

## **Regionalism and Globalism in the EMP: The Limits to Western Mediterranean Co-operation**

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The aim of this paper is to consider whether, in view of the setbacks experienced by the EMP, a greater emphasis upon western Mediterranean co-operation might be a way forward, or at least a way of maintaining a minimum degree of momentum within the Barcelona Process, bearing in mind the argument presented by Adler and Crawford that the survival and longevity of the process is fundamental to the prospects of building a security community. It will begin with a discussion of the various forums that have been proposed in the name of enhancing Mediterranean security. It will go on to consider both the potential and the obstacles affecting western Mediterranean co-operation. Thereafter a third section will consider the specific impact of September 11 in the western Mediterranean, focusing in particular on Spain, given its relevance as a key player in the launch of the Barcelona Process and as an influential actor in EU responses through the EMP, as the current incumbent of the EU Presidency. Finally, referring to the theoretical framework developed for the project, the paper will conclude with some thoughts on whether a western Mediterranean substitute for the EMP might be a viable future scenario.

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### **Western Mediterranean Forums**

The actual experience of western Mediterranean forums thus far has been largely unimpressive. One can speak of little more than a series of initiatives, often attributable to the ambitions of an individual or a single country, and forever failing to become institutionalized. In recent decades (at least until the Barcelona Process began), most of the impetus has come from post-colonial France, seeking to continue to project influence in the western Mediterranean, partly as a response to the growth of German influence

within Europe. In 1983, François Mitterrand proposed a western Mediterranean conference (involving France, Italy, Spain, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco) during a visit to Morocco. While regional challenges provided part of his motivation, the project was also very much to do with France seeking to harness ‘southern power’ to counter Germany’s preponderance within the EEC [Meyrede, 1999: 56]. Indeed, even before arriving in the Elysée Palace, Mitterrand had looked for southern support to counterbalance German predominance within the Socialist International, by holding two conferences of southern European socialist parties in January 1976 and May 1977 [Gillespie, 1989: 317].

Held up by a lack of Algerian enthusiasm and greater priorities on the French agenda [Carle, 1992: 43; Meyrede, 1999: 57], the idea of a conference or forum received little in the way of practical follow-up until 1988, when plans began to materialize for a western Mediterranean forum that would provide a permanent framework to establish co-operation. It is interesting to note in retrospect that in the late 1980s, although encouraged by Mitterrand, the initial meetings of this forum were non-governmental, involving civil servants, politicians, socio-economic leaders, academics and experts from European and Maghreb countries [Meyrede, 1999: 58],<sup>1</sup> whereas subsequent initiatives by Spain were essentially governmental and sought a much more controlled, elitist approach to partnership building. By the start of the 1990s, however, following the emergence of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) via the Treaty of Marrakesh of 1989, and with a sense of greater urgency being brought to the project by the Gulf War and events in Algeria, this (Western) Mediterranean Forum, now known as the ‘4 plus 5 Group’ was more firmly established as part of the official French diplomatic agenda.

In parallel, proposals for a Euro-Maghrebi Partnership were promoted by the members of the Forum within the EU, while the Forum itself was extended to include Malta (and thus become the ‘5 plus 5’ or ‘Group of 10’). The emphasis on the *western* Mediterranean remained firm, however, as was seen in the rebuff given to Egypt when it sought to gain admission in 1991, at the same time as seeking entry to the AMU [Winrow, 2000: 144-45]. The conjuncture of conflict in the eastern Mediterranean, growing southern European concerns about North Africa and momentary EU optimism about the prospect of developing an inter-regional partnership with the countries of the

Maghreb all encouraged a ‘bifurcated’ view of the Mediterranean and of Mediterranean security, although the subdivision of the area into eastern and western sub-areas was already well established in Cold War security perspectives. The relative lack of US interest in the western Mediterranean, which allowed more opportunity for European protagonism [Winrow, 2000: 50], also helps account for the western orientation of the French-sponsored Forum.

Over a period of three years from 1988, the ‘5+5’ project did begin to develop a dynamic, starting with ‘pre-diplomatic’ meetings in Marseilles, Tangiers and Rome and then graduating to meetings at foreign minister level in Rome and Algiers in 1990-91, the main subjects of discussion being co-operation in natural resource management, economic links and financial assistance, migration and cultural matters (thereby omitting hard security issues entirely) [Winrow, 2000, 138-39; Collinson, 1996: 48-50; Ghebali, 1993]. Yet even at its height, this Western Mediterranean Forum was challenged by the rival proposal co-sponsored by two of its own members, Spain and Italy, that sought to apply the CSCE formula to the Mediterranean. This implied going beyond an inter-governmental approach by seeking to build in transnational features [Calleya, 1997: 145-48, 151-57]. Although the more ambitious proposal for a Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) failed to get off the ground, its existence indicated Spanish and Italian reservations about the French project (not least a wariness about French protagonism). At the same time, the CSCM proposal involved a more comprehensive view of Mediterranean security—one that seemed to require the co-operation of over thirty countries including those of the EU, all the Arab countries from Mauritania to the Gulf, plus Israel, Russia and the USA [Gillespie, 2000: 171-3]. The formula was far too grandiose in French and Portuguese eyes [Chérigui, 1997: 107, 193-95; Vasconcelos, 1996a: 123].

The Western Mediterranean Forum of the early 1990s (not to be confused with the Mediterranean Forum launched in 1994) collapsed as a result of the crisis in Algeria and the Lockerbie disaster, which placed a strain on Euro-Maghrebi relations and also helped undermine the prospects of an EU-Maghrebi Partnership. Simultaneously, more overarching processes—the replacement of Cold War perceptions of Mediterranean security issues, initiation of the Middle East Peace Process—led specifically *western*

Mediterranean schemas to lose currency. This was seen most clearly in the shift in French policy towards the broader *Forum Méditerranéen* (or Forum for Dialogue and Co-operation in the Mediterranean) launched in Alexandria in July 1994, with Egypt and Italy as additional co-promoters. Although this Mediterranean Forum was to exclude Israel, Syria and Libya, it was sufficiently trans-Mediterranean to represent a would-be 'regional' as opposed to sub-regional project, with some prospect of eventually embracing all the littoral states (in addition to which it already included Portugal).

Since that time, attempts to build a security community in the Mediterranean have primarily been Euro-Mediterranean in focus, through the Barcelona Process, with the Mediterranean Forum existing more informally within the Mediterranean area and grouping 11 countries compared with an EMP membership of 27. None the less, *western* Mediterraneanism has not disappeared entirely. In 2000-01 Portugal favoured a revival of the 5 + 5 grouping in response to the crisis of the Middle East peace process and the problems besetting the EMP.<sup>2</sup> In the same context, the concept also seemed implicit in the call by EU external relations commissioner Chris Patten for 'sub-regionalism' as a way forward.<sup>3</sup> Nobody—at least in official discourses—has proposed a western sub-regional approach as an *alternative* to Barcelona, to whose preservation both the EU and the Mediterranean Partner countries (MPCs) remain committed. However, the importance attached by EMP members to maintaining momentum in the Barcelona Process has led to the case being made for sub-regional initiatives to be taken at a time when whole areas of the Barcelona Programme (such as the proposed Charter for Peace and Security) remain blocked, partly owing to conflict in the Middle East. This seems to have led to only a limited revival of specifically western Mediterranean co-ordination, primarily at the level of senior officials. The stated purpose is to complement the work of the larger Barcelona project, while recognizing that everything cannot be done 'at 27' (and even less so with the additional members that will soon be joining as a result of the planned enlargement of the EU).

This discussion has sought to establish a background against which contemporary options may be explored. It may be that sub-regionalism has positive contributions to make to the EMP, whether with a geographical basis in the western Mediterranean or not. (Although lacking geographical contiguity, the initiative taken by the Agadir Group of

Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan is also a noteworthy sub-regional initiative aimed at achieving a degree of horizontal integration.) But we must also consider the possibility that, regardless of the aims of its advocates, sub-regionalism could—under pressure from events—bring a retreat from the ‘global’ pretensions of Barcelona and leave behind rather more modest foundations for the creation of a Mediterranean security community.

### **The Distant Neighbours of the Western Mediterranean**

The current reality is formed by the existence of two markedly asymmetrical groups of states, notable differences in organizational, diplomatic and business cultures across the western Mediterranean, and significant country contrasts not only along the North-South axis but within southern Europe and North Africa as well. The foundations for *western* Mediterranean co-operation at present are indeed modest, as a selective, far from complete, discussion of international relationships should suffice to demonstrate.

To begin with, any comparison of the foreign and security policies of the European countries of the western Mediterranean reveals marked contrasts regarding the prioritization of areas of interest, notwithstanding common membership of the EU and NATO [Aliboni, ed., 1992; Mediterranean Politics, 1996; Stavridis et al., eds., 1999]. One of the starkest contrasts is that between Iberian neighbours Spain and Portugal. While Spanish interest in the Mediterranean is deeply rooted in history and has been the subject of considerable engagement since the late 1970s [Gillespie, 2000], Portugal only began to develop a Mediterranean policy by virtue of entry to the European Community in 1986 [Vasconcelos, 1996a, 1996b; Silva and Pereira, 1998: 86-87]. The Mediterranean has been a priority for post-Franco Spain, particularly under Felipe González and the Socialist Party (in office 1982-96), who grasped the opportunities for international influence to be derived from developing a European-Mediterranean-Spanish triangle as a focus of diplomatic activity. In contrast, Portugal’s more limited interest in the Maghreb has lagged behind several other national external priorities: Europe, Brazil, Lusophone Africa, East Timor,<sup>4</sup> and the extent to which the country is ‘Mediterranean’ is debatable.<sup>5</sup> Although occasionally the two Iberian countries, together with France and Italy (and occasionally Greece too), have co-ordinated their positions when Mediterranean issues have come up on the EU agenda, there are many alternative bases of international

alignment within the EU, including shared policy positions with northern member states on other issues, or similarities of size and status with northern countries (for example, Portugal often finds itself allied with Belgium, Holland or Austria on EU matters).<sup>6</sup>

Spain and Portugal differ moreover in terms of their respective security outlooks. Partly because of its marginal geographical position and considerable reassurance derived historically from Atlantic alignment, Portuguese society lacks the sensation of a ‘threat’ that Spain has obtained historically from its relationship with Morocco (a source of invasion and occupation), from the campaign of ETA terrorism that has lasted now for several decades, and from more recent unregulated immigration from the South. Portugal experienced its greatest sudden influx of immigrants back in the mid-1970s, at the end of the colonial wars in Africa; since then it has had considerable success with integrating immigrants (a large proportion of whom, notably the major cohort from Cape Verde, share the Portuguese language); and there have been very few North Africans among its recent arrivals. The Spanish experience of immigration is more recent and a substantial proportion (about one-quarter) is Moroccan.

Of course, migration over a long period of time can break down cultural barriers. As Russell King has observed, ‘migration redistributes (and creates) cultures’, adding that ‘the EU appears to be deeply afraid of this’ [King, 1998: 125]. Yet looking at the Mediterranean as a whole, the pattern of migration is clearly one marked by multiple ‘passages’ insofar as human migration is concerned, rather than the existence of a single ‘Río Grande’, the existence of which might facilitate common European outlooks on this link with the Mediterranean. While Spain’s migration pattern has been influenced by proximity to the Strait of Gibraltar and the closeness of the Canary Islands to West Africa, the Italian pattern has been affected by the Sicilian and the Otranto channels, linking the country respectively to Tunisia and Albania [King, ed., 2001: 10]. Although migration by sea (e.g. by *patera*) is not the principal form of movement from the Mediterranean to Europe, geography has helped to provide the European countries of the western Mediterranean with different experiences of migration, inviting contrasting responses.

This same geography, however, may be able to contribute to the development of a Mediterranean community in other regards, however—for instance, the development of

trans-Mediterranean infrastructure (with gas pipelines already linking Algeria, Morocco and the Iberian Peninsular), not to mention Morocco's longstanding hopes of a 'fixed link' to Europe by bridge or tunnel.

Along the North-South axis, the crucial problem remains the vast economic gulf between countries (and sometimes within them too). Although wider in some cases than others,<sup>7</sup> the extremity of this gulf makes it difficult to envisage western Mediterranean co-operation in the management of migration flows, as is amply illustrated by the frustrations surrounding bilateral migration agreements between Morocco and Spain over the last decade. This is one reason why Spain has recently shown greater interest in migrants from other source countries, particularly in Latin America (to such an extent that Ecuadorans now outnumber Moroccans in the region of Murcia) and perhaps also it is why José María Aznar recently seemed to respond so warmly to proposals from Tony Blair implying a more punitive EU approach towards countries failing to co-operate with European border policies [*Financial Times*, 21 May 2002].

The intensification of business ties across the Mediterranean does not seem to be reducing the economic gulf. In the last twenty years, Spain has moved from having a handful to possessing more than 800 companies in Morocco, yet early expectations that this would generate a multiplicity of interdependent relations that would breed harmony and co-operation between Madrid and Rabat, and push potentially conflictive issues (such as the Ceuta/Melilla dispute) to the sidelines, have not exactly been realised, for a number of reasons. One may be that the business expansion was not only one-sided, but also achieved politically: created through diplomatic initiatives and crowned by political agreements accompanied by aid packages. This has left Hispano-Moroccan relations still vulnerable to domestic political change in either of the countries concerned (for instance, it is arguable that the election of the Partido Popular in Spain represented an adverse development in this regard) [Gillespie, 2001]. Another reason is that joint ventures have proven unpopular with Iberian businessmen, who cite differences in business culture as the impediment.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the elitist approach to integration has left the bilateral relationship without sustenance from civil society. Far fewer Spanish NGOs are involved in the Maghreb than in Latin America. Attempts to develop a cultural dimension to diplomatic relations have depended ultimately on governmental good will, and thus

frameworks for dialogue such as the Averroes Committee have proven short-lived [Núñez Villaverde, 2001: 130-31]. In short, little has been done to challenge negative images of the 'other' through cultural projects. Indeed, the media in each country has bolstered up traditional stereotypes, perpetrated hostile images and concentrated on extant disputes [Del Pino Gutiérrez, 2000].

We should also bear in mind that there is an organizational dimension to the North-South divide in the western Mediterranean. While the European countries are not as cohesive as the 'Club Med' label implies, they do belong to a well-established, highly institutionalised regional bloc, and they are socialised by it. Politicians and senior officials have become accustomed to operating in multilateral frameworks as much as in domestic and bilateral contexts. For the countries of the Maghreb, meanwhile, regional integration has not progressed much beyond the declaratory level. The AMU has failed to function even in terms of economic integration. Composed of trade rivals, AMU's internal trade in the mid-1990s stood at just 3% of the total volume of trade by its members [Winrow, 2000: 107]. Regional disputes persist, not least over the Western Sahara. It is not even firmly established whether historical controversies over which countries constitute the Maghreb are in fact resolved. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that North Africans prefer dealing with the EU bilaterally rather than multilaterally (sometimes expressing a preference for the NATO + 1 formula of the Mediterranean Dialogue to the 15 + 12 equation of the EMP, although the latter has much more to offer in terms of funding).

This critical discussion does not mean necessarily that the project of building a Mediterranean security community, with the most immediate advances coming in the west, is doomed to failure, but it does underline the fact that it can only be conceived of as a very long-term undertaking. As such, it is a venture that will hardly be invested in readily by politicians, particularly by those operating in parliamentary democracies, where political horizons may not extend much beyond the next election. Conversely, the notion that time alone will assist the process of community-building is a pernicious one. The experience of Italy's fluctuating enthusiasm for Mediterranean policy, particularly at the bilateral level, in the late twentieth century shows that some degree of voluntarism (from above and/or below) is important [Holmes, 1996; Aliboni, 1999]. Meanwhile, even

Spain's relatively more consistent Mediterranean engagement has not produced continuous incremental benefits in relation to the building of a security community. Under Franco, Spanish policy towards the Maghreb revolved around a strategy of exploiting Moroccan-Algerian regional rivalries by playing one off against the other. Under González, this was replaced by efforts to develop improved relations with all countries of the Maghreb simultaneously, as part of a more 'global' strategy that sought the creation of relations of interdependence throughout the Mediterranean [Gillespie, 2000: ch. 2]. Under Aznar, there is a sensation of turning back the clock, to some extent, in that the sharp deterioration in bilateral relations with Morocco over the last year or two, seen in the departure of the Moroccan ambassador from Madrid in October 2001, has led to intense Spanish courtship of Algeria. The apparent (or perhaps threatened) shift in Spanish attentions was signalled by the way in which President Bouteflika was feted in Spain during the Valencia Conference of the EMP and in the announcement there that the two countries would shortly be signing a friendship and co-operation treaty, involving initiatives against terrorism and a more diversified economic relationship. These developments must cast doubt over functionalist assumptions that the boosting of economic ties is in itself a reliable route to achieving generally more co-operative relations among states across the Mediterranean.

### **11 September and the Western Mediterranean**

Notwithstanding the existence of a number of bilateral defence agreements between southern European and North African countries, North-South divergence over security challenges in the Mediterranean was in evidence long before 11 September 2001. To go back just a few years, to 1994-95, one can recall how the Maghreb countries, with Libya in the forefront, expressed alarm when three European countries of the western Mediterranean, acting within the framework of the WEU, announced the creation of the European Maritime Force (Euromarfor) and European Rapid Operational Force (Eurofor). Spain, France and Italy, who had been holding regular joint exercises since 1992, were shortly to be joined in these ventures by Portugal, albeit only as an observer in the case of Euromarfor [Biscop, 2002: 95-97]. Both here and in the subsequent planning of the Spanish-Italian Amphibious Force (SIAF) in 1997, a lack of consultation

of southern Mediterranean authorities created distrust and prompted angry complaints in the South [Biad, 1999: 111]. Subsequent efforts by the southern Europeans to involve North African defence forces in joint actions with these forces have failed to entice them, apart from the sending of observers. In addition to operational and financial impediments, the tendency of the Europeans to announce initiatives first, and to thoughtlessly leave the reassurance of southern 'partners' until later (as again occurred over the European Rapid Reaction Force), feeds an undercurrent of southern suspicion of the North. Even today, the very same vessels that are given permission to visit North African ports under a national flag, or that of NATO, find they are refused authorisation if they come identified as Euromarfor ships.<sup>9</sup>

Security concerns and perceptions have been the subject of considerable North-South divergence [Joffé and Vasconcelos, eds., 2000: 131-206], but one issue on which there has been considerable (if not very public) dialogue in recent years has been that of terrorism, in fact predating the events of 11 September. It is on this subject that one of the few claims to achievement by the Mediterranean Forum has been made:<sup>10</sup> that in the informal atmosphere of Forum meetings, among Mediterraneans, the issue of collaboration against terrorist movements was first raised at a multilateral level, before starting to gain entry to the EMP agenda as part of its new justice and home affairs (JHA) component. Following 11 September, the Forum continued to blaze this trail at its extraordinary meeting in Agadir, at the end of which Spanish foreign minister Josep Piqué announced that the Eleven had accepted a Spanish initiative to establish a regional 'code of conduct' against terrorism [*El País*, 26 October 2001].

Unfortunately, as was all too evident at the Valencia Conference, there is not yet anything approaching a Euro-Mediterranean consensus as to the basic definition of terrorism, and thus collaboration between interior ministries promises to be a matter of mutual convenience between individual countries rather than part of a broader region-building project based on shared understandings. Moreover, while responding to a very real security challenge for Euro-Mediterranean countries, the way in which terrorism is addressed runs the risk of being tackled primarily through enhanced intelligence, police and even military co-operation (with calls from Aznar for the remit of the European Rapid Reaction Force to be extended from the original Petersberg Tasks to serve in the

‘War on Terrorism’ as well). It is true that, against a backdrop of universal southern Mediterranean insistence that the events of 11 September must be understood in the context of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, European efforts to revive the peace process have been redoubled and some EU member states have become more openly critical of Israel. EU resentment over US hegemony in the Middle East has grown [Petras and Morley, 2000]. Whether the EU is capable of, or minded to, come up with an independent initiative if the US stance remains one-sided, however, must be doubted, given the very slow progress of the EU towards becoming a coherent global actor.

A clear danger for the EMP is that the responses to terrorism taken individually and/or collectively by its members will bring with them a ‘securitization’ of the whole JHA agenda, making it even more difficult to use the development of a migration policy, or policy in the area of justice, for constructive purposes of building a Mediterranean security community. Moreover, the heads of authoritarian regimes in the south are finding in the new context many opportunities to regain favour in the West (as seen by Bouteflika being invited twice to Washington in quick succession in recent months). Democracy and human rights promotion activity within the EMP, already only minor emphases, risk being stifled in the new climate [Gillespie and Youngs, eds., 2002]. Authoritarian habits may even become more common in the European democracies of the western Mediterranean, as suggested—some would argue—by official efforts in Spain to ban the pro-ETA party, Batasuna.

Here, there is a danger of sensationalism and one must not become obsessed with the headline news. There has clearly been a lot of work going on within the EU to generate means of giving more substance to the third chapter of Barcelona (relating to a partnership in social, cultural and human affairs). Once again, the design work has come from the European side—from informal Swedish-Spanish collaboration and from the preparations made by the European Commission and the Spanish Presidency for the Vth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, held in April [Spanish Presidency, 2002; European Commission, 2002], which resulted in the Valencia Action Plan [*Euromed Report*, no. 42 W, 26 April 2002]. The proposals put to the Valencia Conference were deliberately modest in order to ensure that some sense of achievement would be obtained, following the failure of the previous meeting in Marseilles.

The immediate results of Valencia are modest. Even before the event, Spain's renewed advocacy of a Euro-Mediterranean Bank, which has found favour in several countries of the Maghreb, was thwarted (or at least diluted into increased credit provision via the European Investment Bank), owing to northern European opposition. Moreover, while co-operation over JHA matters was approved, the decision to delegate the central role in the struggle against terrorism to the United Nations represented avoidance of the issue of how the EMP itself might respond. However, a number of proposals approved at Valencia do have some potential to contribute to community building activities: the decision to hold a conference on migration next year and to establish a migration observatory in Tunis; the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Foundation to organize intercultural dialogue on a permanent basis; and support for the European Parliament's proposal to establish a Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly [*Oxford Analytica Daily Brief*, 29 April 2002]. Of course, the real significance of these steps will only become clear as they are implemented: the latter proposal will only enhance the feeble parliamentary dimension of the EMP if parliaments become more representative of the public, particularly in the South; the Foundation's role will be influenced by the political 'weight' of its director(s) and whether the new body is truly, as agreed at Valencia, 'based on the principle of co-ownership'; and the observatory may only be able to fulfil its mandate if there is an unexpected dramatic shift in the relationship between state and civil society in Tunisia.

### **A Western Mediterranean Scenario?**

Referring back to the theoretical framework, it would seem from this discussion that the 'triage' scenario is quite improbable. Of the four southern European countries discussed, Portugal may be one of the countries most open to this option, given that its direct interests in the Mediterranean are small and concentrated in just certain countries of the Maghreb (essentially Morocco and to a lesser extent Tunisia). It should be noted none the less that Portugal has been relatively keen on the continuation of the Mediterranean Forum, whose scope extends beyond the original '4 + 5' geographical area. This is a mark of Portugal's relative lack of influence within the multilateral framework of the EMP, a framework nevertheless valued in Lisbon as the best response to Mediterranean

challenges, in an area where a very limited Portuguese presence precludes a reliance on bilateral approaches. Italy's geographical location, meanwhile, has obliged it to look eastwards as well as westwards, while internal debates about the country's respective European and Mediterranean identities continue unresolved. France, given its historical interests in the eastern (as well as western) Mediterranean and its role within the EU, would hardly be likely to favour triage. The same is true of Spain. Indeed, Spain expressed strong reservations when the idea of 'sub-regionalism' was first floated, seeing it as a threat to the 'globalism' of the EMP—which essentially reflects Spanish thinking on Mediterranean security, as the CSCM proposal demonstrated earlier. Spanish diplomats still take pride in their hosting of the Middle East peace conference in Madrid back in 1991 and they entertain hopes of again playing a useful role in support of external mediation in the future.<sup>11</sup>

Equally, the notion that 'triage' might lead to an 'Arab-European' partnership (Adler and Crawford, p. 36) must be questioned. Given the failure of the Euro-Arab Dialogue after 1974, such a formula commands little enthusiasm among Europeans. It is something that the EMP could turn into over time, almost by default, as Malta and Cyprus become EU members and if Israel's association with the EU were to become closer—the former a distinct possibility in the short term, the latter much more remote following the recent dispute over Israeli exports of goods from the occupied territories and European condemnation of Israeli military action in Palestinian towns such as Jenin. But it seems highly unlikely that continued diplomatic failure in the Middle East will bring an Arab-European partnership based mainly on the Western Mediterranean in the near future.

A more likely scenario is the third one, 'more of the same': a not particularly heartening outlook admittedly, yet one that might permit greater 'systematisation and structuring of Euro-Mediterranean relations' over time [Xenakis and Chryssochoou, 2001: 123]. Moreover, though 'open regionalism, interactions, and stagnation' may define the broad features of the Barcelona Process in the near term, this scenario should not be seen as precluding some—undoubtedly very modest—progress towards the long-term building of a Mediterranean culture and security community. Although the events of 11 September may have increased the risk of conflict along civilizational lines in the

Mediterranean area and certainly have increased the propensity of political incumbents to use or endorse repressive responses to security challenges, they have also prompted some development of the third chapter of the EMP, as seen in the extension of the EU Tempus programme of university exchanges to MPCs and the introduction of the new Euro-Mediterranean youth programme, even before the further additions brought by the Valencia Action Plan. These initiatives are creating opportunities for academics—hitherto accorded a fairly marginal role in the Barcelona Process—to play a more constructive role in the future. It is not only the terms of the new initiatives that will determine whether they realize their potential: it is also very much a question of the response from civil society.

#### NOTES

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1. One Spanish diplomat spoke dismissively of this Forum as a ‘cocktail’, implying that nothing serious or coherent was likely to come from an initiative with such diverse participants. Interview with Mariano Alonso Burón, 11 February 1992.
2. Interview with Graça Gonçalves Pereira, Portuguese foreign ministry, 7 April 2000.
3. In April 2000, Patten [2000] made a speech in Cairo in which he not only urged the development of sub-regional free trade areas but also called for flexibility to overcome objections to the proposed Charter for Peace and Stability, so that Barcelona partners who wished to ‘advance ahead of others’ might do so, without prejudice to the right of all partners to participate in discussions. Subsequently, the EU’s Common Mediterranean Strategy approved at Santa Maria da Fera in June [European Council, 2000] said that the Union, in developing initiatives, would ‘take

account of the specific situations and needs of the countries, regions or sub-regions concerned' and would 'encourage and support subregional cooperation, such as within the Arab Maghreb Union, within a framework leading to wider regional cooperation'. Finally, the Commission document issued ahead of the Marseilles Conference of the EMP, in a section on the Charter, stated that 'Partnership building measures should be implemented in a flexible way' so that questions could be addressed 'by a smaller number of partners wishing to advance more quickly, without prejudice to the principle that all Barcelona partners have the right to participate if they so wish. The Charter should confirm this principle of flexibility.' [European Commission, 2000].

4. I owe this insight into Portugal's ranking of international issues to a conversation with Maria Vaz.
5. Jorge Sampaio [1999: 9-10] has argued: 'Although geographically Atlantic, Portugal is culturally Mediterranean, whether through its old and deep links with the littoral states to the north and south of the Mediterranean, or by virtue of its awareness that Europe and the Mediterranean area share a common sense of development and security'. This, however, is clearly a politician's discourse; there is no evidence that the Mediterranean has a resonance in Portuguese public opinion.
6. Interview with General Luis Valença Pinto, IDN, Portuguese defence ministry, 7 November 2000.
7. Interview with Dr Eduardo Henriques, Instituto de Comércio Externo de Portugal (ICEP), Lisbon, 8 November 2000.
8. Portuguese diplomats Joana Gaspar and Mónica Márques da Silva (interviewed 14 April 2000) remarked that, although their country was way behind Spain in terms of establishing an economic presence in North Africa, two national advantages were the lack of a colonial presence there and a lesser economic divide.

9. Interview with Dr Rui Aleixo, Portuguese foreign ministry, 9 November 2000.
10. It might be added that the Mediterranean Forum has *directly* discussed the issue of region-building. Meeting in Portugal in March 2000, it declared that its aim was ‘to affirm the Mediterranean as a region on the world stage’ (and to contribute to the EMP). It spoke of ‘the establishment and nurturing of a Euro-Mediterranean Image, reflecting the evolving Euro-Mediterranean identity and a sense of purpose as a region’ and endorsed Maltese, Portuguese and Tunisian ideas for holding a regular Euro-Mediterranean Global Forum, instituting a scheme of Euro-Mediterranean Awards and devoting a specific year to the Mediterranean. See ‘Oral Conclusions of the Seventh Ordinary Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Mediterranean Forum, Funchal, 30-31 March’. It is noteworthy that the Forum has shown no interest at all in democracy promotion [Youngs, 2002: 44], in contrast to the EU, whose northern member states have insisted upon the inclusion of such activity in the EMP.
11. It is worth remembering here that two of the main European officials engaged in Middle East diplomacy, Javier Solana and Miguel Angel Moratinos, are Spaniards.

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