failure, let stand as a counter-productive initiative. All the goals that the EU put

forward at the beginning of the partnership, such as defining a common area of peace and stability, constructing a zone of shared prosperity and providing rapprochement between peoples, are long-term strategies which require time. However, the EU has so far failed to translate its calls for the promotion of democracy and human rights into concrete action. This is related with the EU's preference for preserving short-term stability in certain cases, the existence of differing interests among the member states and the reluctance of EU member states to use conditionality in their efforts to promote democracy. In spite of all the criticisms, one of the key successes of the EMP is to provide a forum between the Mediterranean Partners involved in the Middle East Peace Process. The EMP remains the only multilateral body outside the United Nations where all the parties affected by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict meet. Other attempts to bring the parties involved in the Middle East conflict have either been disbanded or have no aim beyond developing a dialogue.

The recent development of the European Neighborhood Policy as part of the 2004 enlargement process includes the decision to work more closely with Europe's eastern neighbors. Although a clear distinction has been made between the EMP and the ENP and it has been stated that the ENP will not override the EMP framework and the ENP is regarded as the successor to the EMP. As explained earlier in this thesis, there are notable distinctions between the EMP and ENP. First, there is the shift in the ENP from the principles of multilateralism and regionalism that characterize the Barcelona Process, to the principle of differentiated bilateralism. Second, the method for the application of conditionality was strengthened in the ENP through introducing positive conditionality as opposed to the EMP framework which adopted negative conditionality. Finally, it seems that the ENP is designed to respond to the challenges arising from the EU Neighborhood rather than to address the socio-economic problems in the EU's periphery. Although it is not yet possible to evaluate the repercussions of the ENP, it could be argued that the idea of putting the eastern and southern neighbors into a single basket might not produce the desired results. In addition, the ENP is regarded as a process in which the EU is

primarily concerned with its own agenda, such as maintaining stability, but not with the realities of its eastern and southern periphery. However, the bilateral approach introduced under the ENP, which has been criticized by most of the analysts, would seem to respond to the particular needs of the partners, and the use of positive conditionality would force states that so far have been reluctant to introduce reform to actively pursue reforms.

The role of the EU in the Middle East Peace Process has been perceived separately from the other initiatives of the Union related to the southern littoral states of the Mediterranean, such as the EMP. The thesis puts forward the idea that there is an important tie between the MEPP and the other institutional initiatives of the EU, and that it was possible for the Union to institute the EMP by using the momentum created by the 1993 Oslo Accords. Similarly, the EMP meetings suffered from the negative developments in the peace process. Thereafter, it became impossible for the European Union to separate future progress in the Barcelona Process from the MEPP. Although the MEPP has been a primary example of the EU's common policy, its role in the process is regarded as limited. This is due to the fact that the United States is the primary actor in the MEPP with its strong political and military capabilities. The EU has certain strengths compared to the US such as geographical proximity, greater economic linkages and more intense relations with the Arab parties to the dispute. However, the EU is not always successful in transforming these strengths into concrete actions. The main problem of the EU is to be regarded just as a "payer" in the MEPP. Yet, EU has been trying to be a real player in the solution of the conflict since the beginning of the 1990s.

From the 1991 Madrid Conference onwards, the EU's involvement in the MEPP has increased. However the main negotiations related to the peace process have still been conducted by the USA. One of the EU's major handicaps in assuming a more active role in the peace process has been its institutional problems. The divergences between the European states on the formation of a common policy have been increased by institutional complexities. The EU has not been able to

exert pressure either on Palestine or Israel. Moreover, deeply embedded Israeli distrust of European intentions and good faith has led to the EU's exclusion by the Israeli leadership as a broker in the peace process. However, these weaknesses could be counter-balanced by Europe's strengths. In addition to geographical proximity and intense economic linkages, the programs and institutional structures that the EU has promoted in the region such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the European Neighborhood Policy will tend to enhance its stature in future attempts at solving the conflict.

The main theme of the thesis is to examine the policies of the European Union related to the Middle East. However, a chapter has also been devoted to the comparison of EU and US policies pertaining to the region. As shown in the introduction, it is impossible to analyze the Middle East's situation without acknowledging the US's role in the region. There are convergences and divergences in EU and US approaches to the Middle East's problems. These are examined through two of the thornier issues, namely the Israel-Palestine conflict and political relations with Syria.

The last chapter of the thesis argues that, although the US and the EU share common interests in the Middle East, the Middle Eastern issues have been a matter of contention between the US and the EU member states. There are many reasons which may explain the policy differences of US and the EU. These include historical, geographic, demographic differences, the nature of European Union's economic ties with the Middle East, divergent threat perceptions and different approaches to managing threats, and growing EU ambitions. These factors led to the formation of different Middle Eastern policies on the EU and on the US sides. On the other hand, the US and the EU have common strategic and economic interests and a common will in supporting the spread of market economies and democracies.

In the thesis, the Israel-Palestine conflict is analyzed as a case in point to demonstrate European-American differences. While the US and the EU both

believe that the conflict should be resolved through negotiations, they part ways over the methods to achieve these objectives. The main difference between the EU and the US is that, while the EU views the solution of the conflict as the key to reshaping the Middle East, in the US view the Israel-Palestine conflict is not an obstacle to realizing other reforms. In addition, European leaders have a greater sense of urgency about making progress in the peace process than the US. Another important difference in the US-EU approaches to the conflict is that while Europeans believe that Palestinians recourse to terrorism is directly linked to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the US declares terrorism in all forms illegal, regardless of its causes. As opposed to the EU, the US believed that the former PLO leader Arafat as an obstacle to peace, and that replacing Arafat was a prerequisite for political progress. On the other hand, the EU always viewed Yassir Arafat as the undisputed leader of the Palestinian people. As emphasized in the last chapter, these divergences derive from the main policies that the EU and the US have adopted towards the Middle East. In dealing with the Middle East as well as other regions, Europe generally puts the emphasis on institution building, while the United States focuses more on the people in charge. As a consequence the US has tried to limit the EU's role in the peace process. However, I argue that if the peace process moves forward, differences between the EU and the US are likely to diminish but if the process fails those divergences could widen.

Political relations with Syria is another case in point to show the ever-growing divergences between the EU and the US. The EU's policies toward Syria are characterized as "critical and constructive engagement," whereas the US prefers the policies of containment and isolation. European countries have long-standing historical and economic relations with Syria. The EU has sought to improve its relations with Syria through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, although more slowly than with other Arab countries. In contrast, US-Syrian relations have always been problematic and hostile. Syria has been accused by the US of acts of terrorism, of creating turmoil in Iraq and tensions in Lebanon. Because of these reasons, US has applied economic and political sanctions against Syria. Although

there are sharp differences between the policies of the EU and the US toward Syria, their approaches converged with the decision of the European governments to harden their views after the assassination of former Lebanese Primer Minister Refik Hariri on 14 February, 2005. The EU, France in particular, and the US were united in their support for the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon.

The EU is a modest actor in the Middle East, yet keeps an important presence through its initiatives and policies in the region. However, it does not have the capacity to shape events there. The EU conducts its relations with the Middle Eastern countries through institutional mechanisms and long-term strategies. The main reasons for establishing these institutional structures are the economic and strategic interests of the EU related to the region. However, in case of military interventions, the EU has been unable to formulate a coherent policy, where member states have chosen to act unilaterally. Reservations about the use of force and the general failure in forming a CFSP, limit the power of the EU in the Middle East. Although the policy of the EU toward the Middle East is widely regarded as a failure or as a non-policy, the thesis avoids such condemnations since the EU's most comprehensive Middle Eastern policy of the Union was formulated relatively recently, in 1995 and most of its objectives are long-term ones. The EU's Middle Eastern policy operates through the Union's institutions and initiatives and depends on the democratic transformation and economic development of the countries of the region; in fact, the policy has been mainly shaped by the EU's economic and strategic concerns. However, the asymmetric relationship between the EU and its Middle Eastern partners prevents obtaining important results from these initiatives.

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