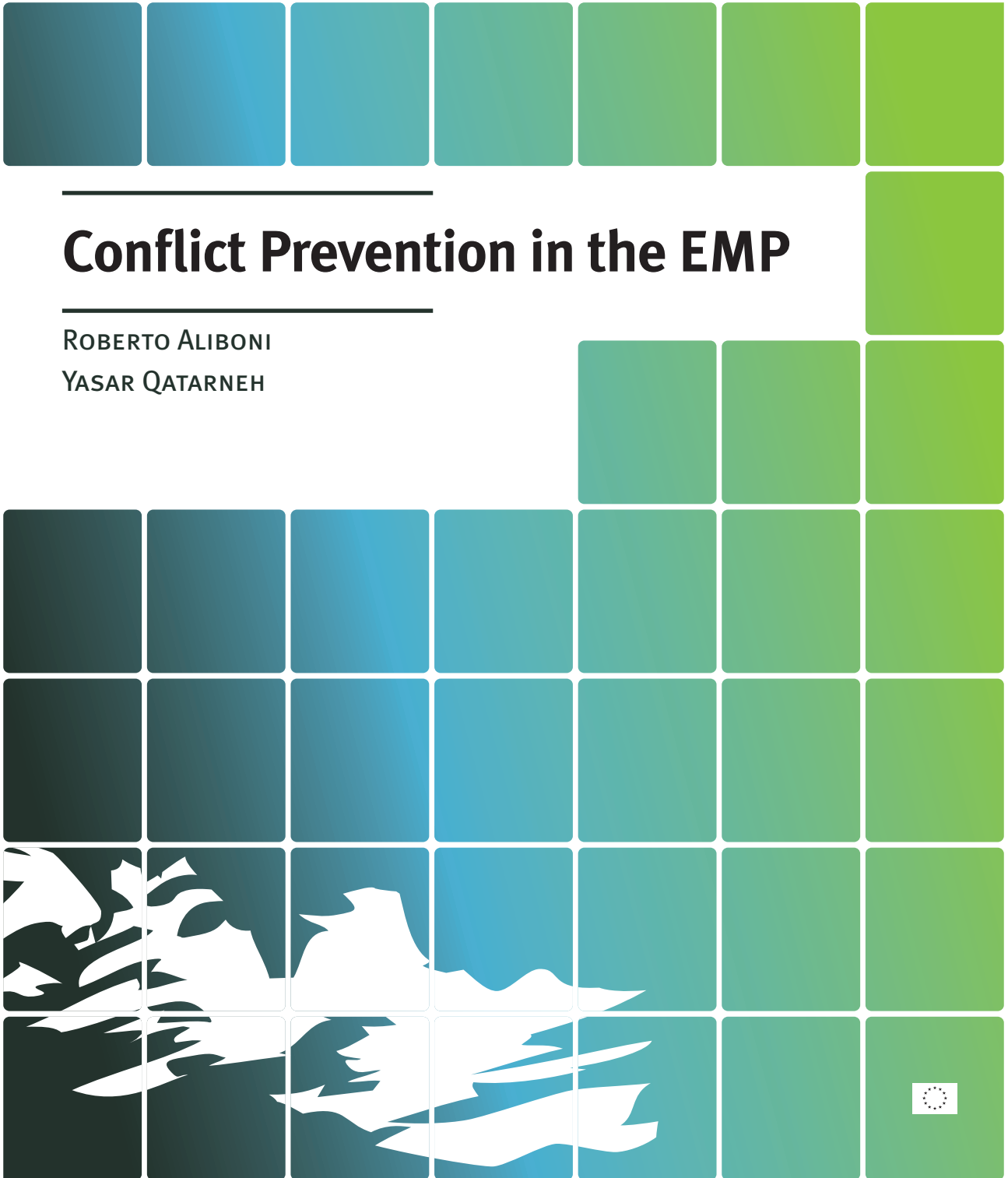

Conflict Prevention in the EMP

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Executive Summary

The survey on conflict prevention in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) was undertaken on the basis of the “Maastricht Watch” rationale and is based on a panel of twenty experts, all of whom are from the pre-enlarged EU and the Arab southern Mediterranean.

The survey is divided into three main sections. The first discusses the EU conflict prevention policy, its rationale and effectiveness, its instruments and, more importantly, the use of the military and paramilitary instrument. The second section deals with perceptions and policies of conflict prevention of the EMP’s southern partners, whereas the third section explores respondents’ views on the possibility of a joint conflict prevention approach and policy within the EMP.

On EU conflict prevention policy

Rationale and effectiveness - For most respondents, the EU’s preference for conflict prevention is based on Europe’s “history” and the inherent “rationality” of such an approach with regards to the southern Mediterranean being a conflict-ridden area. Furthermore, the wide spectrum of conflict prevention policies is seen as significant with respect to social, economic and cultural root causes of conflict in the region, together with political and strategic ones. On the other hand, conflict prevention reflects the EU’s capabilities better than other approaches.

All respondents point out (a) the clear effectiveness of the EU’s conflict prevention approach in the EU sphere; (b) its mixed results in the EU neighbourhood and in Sub-Saharan Africa. Any ineffectiveness is blamed on deficits in (a) coordination, coherence, and decision-making (institutional factors), and (b) the lack of political will (political factors).

Instruments - The survey explores five clusters of instruments (economic development, political reform, security governance and cooperation, combating small weapons trafficking, and WMD non-proliferation) and, in particular, the merit of regional integration and cooperation.

Non-EU respondents consider *economic development* far more significant and politically feasible than EU respondents do. Both consider political reforms (*human rights*, the *rule of law*) significant, with non-EU respondents being more convinced than EU ones about the feasibility of reforms in their own countries. *Election monitoring* is seen as significant and highly feasible by both groups. The *democratisation of southern Mediterranean constabulary and armed forces* appears a difficult and improbable objective, with EU respondents decidedly assigning greater importance to armed forces than non-EU ones. A medium score is assigned to security cooperation – especially in *peacekeeping* – by both groups. *Non-proliferation* is seen as more significant and feasible, by both groups, than the prevention of *small arms* trafficking.

In principle, most respondents emphasise the importance of *regional cooperation* as a preventative instrument. However, the most important objection refers to the multilateral frameworks that must be homogeneous if they are to function and, in particular, facilitate conflict prevention initiatives.

Employing military tools - All respondents tend to agree on the use of military equipment for preventive purposes. Such tools, however, should be embedded in a broader political context with very precise objectives and their use limited to a short period of time. Furthermore, in the eyes of EU respondents, military action has to encompass a number of approaches: it must be comprehensive and multidimensional; civil-military; inclusive; multilateral; be based on human security; include non-governmental components; and help build local capabilities. Non-EU respondents point out two requirements for military action: legitimacy and coordination, as well as a sufficient degree of understanding with the countries concerned.

According to most respondents from both groups, North-South military cooperation is feasible in a preventative perspective, but not (yet) in the EMP framework. Also, all respondents considered that past EU interventions were based on sound international legitimacy. However, only three respondents (two from the EU and one from the South) proved to be well-informed about EU conflict prevention missions actually carried out so far.

Conflict prevention in Southern members’ perceptions and policies

This section includes one question on policies and three on perceptions. The question related to Arab conflict prevention policies obtained random responses, reflecting a general lack of awareness and the fact that Arab countries do not actually contemplate a regular conflict prevention approach.

As for perceptions, eighteen survey participants believe that there are differences between EU and Arab approaches to conflict prevention, due less to historical and cultural reasons - as the questionnaire suggests - but rather because concepts of security, sources of threat, and security needs differ on both sides. That said, there are no doubts that the Southern Mediterranean countries see traces of colonialism in EU policies and that there is in the South a nationalist culture at odds with present EU political cultures. The nature of Southern Mediterranean regimes is also regarded as a factor generating differences.

A number of Southern respondents fear that EU conflict prevention policies may advance European security interests at the expense of regional ones. The importance attached by the EU to the struggle against terrorism over that given the implementation of human rights is a case in point, according to respondents. In general, the risk should be averted by applying policies of co-ownership. Conflict prevention policies, on the other hand, are not seen as detrimental to the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. They are rather regarded as inapplicable, considering that no conflict prevention initiative that concerns the Arab-Israeli conflict will gain trust, credibility or regional engagement until a solution is negotiated.

Southern Mediterranean responses are characterised by an understanding and even respect for EU conflict prevention activities. Yet, these respondents seem unsatisfied with the weak impact of the latter on Middle Eastern conflicts, especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Expectations and perceptions are concentrated on conflict resolution. Finally, conflict prevention is not perceived as helpful in terms of Middle Eastern security requirements.

The section concludes by deeming the EU a reliable partner in regional affairs, whereas NATO – despite specific achievements in bilateral security cooperation – looks decidedly less competent in the complex task of conflict prevention.

While respondents on both sides of the Mediterranean Sea recognize the rationale of EU conflict prevention initiatives in Euro-Mediterranean relations, they are much less prepared to see such rationale in joint action occurring under the umbrella of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Most participants agree that there should be more equality within the EMP as a condition for joint action. However, most respondents do not believe that the EMP's involvement in North-North crises would make sense. EMP involvement in North-South crises is not excluded, but only on a case-by-case basis. All in all, the EMP is regarded more as a framework to deal with South-South problems where the EU's engagement, on a basis of coordination and co-ownership with the Southern partners, plays an important role. It is in this sense that more equality is sought.

It emerges from the responses that there exists a full consensus as regards empowering the role of non-governmental players in the EMP framework, with a view to developing a common culture of conflict prevention; thus facilitating, over time, joint action at a governmental level. Whereas some respondents mostly envision this as cooperation between think tanks, others think of cooperation between NGOs.

As regards indirect approaches to cooperation in the field of conflict prevention – encompassed by the concluding set of questions - most respondents agree on EU support for regional or global organizations (such as the Arab League and the UN) to develop conflict prevention policies in the Mediterranean. Support is also given to bilateral approaches' differentiation within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy. A number of respondents warned, however, that indirect approaches should not become a pretext for the EU to dismiss its engagement towards the region.

Joint conflict prevention approaches within the EMP

Introduction

The survey on conflict prevention in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) was undertaken using the “Maastricht Watch” methodology. According to this method, a questionnaire was prepared by a researcher or a group of researchers and sent to a pre-defined number of experts or observers. Thus, the survey aims at obtaining qualitative, rather than quantitative results. These results, however, are not achieved by means of semi-structured interviews. The Maastricht methodology presents highly professional questions and targets a universe of respondents with a relevant background. It would therefore apply well to analysing conflict prevention in the EMP, seeing as there is a correlation between a highly specific subject area and the existence of a relatively reduced cluster of experts devoted to both issues (conflict prevention and Euro-Mediterranean relations).

The universe to which the questionnaire (attached to this report) was addressed consists of twenty experts, belonging to the EU countries before the 2004 enlargement and the Arab countries in the south-eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. With respect to this central group, Israel, Turkey and those Central and Eastern European countries that only entered the EU in 2004 were assigned a marginal role. In fact, the survey has a deliberate focus on Western European-Arab relations. This choice is obviously arbitrary, yet it displays a rationale. The pursuit of a more even-handed universe would implicate a plurality of security cultures and consequently make comparisons too complex and diversified to be grasped by the methodology adopted in the survey.

Although the 2004 enlargement attests that the Eastern EU countries abide by the Copenhagen principles, there is no doubt that they are affected by nationalist and post-communist trends that cause a significant divergence with respect to the internationalist security culture developed and shared by previous EU members (whether “neutral” or not).¹

From another angle, Eastern EU countries, as well as Turkey, Israel and the Arab Mediterranean countries, share relatively strong degrees of nationalism and a tendency to stark realism and balance-of-power approaches to international relations. However, this is played out in very distinct contexts: Israeli realism is shaped by a strongly democratic political context; Eastern EU countries and Turkey are involved in genuine dynamics of democratisation.² Broadly speaking, this is less true for the Arab Mediterranean countries whose greater homogeneity is due not only to a shared realism, but also because this realism is not mitigated by a democratic context.

While further and better equipped endeavours could potentially deal with a universe as diversified as the greater Euro-Mediterranean area, this survey has limited itself to the two largest and inherently homogeneous groups of this very area: the Western EU and the Arab countries, albeit it made sure to include some voices from other groups within the universe (Israel, Turkey and parts of the Eastern EU – which, to be specific, is represented by Hungary).

From among the twenty questionnaires composing the survey’s universe, seven derive from Western EU countries (five from Northern Europe and two from Southern Europe), ten from the Arab-Mediterranean countries (six from the Mashreq and four from the Maghreb), one from Eastern Europe, one from Turkey, and one from Israel.

¹ See Geoffrey Edwards (2006) *Is There a European Security Culture in the Enlarged European Union?*, *The International Spectator*, 61(3), pp. 7-24, in particular pp. 19-21.

² In relation to Turkey, there is a conscious effort toward “Europeanizing” security policies; in this respect, see Karasmanoğlu A. L. and Taşhan S. (Eds.) (2003) *The Europeanization of Turkey’s Security Policy: Prospects and Pitfalls* (Ankara, Foreign Policy Institute).

According to the structure of the questionnaire, the analysis of responses is divided into three main sections. The first section addresses the EU's conflict prevention policy, its effectiveness, its instruments and more particularly, the use of military and paramilitary instruments. The second section concerns EMP southern members' perceptions and policies of conflict prevention. The third section refers to conflict prevention in the EMP framework, i.e. the potential and the instruments for a joint conflict prevention approach and policy within the EMP.

Do you think conflict prevention is, broadly speaking, an effective response to crises?

A large majority of respondents believe that conflict prevention is - in general (not necessarily in regard to the EU) - an effective response to crises, with sixteen respondents arguing in favour and four against. Whereas on the Southern shores of the Mediterranean only one (Maghrebi) respondent sees conflict prevention as ineffective, on the Northern shore three negative assessments were made of that same issue.

Why do you think the EU attributes such a significant role to conflict prevention?

Those who consider conflict prevention as a broad, effective response to crises have also expressed that the EU generally has good reasons for giving significance and priority to this policy. Most respondents from the Southern Mediterranean countries see the EU's preference for conflict prevention as a result of European history and its devastating experience with the Second World War, together with Europe's present peaceful stability and prosperity thanks to its regional communitarian integration (the EU and - as one respondent stresses very aptly - the Helsinki process). As a consequence, in their eyes "history" offers a good justification for the EU to attempt projecting its own model of stabilisation abroad, notably with respect to its neighbours. They also point out the inherent "rationality" of the conflict prevention approach: in a conflict-ridden region - such as North Africa and, more particularly, the Middle East - conflict management is bound to be far more costly than any policy of conflict prevention. Furthermore, the wide spectrum of conflict prevention policies adapts well to the diverse social, economic and cultural root causes of conflict in the region, as well as further political and strategic ones. The Israeli and Turkish respondents mirror the Arab assessment in this respect. It should nonetheless be noted that in the Mashreq "history" is preferred over "rationality", whereas the opposite tends to be the case in the Maghreb.

Respondents from the EU are mostly in agreement with their Southern Mediterranean colleagues. One respondent refers to conflict prevention as "part of the 'genetic material' of the EU", because of the "historical" factors just referred to. Another points out that the significance of conflict prevention stems from "an enlightened understanding of how to deal best with conflict in the post Cold War era", which corresponds to what is previously referred to as "rationality".

Those from the EU who do not consider conflict prevention an effective option, nevertheless agree that either "history" or "rationality" offers a good explanation of the importance attached by the EU to conflict prevention policies. One of them stated that the importance of conflict prevention stems from "perceived self-interest, combined with an externalisation of its own internal norms of conflict settlement, through its own historical experience". Others, stressing "rationality", still believe that such rationality will never produce effective results.

While "history" and "rationality" are the most common explanations for the importance of conflict prevention in the EU's approach, respondents point to other motives that are worth mentioning. These motives are linked to conflict prevention's functionality with respect to goals; goals as varied as bringing to bear "the EU's strength in the field of diplomacy", acquiring a good knowledge of risks and threats, training officials to deal with crises, and finally, allowing for across-the-EU exercises among diplomats. More generally, they think of conflict prevention as a function of EU capabilities. In other words, conflict prevention seems to be so significant because it fits EU capabilities better than other approaches.

Analyzing The Responses To The Questionnaire

1. EU conflict prevention policy

1.1. Effectiveness and rationale of conflict prevention approaches

Do you think that the importance given to conflict prevention in the EU's policy approach may stem from the EU's weakness in terms of conventional foreign and security policy capabilities?

This argument slips quite naturally into the questionnaire's subsequent question. A number of respondents agree on the correlation between the significance of the EU's conflict prevention approach and its capabilities. However, almost nobody sees conflict prevention as a surrogate for the conventional power the EU lacks, or as a counterbalance for the weakness of its common foreign and security policy-making. The mainstream response is "not necessarily", meaning that, in any case, conflict prevention is "the right thing to do" – as an Egyptian response puts it. Three respondents from the Maghreb, while in agreement with this almost general attitude, point to the need for the EU to remember that it has to develop a stronger and more complete international identity.

The most balanced response seems to come from Turkey: "Conflict prevention and conventional foreign and security policy capabilities are not interchangeable, but are rather like two sides of the same coin. Conflict prevention is applicable to the pre-conflict period and requires different tools and mechanisms than, for instance, crisis management. The fact that the EU attaches great importance to conflict prevention is not because it is weak in terms of conventional foreign and security policy."

A number of European responses go beyond this and point out that conflict prevention is not only an essential ingredient in any foreign and security policy, but also the most fitting approach to the nature of post-Cold War conflicts. EU conflict prevention is, therefore, absolutely not an offset to the CFSP's weakness.

Other Europeans refer to the relationship between conflict prevention and the CFSP as an important factor in the EU inter-institutional balance. Some see the European Commission as more equipped to implement conflict prevention than the national governments, whereas others argue that conflict prevention cannot be implemented without governments' contributions.

All in all, what seems remarkable is the high level of understanding among respondents from the Southern Mediterranean of the role of conflict prevention in the EU foreign and security policy. In a sense, these findings belie the common wisdom of the "Hobbesian" attitude presented by Southern Mediterranean analysts. Only two responses (one from the Mashreq and another from the Maghreb) depict EU conflict prevention as a manifestation of its weak power, thus concluding that, if the CFSP were to be strengthened, the EU's conflict prevention approach would dwindle or at least strongly decline.

How effective has EU conflict prevention policy proven so far?

In general, all respondents point to (a) a clear success within the EU's own sphere and its enlargement (hence implicitly establishing a correlation with inclusion); (b) mixed results in the EU neighbourhood and Sub-Saharan Africa, and (c) difficulties in assessing potential results elsewhere.

Obviously, responses concentrate on the neighbourhood and Sub-Saharan Africa, where the EU has actually operated. In these areas, EU conflict prevention policies were considered to be "mixed": a small group stressed the notion of ineffective results; the responses of another group closely, although not entirely, correlated with the response to the first question; and a third group, composed mainly of European respondents, stressed that results of preventive action can hardly be measured by definition – referring to the paradox of conflict prevention's results being "invisible" when this prevention proves successful.

With respect to the Mashreq and the Maghreb it is worth noting that, in general, there is not always a clear distinction between EU conflict management and conflict prevention responses. There is understanding and even respect for EU conflict prevention activities, yet respondents are unhappy with their poor impact on Middle Eastern conflicts, especially on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Expectations and perceptions

concentrate on conflict resolution. Conflict prevention may even be admired, but is not deemed satisfactory. One respondent stated that “the EU has good intentions but weak implementation”. Overall, conflict prevention is not perceived as helpful in terms of Middle Eastern security requirements.

Lastly, the European intervention in the recent Israeli-Lebanese crisis is generally considered not very satisfactory by Southern Mediterranean respondents. Nonetheless, three of these (including those from Lebanon and Syria) did use expressions such as “new stage” or a new start.

In the event that you consider the EU's approach ineffective, is this due to inherent (technical, institutional) shortcomings in the policy itself or because of insufficient means and resources being made available for its implementation?

Independent of whether the conflict prevention approach is considered ineffective or effective, all respondents commented on factors that affect its performance.

Only seven respondents made reference to the lack of resources. One respondent from the Mashreq stated that the EU has not proven to be “ready to allocate huge resources, especially financial [ones]”, thus referring essentially to long-term conflict prevention.

The most important factors of ineffectiveness identified by respondents are (a) coordination, coherence, and decision-making (institutional factors), and (b) political will (political factors).

One European respondent stresses the weak coordination that, in his view, exists between the EU and the capitals. A number of respondents (mostly Southern) believe that what is weak is the coordination between the varying EU instruments and institutions, thus bringing into question the success of conflict prevention mainstreaming across the EU (as asserted, in contrast, by some European respondents). The issue of weak coordination was pointed out by Turkish and Israeli respondents.

As regards political will, many on both sides of the Mediterranean note that this factor plays a central role in the ineffectiveness of conflict prevention. One respondent from the Mashreq noted that political will was lacking, in particular with respect to that very region. Another respondent from this region stressed that the lack of political will in pursuing a conflict prevention approach stems from a cultural deficit on both sides of the Mediterranean. On this point, a number of Arab respondents alluded to the weakness of the CFSP. Conversely, one respondent from the Maghreb highlights the poor political will and capabilities of EU Southern Mediterranean partners as a factor restricting the effectiveness of EU conflict prevention.

Can you assess the following instruments in terms of their broad potential effectiveness and political feasibility?

The results relating to this question are summarized in tables 1.2.a., b., c. and d, attached at the end of the report. Responses are divided between those coming from the EU and those coming from non-EU countries (the former including Eastern EU member states, and the latter Turkey and Israel). The answer is aimed at ascertaining the degree of political feasibility and potential effectiveness respondents ascribe to different instruments/policies of relevance to conflict prevention.

Potential effectiveness is interpreted as an indicator of the significance ascribed by respondents to instruments/policies' preventative success, whereas political feasibility is interpreted as an indicator of the chances for the employment and implementation of these same instruments/policies – primarily with respect to respondents' own political contexts (the EU or the Southern Mediterranean countries) and, more generally, with respect to the EMP/international context.

1.2. Instruments

In general, the twelve non-EU respondents appear more optimistic than the eight Europeans, both with respect to political feasibility and potential effectiveness. When it comes to the ten instruments to be analysed as mentioned in the questionnaire, they can be regrouped according to five items: (a) development (strengthening economic and social development); (b) political reform (strengthening the rule of law and human rights, as well as monitoring elections); (c) security governance and security cooperation (democratising constabulary and armed forces, as well as peace-making support forces); (d) the issue of small weapons trafficking; (e) the issue of WMD proliferation. EU and non-EU responses shall be compared with reference to these groups of issues.

Development scores highly, both in terms of its significance and political feasibility, on the Southern Mediterranean side. Although also considered important, the assessment of development is more prudent on the EU side. Economic development is regarded as an extremely important instrument by 91.6% of non-EU respondents, in contrast to only 50% on the EU side. EU-respondents consider social development as more important than non-EU ones (62.5% vs. 50%). The political feasibility of developmental policies is decidedly higher for non-EU respondents. In terms of EU relations with the Southern Mediterranean countries (within the EMP and beyond), these figures fit well with conventional Southern perceptions and objectives that consider economic and social development either as a priority, with respect to political reforms, or as a decisive factor in making political reforms possible.

As for political reform, non-EU respondents assign great importance to both human rights (66% of respondents) and the rule of law (75%), although these scores are not as high as those for the question related to development. The same is true for EU respondents (62.5 and 75% respectively). However, non-EU respondents are somewhat more optimistic than EU ones with regard to the implementation of such policies. As for its feasibility, both groups converge in believing in a medium one.

These figures provide a more optimistic picture of the importance given human rights and the rule of law by the EMP partner countries than that prevailing European opinion, although one could object that this survey privileges the (nationalist/liberal) views of a specific elite over those of governments and the mass. What is less in accordance with views commonly-held in Europe, is the high percentage of those believing that human rights and the rule of law reflect a relatively high degree of political feasibility. Experience, so far, suggests that EU human rights policies have proven very difficult to implement; moreover, they are usually not well received in the EMP inter-governmental circle.

As regards elections monitoring, this issue is considered, by far, more important by non-EU respondents than respondents from within the EU. Yet, both of them consider it highly feasible at the political level.

The democratisation of constabulary forces is important for both non-EU and EU respondents (albeit more for the former than the latter), whereas the democratisation of armed forces is much more important in European eyes than in the eyes of non-EU respondents. EU respondents are strongly pessimistic about the feasibility of political reforms (37-50% of respondents see the democratisation of constabulary forces as having a low political feasibility, and 75% give a low score to the democratisation of the armed forces). Non-EU respondents are slightly more optimistic, as 58% of them assign a low political feasibility to armed forces' democratisation.

While the perspective of security governance does not look bright, the perspective of security cooperation looks somehow better. Both groups assign a medium score to cooperation in peace support operations as far as importance and feasibility are concerned. Percentages are very similar. The European involvement in UNIFIL-2 might have affected Southern attitudes, which are normally rather suspicious on this point.

The issue of small arms trafficking – which is given high importance by a number of EU countries – has medium importance for both groups (sharing the same percentage). In contrast, feasibility is given low importance by EU-respondents and medium importance by non-EU ones. More affected by current developments, the issue of non-proliferation is of medium importance for both sides, although it is more important for EU respondents than non-EU ones (in both cases percentages are rather high). Both consider that the implementation of a non-proliferation policy is of medium political difficulty.

Most of these results would deserve a deeper analysis by means of more targeted surveys. However, the brief overview provided by our survey suggests that – at expert level – more or

less nationally involved in policy-making, North-South convergence is remarkable. In particular, it suggests that, in the South of the Mediterranean, political reforms are regarded very positively by the elites. Besides, political reforms are assigned greater chances than internal security reforms. This confirms that, while the dominant EU view is that political reforms have a favourable effect on development, the opposite seems to be true in the South of the Mediterranean.

Convergence and divergence in perceptions related to conflict prevention instruments should be given more attention by analysts and policy-makers, in order to enhance the acceptability of individual players' preventative policies and to improve the feasibility of joint action in preventing conflict.

Can you assess, from a specific conflict prevention policy perspective, the value and efficiency of EU policies initiating and supporting regional frameworks of integration and cooperation— in particular the EMP?

All the respondents believe that, in principle, multilateral agreements facilitate conflict prevention approaches. There were, however, some interesting qualifications.

The first one came from two EU respondents: multilateral frameworks must be homogeneous if they are to work and, more particularly, facilitate conflict prevention initiatives. This general remark is extremely important in relation to the EMP, where a common ground is substantially lacking. In fact, most respondents, especially from the Mashreq, believe that the EMP failed. In particular, it failed in improving confidence in the initiative amongst its Southern partners and in inspiring a sense of ownership with respect to it. More specifically, a respondent from the Mashreq pointed out that regional integration could play a positive role with respect to the Arab-Israeli conflict. However, two other respondents, from the Mashreq as well, stressed the EU's inability to adequately support its own efforts in the Near East (in the event, those towards the Israeli-Palestinian and the Lebanese crises). A Maghrebi respondent complained that the EMP proved ironically to be unable to deal with the Leila-Perjil crisis. A European one criticized the lack of initiative of the EU with respect to the Western Sahara conflict. Two respondents from the Maghreb suggested the need for the EU to show stronger support for South-South sub-regional integration in the area (for instance, AMU, Agadir Pact, etc.).

In sum, the heterogeneous nature of the EMP makes formulating any eventual conflict prevention initiatives difficult. It is believed that the framework could function to some extent, but that there remains a basic lack of initiative from the EU that prevents the EMP from performing at its maximum potential. One European respondent mentions the EU success in encouraging multilateral cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, all respondents evaluate the EMP's actions far less favourably.

The second qualification came from both the EU and its Southern partner countries: multilateralism may weaken the national and bilateral components that would be essential when responding to crises. A number of respondents quoted the Arab-Israeli case. Broadly speaking, the existence of international conflicts among the EMP partners seems to prevent that they share a similar successful regional integration as that experienced in Europe.

The third remark came from the Southern respondents: the Mediterranean regional format (the EMP) may exclude factors stemming from the wider Middle Eastern region that may also be essential to the formulation of an effective response.

Do you think that, broadly speaking, the employment of military or paramilitary forces in order to attain conflict prevention aims is correct and feasible? Why so, or not so?

All the respondents on both sides of the Mediterranean believe that the employment of military and paramilitary forces in a conflict prevention perspective is viable and adequate, yet contingent on two main conditions: (a) it should be "part of a much broader policy"

1.3. Employing military tools

– using the words of a European respondent, and (b) employed “only to serve very well defined aims and for just a limited period” – quoting two respondents from the Mashreq. In general, there is a more prudent stance amongst EU responses than non-EU’s: for most EU respondents, the use of military force should clearly be understood as a last resort. A respondent from the Maghreb stresses the need for a common decision-making process and mentions the case of Eurofor. The respondents from Israel and Turkey point to the fact that armed forces (used in the right way) are an indispensable ingredient of any good conflict prevention policy.

Do you think that the EU is committed to ensuring that its peace-supporting forces act on the basis of sound international legitimacy?

“Yes” for nineteen respondents. One “no” from the Maghreb.

How could EU intervention differentiate itself, in your view, from that of other international forces, such as US, NATO, etc.

With the exception of one respondent from Israel – who points out that if the EU intervenes with its forces in the framework of a conflict prevention action, there is no cause to believe that its intervention will differ from any similar intervention carried out by other players – both the European and the Southern partners are convinced that EU intervention is and must be different and characterised by specific and well-defined requirements.

The EU respondents do not dwell too much on differences between the EU and the USA and NATO: such as “a different strategic outlook”, the fact that NATO does not possess civilian instruments to the extent the EU does, “a more normative justification”. They are, in contrast, much more interested in defining the character of EU interventions. EU action has to be based on (a) a comprehensive and multidimensional approach (one respondent from the Southern shore mentions this point as well) – this being the EU’s most distinctive characteristic for many respondents; (b) the pursuit of a civil-military approach; (c) an inclusive approach; (d) a multilateral approach; (e) the pursuit of a full human security approach (in this sense, any intervention must have the primary task of protecting populations and avoiding, by definition, any collateral damage); (f) the inclusion of non-governmental components; (g) building local capabilities.

The approach expressed by non-EU respondents is more concerned with a couple of basic political requirements: (a) legitimacy; (b) “understanding and coordination with the region’s parties”. One respondent stresses that legitimacy is necessary, albeit international legitimacy has lost all credibility in the region by now. Most respondents highlight the fact that across the region the EU is seen as a partner with a more correct and benevolent attitude: “it has no ambition of dominance”, as is explained by a Maghrebi respondent.

Are you aware of conflict prevention missions already accomplished by EU military or paramilitary forces? Are you aware, in particular, of EU missions accomplished in the Middle East and North Africa?

Only two Europeans and a respondent from the Maghreb were precise in mentioning the three EU missions in the Middle East relating to conflict prevention: EUPOL-COOPS (the EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories; EU BAM Rafah (the EU Border Assistance Mission at Rafah Crossing); EUJUST LEX (EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq). Conversely, only one European stressed that, as a matter of fact, “none of [these three missions] include a military component”. Instead, they consist of (especially the two missions to the West Bank and Gaza) paramilitary forces, in the event police personnel.

Many European and non-European respondents mention Rafah (EU BAM Rafah) and Palestine (or Hebron). Four respondents from both groups are not aware or fully aware.

On the Middle East and North Africa side, UNIFIL-2 is much mentioned and praised. All things considered, however, it can be understood that, especially from the Southern responses, distinctions between the varying modes of military and paramilitary force employment is not so clear. One respondent says that, ultimately, too many EU and Western troops and warships are around.

Do you think such EU forces can cooperate with Arab military forces within multilateral frameworks and/o bilateral frameworks, and if so, do you think this cooperation is possible even with regard to missions directed towards the Middle Eastern and North African area?

The response is an almost universal “yes”. One European emphasises that it would be better – in a conflict prevention perspective – to start from the basis of civilian missions. He also notes that in the EMP it would be difficult to place Israeli-Arab cooperation under the umbrella of EU-led missions. Most of them note that cooperation is already at work, although – as a few respondents remarked – essentially within NATO and the UN, whereas no cooperation has taken place so far in an EU circle. However, here again responses lack a exact focus on conflict prevention.

Some perplexities emerge from the Mashreq: cooperation is militarily but not politically feasible; it would be better to cooperate in Sub-Saharan Africa, leaving aside the Middle East and North Africa. The Turkish response is rather sceptical. From Israel, the response is even more incredulous: “it remains to be seen”.

Do you think the EMP, with its joint institutions of political dialogue, could launch joint peace support operations in its own circle, according to the OSCE model?

The majority’s response is “no”, although – more or less explicitly – all respondents think that an EMP ability to launch joint actions would be desirable. However, an unexpected unconditional “yes” came from a small group of Arab respondents.

The fundamental reason why operations cannot be launched in the EMP is that “the level of political dialogue is not sufficient”. Some say that it would be possible if a “Charter” of principles – as put aside by the Marseille Ministers’ Conference in 2000 – was adopted. One European respondent observes that there should be more political integration on the Southern side.

2. Conflict prevention in EMP's Southern members' perceptions and policies

The second part of the questionnaire includes four questions, of which the first one is subdivided into 5 sub-questions. In general, the responses suggest that conflict prevention is perceived quite differently by the EU and the EMP's Southern members.

Do you think there are significant differences in EU and Southern Mediterranean approaches to conflict prevention?

Two participants, from Egypt and France, answered negatively to this question and eighteen participants positively. One participant did not answer "yes" or "no", but rather highlighted that there is shared desire amongst EU and Southern Mediterranean Countries to devise strategies that will lessen the potential for conflict. Nevertheless, in some cases conflicts explode and must then be dealt with using more determination and perhaps strength. The EU preferably pursues negotiations, whereas Southern states adopt different approaches. It could thus be inferred from the answers that there is a difference in approaches between EU and Southern states.

A "yes" answer to the first question leads to five subdivided questions for which the answers were as follows:

1. Do you think this difference stems from different security cultures and historical/political experiences?

Fourteen answered "yes", and four "no". Positive answers came from both the North and South, while negative ones came from Western Mediterranean countries and from France. As for the ones who answered "yes", their views on these differences varied. The meanings of security, the sources of threat, as well as security needs differ for both sides. There is a lack of integration and of dialogue with partners, which makes both parties hesitant towards multilateral initiatives. As for the Mediterranean, the region witnessed a history of repeated violent conflicts related to Arab-Israeli relations. There are still traces of former colonialism, and regimes tend to mainly protect their own existence. The security culture prevalent in the Southern Mediterranean is more of a hard nationalist culture. Southern states may have succeeded in settling conflicts non-violently, but this was in very few cases, and according to one of the opinions, they feel strong only if they are able to use force. There is a noticeable increasing hostility and suspicion towards the West amongst the Southern states as a result of American foreign policy actions after the attacks of September 11, 2001. Another difference lies in the fact that there are wide-ranging opportunities for the general public in the North to engage in discussions and debates over security policy in general and conflict prevention in particular, while these opportunities are very limited in the South due to historical experiences.

The EU could aim to pursue a conflict prevention strategy to minimise problems within the EMP region, rather than implementing solutions only after the fact. Nevertheless, regional interests must be balanced. For participants who answered this question with a "no", differences are related more to instruments and methods, and to lack of confidence. One point of view expressed is that Mediterranean countries do not have a security culture, but rather a set of unilateral and authoritarian practices.

2. Do you think it can be ascribed to structural differences, such as the nature of political regimes, economic development, colonial heritage, root causes of conflicts (others)?

Sixteen answers were "yes" and two were "no". As for the two negative answers, from a Southern point of view distrust is due to Israel's and the EU's submissiveness to American policy. From a European point of view, for many regimes conflicts stem from a question of legitimacy. Regarding the "yes" answers, it has been agreed by participants from all origins that, beside all other factors, the nature of regimes in the Mediterranean is the main cause for such differences, though these differences exist among Middle East countries themselves.

The authoritarian nature of many regimes, their lack of democracy and socio-economic reforms, their lack of maturity and failure in development projects, the collapse of the geopolitical system and US attempts to use conflict in the region to implement its vision for the region's future, are all obstacles to successful conflict prevention and peacekeeping.

It is argued, from a Southern point of view, that the EU follows an approach where security means remaining in power but that it should also address other aspects of security, such as economic and social ones. From a European point of view, however, the sophistication of the European approach cannot be grasped by someone who has not experienced the benefits of forfeiting sovereignty for the sake of peace and cooperation. Therefore, the construction of a common policy for conflict prevention should be gradual. Countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region will have to come to recognise that it is in their own interest to become actively engaged in such an exercise and all should be allowed to contribute towards this endeavour at their own pace.

It is noticeable that in the Southern countries security debates are highly dominated by political and economic elites, there thus being few channels to express differences in public opinion. This makes southern societies structurally unstable and increases their risk of violence. On the contrary, the EU concentrates on the integration of several generations of migrant communities, on issues of identity and on the balance between civil liberties and national security measures.

3. Do you think that conflict prevention is unsuited to a conflict-ridden region such as the Southern Mediterranean area?

Two respondents answered this question with a "yes" and fifteen with a "no", while one respondent did not give a firm answer. This latter respondent's argument is that conflict prevention is inappropriate if it is restricted to a military and peace-keeping / peace-enforcement sense. The Mediterranean region perceives that its reputation for being 'conflict-ridden' derives more from external interference than from internal or regional differences, especially because it has been the target of external military interventions and external interest, in both its resources and internal political arrangements, over the past fifty years.

The argument of those who answered with "yes", coming from Syria and Belgium, is that entrenched causes of conflicts should be resolved before outlining any conflict prevention policies. Otherwise, if these are not based on an accurate analysis of the region's problems, it could lead to terrorism.

Generally, all agreed that conflict prevention is necessary in the region because of its many conflicts. There should be a strong will, clear vision and diplomatic engagement with this issue, and techniques for peace regulation must be implemented to de-escalate disputes. The problem remains in the definition and prevention of these conflicts. Different conflicts require different tools at different junctures. Therefore, the EU must be aware of the diverse cultural values influencing the kind of conflict prevention approach adopted and should enhance its influence in this geo-politically close region, perhaps by introducing a political mechanism that will enable it to adopt a more regular, rapid and flexible involvement in the Middle East.

4. Do you think prevention policies can open the door for unacceptable interference from EU countries in matters of domestic policy and regional relations? Do you think the EU capable of using conflict prevention to advance its own security interests at the expense of regional ones?

Eleven participants answered "yes" and seven "no". For those who answered "no" - coming equally from Southern and Northern countries - it is believed that if the EU is perceived as attempting to dominate intra-Mediterranean patterns of interaction, this will negatively affect the relationship between Southern Mediterranean countries and specific EU member states. In fact, the region could benefit from an active EU role in establishing its own regional security system and given that policies are collective, and thus naturally kept in

check, there is not much room for intervention abuses. By stabilising the region, the EU will be serving its own interests. Furthermore, international legitimacy will be sought when determining the type of intervention, therefore avoiding any negative perceptions. There has been an improvement in the degree of mutual trust, and there is a greater willingness to accept a more prominent European role.

The opinions which foresaw an unacceptable interference from the EU, five of which come from the South, suggest that there are fears resulting from the cases of Iraq and Sudan. However, both partners' interests could coincide if the EU understands its own interests in an enlightened fashion and if it applies and pursues an approach of co-ownership, rather than unilateral decision-making, in its dialogue with the region. It has been said that such interference might happen intentionally or unintentionally, but the EU only stands to win if conflict prevention works in the South and vice versa.

The problem lies in the importance Europeans attach to terrorism prevention, over that given the promotion of human rights. This attitude could be perceived as one aiming to defend and promote their own interests before those of regional populations'.

5. Do you think that conflict prevention approaches can be detrimental to attempts at bringing about a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as to other Israeli-Arab and inter-Arab controversies?

Thirteen answers were "no" and five were "yes". The argument voiced by the first group is that these approaches cannot be detrimental, especially if the EU implements an approach that addresses the concerns of both EU and south Mediterranean states, having been formulated through close political dialogue between both parties and implemented in a manner that respects each party's security rights. Any efforts made in good faith can be helpful on the whole, but it depends on which tools are used. EU conflict prevention approaches have always been seen as playing a constructive role in the region.

Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, no other conflict prevention initiative in the region will gain trust, credibility or regional engagement until a solution is negotiated, agreed by both sides and successfully implemented. Only then will the door be open for further conflict prevention policies in the region.

The group which answered this question with "yes" argues that conflict prevention approaches can be detrimental if softer elements of conflict prevention lead the EU to neglect a more balanced political role and if conflict prevention follows long or permanent arrangements. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an example of a central conflict in the region that affected the whole international community.

It shall be noted here that most of the answers to the first question were rather mitigated and not divided according to origins of participants.

Is there any effective inter-Arab experience with conflict prevention? In particular, with respect to the use of military, diplomatic and political instruments?

Three participants, two Europeans and the Israeli, did not answer this question due to limited expertise, leaving it instead to Arab participants. Nine participants, from Europe, western Mediterranean and the Middle East, said there were no effective experiences. Seven participants mentioned six examples of effective inter-Arab experiences in conflict prevention:

- Taef agreement in 1990 which ended the civil war in Lebanon
- The Lakhdar Ibrahimmediation in Iraq ahead of the first legislative elections
- The Algerian / Moroccan dispute over Western Sahara
- The UAR mediation between Iraq and Kuwait in the 1960s during the time of Abdel Kareem Kasem of Iraq

- Mediation between Somali factions by the Arab League
- The Gulf Cooperation Council mediation between Egypt and Sudan

How important in conflict prevention is the nature of the players? Are regional players – such as the Arab League or the Islamic Conference – more reliable than non-regional ones, including the EU? Is the UN more reliable than non-regional players? How can EU participation in UN-led conflict prevention operations be assessed?

All participants agreed that the involvement of regional players is crucial for the legitimacy of any intervention in the region. For the peoples of the South they are considered more reliable, but what really matters is the player's record of behaviour and its effectiveness.

As for the reliability of regional and non-regional players, this depends on the nature of the problem and the type of expertise needed. Extra-regional powers may be perceived as more "honest" brokers. The more credible and capable the third parties are, the more chances they have in bringing disputants to agreement. Regional force may seem better suited, especially because leaders in the region, such as Egypt and Saudi-Arabia, have a better understanding of the nature of Arab relations and the personal relations among them.

For few participants, from both the North and South, the UN and EU are seen as more reliable than the Islamic Conference or the Arab League, which have not yet demonstrated any effectiveness. The involvement of states is better than the aforementioned two regional players.

The EU can be effective and reliable if it perceives the EMP as a partnership between equals rather than merely as an EU policy towards the region. The UN is more effective and more required, especially in interventions involving the use of force. It could be used as a positive and more legitimate umbrella encompassing all regional and non-regional players. However, one of the UN's shortcomings, that has undermined its appeal in the region, is its apparent weak role in the Palestinian issue. Additionally, although the UN has a global weight, it has been accused of one-sidedness and of being strongly influenced by the United States.

The EU's participation receives a positive assessment but this can be extended. The EU prefers EU-led operations over those led by the UN because some EU member states are reluctant to participate. In any case, any EU or UN-led mission should be based on clear rules of engagement.

How can NATO – in particular, with its Mediterranean Dialogue - be assessed as a conflict prevention player?

NATO's role receives diverse evaluations. NATO suffers from a problem of image and still needs to earn the trust of many players. Its role is deemed as sensitive due to its history and nature. Nevertheless, participants who consider its role as positive argue that NATO includes Europeans and that the participation of some Southern Mediterranean countries, such as Algeria, assists in removing negative perceptions. The NATO-Med dialogue offers a forum for dialogue and practical cooperation between partners. Its many initiatives and active role in encouraging regional dialogue reflects a genuine effort to strengthen its influence.

On the contrary, many consider NATO to be inefficient and less comprehensive because of its focus on the military dimension. It needs time to be accepted as a player in these regional conflicts. Indeed, its intervention in Afghanistan and its role in Iraq negatively affected its image. NATO is more suited to crisis management and peace enforcement missions than to conflict prevention. Therefore, it should primarily aim to be complementary to the EU/EMP.

Concluding this part of the questionnaire, it is difficult to group the answers and relate them to respondents' origins, assuming for instance that Northern participants share the same opinions, or that these contradict Southern ones. There were divergent points of view and each respondent gave his/her opinion according to their own experience and informational background. Agreement on differences between Southern and Northern approaches to conflict prevention and on the reasons for these differences has nonetheless emerged. It is indisputable that reform must be launched regarding the nature of political regimes in Southern Mediterranean and that regional players should play a more influential role in conflict prevention, especially because there have been few successful inter-Arab experiences on conflict prevention. Other players, such as the EU, the UN and NATO, vary in their legitimacy, efficiency and in the Southern acceptance of their participation. However, any role adopted by these players should be based on mutual approval and involve both parts of the Mediterranean.

Today, the EMP is less a regional organisation among peers and more a framework in which EU Mediterranean policies are carried out in cooperation with the Southern Mediterranean countries.

Do you think this situation should change? Should the EMP have a role in South-South crises only, as is the case nowadays, or should it assume a paramount role, thus extending its scope of intervention to North-South crises (e.g. the Perejil-Leila crisis between Spain and Morocco,) as well as in North-North crises (e.g. minorities in Western or Eastern Balkans)?

All respondents agree that the EMP should develop an expanded and more even-handed role in the Euro-Med circle. A few excluded the need for EMP intervention in North-North crises and conflict, saying that this would be “unnecessary” given that the EU and Europeans have a well-structured security environment. Most stress that such an EMP role would be possible only if partnership and co-ownership are expanded and consolidated. Some, especially on the Southern side, are concerned with discrimination and inequality. In any case, a number of respondents set qualifications and limits.

As for North-South crises, somebody was explicit in saying that the EMP could be involved, but only gradually. One EU respondent pointed out that the North-South dimension should be included on a case-by-case basis “under the condition of an understanding of and compliance with basic principles of peaceful management”. A South Mediterranean respondent pointed out that, while joint action in South-South crises may well be envisaged, depending from case to case, EMP North-South action could be more problematic, from a Southern perspective, in the situation of a crisis in the South involving Northern security. The reverse may be true but nobody raised this point.

An interesting qualification came from a European respondent who stressed the fact that with the advent of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), co-decision will mainly be on an EU-to-1 basis, i.e., decisions will be made by the EU and each Southern partner separately. With the level of interest shown towards the Mediterranean by the 25 members of the EU being much differentiated, the risk is that only very important crises will be taken into consideration by the EU as a whole. Thus, the ENP pattern may reduce EU engagement in the Mediterranean and exclude the paramount approach put forward by this question. However, the question on differentiation in section 3.2. is rather optimistic about the ENP's impact.

Finally, one Maghrebi respondent notes that if North-South and North-North crises were to come under the EMP's umbrella, other frameworks would inevitably become involved and even get priority over the EMP. In fact, it is impossible to think of negotiations on Western Sahara, not to mention Israeli-Palestinian relations, exclusively taking place within the EMP circle. No respondent was too explicit about the asymmetrical character of North-South relations in the EMP framework, having a strongly structured security environment in the North, and a very weak security environment in the South. This state of affairs not only contributes to making the South a conflict-ridden region, in which the North has reasons to intervene, but also makes Southern intervention in Northern conflict “unnecessary”.

The Israeli and the Lebanese respondents were very clear on this point: the problem is not about more equality, but rather more EU engagement.

Do you think that, while the EMP cannot have an inter-governmental or official policy of conflict prevention, it should nevertheless have some kind of conflict prevention network working at the civil society level?

There is full consensus on this point, although some respondents are afraid of weaknesses in Southern civil society and the consequences these may have on a balanced North-South cooperation. Somebody suggested the possibility of upgrading analytical capabilities and putting these at the service of both governments and civil societies. Others mentioned NGOs' activities.

3. Conflict prevention in the EMP circle

3.1. Conflict prevention as the result of joint EMP policies

3.2. Direct vs. indirect approaches

Should the EU more decidedly and concretely accept differentiation in its approach towards its Mediterranean neighbouring countries?

Only two respondents from Arab countries are decidedly against differentiation. The Israeli respondent was unsure about the meaning of the question. Seventeen respondents support differentiation and the European Neighbouring Policy, although motivations were varied. The Eastern European respondent appreciates differentiation in the Mediterranean by saying that the Hungarians “wanted to be treated separately” (in the enlargement process).

In general, respondents appreciate differentiation because it allows progress where it is desired, as well as more freedom on the Southern partners’ part. Yet, many pointed out the need for the regional and collective dimension not to get lost.

One Mashreqi respondent says that a differentiated approach may trigger rivalries in the South of the Mediterranean.

Should the EU initiate a policy encouraging the Arab League or other multilateral Arab institutions to undertake conflict prevention approaches and strengthen their capabilities in carrying out policies?

For this question there are eighteen “yes” against two “no” answers. The two negative responses come from the EU, one arguing that the task is “not really up to the EU” and the other one due to an absolute mistrust of the Arab League.

There is also mistrust amongst some of the positive responses from the South, but not to the point of preventing support from these respondents for the idea of promoting Arab and Muslim institutions’ capabilities. Four respondents (one from the EU and three from the non-EU side) agree with encouraging the participation of Arab institutions, but strictly on condition that this would not lead to the EU delegating the task to them instead. One such respondent says “the EU conflict prevention approach brings with it fresh outlook, objectivity and creative thinking, all of which are absent with the Arab League”.

One Arab respondent says that this would be a “great achievement of the EU”; furthermore it “would reduce Arab suspicions towards what is known in the region as ‘the Mediterranean project’”, a project perceived in the region as affecting “the future of the ‘Arab project’”.

One European respondent suggests expanding the indirect approach to even include “initiatives at sub-Arab League level”.

Should the EU encourage regional integration even with regard to peace support operations?

There were thirteen positive answers to this question, albeit none that elaborated. Further answers were more perplexed than negative. One Maghrebi respondent points out that a Euro-Med integration in PSOs is possible, but that operations would have to unfold within a UN framework. A Mashreqi respondent is in principle favourable yet very aptly stresses the fact that PSOs need a strong common will that is not just there.

Two European respondents make reference to the positive EU experience with the African Union. Four EU respondents stress the positive effects of inter-operability and one of them refers to the RECAMP experience in Sub-Saharan Africa. One European respondent agrees with including PSOs in EMP duties, pointing out, however, that this would only be concretely possible once the Southern partners genuinely develop their own conflict prevention approach. Another European respondent says “yes, but not yet”, implying that the most serious political conflict in the region has to be solved before it is possible to have regionally operated PSOs (as in the OSCE).

Should the EU give more prominence to its cooperation with the UN within the EMP framework as regards conflict prevention?

Fourteen convinced and four milder “yes” answers, and two “no”s. Among the “yes”, one Mashreqi respondent points out that an EU/UN association contributes to “reducing the regional resistance” with respect to conflict prevention approaches, especially from nationalists and religious groups. When it comes to conflict prevention in the Mediterranean, a European respondent suggests furthering the EU’s cooperation with international institutions (adding the G8, the OCDE’s DAC, etc.). It is also suggested that, even in the short run, the EU should improve its participation in the EMP to the level of its current (qualitatively higher) relationship with the African Union.

Two Maghrebi, the Israeli and the Lebanese respondents point out that the UN may help but that it is not really necessary.

Recommendations

The survey has generated a rich amount of results. However, the results are not that easy to analyse. In fact, most considerations and perceptions – coming especially, but not only from the Southern shore of the Mediterranean – do not target conflict prevention specifically. They rather regard conflict prevention within the broader context of the uneasy and sometimes tense security relationship linking North and South across the Mediterranean Sea. In this sense, the survey results may be more useful in suggesting recommendations as regards Euro-Mediterranean security relations in general, than ones shaping conflict prevention policies in the Euro-Mediterranean context.

Especially in the South of the Mediterranean, distinctions between conflict prevention and other policies are blurred and conflict prevention is definitely regarded as an instrument - among others - of national foreign and security policies, rather than international cooperation and cooperative security. This is not to say that policies based on conflict prevention and, in particular, EU conflict prevention policies are opposed to or rejected by Southern respondents. On the contrary, the conflict prevention approach is widely recognized and respected, even admired. With very few exceptions, Southern respondents endorse EU legitimacy and its good faith in carrying out conflict prevention policies, including by means of military or paramilitary forces. Still, it is very clear that on the Southern side of the Mediterranean there are some doubts and hesitations.

Southern doubts relate to conflict prevention, regarding two factors in particular. The first factor is the asymmetry between the security situations of the EU and the South of the Mediterranean. In Arab eyes, the idea that conflicts should be prevented in the Mediterranean region, albeit shared in principle, would not allow contestation of the existing balance of power with Israel. Conflict prevention in the region may work as a policy of containment and play into the hands of Israel. More generally speaking, conflict prevention may serve EU security interests and not necessarily promote broader collective security interests. While in Southern eyes there is no doubt that it is an effective instrument of EU foreign and security policy, there is less certainty regarding its success as an instrument of regional cooperation. It may even bring about unwanted interference.

The second factor relates to a cultural gap between the EU and its Southern partners which impacts on security thinking. According to the concept evolved by the EU, conflict prevention is the outcome of a broader analysis of the nature and roots of conflicts after the end of the Cold War. The nature and roots of these conflicts suggest that they can only be tackled by a systemic preventative effort. Otherwise, their multidimensional nature, entrenched roots, and dispersed pattern make it practically impossible to successfully tackle them only after they erupt. In this sense, conflict prevention is less a coherent policy in itself and more a dimension which must be considered in every policy. In fact, the EU is not carrying out a policy of conflict prevention; rather, it is mainstreaming conflict prevention in whichever policy it pursues. This is largely ignored in Southern Mediterranean countries and – admittedly – even in Europe. The results of the survey reveal that only few respondents – on both sides of the Mediterranean – are fully aware of the conflict prevention concept the EU is applying in its foreign and security policy. This cultural difference does not help in avoiding Arab misperceptions and suspicions regarding EU conflict prevention.

As a consequence, the first and fundamental recommendation stemming from the survey concerns ***the improvement of communication and transparency concerning conflict prevention and its policies***. Obviously, this recommendation is in itself too general to make sense. To make it operational and effective, we have used the survey's results to try and identify instruments to improve communication and transparency, together with the Euro-Med frameworks where conflict prevention is bound to generate confidence and, thus, likely to work more effectively.

As for instruments, we would identify the following:

1. Most responses from the South of the Mediterranean stress that EU policies involving security are acceptable only contingent on their (a) legitimacy; and (b) “understandings and coordination with the region's parties”. This means that actions intended to ***introduce and strengthen ownership and co-ownership*** in relations and agreements with the Southern partners have to become more central in EU policy-making and credible in partners' eyes. As we have just noted, conflict prevention is almost always integrated into other policies. Consequently, efforts have to be made to shed light on their conflict prevention dimension and to agree more directly and explicitly on it. Action Plans contemplate consultations on conflict prevention. ***Action Plans' consultations should be held not only on policies regarding direct actions of conflict prevention, but also on the conflict prevention dimensions involved in other policies.***

2. Southern Mediterranean **officials and officers should be briefed and trained** frequently and intensively on the conflict prevention aspects of EU policies, especially with respect to policies concerning the Southern partners, but also more generally and with respect to other countries or areas. They should be made well aware of the integrated and multidimensional character of EU conflict prevention policies, which sets in motion basic civilian-military approaches and a mix of instruments.
3. Training, briefing and seminars should not only be offered to **officials and officers** separately; they should **integrate both** so as to promote understanding of the multidimensional character of the EU's conflict prevention approach.
4. An important role in narrowing the noted cultural/conceptual gap and improving transparency and communication should be played by the **civil societies of the Euro-Med partners**. Most respondents agree with the idea of reinforced networking within and between Euro-Med civil societies to set the stage for the enhanced role of conflict prevention within the EMP circle. **Networking between Euro-Med NGOs** operating on the ground was proposed. Others envisioned a provision of analytical inputs by **Euro-Med think tanks**, proceeding to conceptual clarifications. By influencing decision- and opinion-makers in their respective countries, **public-policy institutions** can play a very important role in improving communication and confidence throughout the EMP. In this sense, **the EU should support the development of a Euro-Med network in the field of conflict prevention**. This factor proved crucial in the development of the existing EU conflict prevention culture. It may also prove so in the Euro-Med framework. Alternatively, the EU could focus on fostering further conflict prevention activities within existing networks (e.g. EuroMeSCo, Anna Lindh Foundation, and EMHRN).

As for the frameworks - where communication and transparency, as well as EMP cooperation could be improved - the survey suggests two main recommendations:

1. The survey suggests that, at the end of the day, most respondents regard the EMP less as a regional organisation composed of peers and more a framework in which EU-Mediterranean policies are carried out in cooperation with the Southern Mediterranean countries. Equality is a crucial requirement from the Southern point of view, yet less in formal than substantive terms. While they are prepared to accept the EMP as a framework allowing the EU to carry out its policies towards Mediterranean neighbours, they believe that this framework should provide indivisible security on the basis of shared decisions. In this sense, they consider that the EMP should not deal with North-North crises, should intervene only very cautiously in North-South crises, on a case-by-case basis, and should instead be devoted to tackling essentially South-South crises. On the other hand, both EU and Southern respondents believe that a multilateral context fits with conflict prevention policies, yet this is less true when the context proves heterogeneous, as in the case of the EMP. These two views indicate a neat preference for acting on the bilateral side of the EMP, especially when it comes to security and conflict prevention. In sum, **the partners should privilege the bilateral structure of the EMP in developing conflict prevention actions**. This suggests that **the European Neighbourhood Policy is headed in the right direction. It may successfully foster conflict prevention actions by means of Action Plans and the Associations' institutional structures**.
2. The survey also suggests that indirect approaches in the Euro-Med setting are appreciated by respondents, but only up to a point. First, whereas the African Union is meant to have successfully developed such an indirect approach in its cooperation with the EU, there are doubts about the Arab League's effectiveness in representing a compact partner for the EU. Many say that an indirect approach is in principle the right one, however, it has to be pursued on a case-by-case basis, with the Arab League, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference or sub-regional organisations, as well as the Arab Maghreb Union or stronger organisations to come. On the other hand, voices from the Southern Mediterranean also arise to highlight the urgent need for direct EU engagement. An indirect approach must not be a pretext for giving up. The message seems to be that **indirect approaches have to be tried, yet they cannot be taken for granted in the Euro-Med context and, thus, must be carried out on a case-by-case basis**.

Attachment 1 - Tables

**Tab. 1.2.a.
EU respondents
(8 respondents)**

Instruments	Political feasibility			Potential Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Strengthening economic development	3	4	1	4	4	0
Strengthening social development	3	4	1	5	1	2
Strengthening the rule of law ¹	1	5 [6]	2 [1]	6	1	1
Strengthening human rights ¹	1	4 [5]	3 [2]	5	1	2
Democratising and training constabulary forces ¹	1	3 [4]	4 [3]	4	3	1
Democratising armed forces	0	2	6	5	2	1
Making peace support forces available	0	7	1	3	4	1
Suppressing small weapons trafficking	1	2	5	0	6	2
Strengthening non-proliferation of WMD	1	4	3	1	6	1
Elections monitoring	5	2	1	2	3	3

**Tab. 1.2.b.
Non-EU respondents
(12 respondents)**

Instruments	Political feasibility			Potential Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Strengthening economic development	9	3	0	11	1	0
Strengthening social development	5	7	0	6	6	0
Strengthening the rule of law	5	6	1	9	3	0
Strengthening human rights	4	6	2	8	4	0
Democratising and training constabulary forces ²	2	5	4	8	3	0
Democratising armed forces	1	4	7	4	5	3
Making peace support forces available	0	10	2	4	8	0
Suppressing small weapons trafficking	3	7	2	2	9	1
Strengthening non proliferation of WMD	1	7	4	3	7	2
Elections monitoring	6	6	0	8	3	1

(1) One respondent assigned a medium-low score to the question. The score accepted by the table is the low one; however, the figure which would result by entering the medium score, instead, is provided in brackets.

(2) One respondent did not answer this question.

Instruments	Political feasibility			Potential Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Strengthening economic development	37.5	50	12.5	50	50	0
Strengthening social development	37.5	50	12.5	62.5	12.5	25
Strengthening the rule of law	12.5	62.5[75]	25[12.5]	75	12.5	12.5
Strengthening human rights	12.5	50[62.5]	37.5[25]	62.5	12.5	25
Democratising and training constabulary forces	12.5	37.5[50]	50[37.5]	50	37.5	12.5
Democratising armed forces	0	25	75	62.5	25	12.5
Making peace support forces available	0	87.5	12.5	37.5	50	12.5
Suppressing small weapons trafficking	12.5	25	62.5	0	75	25
Strengthening non-proliferation of WMD	12.5	50	37.5	12.5	75	12.5
Elections monitoring	62.5	25	12.5	25	37.5	37.5

Tab. 1.2.c.
EU respondents'
percentages (8=100)

Instruments	Political feasibility			Potential Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Strengthening economic development	75	25	0	91.6	8.3	0
Strengthening social development	41.6	58.3	0	50	50	0
Strengthening the rule of law	41.6	50	8.3	75	25	0
Strengthening human rights	33.3	50	16.6	66.6	33.3	0
Democratising and training constabulary forces	16.6	41.6	33.3	66.6	25	0
Democratising armed forces	8.3	33.3	58.3	33.3	41.6	25
Making peace support forces available	0	83.3	16.6	33.3	66.6	0
Suppressing small weapons trafficking	25	58.3	16.6	16.6	75	8.3
Strengthening non proliferation of WMD	8.3	58.3	33.3	25	58.3	16.6
Elections monitoring	50	50	0	66.6	25	8.3

Tab. 1.2.d.
Non-EU respondents'
percentages (12=100)

Attachment 2 – The Survey’s Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into three main sections, each one of which comprises a number of questions or a set of subsections devoted to specific topics. The first such section regards the EU’s conflict prevention policy, its effectiveness, instruments and, more particularly, the use of the military instrument. The second section concerns EMP southern members’ perceptions and policies of conflict prevention, on the assumption that they are significantly different from those of the EU. The third section refers to conflict prevention in the EMP framework, that is, the possibility and instruments for a joint conflict prevention approach and policy within the EMP.

1. EU conflict prevention policy

Since the beginning of the 2000s, the EU has developed and continues to outline a significant policy body to prevent violent conflict and to provide stability in post-conflict situations with a view to preventing conflict re-eruption. Conflict prevention is systematically mainstreamed in EU external and foreign policies, so as to become a regular dimension in every external and foreign EU policy. Furthermore, the EU internationally promotes regional and inter-regional multidimensional frameworks modelled on its own experience with the objective of facilitating domestic structural stability and peaceful inter-state relations in the long term. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is one such inter-regional agreement. It is a measure of conflict prevention in itself, but also a framework in which single players’, as well as joint action efforts directed at conflict prevention may take place.

This section of the questionnaire aims at exploring your point of view and perceptions about EU conflict prevention policies and approaches.

1.1. Effectiveness of conflict prevention approaches

- Do you think conflict prevention is, broadly speaking, an effective response to crises?

YES		NO	
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- Why do you think the EU attributes such a significant role to conflict prevention?
- In particular, do you think that the importance given to conflict prevention in the EU’s policy approach may stem from the EU’s weakness in terms of conventional foreign and security policy capabilities?
- How effective has EU conflict prevention policy proven so far?
- In the event that you consider the EU’s approach ineffective, is this due to inherent (technical, institutional) shortcomings in the policy itself or because of insufficient means and resources being made available for its implementation?
- Do you think that regional multilateral agreements, such as the EMP, facilitate the application of EU conflict prevention approaches?³

1.2. Instruments

The EU adopts a variety of instruments to carry out its conflict prevention policy.

- Can you assess the following instruments in terms of their broad potential effectiveness and political feasibility:

POLITICAL FEASIBILITY	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Strengthening economic development			
Strengthening social development			
Strengthening the rule of law			
Strengthening human rights			
Democratising and training constabulary forces			
Democratising armed forces			
Making peace support forces available			
Suppressing small weapons trafficking			
Strengthening non proliferation of WMD			
Elections monitoring			

³ In drafting the report, this question has been merged with the last question in subsequent section (on Instrument).

POTENTIAL EFFECTIVENESS	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Strengthening economic development			
Strengthening social development			
Strengthening the rule of law			
Strengthening human rights			
Democratising and training constabulary forces			
Democratising armed forces			
Making peace support forces available			
Suppressing small weapons trafficking			
Strengthening non proliferation of WMD			
Elections monitoring			

- Can you assess, from a specific conflict prevention policy perspective, the value and efficiency of EU policies aimed at initiating and supporting regional frameworks of integration and cooperation– in particular the EMP?

Since the beginning of 2000 the EU has begun to develop a joint European military force with the task of supporting peace operations (so-called Petersberg tasks). Such a development is coupled with efforts to develop intervention capabilities in the field of police and civil protection.

1.3. Employing military tools

- Do you think that, broadly speaking, the employment of military or paramilitary forces in order to attain conflict prevention aims is correct and feasible? Why so, or not so?
- Do you think that the EU is committed to ensuring that its peace-supporting forces act on the basis of sound international legitimacy?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- How could EU intervention be different, in your view, from that of other international forces, such as US, NATO, etc.
- Are you aware of conflict prevention missions already accomplished by EU military or paramilitary forces? Are you aware, in particular, of EU missions accomplished in the Middle East and North Africa?
- Do you think such EU forces can cooperate with Arab military forces within multilateral frameworks and/or bilateral frameworks, and if so, do you think this cooperation is possible even with regard to missions directed towards the Middle Eastern and North African area?
- Do you think the EMP, with its joint institutions of political dialogue, could launch joint peace support operations in its own circle, according to the OSCE model?

Conflict prevention seems to play a very different role in the perceptions of the EU and the EMP's Southern members.

2. Conflict prevention in EMP's southern members' perceptions and policies

This section of the questionnaire aims at obtaining your opinions and perceptions as regards this difference and its causes.

- Do you think there are significant differences in EU and Southern Mediterranean approaches to conflict prevention?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- If so, to which factors can these differences be ascribed? (Please, elaborate where you think it appropriate)

- ⊙ Do you think this difference stems from different security cultures and historical/political experiences?

Yes _ ; No _ ; Elaborate:

- ⊙ Do you think it can be ascribed to structural differences, such as the nature of political regimes, economic development, colonial heritage, root causes of conflicts (others)?

Yes _ ; No _ ; Elaborate:

Do you think that conflict prevention is unsuited to a conflict-ridden region such as the Southern Mediterranean area?

Yes _ ; No _ ; Elaborate:

- ⊙ Do you think prevention policies can open the door for unacceptable interference from EU countries in matters of domestic policy and regional relations? Do you think the EU capable of using conflict prevention to advance its own security interests at the expenses of regional ones?

Yes _ ; No _ ; Elaborate:

- ⊙ Do you think that conflict prevention approaches can be detrimental to attempts at bringing about a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as to other Israeli-Arab and inter-Arab controversies?

Yes _ ; No _ ; Elaborate:

- Is there any effective inter-Arab experience with conflict prevention? In particular, with respect to the use of military, diplomatic and political instruments?
- How important for conflict prevention is the nature of the players? Are regional players – such as the Arab League or the Islamic Conference – more reliable than non-regional ones, including the EU? Is the UN more reliable than non-regional players? How can EU participation in UN-led conflict prevention operations be assessed?
- How can NATO – in particular, with its Mediterranean Dialogue - be assessed as a conflict prevention player?

3. Conflict prevention in the EMP circle

This section aims at understanding whether conflict prevention action can be the outcome of joint EMP policies or other kinds of cooperative arrangements. The first scenario is one in which conflict prevention initiatives involving EMP countries originate essentially from the EU. The second is a scenario in which conflict prevention would stem from joint EMP policies. The third scenario is based on an EU policy encouraging Arab conflict prevention ownership and joint action, rather than direct EU action. (The third scenario is reminiscent of EU policies directed at enabling the African Union to carry out its own conflict prevention policies and strengthening its ownership.)

While the first scenario is assessed in section 1, this section aims at understanding what approach you consider preferable and feasible with respect to the second and third scenarios.

3.1. Conflict prevention as the result of joint EMP policies

Today, the EMP is less a regional organisation among peers and more a framework in which EU Mediterranean policies are carried out in cooperation with the Southern Mediterranean countries.

- Do you think this situation should change? Should the EMP have a role in South-South crises only, as is the case nowadays, or should it assume a paramount role, thus extending its scope of intervention to North-South crises (e.g. the Perejil-Leila crisis between Spain and Morocco), as well as North-North crises (e.g. minorities in Western or Eastern Balkans)?

- Do you think that, while the EMP cannot have an inter-governmental or official policy of conflict prevention, it should nevertheless have some kind of conflict prevention network working at the civil society level?
- Should the EU more decidedly and concretely accept differentiation in its approach towards its neighbouring countries of the Mediterranean?
- Should the EU initiate a policy encouraging the Arab League or other multilateral Arab institutions to undertake conflict prevention approaches and strengthen their capabilities in carrying out policies?
- Should the EU encourage regional integration, even with regard to peace support operations?
- Should the EU give greater prominence to its cooperation with the UN within the EMP framework as regards conflict prevention?

3.2. Direct vs. indirect approaches

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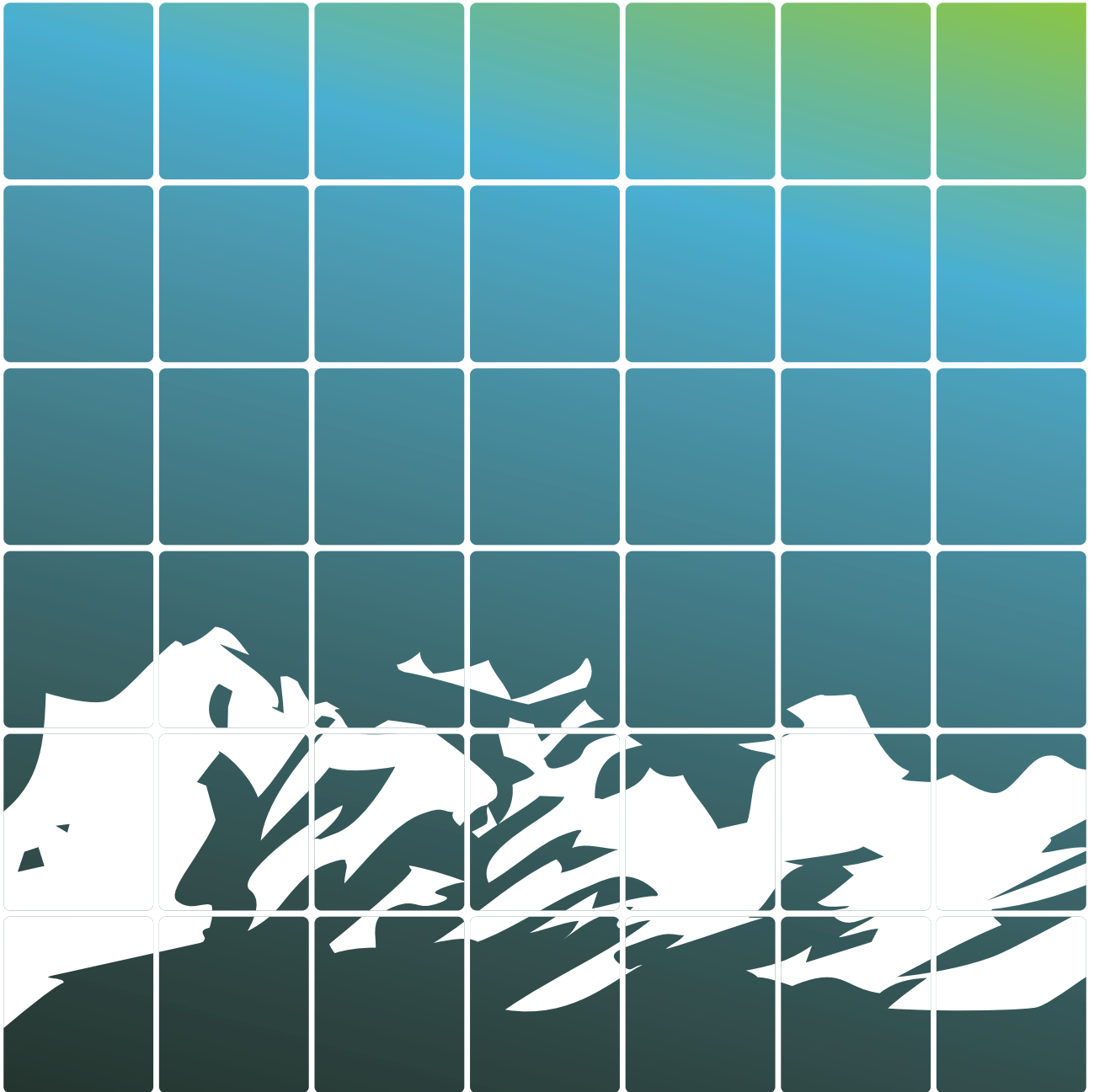
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