

**WORKING GROUP III**

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**European Defence  
Perceptions vs. Realities**

**First Year Report**

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**16**

*EuroMeSCo Papers*

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*European Defence – Perceptions vs. Realities*

*First Year Report of the Working Group on  
European Security and Defence Policy: Impact on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership*

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# Contents

Introduction	5
Objectives	9
1. The Nature of ESDP and the Mediterranean	11
2. Southern Perceptions of CFSP and ESDP	13
3. Conclusions	21
4. Recommendations	23
Appendix I	
Group Meetings and Public Activities	27
Contributions	28
Appendix II	
Survey on ESDP in EMP Southern Mediterranean Countries	30



## **Introduction**

*Álvaro de Vasconcelos*

The aim of the EuroMeSCo working group on EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY: IMPACT ON THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP (EMP) during its first year of activity was twofold; first, to analyse developments in European Union (EU) security and defence policy, looking at both the explicit and the implicit factors shaping such developments and, second but more importantly, to shed light on perceptions of these developments by elites in the South and to demonstrate how they would affect Euro-Mediterranean relations.

### **Underlying assumptions**

#### **ESDP, a new factor for the EMP.**

The development of a European security and defence policy (ESDP), as well as a European military instrument, is a new element in Euro-Mediterranean relations which is bound to have a significant impact on the Partnership, especially where political and security co-operation and North-South confidence-building measures are concerned. Past experiences, such as the creation of Eurofor and Euromarfor, generated strong negative public responses when they were announced. This led some to believe that a similar reaction could be expected to the creation of a European defence capability.

#### **A 'policy deficit'.**

In its attempts to set up a defence structure and to build a defence and security policy, the European Union has created the relevant institutional mechanisms but, so far, has done so in the absence of a strategic concept or a clear set of foreign policy goals. While the overriding goal of maintaining stability within the boundaries of the European continent is clear, wider objectives, intended force projection and policy aims generally remain unclear, as they do with specific respect to the Mediterranean.

#### **Perceptions shape reality.**

Indeed, perceptions are important in EU relations with the Union's Southern neighbours. The gap between government perceptions and public opinion, both in the North and the South, is growing wider, and mutual perceptions of enmity and mistrust may increase within European and Southern public opinion alike.

#### **Public opinion matters.**

Europe cannot afford to consider only governments in policy-making and to ignore public opinion. This is particularly important in the light of growing radical and identity-based political currents in Europe and the South, which could condition government policy. This has become even more evident since 11 September, 2001.

## **Main findings**

### **Lack of information generates suspicion.**

Lack of information and knowledge about European security and defence let alone foreign policy, is notable in the South. The surveys conducted reveal this to be the case, to a surprising degree, among politicians, the academic world, and media circles, thus suggesting an enormous knowledge gap within the general public at large.

### **Not negativism but contradictory expectations.**

ESDP generates contradictory feelings: it is desired and yet feared. Paradoxically, it is feared for its potential intrusiveness in different countries by the same social sectors that would wish it to represent an assertion of Europe's power to tackle crises in other parts of the Mediterranean.

### **The absence of a strategic concept is a central issue.**

Southern ambiguity towards ESDP is primarily a product of the lack of clearly formulated aims for ESDP. In other words there is an absence of clear and autonomous foreign policy and security policy goals. The weight of the United States and the trans-Atlantic alliance adds to this situation. As a result, the Southern perception is that the agendas in both cases are the same, particularly where terrorism, proliferation and even immigration are concerned, and that Europe is gearing up to face a diffuse threat from the South. These negative views are particularly strong among sectors disgruntled with current international and domestic political and social situations. Anti-terrorist action taken since 11 September, war in the Middle East, and the tendency for Europe to adopt an increasingly security-driven approach to migration have all contributed towards suspicions about the underlying motivations of ESDP.

### **The dangerous ambiguity of security concepts.**

Significant sectors view the growing weight of domestic security concerns within the European Union as negatively affecting reforms that are considered essential, while certain government elites view them as the confirmation and legitimisation of their own security-driven theses.

### **Three varying attitudes.**

There are three main attitudes towards ESDP, although it is difficult to judge their relative weights:

**(a)** One important group takes the generally positive view that, in developing a security and defence policy and a defence capability, the European Union is seeking to assert its international role. Those who hold this view tend to de-emphasise the importance of the military component as such, since it is regarded a 'natural' policy tool. Greater emphasis is placed on Europe retaining its own model, based on multilateralism and social cohesion, thus enabling it to play a significant role as a factor for stability and balance in the Mediterranean region, notably with respect to the worsening crisis in the Middle East.

**(b)** Another group fears that ESDP will mean the reinforcement of western military power and the development of a capacity to intervene in domestic crises, especially in response to humanitarian disasters; part of this group opposes the positions that the European Union has adopted in the Middle East or other crises.

**(c)** Others feel that the European Union will never be a significant actor, particularly in the Middle East, and are essentially sceptical or uninterested; this is due, in large part, to the difficulties the European Union has confronted in the Middle East.

### **Transcending the EMP.**

A general observation that, in part, transcends CFS/ESDP is that any reinforcement of European institutions is perceived as accentuating the asymmetry inherent in the Barcelona process and is thus unwelcome to some sectors in the EMP. While there is a belief that, in the present circumstances, the Partnership remains the best option for North-South economic integration, there are many who see no reason why it should be the preferred framework for security co-operation, especially in the light of the wealth of bilateral ties that already exist across the Mediterranean. Those sectors consider that it is necessary to push ahead with more substantial direct dialogue on security and defence co-operation with the European Union. This, they feel, would help to redress the current imbalance.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the role the European Union currently plays in the Mediterranean, the analysis, as a whole, indicates that ESDP can be developed with no significant negative impact in the South. It may actually have a positive impact, provided residual suspicions towards Europe's motives can be dispelled, in particular, through measures such as those indicated below:

#### **(1) Information and common language.**

Promote a better understanding of policy aims through debate – in which groups hostile to European foreign and defence policy should be included – through seminars and articles in the Southern press. The efficacy of this approach will depend, however, on the European Union formulating and pursuing clearer aims and on the development of common definitions of the main terms used in security discourse.

#### **(2) Democratisation, civil society and security.**

Debate should encourage frank discussion of the links between democratisation, fundamental rights and security. The Euro-Mediterranean dialogue must clearly differentiate external from internal security, and co-operation on the latter should be promoted in the realm of Justice and Home Affairs. Civil society organisations must be ever more closely involved in the security debate.

#### **(3) Establishing a regular defence and security dialogue.**

Establishing a regular dialogue between the European Union and its southern partners is an important means of addressing Mediterranean security concerns. A possible format would be the revival of the old WEU dialogue, through regular meetings in Brussels between the Presidency of the European Union and Southern ambassadors and military attachés. The participation of Southern forces or observers in future ESDP exercises in the Mediterranean should also be encouraged, as a natural complement to this dialogue.

**(4) Strengthening security and defence co-operation at all levels.**

ESDP should be seen as an opportunity in itself and not as an alternative to co-operation with the South. Bilateral co-operation at the level of information exchange, funded by the EU, would be steps in the right direction. Enhancing exchanges between military academies and joint training programmes would be a practical step which would generate greater understanding of ESDP. Encouraging EU-led military co-operation in such fields as de-mining, engineering and health could also provide useful training and enhance the image of European defence policy.

**(5) Promoting multilateralism.**

The active promotion of international and regional multilateralism should be the first priority of political co-operation within the EMP. Particular emphasis should be put on consultations for the adoption of common positions within the UN and other multilateral fora.

**(6) Addressing the institutional asymmetry.**

Despite its current difficulties, the EMP will pave the way for Euro-Mediterranean integration. The participation of representatives of non-EU members in the EMP decision-making process should be promoted. This could be done by creating a Pro-Med Committee in Brussels, as proposed some time ago by EuroMeSCo.



## Objectives

As a consequence of new provisions in the European Union Treaty and decisions taken by the European Council in Cologne and Helsinki, the mechanisms of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) are being reshaped and a European security and defence policy (ESDP) is slowly becoming a reality. In fact, the European Council in Laeken declared the latter "operational" for "some" of its proposed missions. This further integration of foreign, security and defence policies is bound to have an impact on the EMP. The reasons for this are obvious, for the rationale for the EMP is essentially that Europe should attempt to extend integration to the South. EMP co-ordination is handled by EU institutions, notably the Commission and the Council, whilst CFSP has, and ESDP should have, a Mediterranean dimension. Furthermore, demands for greater transparency cut across all common policies and the related decision-making process. Transparency is particularly important where the Mediterranean is concerned since one of the specific purposes of the Barcelona Process is to promote mutual trust. Indeed, security issues in the Mediterranean, including those linked to peacekeeping in and around the area, cannot be properly handled without the involvement of all parties concerned. Moreover the fundamental asymmetry amongst the partners – the anticipated integration in the North is not matched by reinforced co-operation within the South – is reflected in the overall management of the EMP. It is therefore necessary to devise ways to give Southern partners a greater voice in correcting this inherent imbalance.

The aim of this working group is to examine in detail the issues outlined above. The first year of research concentrated on two of them:

- The first was the nature of ESDP, its objectives and the implications for the Mediterranean, with the objective of both improving understanding of the ESDP, and comparing perceptions and realities in order to dispel possible misunderstandings, in line with the EuroMeSCo objective as both a provider of expertise and as a confidence-building measure;
- The second involved Southern perceptions of the CFSP and the ESDP, and their impacts on the EMP.

Indeed, since the asymmetry described above does not go unnoticed in the South, it was decided to start the three years research programme by ensuring that Southern perceptions, concerns and suggestions regarding these matters would be given as much consideration as possible from the outset. Nonetheless the research conducted in both the areas mentioned above, is intended to provide conclusions which will make ESDP a positive factor in the development of the EMP, despite particularly trying circumstances at present.

## Methodology

During the working group's first year of activities, research focused on the Mediterranean dimension of the CFSP and of the ESDP, as well as on governmental and popular perceptions towards them in EMP partner-countries. This was achieved primarily through a direct survey conducted by researchers from the affiliated institutes of EuroMeSCo in each country. They were asked to consult members of the military, government and academic elites about their attitudes towards CFSP and ESDP, as well as making their own assessments of the general public's perception of these realities. The project was completed through a double press review: one dealt with the printed press, mostly in Arabic; the other dealt with the online press, in English or French.

First we tried to assess the degree of information available, as well as forming a generic picture of EU defence policy and its connection with the CFSP and the EMP. Secondly we sought information on prevailing views over existing structures for dialogue and co-operation and how they could be enhanced. We also sought an appreciation of the role of the European Union in the current crisis, and of its defence policies, capabilities, and risk analysis capacity. We were anxious that particular attention be devoted to the political and institutional measures that could be taken by the EMP and the European Union to ensure that new European developments would have a positive impact on Euro-Mediterranean integration in view of existing asymmetries within the EMP. Finally, we also asked the researchers to make specific reference to any significant variations in perception between different social and political groups within each country.

The press review was seen as complementary to the survey. It allowed us to have an idea of how this key sector in terms of structuring public opinion viewed the European Union and its Mediterranean and defence policies. It also meant that we would have some information even from those countries that might not reply to the survey. However, from the beginning it was clear that the press almost entirely lacked specific references to the ESDP and the questions that were of most concern to us. Indeed, when there were some references to European Defence and Security, they were very generic and, quite often in fact, were focused on specific bilateral arrangements with a particular European country.

## **Output**

This report summarises the research findings on the issues outlined above. A more detailed overview of each country survey – both in terms of the questions asked and of the answers for the different countries – is given as an appendix. Appendices also include details of meetings and activities; of those responsible for each country survey; of papers developed during the course of first year's research; and of participants and contributors to the activities of the working group.

The conclusions include policy recommendations over issues of transparency, mutual trust and co-operation in this area of activity. Measures are also proposed to reduce institutional asymmetries between the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean so as to address Southern Mediterranean countries' concerns over equal access to the decision-making process within the EMP itself. The working group is co-ordinated and managed by the IEEI (Lisbon) in collaboration with GERM (Rabat) and CIDOB (Barcelona).

A first meeting of the working group was held in Lisbon on 18-19 May, 2001 to identify relevant issues. In Rabat, in 23 September, 2001, there was a meeting of the working group with commentators and contributors, and a public conference about the different perceptions of European Security and Defence Policy (24-25 September, 2001). This provided an essential opportunity to test and discuss these matters with a significant Southern Mediterranean audience, and to take into account the impact of the events of September 11. The latter event led to the decision to delay the final report, so as to give more time to the authors and researchers of the survey to incorporate the impact of this new factor into their work. An additional meeting of the authors to co-ordinate objectives in the light of this new reality took place in Lisbon (10 November 2001). Finally, there was a presentation of an earlier version of this report, and a discussion of the preliminary conclusions of the working group, with Senior Officials in Brussels (5 December 2001).

Another factor, in terms of the working groups public activities, was the posting on the EuroMeSCo site of some basic information on ESDP.<sup>1</sup> Research reports of reviews of perceptions of ESDP in the press in Arabic – by Fouad Ammor and Loubaba Achour, GERM (Rabat) – and on-line press have also been made available on the website and will be published separately.

This report was co-ordinated by Álvaro de Vasconcelos and drafted by Bruno Cardoso Reis, IEEI (Lisbon).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. <http://www.euromesco.net/>

## 1. The nature of ESDP and the Mediterranean

While there has been some progress in terms of the institutional arrangements and the setting up of a European defence capability, much less has been achieved in terms of the development of an **explicit**, comprehensive strategy with a clear list of policy goals the military instrument should serve to implement. In fact, there is an inherent ambiguity about the objectives of intergovernmental EU policies, which is typically apparent in security and defence. This arises from the varying intentions of member-states who wish to preserve their freedom of manoeuvre, or as a result of their inability to reach an agreement on coherent and effective policies. Consequently, **implicit** goals play an important role in this area, and will probably continue to do so, at least until the European Union is able to define its common interests which should govern the full range of its foreign and security policy instruments, including the ESDP military instrument. In the absence of a clear set of policy goals derived from a *strategic concept*, a certain degree of ambiguity as to what precise purpose the military instrument is designed to serve is inevitable.

Nonetheless, there are passages in key documents that help to draw a clearer picture of these matters. The best guides available regarding the future shape of ESDP's military instrument and the impact of ESDP on the Mediterranean are the Annex concerning the European Rapid Reaction Force to the Conclusions of the Helsinki European Council (December 1999), and the Common Strategy for the Mediterranean adopted at the Feira European Council (November 2000). This continues to be the case even if the latter is a very generic document, has no clear list of priorities, and avoids clear substantive statements on controversial issues – which are quite often the key to any effective European action in terms of security and defence in the Mediterranean area (e.g. the Middle East Peace Process).

The character of the Rapid Reaction Force which should be fully operational in 2003 was defined in Helsinki as the result of voluntary co-operation between EU-member states in "EU-led operations" in the "full range of Petersberg tasks", which include humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping, and the use of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. This document also addresses in equally vague and uncompromising terms the prospective area of operations of this rather small force – 60,000 personnel deployable within 60 days for a period of 12 months – stating that planning should take into account "that *within the agreed range of missions, the most demanding will occur in and around Europe*". This, of course, includes the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Indeed, in a declaration by the CFSP High-Representative, Javier Solana (Berlin, 14 November 2000), it was made clear that "the Balkans and the Southern Mediterranean shore deserve our utmost attention, because their political and economic evolution can have serious implications for our prosperity and even our security". Self-evidently, equal importance in terms of European security concerns should not necessarily mean the same approach to security and defence in these two adjoining regions, given their very different evolution in recent years and the differences envisioned for the future of their relations with the European Union.

The Common Strategy for the Mediterranean (CSM) does comment on security, which should have a defining role in terms of ESDP's Mediterranean dimension. Even this assertion should be tempered with some scepticism, given the recent criticism of the effectiveness of the Common Strategies by the CFSP High Representative himself in his recent report on this matter. Be that as it may, the CSM is still the most comprehensive guide available and it states one of its primary objectives to be "to

establish a common area of peace and stability through political and security partnership", and reaffirms that "the European Union intends to make use of the evolving common ESDP to consider how to strengthen together with its Mediterranean partners co-operative security in the region."

However, it is clear that the construction of a European defence policy will essentially be controlled by traditional EU patterns of decision-making and the congenital difficulties that come with them. Significant outside influence can come only from the United States' own evolving attitude towards European defence. The EU defence profile and the degree of real autonomy and effectiveness it will be able to achieve will most likely be dictated by primary options regarding the European Union's future as a world power, a regional power or a civilian power.

### **A very incomplete picture**

It is clear that the ESDP *has no stated strategic concept*, given the current emphasis on developing military capabilities rather than fully integrating the CFSP. *This leads many Europeans as well as people from the South Mediterranean to assume that the ESDP shares the strategic concept of Nato* (with its emphasis on terrorism and proliferation, for instance, which have clear implications for the Mediterranean). This may or may not be true.

The truth is the ESDP has evolved in response to fundamentally European concerns resulting mainly from the trauma of the tragic consequences of European impotence in the wars in the former Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the subordinate role arising from a marked gap in military capabilities in the Kosovo campaign. Less immediate concerns over the future outlook of the European Union as a more or less active, more or less civilian power in international affairs also play a role. The fact that stability and peace within the Europe remains ESDP's main focus does not mean however, as noted above, that it will not *have a role beyond the European continent, especially in its "near abroad"*.

Consequently, *South Mediterranean countries should not be led to believe that they had any significant influence as far as the underlying motivations for the creation of ESDP are concerned*, any more than they should see emerging European defence capabilities as fundamentally aimed at them. One important question that remains open, especially in the light of the rapidly worsening crisis in the Middle East, is the relationship between the ESDP and the EMP in achieving the stated goal of promoting cooperative security in the Mediterranean region. In fact, the security component of the EMP, which was established prior to the ESDP, was stillborn, mainly because of the difficulties arising from the Middle East peace process. The new defence dimension of the European Union should usefully contribute to promoting security dialogue and co-operation within the Partnership, even if the present obstacles pose serious questions as to when the latter can realistically be implemented.

## 2. Southern Perceptions of CFSP and ESDP

A focus on Southern perceptions may be seen by some to be misplaced, because, in most of the countries concerned – Turkey, Cyprus and Malta were not included in the survey because they have been accepted as candidates to the European Union – the power structure only allows for a limited expression of public opinion, especially on questions of national security and defence. But even if this is the case today – and we think that it is a mistake to assume that regimes currently in power are able to completely ignore public opinion – the option for empowerment of civil society and democratisation favoured by the European Union in all its major policy statements for the Mediterranean region should lead to sustained growth of public scrutiny in government. Furthermore, in our research and analysis, we have tried to take into account as much as possible the attitudes of different segments of the population, both at the grassroots and the elite levels. Knowing and understanding these perceptions is essential for evaluating the impact of ESDP in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

There is a complete consensus between different commentators and press reviewers about the amount of information available and the levels of public debate in the Southern Mediterranean countries regarding these questions. It is usually described in terms such as "minimal", "low", "fragmentary", "very limited". Public discussion of these topics is described as almost totally absent, except for rare academic seminars. All point to the almost complete absence of specific references in the press to these matters as a major factor in the lack of public awareness of them. They also, however, underline the limited interest in them, even at the elite level – at least, at this preliminary stage of the development of the ESDP. All the surveys, however, claim to have identified some degree of knowledge of these matters at the level of the military and foreign policy elites.

As far as the **credibility and significance** of EU defence initiatives are concerned:

- There is a great deal of consensus among **Arab members of the EMP**, where ESDP is seen as important at the elite level; at the grass-root level it is ignored or is seen in very vague terms as a natural development of the process of European integration.
- The exception is **Algeria**, where, due to the current crisis, there seems to be a more intense sense of European defence strategies and capabilities as entailing a real risk of intervention in the Mediterranean – seen as the primordial area of future deployment.
- In **Israel**, public opinion seems to attach no importance to ESDP and CFSP because of the lack of credibility with which they are seen.

The importance attached to the ESDP and the absence of negative perceptions about it in most Southern Mediterranean countries – even if this attitude is tainted with scepticism regarding the timing of effective implementation and criticism of ineffective EU action in the Middle East – can be explained as the result of hopes of growing proximity to the European Union, and of the potential balancing role of Europe vis-à-vis the United States, in terms of the Arab-Israeli peace process.

## **Impact of the Middle East crisis**

The Middle East peace process is a major factor in evaluating the EU's performance in terms of CFSP and has also a clear spill-over effect in the perception of ESDP. This is evident in the surveys, and becomes even clearer in the press reviews (whether in Arabic, or in English or French). Almost without exception, the rare and brief references in Southern newspapers to matters related to the EU's role in terms of defence and security are made in the context of comments on the Arab/Israeli conflict, and particularly over the question of Palestine.

The EMP Arab countries manifest a fundamental ambiguity over Europe's performance on the Palestinian question. On the one hand it is seen as positive and worth reinforcing, on the other it is criticised for being excessively timid or virtually non-existent.

Be that as it may, it seems clear that there is an important section of opinion in the South that sees Europe as more favourable to Arab/Palestinian interests than the United States is. It is often suggested that the European Union is "more balanced", "fairer", even if too inactive in the peace process, because of lack of power and of a clear common direction.

There are other segments of society, however – members of radical Islamist movements or extreme nationalists –, that see Europe as part of a Western world that is essentially hostile or at least openly indifferent and passive to Arab and Islamic interests in situations of crisis. This is perhaps more evident in the Middle East, a region closer to Palestine where there seems to be a deeper divide between governments close to the United States and significant sectors of public opinion. Recent events in Palestine, however, are reinforcing the ranks of those throughout the Southern Mediterranean who point to international (namely European) culpable ineffectiveness.

There can be no doubt that the current inability of the international community to contain, let alone, solve the crisis in the Middle East, clearly favours the more radical Islamist and nationalist groups in the South. They are, of course, hostile to any kind of European defence as just another mechanism of reinforcing the already overwhelming strength of the "hostile West", and are no less hostile to any kind of enhanced dialogue and co-operation between the two shores of the Mediterranean. This change in the atmosphere of Southern members of the EMP, is still difficult to gauge in terms of its long-term impact, but it has the potential to create enormous difficulties for a constructive and co-operative concept of security in the Mediterranean. This was already clear when the Partnership was unable to move towards its declared objective of a Mediterranean Charter.

Hence, even if many see a more active and autonomous international European presence as something positive for the South Mediterranean – so that the development of the ESDP becomes a positive mechanism for enhancing Europe's role – there are also those who disagree and are hostile to any such development. Finally, some of the surveys made clear that there are also sectors of the elite (at least in the case of Egypt and Jordan), with a more conservative (or realist) approach, who do not believe that Europe can replace the US in the Middle East peace process or in the security of the Mediterranean, even if a European defence identity comes about.

Israel sees the European role as negative and contaminated by an anti-Israeli bias (with few possible exceptions, such as Germany and the UK). Perceptions in Israel of Europe's international role are parallel but inverse to those of its neighbours and other Southern Mediterranean partners. The European Union is seen as both irrelevant and hostile. The dominant perception seems to be one of "hopeful pessimism" regarding the EU's international

position, which is seen to be, fortunately, limited given its perceived hostility towards Israeli interests. Clearly, an increased European role in terms of foreign or defence policy in the Mediterranean would arouse a negative reaction from Israel, which shows no interest, to say the least, in increased European strength in these areas. It is not clear whether or not this view is shared throughout Israeli society, and how it might evolve.

### **General outlook for the ESDP from the South – too soon to form any conclusions...**

In consequence, it can be said that, *with the possible exception of Israel, and some radical Islamist or extreme nationalist sectors in other Southern Mediterranean countries, the ESDP is not a priori perceived as a threat*, and even generates some positive expectations. However, in answers to questions that are more searching than this generic approach, it becomes clear that reservations from relevant sectors (radical Islamists and nationalists) might be growing, and might even affect sectors otherwise sympathetic towards Europe. For instance, anxieties from the latter group include the fear that ESDP this would just mean more forces at the disposal of the United States and not a more autonomous European voice, or that positive expectations regarding EU pressure on human rights in the South might well be superseded by a new priority over security, for which the ESDP would be the façade.

In other words, *the absence of a clearly dominant general negative perception of ESDP in the South should be evaluated with caution:*

- because *it is difficult to gauge the strength of sectors hostile to ESDP – which might, in any case, be growing;*
- secondly, because of lack of information, *the ESDP is a grey area for most of the population* and;
- thirdly, because there is a "lack of ESDP", its capabilities and policies are far from fully developed, and this *could lead to false expectations*, whether positive or negative, *from the South, that will eventually have to adjust to the reality of more fully developed European defence.*

### **THE UNITED STATES, NATO, AND THE IMPACT OF SEPTEMBER 11**

There is a degree of consensus at the elite level in South Mediterranean countries, that Nato's role and importance will not be replaced or downgraded in the short term. Perceptions are not so clear in the surveys regarding the medium to long term – some state that an independent ESDP decision-making process will necessarily lead Europe to act independently of the USA and outside Nato; others think that Nato will remain, for a long time, the "real" decision making-body and that Euro-American relations will continue to be strong.

It is also clear that most **EMP Arab countries** would wish for a more independent stance on the part of the European Union towards the United States. However, it also seems clear that even among those with reservations over further co-operation with Nato, ESDP is not yet seen, understandably, as an equally significant alternative.

However, there appears to be some differences in this respect between them. In the case of **Jordan** and **Egypt**, the surveys and the press reviews make it clear that, compared with the

European Union, relations with the United States, at the military and even economic level, are very important, if not paramount. Enhanced co-operation with Nato – conditional on advances in the Middle East peace process – would also be welcomed. The same would be the case with **Israel**, which tried in vain to become a full member of Nato in the 1950s, and also with **Algeria**, whose military seem to view enhanced co-operation with the United States at all levels, a useful way of countering European influence with a more anti-terrorism-oriented partner.

These questions gained a new importance in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001. The major military role of the United States in the Mediterranean came very clearly into the fore, even if it was clear that its focus was in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Gulf, and that there was no American strategy for the region comparable to the Barcelona Process promoted by the EU. The importance of Trans-Atlantic solidarity, especially in crises of this magnitude, was also emphasised.

### **DEMOCRACY AND STABILITY POST-9/11**

Many in the South fear that the priority assigned to the fight against terrorism after the attacks of September 11, 2001 will mean increased internal repression – with Western countries turning a blind eye in the name of security priorities, as they define them. This could seriously jeopardise democratisation efforts – the key for long-term stability, prosperity and peaceful co-existence with the rest of the international community. It could also mean an excessive focus on hard security instead of investment in development, which is essential for the success of these efforts, which are in themselves fundamental in the promotion of long-term security and stability in the Mediterranean. The consequences of this could be to reinforce of radical Islamists and nationalists in the South, as well as their view of a united and hostile Euro-American West. If no significant advances are made in the Israel/Palestine question, such developments will reinforce the argument that Westerners have always been prejudiced against Arabs and Muslims. This would have an inevitable spill-over effect in terms of a more negative perception of the EU's initiatives over CFSP and ESDP.

### **SOUTHERN EMPHASIS ON WESTERN DOUBLE STANDARDS**

This more negative view of ESDP could be further strengthened by the priority apparently being given by the current US government to a renewed offensive against the "axis of evil", and particularly **Iraq**, regardless of what is called in Washington, the Arab "public rhetoric" linking Iraqi violations of UN resolutions with those of Israel, and denouncing the consequent "double standards" in the West's response to them. An effective European opposition to this course of action – or linking it to significant progress in Palestine – could, however, have a major role in reinforcing those in the Southern Mediterranean who claim that there is a significant difference between the United States and the European Union in their approach towards the Arab world. This would be at least as important as any other specific security-building measure, to Southern perceptions of ESDP. Failure to act effectively in the Israel/Palestine conflict would make such measures essential.

### **EU AND US RELATIONS**

Immediately after the attacks of September 11, there was an undeniable rapprochement between European countries and the United States. However, tensions between the two shores of the Atlantic that had already emerged after the decision by the new Bush Administration to withdraw



unilaterally from the Kyoto protocol, began to re-surface. This has again become evident in the way the Administration has been handling its war on terrorism and its relations with Israel and Palestine. European elites often complain of lack of real consultation and indicate that the USA has to decide if it wants allies or obedient vassals. The American elite replies that Washington cannot be tied by unwilling and incompetent allies and that it is easy to complain when others have to act. Can this growing rift be healed? Will ESDP give Europe effective means of acting on its own and dispensing with American security in the Continent? The answer to these questions will have an important, if indirect, impact on Euro-Mediterranean relations.

### **Defence co-operation : not a very encouraging picture**

The importance attached by Southern Mediterranean elites to co-operation with the United States, however, does not mean that bilateral co-operation in terms of defence with Europe is not also valued.

This is clearly the case in **EMP Arab countries**, where Europe frequently features in positive terms in the press. In almost every one of the countries surveyed defence co-operation with European countries at a bilateral level, or joint exercises are clearly valued. *Bright Star* and *Cleopatra exercises*, in Egypt, in which a significant number of European countries take part is the most visible example. **Algeria** appears, again, to be the exception, for the survey points to a very marked contrast between the military elite which would be very happy with enhanced security and defence co-operation with no strings attached in terms of human rights and good governance, and, on the one hand, wider sectors of society that would see it with reservations precisely because it could increase military leverage in the political system, and, on the other, the Islamists who would be hostile to it and would see it as targeted against them. However, this contrast can also be found, to a lesser degree, judging from the surveys, in other Arab partners.

Although the current bilateral mechanisms of co-operation seem to be much liked by the Southern Mediterranean elite, direct multi-bilateral dialogue with the future common structures of the ESDP is not excluded. However, the preferred way to move forward in this respect – if changes are made in the current system – would seem to be enhanced defence co-operation through a reformed and upgraded EMP security dimension – which would include frequent meetings at defence ministerial level. This could imply a desire that such steps be taken in a multilateral and more egalitarian structure, or it could be an indirect way of pointing to the need for decisive advances in terms of the Middle East peace process before such a dialogue becomes feasible, given the internal political costs of any such initiatives in the absence of a reasonable hope of solution for the Palestinian question. The point is that a more positive European role over Palestinian matters is, in some cases, explicitly presented as a condition for further military co-operation. For instance, the survey of **Tunisia** suggests that the future Charter for Peace and Stability should affirm a common hostility to all forms of "colonialism" – Israeli occupation of Palestinian land.

**Israel** shows no interest in, nor sees any real possibility, of enhanced co-operation with the European Union in this area, and looks to the United States and Turkey as its major defence partners in the Mediterranean area.

Even if, clearly, there are ways to move forward, it is also important to take into account that there are difficulties in hampering euro-mediterranean defence and security concerns.

- **Israel** clearly does not attach a great deal of importance to the Barcelona process. The Tel-Aviv government will not let Euro-Mediterranean dialogue in any way condition its behaviour in the

current conflict with the Palestinians. Southern Arab partners retaliate by refusing to participate in any security and defence initiative in conjunction with Israel.

- **South/South relations** are not always good, quite apart from Israel, and just among EMP Arab countries. This also explains why bilateral defence co-operation between individual European countries and Southern Arab countries is looked at with such interest by the latter.
- At **the EU level** there are also difficulties, mainly regarding resource-availability and the lack of interest of some members in Mediterranean affairs.

### **Risk analysis: shared security challenges?**

Whilst they evaluated risks for the national security of their own countries and what they perceive to be the European evaluation of risks coming from the South, the respondents to our surveys never pointed to Europe as a major source of threats and were adamant in viewing European perceptions of threats from the South as exaggerated. Even if the imbalance between the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean, from the military to the economic and demographic level is seen as creating problems, it was said that the two sides should solve these problems together and the EMP would be the natural structure for that purpose. Indeed, the respondents were very emphatic in saying that in terms of either capabilities or intentions, there was no indication that Southern members of EMP countries had aggressive strategies towards the North. In this atmosphere of almost total unanimity, we did not find any marked statements of hostility or fear towards the new defence capabilities that are being built-up in Europe.

In **EMP Arab countries**, however, there are sectors that fear what they perceive as the growing military strength of the North and the growing military vulnerability of the South Mediterranean. They express concern about the concept of peace-enforcement, but most do not seem to believe that the South Mediterranean is a "target" area for the ESDP. This is either because these new European forces are seen as not having any clearly assigned future theatre of operations – they will go where they are needed –, or because they are seen as primarily an instrument to deal with crisis inside Europe, namely in its main area of instability – the Balkans.

**Algeria** is an exception in as much as this fear is much more pronounced and generalised. The survey pointed to widespread concern with the risk of European intervention in the Mediterranean if an internal crisis, such as the one they have been living, degenerates.

In the surveys of **Tunisia** and **Morocco**, immigration towards Europe comes up as the only major source of tension. But this is attributed to an erroneous European perception of the question, because migration is seen as actually relatively small, as well as being economically necessary for both sides of the Mediterranean.

**Egypt's** survey claimed major threats were in fact shared by the two shores of the Mediterranean, pointing to terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) as a common concern given Israel's nuclear capability and growing nationalism which is a major threat to regional security. What is clear is that, for most Southern countries, the dominant perception of potential threats to their national security comes from the "southern near abroad" or internal subversion.

**Israel** almost always comes up in the risk evaluations of EMP Arab countries. This is even true in more distant countries, such as Tunisia, where the memory of Israel's air attack to the PLO headquarters in Tunis, in 1984, in which several Tunisians died, is clearly present. It is a view that

also conforms the picture of South/South conflicts as the major source of security concerns. The emphasis in the Israeli survey is on its divergence with Europe in terms of security perceptions, particularly of the risks represented by Iraq and Iran, which are seen as hostile and potentially very threatening to both national and regional security. This suggests that Israel has strong reservations over an effective ESDP.

This situation, however, creates a double paradox. Firstly, the country that is seen as the spearhead of Western interests in the East by many Israelis and by many Arabs, is actually the one most at odds with Europe in security terms. Secondly, the ESDP is seen by Arab countries as a potentially positive factor in terms of an increased ability of the European Union to intervene in the Middle East peace process, but Israel remains hostile and sceptical. This seems to indicate that ESDP would actually have no impact at all in this key crisis for the Mediterranean region. Indeed, such a difficult situation would be a real test for this, as yet untested, crisis-solving EU mechanism. It is not at all certain that it would reinforce the international credibility of the European Union if it were used, at least in the short term. In fact, at least in Israel, the ESDP itself as well as the EMP – which is described in the Israeli survey as "non-realistic" because of Arab and European attitudes towards Israel – faces a major credibility problem.

In terms of more concrete security problems in the Euro-Mediterranean context there are tensions arising from the **capability gap** between the North and South of the Mediterranean in terms of military strength. This is much like the one between Europe and the United States, and it creates discomfort among Southern EMP members, who also exhibit a marked perplexity over claims of threats from the South. Tensions also arise from European **immigration policy**, because again the South sees double standards at work, with the European Union defending freedom of circulation for capital – Northern investment in the South –, but not for the movement of Southern agricultural goods and workers towards the North.

There clearly are very marked **South/South suspicions** and neighbouring countries always figure prominently in the risk appreciation contained in the surveys.

### **Institutional asymmetry**

There is a fundamental and basic institutional asymmetry between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean countries. There is a great number of multilateral institutions in the North, but in the South there is only the dormant UMA (Arab Maghrib Union) and some, infrequent attempts at consultation. This also applies in the economic dimension where it is more acceptable.

The European Commission naturally wants to control the application of funds it provides through the MEDA programmes. In terms of trade, between the two Mediterranean shores, Europe's leading role is a consequence of the Association agreements between the European Union and each Southern Mediterranean country. In terms of the political dimension of the EMP, however, the justification for this imbalance is not so clear.

Southern concerns about EMP structure are a well-known problem, which is criticised in most of the surveys and in the press of Southern Mediterranean countries. Initiatives in the EMP are always European, the presidency is linked to the EU's own rotating presidency and it is up to the EU bureaucracy to put decisions into effect and ensure routine management. This creates a basic contradiction with the idea of Partnership in the EMP which was originally set as a way of promoting active dialogue and a feeling of joint ownership for the Southern Mediterranean countries.

The surveys suggest that there should be a more balanced institutional apparatus in which Southern participation on equal terms would be assured. Further attention to the political and security dimensions is also recommended, as well as further participation by civil society, with the promotion of an active information policy and regular debates between institutions on both shores of the Mediterranean.

### 3. Conclusions

We can draw the following conclusions from the surveys, press reviews and academic studies that have formed part of this project. It would seem, especially from the answers to the surveys, that the EU's efforts to develop a defence policy benefit from a response in the Southern Mediterranean countries which is not entirely hostile. This conclusion, however, needs some further elaboration, and we can distinguish at least five different categories of response:

1. The **elites of Maghrib countries** seem moderately optimistic over the development of the ESDP but have mixed feelings as to its effects on Euro-Mediterranean relations. Some believe that this might be positive, others consider that it might herald the constitution of a European fortress.
2. The **elites in the Mashriq** seem dominated by pessimism towards suggestions that the ESDP would have a rapid impact in international affairs, but view with interest new possibilities of co-operation.
3. **Israel** seems mostly hostile and sceptical to the ESDP.
4. In **Algeria**, most seem convinced that the ESDP could involve a short term threat of European intervention if its own domestic situation degenerates. The military see in this a potentially useful mechanism for co-operation that would give them extra internal and external leverage.
5. **Some elements – radical Islamists and nationalists – among all the EMP Arab countries** believe that this further reinforcement of "Western military power" will take place, and argue that it would be detrimental to the interests of Islamic and Arab countries.
6. Important **sectors of the population (and even of the elites) in all the Southern Mediterranean countries do not have a clear idea of what the ESDP is**, both because this is not a subject of great interest to them and because it receives very little press coverage.

What is clear is that *European fears of a deep and generalised anxiety in Southern Mediterranean countries over the objectives of the proposed European Rapid Reaction Force and of the ESDP in general are exaggerated*. This can be stated with some confidence for the elites of those countries where the survey was conducted. Algeria and Israel are the exception; both have important sectors of the population with clear reservations, even if the latter is much less concerned than the former with the impact of the ESDP. In the other EMP members there are some generalised misgivings concerning the impact of the ESDP on European investment in Southern development, but also some interest in being included in consultation and co-operation mechanisms that might be created in this context, if Israel is not part of them. This is in line with the interest shown in the press and in official declarations over current bilateral defence co-operation with European countries.

This attitude of relative benevolence towards the ESDP can – in the case of the surveys – be at least partly the result of self-censorship, in view of the identities of prospective readers of the results. However, the range of questions asked in the surveys does allow us to gauge the nature of the reservations that have been voiced, and the press reviews give some support to the general attitudes in the surveys. This justifies cautious optimism that the ESDP can be introduced without causing excessive alarm among the EU's Southern Mediterranean partners. However, *it would be imprudent to believe that this relative benevolence can be maintained without well thought-through European initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting that initial favourable disposition towards the ESDP*. This is because:

- Attitudes seem to be based on a large measure of ignorance, as well as some scepticism over its likely effectiveness;

- There are unreal expectations regarding the immediate impact of the ESDP on EU-US relations; and
- There is the risk that the image of ESDP will be contaminated by negative views in the South of other issues, whether related to EU-South Mediterranean relations, or not – especially when its capabilities become visible.

Among the major points that already cause difficulties in terms of perceptions of the European Union foreign policy and defence dimension among its Southern Mediterranean partners are the following:

- the institutional asymmetry within the EMP;
- the alleged lack of European commitment to the Middle East peace process;
- European immigration policies.

These problems will continue to have a clear spill-over effect in terms of Southern perceptions of the CFSPD and ESDP. This is clear from the doubts expressed in the press, the surveys and in meetings, as embodied in questions such as the following. Will a stronger Europe use its new-found force to put pressure on Israel? If the ESDP has no hostile intentions towards the South are we going to be informed and consulted about it? Is this new attention by the European Union to the security dimension not going to be used to stop immigration instead of promoting co-operation with us?

The ability of the European Union to respond to these concerns – in the context of the EMP, the CFSP and ESDP – is therefore essential. It should, at least, be aware of them despite difficulties in accommodating Southern concerns.

The most obvious problem – the **Middle East** peace process – is clearly a major stumbling block for the Barcelona Process, not only in its security dimension, but also in terms of its original multilateral character. EU institutions are forced to concentrate a great deal of efforts in the almost impossible task of keeping Israel within the Barcelona framework, without the Arab partners leaving it, and at the same time trying to make some useful contribution to the peace process, as the Arab partners demand, while facing Israeli hostility towards any kind of European "interference". The ESDP will not solve any of these problems. Some of the surveys admit that the role of the United States in controlling Israeli-Arab relations is irreplaceable and that although Europe does have a more balanced and positive position from the point of view of Arab interests, its impact is limited by structural constraints that are difficult to overcome. Other comments in the survey and the press, however, do seem to expect a more prominent and effective European role in this crisis after the ESDP comes fully into force.

As we have seen, the **Southern sense of being marginalised** is very real. Despite the original intention, the lop-sided decision-making process within the EMP has not reduced this general sense of institutional asymmetry between the South and the North of the Mediterranean. Of course, this is in large measure a result of the European perception that a real Euro-Mediterranean common decision-making process would run the risk of paralysing the whole process because of South/South tensions.

The very concrete **fear** in the South that the **ESDP will mean less investment in development, in co-operative security but, more investment in exclusive hard security**. Any use of a new common structure or of common forces to curb illegal immigration would have a very negative impact indeed on Southern perceptions of the ESDP. These fears may be utterly false and with no basis in EU intentions regarding the specific tasks attributed to the ESDP structures and capabilities. Furthermore, even if this kind of mission is undertaken by new structures and forces, there should be a major and highly visible effort, in terms of CFSP and, particularly of the ESDP, to demonstrate that the European Union has something positive to offer in the fields of security and defence to its Southern partners that may help diminish the negative impact of those kinds of measures.

## 4. Recommendations

Drawing from the views expressed in the surveys of Southern Mediterranean perceptions of the CFSP, ESDP and EMP, we make the following recommendations in order to promote a better knowledge of European policies among the EMP's Southern partners and to contribute towards positive developments in security relations in the Mediterranean:

### 1) Knowledge and information

The press reviews demonstrated – and the surveys confirmed – the very low level of information about ESDP in Southern Mediterranean newspapers and emphasised that even specialised debate was very rare. An effort by the European Union to actively promote a higher degree of knowledge about these matters would have a double advantage. First, it would show European openness regarding them – proof that the European Union has nothing to hide and that there is no hostile intent towards the South Mediterranean. Secondly, it could promote a more enlightened public debate that could help to dispel exaggerated expectations and fears about the ESDP. We recommend:

- Higher visibility of the ESDP should be achieved in the Southern Mediterranean press, through seminars with editors and columnists – as participants and not just as a passive audience.
- It would also be very important to have the participation of Southern ministries of defence and the military in seminars that would offer them a better vision of what the real objectives and nature of ESDP are. Indeed, the Spanish presidency has already taken a very important first step in this regard, with its seminar in Barcelona (May 20-21, 2002), and there is a promise that the Greek presidency will do something similar. This could become a very important *regular* seminar on ESDP matters by the EU Presidency, with the input of experts as well as officials.
- There should also be a deeper involvement, through the EuroMeSCo network, of the Southern Mediterranean academic world, specifically universities, through an increased number of public debates there that may be essential for further public awareness of the ESDP and other EU policies in the South.
- Finally, the involvement of the Parliaments of the two shores of the Mediterranean, as part of a more complex dialogue, should be stimulated in the context of parliamentary commissions, that could further enhance opportunities for debate about the ESDP in the South.

### 2) Common language

A greater effort should be devoted to questions of language as a source of potential conflict. All efforts to address possible sources of misunderstanding at this level and to create a common language in terms of security and defence issues between the two shores of the Mediterranean – while acknowledging differences of perception and interest – should be encouraged as an important additional effort to the initiatives mentioned above. The work being conducted by

EuroMeSCo working group I (*Euro-Med Charter, Searching for Common Ground*) could be an important starting point.

### **3) Democratisation, civil society and security**

These discussions should include candid comment between the two shores of the Mediterranean over the connection between long-term security and democratisation. EU support has been pledged to groups from the civil society in the Southern Mediterranean countries for human rights and good governance, but concrete measures are not always forthcoming. In particular we would recommend the following in terms of Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and co-operation:

- In the surveys there were calls for participation by representatives of civil society in the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue. They could be invited as specialised consultative bodies whenever the policy-making institutions of the European Union or the EMP intended to take measures in any specific area. This could help to dispel the fear, very present in the post-September 11 context, that an enhanced defence and security co-operation would be focused on internal security co-operation leading to European acceptance of illegitimate state repression.
- A clear separation should be made between internal security and defence dialogue and co-operation.
- In the context of military co-operation, the experience of civil-military relations in European democracies should be an integral part of the information programmes about European defence.

### **4) Institutional reform**

This is a clear demand of the Southern Mediterranean elites, for they want a more active role in the Partnership. This would entail, at the policy level, rules that would allow for a more even-handed decision-making process. Some, in the surveys, suggested that it would be important to have at least a semi-permanent presence of representatives from the Southern Mediterranean (whether in an autonomous secretariat or not) and a rotating presidency between the partners.

However, we believe a distinction should be maintained – as it is in the meetings of Senior Officials – between:

- The economic level, where in the context of the MEDA process the European Commission as the provider of funds will retain ultimate responsibility. The difficulty of making effective use of the MEDA funds, however, does illustrate the need to move to a solution of the kind recommended by the first EuroMeSCo report. This suggested recruiting officials from Southern Mediterranean countries committed to the MEDA programme, to work with the European Commission. They could bring, along with technical expertise, a deeper knowledge of local realities.
- The political and security level, where the need for a greater degree of participation from Southern countries is clear from our research. This would also be in accordance with the policy statements of the EU mentioned above. An important initiative would be to create a rotating co-presidency of the EMP between the EU Presidency and each one of the Southern Mediterranean partners. This should be introduced even if, the conflict in the Middle East creates problems in the implementation of this measure in the short-term.



## 5) Euro-Mediterranean security dialogue

In the short term, the **creation of consultation mechanisms at the defence and security level** between the European Union and Southern partners, seems realistic and essential. This is particularly important, given the fact that the absence of clear statements of intent regarding the use of European Defence capabilities are bound to create suspicions as to their potential use. This could also avoid the repetition, in the Mediterranean, of the traditional security dilemma: new military capacities to enhance security generate enhanced suspicions among neighbours and thus ultimately create more insecurity. We would propose the following:

- Dialogue at senior political and military levels between each Southern country and the EU Presidency and the ESDP headquarters. This would replace the now defunct WEU efforts in this area with an ESDP Mediterranean security dialogue. Regular meetings between the EU presidency and those responsible for ESDP with ambassadors and military attachés from the South in Brussels would seem to be an appropriate way to start this process. In the future this could become integrated with regular defence and foreign minister meetings in the context of the EMP.
- The presence of Southern representatives as observers in any future ESDP military exercises in the Mediterranean area is also essential as a short-term confidence-building-measure. In future, joint exercises would be of the utmost importance and could be very helpful in the possible repetition of the experience of joint participation of European Union and Southern Mediterranean countries in peace-keeping operations – Bosnia and Kosovo being examples of that in the past.

## 6) Euro-Mediterranean defence co-operation

In the short term, co-ordination mechanisms for bilateral co-operation between EU-members and Southern partners should be created. The aim would be to incorporate important defence and security bilateral relations between different partner-countries and EU-members, at least at the level of exchange of information. This would also extend to sub-regional organisations where security is clearly an issue, such as the five-plus-five process, and the Euro-Mediterranean Forum. Specifically we would recommend:

- *EU funds could be used to promote such bilateral co-operation* in areas such as security and defence, which are fundamental for EMP objectives.
- *Jointly discussed guidelines and priority areas* could be defined, taking into account current bilateral co-operation areas.

Two areas in particular should be encouraged in the context of ESDP Mediterranean defence dialogue and co-operation:

- *Academic instruction of Southern officers in the North.* The participation of Southern officers in courses in the North – in national military academies and in the ESDP structures – would be an ideal way of creating useful personal bonds and of providing information on European defence.
- *EU military co-operation missions in the South.* These could be very useful in humanitarian fields – such as de-mining, health and engineering. These could also provide useful training for European forces in emergency-relief situations. They could include a training dimension of Southern officers and also be very helpful in creating a positive image of European defence among the population of Southern partners.

- When circumstances allow it – particularly the Arab/Israeli question –, all this would *develop into progressively integrated defence co-operation, not only on a multi-bilateral basis, but also truly multilateral in nature*, thus giving growing substance to the security and defence dimension of the EMP.
- Such initiatives could include *joint exercises, as well as joint participation in peacekeeping missions*, particularly in areas of common concern to European and Southern Mediterranean security, such as Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Finally, in view of the scarce resources and differing priorities between EU-members, *an Euro-Mediterranean defence dialogue should develop in terms of a coalition of the willing and able*.

### **7) Multilateralism – an impossible dream in Euro-Mediterranean defence dialogue?**

Despite the difficulties we have mentioned – the crisis in the Middle East, South/South suspicions, scarce resources and a lack of commitment from some members within the European Union– there is a marked preference in the Southern Mediterranean surveys for a defence and security dialogue between the North and South in the context of the EMP. This would have the advantage of confronting South/South distrust, and thus contributing to a healthier climate between Southern partners, which would be essential for the EMP's fundamental objective of creating a region of peace and prosperity in the Mediterranean basin.

### **8) Final remarks**

*This is the right moment to move forward on the essential first steps for defence dialogue and co-operation between the European Union and its Southern partners.* After a period of development of a minimal structure of common European defence, before ESDP capabilities are fully operational, the ESDP must contribute to, not hinder, the Barcelona process. This is essential for the European Union, if the ESDP is to achieve its vital aim – to provide more security.

These initial efforts should be directed towards *transparency* and enhanced *co-operation*. This is essential to dispel Southern Mediterranean suspicions of European actions in the context of the ESDP. They would also present European defence as a new opportunity for co-operation with the South, and not, as is feared, as an alternative to it.

## APPENDIX I

### GROUP MEETINGS AND PUBLIC ACTIVITIES

#### **Lisbon, 18-19 May 2001 (authors)**

- Brainstorming in terms of basic concepts and *modus faciendi*

#### **Morocco, 8-9 June 2001**

- Working Group Mission (conference about ESDP organised by GERM; contacts with Senior Officials)

#### **Rabat, 23 (group meeting), 24-25 September 2001 (Conference organised with GERM)**

- Analysis of the CFSP in its Mediterranean dimension, and of the Spanish Presidency's policy objectives in this field
- Presentation of the press and documentation reviews
- Perspectives of the Southern Mediterranean countries

#### **Lisbon, 10 November 2001 (authors)**

- Co-ordination of objectives in the light of the international post-September 11 crisis.

#### **Brussels, 5 December 2001 (meeting with Senior Officials)**

- Presentation of the preliminary report

#### **Barcelona, 14 June 2002**

- Presentation and discussion of the 2001 Working Group III preliminary report
- Discussion of the research being conducted under the second year programme

#### **Halki, 10-11 September 2002**

- Presentation and discussion of the 2002 Working Group III draft report

## CONTRIBUTIONS

### Country Surveys

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### Papers and Reports

Fouad Ammor and Loubaba Achour, *Perceptions de la politique de défense européenne dans les pays de la rive Sud*

Thanos Dokos, *The Explicit Concept of the Mediterranean in the EU's Security and Defence Policy*

Ahmed Driss, *Les perceptions de la PESD dans le Sud de la Méditerranée. Le cas de la Tunisie*

René Leray, *PESD, perceptions chez nos partenaires méditerranéens*

Ian Lesser, *ESDP and EMP in the context of American policies and perceptions* (background paper)

Muhammad Mustafa, *Southern Mediterranean Perceptions of the European Defence Policy. A Jordanian view*

Bruno Cardoso Reis, *Review of Southern Mediterranean Online Press*

Elvira Sánchez Mateos, *The CFSP and the Mediterranean*

Álvaro Vasconcelos, *Europe's Mediterranean Strategy*  
(background paper)

*Different Perceptions of European Foreign and Defence Policies*, report of the conference in Rabat, 24-25 September 2001.

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## APPENDIX II

### Survey on ESDP of EMP Southern Mediterranean Countries <sup>1</sup>

	<b>Information and debate about CFSDP</b>	<b>Importance and credibility of CFSDP</b>	<b>Defence co-operation and dialogue with Europe</b>	<b>NATO and CFSDP</b>
<b>MOROCCO</b>	Insufficient, hard to obtain for the general public. No public debate or media coverage.	Great importance, because the European Union is a close neighbour, but little credibility. The High Representative is seen as able but powerless.	Defence co-operation is secret but perceived as important, especially at the bilateral level with France. Dialogue with the WEU and OSCE is seen as empty and irrelevant. It should be given more substance within the EMP	There is at present no significant difference between the two, as was clear in Kosovo. A more independent European stance would be welcomed. Co-operation with NATO would be seen as important but demanding for a country with the economic limitations of Morocco.
<b>ALGERIA</b>	Information is rare. Debate is non-existent, except at the elite level.	Not very important, at present. But the development of an effective European army would be seen as a threat, an instrument of neo-colonialism. The High Representative is seen as powerless.	Bilateral co-operation is important, especially with France, it is also extremely discrete, so there is no clear public perception of it. Multilateral dialogue is seen as insufficient and irrelevant. Within the EMP it should be given more weight and a more balanced profile.	The political elite and the army attach great importance to enhanced co-operation with NATO, as an opportunity to balance European influence and to gain leverage from the current "war on terrorism", in its campaign against Algerian extremists.
<b>TUNISIA</b>	Marginal in terms of the press and public debate.	Very important, but with little credibility. High Representative is seen as irrelevant and limited in terms of his range of activities, which are almost entirely devoted to Eastern Europe.	Bilateral co-operation is seen as very important, specifically with "Latin Europe" (Italy, Spain and Portugal, and most importantly, France). Dialogue within the WEU and OSCE is seen as irrelevant and academic. It should be given more substance within the EMP, and if that was the case, it should suffice.	Certainly the European Union will have different objectives from NATO due to the persistence of differing approaches between member-countries. Enhanced co-operation with NATO would be seen as very important, but a more active role of NATO in favour of Palestine would be required

<sup>1</sup> Turkey, Cyprus and Malta were not included in this survey because they have been accepted as candidates to the European Union. It has not yet been possible to conduct the survey in Syria and Lebanon. They therefore are not included in the following tables. The tables are organised, due to lack of space in the same page, with all the answers to the survey by Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia in succession; followed by the ones from Egypt and Jordan; and from Israel and Palestine.

	<b>CFSDP and crisis management</b>	<b>Perceptions of European Defence capabilities (v.g. Rapid Reaction Force)</b>	<b>Security risk analysis by each country</b>	<b>Perception of risk analysis prevalent in Europe and OTAN</b>
<b>MOROCCO</b>	Almost non-existent, despite frequent declarations of intentions. It should be reinforced, and used strongly in the defence of human rights.	Too little known to be seen as a threat. Primarily seen as for use in Balkans. Good if they become a counter-balance to US power in the MED area.	Next-door neighbour (Algeria). Impoverished population vulnerable to fundamentalist movements. Lack of democracy.	They are both exaggerated and real. No Southern Mediterranean country has the arsenal to defeat NATO. But the imbalance in power and wealth can feed other kinds of threats.
<b>ALGERIA</b>	Non-existent where it counts – ex-Yugoslavia and Palestine. The latter case is an important test from the point of view of the all Muslim world.	The RRF is perceived as a threat. Islamist violence is seen as a possible pretext for an intervention, because the RRF is perceived primarily as an instrument for crisis management in the Maghrib, to ensure the safe repatriation of European nationals.	Next-door neighbour Morocco, especially in the context of the Western Sahara question. Islamist networks with their rear-guard in Europe. French support for Kabylia.	They are centred on Islamist terrorism and immigration, a generic fear of civil wars in the Maghrib, and a particular fear of possible Libyan chemical attacks.
<b>TUNISIA</b>	It is seen as very positive in the case of the Balkans, but as non-existent in the case of Palestine.	It is not perceived as a threat, but rather as a new capability without any specific scenario in mind.	Major risk is seen as coming from Israel.	They are exaggerated with regard to the Southern Mediterranean. The only major problem is migration, but it should not be seen as a threat.

	<b>What could be done to bridge the perceptions gap between EU and Southern Partners?</b>	<b>Impact of CFSDP in relations between the European Union and Southern Partners</b>	<b>Concrete suggestions for Defence co-operation with the EU</b>	<b>EMP structure and functioning. Perceptions &amp; suggestions</b>
<b>MOROCCO</b>	Through a good education and information strategy, with funds for research centres, seminars for relevant officials and investment in the media (e.g. TV programmes).	More information is needed to evaluate this.	Intense efforts of consensus building between North and South of the Mediterranean should be pursued.	It has a lop-sided structure in which the initiative is monopolised by Europe.
<b>ALGERIA</b>	More dialogue, and a greater concern with substance. <i>A priori</i> there is a cloud of suspicion about real European intentions.	It has given rise to many doubts and preconceived judgements.	There are very different expectations regarding this matter. For the Army, co-operation against terrorist networks would be the priority. For the civilian elite, defence co-operation that would include training on the place of the army in a democratic society would be important. For the general public, any kind of defence co-operation with Europe would arouse suspicion.	It is seen as dismissive of Southern concerns. A more balanced structure and function would be need. But much of the imbalance comes from the inability of the Southern Partners to put forward common positions.
<b>TUNISIA</b>	Real European commitment towards solving the Israel-Palestine problem. More balanced functioning of the EMP.	EMP will cease to have a structural function of conflict prevention.	Adoption of a Charter defining basic common principles for the common use of force, namely defence of peace, human rights and the rejection of colonial occupation.	The principle of consultation should be put into practice, and it should be widened to include civil society.



	<b>Information and debate about CFSDP</b>	<b>Importance and credibility of CFSDP</b>	<b>Defence co-operation and dialogue with Europe</b>	<b>NATO and CFSDP</b>
<b>EGYPT</b>	Medium for some officials, low for the general public. Almost no public debate (one workshop organised by the European Union office in Cairo).	Object of discussion between those concerned with international security as a natural but slow and uncertain process that could eventually make the European Union more effective internationally. The activities of the High Representative in the Middle East is appreciated.	Co-operation is good and varied (arms procurement, joint exercises, peacekeeping, consultations) especially with France, Germany, Italy and the UK. Past dialogue experiences receive moderate approval. They could be renewed by the EU, until the EMP acquires a multilateral security dimension.	In the short-term there seems to be no significant difference between them, but in the long-run the existence of different institutional structures and geo-strategic contexts could create such differences. Enhanced co-operation with NATO would be welcomed, provided peace arrives in the Middle East.
<b>JORDAN</b>	Very asymmetrical. At the elite level, good, at the average level, very poor. Very few newspaper references. Almost no public debate.	Important. But doubts over its definitive form affect its credibility – which is modest at most – at present although with positive expectations. High Representative seen as dedicated but limited in terms of effective power.	Good with a number of countries (UK, France, Germany), including training and joint exercises. Dialogue with WEU was positive. This could be a blue-print for security dialogue within EMP, which should be sufficient.	How different they become will depend on the evolution in relations between major European powers and the US. Jordan has a representative in NATO headquarters, but new co-operation, for example over fighting terrorism, would be appreciated.

	<b>CFSDP and crisis management in MED area</b>	<b>Perceptions of European Defence capabilities (e.g. Rapid Reaction Force)</b>	<b>Security risk analysis by each country</b>	<b>Perception of risk analysis in Europe and OTAN</b>
<b>EGYPT</b>	Current EU involvement in the Crisis in the Middle East is seen as positive, even if more would be desirable. It cannot, however, be expected to replace the US role.	It is seen as a threat by the Islamist sectors, and with reservations by most other sectors, particularly given the lack of clear objectives and limits, as well as the lack of information about it	Instability in the Middle East, leading to regional war. Rise of extremism in Israel (related to regional instability) plus possession of nuclear weapons.	
<b>JORDAN</b>	Seen as positive in terms of the Israel-Palestine conflict, even if not very effective given the difficulties involved in the problem.	It is not seen as a threat (its most probable use would be in the Balkans), but rather as a result of EU integration.	Major regional powers. Europe is not seen as a threat.	Some are shared but there are also misgivings.

	<b>What could be done to bridge the perception gap between EU and Southern Partners?</b>	<b>Impact of CFSDP on relations between the European Union and Southern Partners</b>	<b>Concrete suggestions for Defence co-operation with the EU</b>	<b>EMP structure and operation. Perceptions and suggestions</b>
<b>EGYPT</b>	More dialogue	It will be negative if there is insufficient transparency and mutual consultation	Dialogue and joint initiatives regarding: Peacekeeping; landmine clearance; civil emergencies; crisis management; environmental security; fight on terrorism and smuggling; joint military exercises; military industry	Perceived EU unilateralism within the EMP structure. There is a need to overcome this by creating a EMP secretariat, giving the Euro-Med Committee full competence over initiatives and policies. Regular meetings of foreign affairs (and eventually defence) ministers should be institutionalised as the main decision-making body for the Mediterranean.
<b>JORDAN</b>	Open dialogue, with due respect being shown for Southern concerns and initiatives.	It could be important and positive, since it was seen as making EU into an independent international actor.	Creating a forum where EU defence officials and Jordanian defence officials could discuss matters.	The basic principles of mutual consultation and consensus are important. But more consideration should be given to initiatives originating in the South.

	<b>Information and debate about CFSDP</b>	<b>Importance and credibility of CFSDP</b>	<b>Defence co-operation and dialogue with Europe</b>	<b>NATO and CFSDP</b>
<b>ISRAEL</b>	Very minimal. Very limited (if any) debate, rare information in the press.	Not given much credibility, discussed in terms of whether it will be developed; not yet discussed in terms of its effectiveness.	There is not much co-operation. It could be seen as interesting in the future, after the successful completion of the Peace Process. The priority is the US but Turkey is also important. Dialogue with WEU is seen as conditioned by anti-Israeli bias. This would have to change for a more fruitful dialogue in the context of CFSDP.	There is the sense that nothing significant will happen in terms of security in Europe without the US. NATO will remain as the true forum for decision. Co-operation with NATO would be much valued. Israel tried to become a member in vain in the 1950s.
<b>PALESTINE</b>	Satisfactory. References in the press are few. No public interest, debate only insofar as it touches upon the European Union role with Israel in the Peace Process	It is hoped that it could make EU a more credible partner in the Peace Process, but doubts exist that an effective independent European strategy will emerge. The High Representative was seen in his role in the Peace Process as having no clear mandate.	Given the present situation, it is close to non-existent, but some training was provided for the police and security apparatus.	It remains to be seen whether differences between the members and US pressure will not make effective autonomy of CFSDP impossible. Co-operation would be dependent on recognition of Palestine.

	<b>CFSDP and crisis management in the MED area</b>	<b>Perceptions of European Defence capabilities (v.g. Rapid Reaction Force)</b>	<b>Security risk analysis by each country</b>	<b>Perception of risk analysis prevalent in Europe and OTAN</b>
<b>ISRAEL</b>	Seen as hostile towards Israel (in the context of the Middle East crisis). Hence the major concern is not with credibility and effectiveness, but with a change of policy.	Not directly considered.	Major threats are regional (Iraq and Iran), and do not have a European dimension.	There is the feeling that Europe and NATO do not take these regional threats seriously enough.
<b>PALESTINE</b>	The EU's role towards the Israeli occupation remains hesitant, moreover it has been clearly subordinated to US options. An effective CFSDP could make it a more effective player for peace.	It is not seen as a threat per se. How it is eventually seen depends on the strategy that will guide its use. This is not yet clear. At present its priority use would seem to be the Balkans.	Israeli occupation	They are shared regarding Europe, but there are reservations regarding NATO

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<b>ISRAEL</b>	Iran and Iraq should be seen as serious threats.	No serious consideration is given to this.	Opposition to terrorism, and in reducing violence in the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Hizbullah conflicts. But real co-operation is seen as very difficult because of different perceptions of these problems.	The question is seen as almost irrelevant.
<b>PALESTINE</b>	Effective dialogue, mutual respect and recognition.	Any form of security co-operation would be welcomed.	See previous answer	It is seen in a positive light, even if more consideration should be given to initiatives from the South.

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