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# **Under the Shadow of ‘Barcelona’: From the EMP to the Union for the Mediterranean**

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## Introduction

After a long debate, the Union for the Mediterranean-UFM was endorsed by the 13 July 2008 Paris Summit of Heads of State and Government and concretely set on track by the 3-4 November 2008 Foreign ministers conference in Marseille. These two developments were brought about by a series of events: the 13 March 2008 European Council enshrined the "Europeanization" of the French initiative, which at the start had a Mediterranean rather than Euro-Mediterranean scope, and mandated the European Commission to suggest a scheme for merging the UFM and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) under the umbrella of the Barcelona Process. The Commission presented its advice on 20 May 2008. Subsequently, the Senior Officials drafted the Joint Declaration for the Paris Summit, drawing much from the Commission's Communication. Yet, on matters regarding the overall management of the UFM, they left the final word to the Foreign Ministers' conference, which took place in November 2008.

While the Heads of State and Government, along with the Foreign Ministers, have clarified how the UFM dynamics will have to be managed, as well as the relative roles to be played by the actors in the Process, it seems that the March 13 European Council was who clearly determined the substance of these dynamics – namely, to shift towards the UFM as the new framework for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. Rather than merging the two frameworks, EMP policies will thus become integrated in the UFM.

Let's try to put things even more clearly. The Paris Declaration devotes as much space to Euro-Mediterranean antecedents, and the need to preserve the "acquis", as it does to the setting up of the UFM. In fact, the EU debate on the UFM has not only strongly pleaded for "Europeanising" the UFM ("a project of the 27 member states of the [European] Union", in the words of Chancellor Merkel)<sup>1</sup>, but also for preserving the EMP "acquis" and ensuring continuity and complementary relations between the UFM and the EMP.<sup>2</sup> However, it would be a mistake to believe that the outcome of the Paris Summit and of the Marseille conference will be a mere combination of the two frameworks. These must still be harmonised, and during this process there will certainly be mutual alterations. The dynamics of the process of harmonisation have nonetheless been irreversibly affected by the broad character of the decision made by the March 13 2008 Council, that is (a) firstly, to shift to the UFM framework as the central new policy of the EU towards the Mediterranean, and (b) secondly, to accommodate the old EMP within the UFM. Following this decision, the Mediterranean policy pursued by the EU ceased to be an EU policy strongly associating non-EU partners, and has instead become a policy the EU shares with its non-EU Mediterranean Partners. The EU's Euro-Mediterranean policy is now the UFM; and although the Work Programme and the "acquis" of the EU do survive, these will have to be implemented by means of the UFM's new institutional structures. The deep political meaning of the UFM, but also its main challenge, is the attempt to share decision-making and management between the regions north and south of the Mediterranean Sea.

Although the dynamics of the "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean"<sup>3</sup> aim at absorbing the EMP into the UFM over time, a dualism is nonetheless currently present in the UFM. The way it will be overcome remains to be seen, yet one can already imagine two scenarios: one in which this dualism would be governed by harmonisation and synergy, and another in which separation and competition would prevail instead.

The first scenario described corresponds to the widely-asserted will for continuity and complementary relations between the EMP and the UFM, as emerged in the debate brought to the Paris Summit and the Marseille conference. This report is in tune with this particular scenario, where harmonisation would be the rule of thumb. However, it will also consider the matter of competition.

This report aims at providing a broad evaluation of the UFM, taking stock of the conclusions of the Paris Declaration and of the Marseille conference. The establishment of the UFM can be evaluated from three different vantage points:

1. The actual level of *complementary relations* between outstanding institutions and policies, on the one hand, and on the other, the institutions and measures that would be established by the UFM;
2. The *added value* of the new policy – i.e. the UFM – with respect to previous policies;
3. The *compatibility* between the UFM and EU cohesion, as well as other strategic assets, such as transatlantic cooperation and relations with the Middle East region.

<sup>1</sup> From the "Conférence de presse conjointe de Mme Angela Merkel, Chancelière de la République Fédérale d'Allemagne et de M. Nicolas Sarkozy, Président de la République", on the web site of the French Republic Presidency.

<sup>2</sup> See R. Aliboni, G. Joffé, E. Lannon, A. Mahjoob, A. Saaf, A. de Vasconcelos, Union for the Mediterranean. Building on the Barcelona acquis, EU-SS Report, Paris, June 2008.

<sup>3</sup> The new framework had been given the bizarre official name of "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean", with a view to reflecting the will to ensure continuity and complementary relations with the EMP within the framework of the Barcelona Process. In Marseille, the Ministers decided to drop the "Barcelona process" element from the title after the UFM headquarters were established in Barcelona – this being seen as a sufficient reminder of within which framework the UFM is posited. This Report will use either "UFM" or "Barcelona Process" as synonyms referring to the complex of old and new bodies and procedures that are about to merge within the new framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. We will use EMP to refer, more particularly, to the previous policy.

After an introductory section, the report considers, in the first section, how the UFM and the EMP could be amalgamated in the framework of complementary relations and harmonisation vs. separation and competition. In the second section, the report will discuss the added value that can be attributed to the new Euro-Mediterranean policy – first, from an institutional-political perspective, then, from an economic viewpoint, and finally, from a security perspective. The third section is devoted to issues of compatibility. In the fourth and final section of the report, some conclusions and a set of policy recommendations are provided.

## 1. Complementary and Competitive Perspectives

### 1.1. Outlining the emerging Union for the Mediterranean

**The G-Med** – The central body of the new Euro-Mediterranean framework of relations is the group of UFM members aptly dubbed as the G-Med. The G-Med will meet every two years in the form of a summit gathering members' Heads of State and Government, as well as annually in the shape of a Foreign Ministers' conference. The summits, especially the biennial ones, are expected to simultaneously act as the point of departure and arrival for UFM activities. In this perspective, the standing bodies of the UFM will work towards preparing decisions to be considered during future summits and ministerial conferences, as well as implementing and monitoring decisions made in previous ones.

The Heads of State and Government will approve a two-year Work Programme to direct the activities of the UFM organisation. The three official documents that set the UFM<sup>4</sup> in motion make it clear that the five-year Work Programme adopted by the 2005 Euro-Med anniversary conference will remain in force, either by informing the UFM Work Programmes to come or by becoming integrated within them. The Final Statement of the Ministers in Marseille brings together the two Work Programmes (while still remaining distinct). The Work Programme in force is to be monitored and will be modified and adapted, in response to circumstances, by the annual conference of Foreign Ministers, on the basis of an annual Work Programme and according to an obvious practice of sliding planning.

The G-Med promises to be a crowded body. Given Libya's refusal to adhere, it will include the 27 members of the EU and the EU Commission, 11 countries from the broad Mediterranean area (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Monaco, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey), and four from the Adriatic/Western Balkans area (Albania, Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina) – i.e. a total of 44 members.

**The Co-Presidency** – The activities of the UFM, as defined by the G-Med, will be supervised, coordinated and promoted by a Co-Presidency composed of an EU and a non-EU President.<sup>5</sup> The three constitutive documents (namely, the Paris Declaration, the Marseille Final Statement and the Commission's Communication) do not elaborate specifically on the functions of the Co-Presidents. These documents are less concerned with illustrating functions than with preventing or minimising predictable asymmetries between the EU President and the President appointed by non-EU members. In fact, while the EU President is appointed by rotation, the same cannot happen for the non-EU President given that, in this case, the rotation rule could be easily disrupted by an Arab refusal to have an Israeli President, or other forms of opposition present within the non-EU grouping. For this reason, the non-EU President shall be selected by consensus. Yet, although Israel may happen to acquiesce on certain Arab candidatures (or even consent to them), it might also oppose others. In any case, seeing as non-EU partners lack shared institutions, consensus is the only means of joint action, whereas the EU rotational system is embedded within a consolidated institution. This is why there is asymmetry between the two Presidents.

Although this asymmetry will remain, its configuration may change if the Lisbon Treaty is ultimately endorsed by the EU member states. According to the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU President will be "elected". As such, the source of legitimacy would remain different: namely, consensus in the case of the non-EU Co-President and election in the case of his EU colleague. Again, if the Treaty of Lisbon is enforced, the EU Presidency will have a differentiated configuration: as detailed by the Commission in its 20 May 2008 Communication, "the Presidency on the EU side will correspond to the President of the European Council and the President of the Commission (at the level of the Heads of State and Government) and the High Representative / Vice President of the Commission, at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs".<sup>6</sup> The non-EU Co-President will always be the same.

Some words should also be said about the duration of the Co-Presidencies. The Paris Declaration and the Marseille Statement envisage a two-year (non-renewable) term for the non-EU Co-President, whereas all it says about the term of the EU Co-President is that it "must be compatible with the external representation of the European Union in accordance with the Treaty provisions in force".<sup>7</sup> These provisions refer, first of all, to the differentiated configuration of the EU Presidency already noted in the previous paragraph. However, from the point of view of duration, it means that while, for the time being, the non-EU Co-President is in force for two years and the EU President is in force for six months, in the future – if the Treaty of Lisbon is approved – the term of the EU President would last for a (renewable) period of two-and-a-half-years, whereas that of the non-EU Co-President – as was already said – would be for a (non-renewable) period of two years. The latter will eventually be replaced by his successor in the EU Presidency rotation, unless the Lisbon Treaty is enforced in the meantime, thus giving way to a two-and-a-half-years UFM EU Co-President. Last but not least, over time the mandates of the two Co-Presidents will hardly be simultaneous.

4 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, Brussels, 20/05/08 COM (2008) 319 (Final); Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, Paris, 13 July 2008; the Final Statement of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference, Marseille, 3-4 November 2008 (both available on the web site of the French Presidency of the Republic and that of the EU).

5 The idea of the EU Co-President being solely selected from one of the South European countries seems to have disappeared with the Paris Declaration. It was still aired in the 13 March 2008 European Council, but probably for the last time.

6 COM (2008) 319 (Final), cit., para. 26, p. 6.

7 Paris Declaration, para. 22, p. 15, fully confirmed by the Marseille Statement.

Yet meanwhile, the first Co-Presidency will be an exception. In fact, President Sarkozy's plea for a two-year mandate, in parallel with the Egyptian Co-President Hosni Mubarak, has been accepted by Ministers in Marseille (with the next EU President – the President of the Czech Republic – being adjoined to this duo in a kind of temporary, maybe uneven troika).

In sum, the UFM Co-Presidency is affected by asymmetries that can hardly be completely cancelled out. How significant would they be in terms of the UFM's effectiveness? In general, one has to remark that the differing duration of two Co-Presidents' terms, coupled with differences in their source of legitimacy (namely, rotation or election vs. consensus), may fail to foster a concrete political synergy between the two Presidents, and thus, ultimately prevent an effective coordination of the UFM activities. While the simultaneous mandate of Presidents Mubarak and Sarkozy is a first exceptional response, things appear somewhat unpredictable as of today. In any case, it would seem advisable to adopt measures ensuring harmonisation and continuity, such as, for instance, co-presidential teams, similar to the ancient EU troika, which would work as required by the Co-Presidency's action.

To conclude, the main task of the UFM Co-Presidents will be coordination and supervision – as in the case of the EU Presidency. At the same time, the Co-Presidency will have to contribute towards the promotion of UFM activities. The UFM Co-Presidents will have to negotiate and agree on a common agenda at the beginning of their mandate. Unlike the case with EU Presidencies, this shall require a previous and firm political understanding. Their common agenda will obviously be rooted in the Work Programmes approved by the G-Med. However, it will also be dictated by ongoing activities and partly inspired by any political initiatives reflecting specific priorities shared by the two Co-Presidents. On the other hand, this common agenda may be affected by upcoming events, which may introduce dissent and impose adjustments or changes. As such, circumstances may demand further negotiations and more specific agreements. In any case, there is no doubt that a shared political understanding between the two Co-Presidents will be a decisive factor for the UFM's success.

**The UFM governance** – The structure under the coordination of the two Co-President during their mandate is essentially tasked with providing inputs to the G-Med, thus allowing it to launch the UFM Work Programme, as well as supervise and monitor its implementation. There is no doubt that within the "harmonisation scenario" inputs towards the G-Med stem from two possible sources: the UFM Secretariat and the EU Commission. These inputs will have to be made available to the Senior Officials, whose deliberations will be metabolised and prepared by a Joint Permanent Committee (JPC), based in Brussels and composed of permanent representatives from all the UFM members. Within the UFM framework, the Senior Officials will act similarly to the EU's CoRePer and the JPC will perform the day-to-day jobs that the Brussels-based national representatives are carrying out in this same structure. All inputs – initiated by the Secretariat and/or the Commission, and endorsed by the JPC – will be considered and eventually endorsed by the Senior Officials, who will then annually submit these to the Foreign Ministers in the form of a Work Programme. Every two years, the Ministers shall submit to the Heads of State and Government a proposed biennial Work Programme resulting from the interactions just illustrated.

Let's now look at the **UFM Secretariat**. The main feature as regards the UFM Secretariat, with respect to past EMP experience, is its mixed composition: its officials will be drawn from both the North and South of the UFM membership. Furthermore, the Secretary General will have to be recruited from the Southern shore. As with the Co-Presidency, the mixed composition of the UFM Secretariat and its Southern leadership are part and parcel of the UFM initiative's innovative effort to translate the EU's former policy towards the Mediterranean into a joint inter-governmental endeavour. The members of the UFM Secretariat's staff will be seconded by existing administrations and organisations and will thus have different remunerations and backgrounds. The shaping of a heterogeneous team should thus not be a difficult task for the leaders of the Secretariat.<sup>8</sup>

The UFM Secretariat has the task of generating key projects to enhance the UFM's economic and social development, thus contributing towards deepened integration and developed capabilities in the region. Along with efforts to increase the sense of co-ownership amongst the non-EU members, the central role expected of such projects in the UFM context is that of making Euro-Mediterranean economic and social cooperation more dynamic, especially after the disappointing experience with the EPM, allegedly due to its slow, overly-comprehensive and scattered pattern of action. It is hoped that the UFM will innovate by concentrating on selected projects with a strategic significance, rather than following the "holistic" approach of the Barcelona Declaration.

8 The Marseille Final Statement has established, in addition to the Secretary General, five Deputy Secretaries General – namely, Greece, Israel, Italy, Malta and the Palestinian Authority – with the possibility of a sixth post to Turkey, if it so wishes. The Paris Declaration only envisioned a Secretary General leading a team of twenty officials; while the Marseille Statement says nothing about the number of officials. Funding remains entrusted essentially to member states ("on a shared and balanced basis"), which will tend to limit the number of staff. On the other hand, with the staff remaining limited, the number of leaders seems to materialize according to a bizarre policy of "todos caballeros".



The **EU Commission** will continue to pursue the various activities stemming from the EMP "acquis". As pointed out in the 11<sup>th</sup> paragraph of the Paris Declaration – which substantially takes up that outlined by the Commission in its previous Communication – "The Barcelona Declaration, its goals and its cooperation areas remain valid, and its three chapters of cooperation (Political Dialogue; Economic Cooperation and Free Trade; and Human, Social and Cultural Dialogue) will continue to remain central in Euro-Mediterranean relations. The Five-Year Work Programme adopted by the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Euro-Mediterranean Summit held in Barcelona in 2005 (including the fourth chapter of cooperation on 'Migration, Social Integration, Justice and Security' introduced at that stage) and the conclusions of all ministerial meetings will remain in force". Further to this, the Paris Declaration mentions those activities related to the establishment of a "deep Free Trade Area" by 2010, as well as the "Euromed Trade Roadmap till 2010", recently outlined to that purpose. This is confirmed by the Marseille Statement, which, moreover, makes an integrated (though distinct) presentation of the respective UFM and EMP Work Programmes.

In addition, the Commission's input towards the UFM will essentially address its regional and transversal activities relative to the Mediterranean. Bilateral relations with members of the UFM will continue to be encompassed within the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements (or, in the instance of Mauritania, the ACP agreement) and through pre-accession and accession negotiations. Although – and as is stated in the constitutive documents – these bilateral relations will be "complimentary" to the UFM, they shall remain under the direct competence of the EU and the Commission, and will thus only indirectly shape UFM policies.

As a matter of fact, inputs will be elaborated by both the Commission and the UFM Secretariat – in consultation with the UFM members' representatives gathered in the **Joint Permanent Committee** – with a view to submitting these inputs to the Senior Officials for their deliberations. The JPC will update governments, allowing them to present their views throughout the day-to-day process, during which initiatives and projects will be discussed and elaborated by both the UFM Secretariat and the EU Commission.

Further to this function with respect to the Senior Official committee, the JPC will also have the task of cooperating with the Co-Presidency in the preparation of the G-Med meetings.

## 1.2. A summary profile of the UFM

In sum, the UFM is an international, inter-governmental organisation including, on the one hand, a group of states that are only linked by weak institutional ties, if any (composed of the non-EU states) and, on the other, a group of states brought together by strong semi-supranational institutional ties (the EU states). The Commission is also represented in this organisation. The Marseille Statement introduced the Arab League into the picture, allowing it to participate in all meetings but without a power of vote. UFM decisions will be taken within the framework of a members' conference bringing together the Heads of State and Government, every two years, and the Foreign Ministers, every year.

Decisions will be based on consensus. However, as in the EU, a form of "reinforced" cooperation – among only part of the members – would be possible (and necessary). The Paris Declaration encouraged such a possibility. The Marseille Statement points out that, in making their decisions on the UFM projects, the Senior Officials have to consider, among other requirements, "the principle of variable geometry".

UFM decisions are prepared, and their implementation is then monitored, by a conference of Senior Officials, through inputs provided by the UFM Secretariat, to generate key regional and sectoral projects, and from the EU Commission, drawing on outstanding EMP programmes. While the Commission is an EU organ, the Secretariat is an organ of the UFM, with a mixed composition reflecting that of the very UFM. Both the UFM's and EU Commission's inputs are submitted to the Senior Officials, whose deliberations are prepared by a Joint Permanent Committee of national representatives. Proposals and acts endorsed by the Senior Officials are subsequently submitted to the Foreign Ministers. The latter then prepare the Summit's deliberations. The entirety of the UFM work is coordinated and promoted by an EU and non-EU Co-Presidency.

Within the EMP framework, Euro-Mediterranean relations were developed under the umbrella of the EU, while in the UFM, these same relations will take place in a non-communitarian, inter-governmental framework. Governments will therefore gain importance in this new framework. A consequence of this configuration is a weakening of the role of the EU,



particularly that of the Commission. The Commission will still contribute, even to a significant extent, towards the UFM activities, yet its participation will become institutionally and politically diminished.

Given that UFM activities will be the result of an inter-state organisation of peers, the new organisation is expected to permit a more institutionalised and balanced synergy between EU and non-EU members than was the case with the EMP. This would give Euro-Mediterranean relations greater political substance.

UFM's activities will be informed by the existing synergies between governmental, communitarian and non-governmental bodies, as well as between fresh bodies introduced by the UFM and those bodies stemming from the longstanding experience of the EMP. For this reason, the UFM is expected to amalgamate old and new realities. While the EU Commission, in its role as secretariat (and funds provider) of the EMP, and the Senior Officials are part of the old reality, the UFM Secretariat and the JPC are part of the new one. Embedded within the new UFM framework, the character and process of the former realities will obviously be subject to change. For instance, the Senior Officials' role, while functionally very similar to its previous one, is transforming from a legal point of view. In fact, while the EMP's Euro-Mediterranean Committee and Senior Officials' gatherings, under the heading of the Barcelona Declaration's first chapter, took place within the EU legal framework, under the UFM, these same bodies would assume a non-EU, autonomous legal profile.<sup>9</sup>

Amalgamation will ultimately be the most difficult task of the new Euro-Mediterranean framework of cooperation. Differing patterns of amalgamation between the old and new bodies of the UFM governance may give way to diverse political-institutional scenarios, as referred to above.

As was already pointed out, this report departs from the premise that the new policy of the EU towards the Mediterranean and the new shape of the Barcelona Process is the UFM. The latter must however amalgamate itself with the EMP by ensuring a fit with the UFM's new inter-state substance. This process of amalgamation, as noted, can promote harmonisation over competition, or vice-versa. Such developments can hardly be predicted, yet we can already identify several problems. In this section we discuss four such issues: (a) the need for a basic political understanding at the operative level (in particular, at the level of the Co-Presidency); (b) the leadership managing the UFM and implementing its agenda; (c) funding; (d) the need for synergy between new and old bodies (especially the UFM Secretariat and the EU Commission) in the implementation of the key sectoral projects set out by the UFM. Let's now explore these four points.

First of all, ***the need for a basic political understanding*** must be considered. This does not refer to political understanding in the G-Med, but rather at the level of the Co-Presidency. Clearly, a weak political consensus in the G-Med, or worse, none at all, would have a negative impact on the success of the entire project. This "problematique" will be tackled later, in the section that considers the UFM's political and institutional added value. Assuming, however, that a shared political understanding, even if weak, is achieved within the G-Med, the question demanding consideration is how this agreement will be managed by the Co-Presidents in the day-to-day implementation of the UFM agenda.

Each President will have to mediate demands and proposals stemming from both the North and the South, while also maintaining respect for their colleague, with a view to establishing a common agenda. This may prove a very uneasy task for both. The non-EU President represents a rather heterogeneous constituency, made up by the Arab countries, Israel, as well as a set of countries expressing quite a different political perspective with respect to the EU than that of the North African and Near Eastern partners. Countries with accession hope may happen to side less with the latter than with the EU. This is increasingly probable the closer these countries move towards EU accession. On the other hand, the EU Presidency will bring a more homogeneous approach, which may include controversial demands, especially with regard to questions related to democracy and human rights. This asymmetry may instil tension in the operative understanding that is so important between the Co-Presidents. In the EMP, non-EU partners had limited opportunities to veto the EU agenda, but in the UFM Co-Presidency, negotiations will unfold on an equal footing.

This illustrates the consequences of the new institutional setting introduced through the adoption of the UFM. A significant institutionalised co-ownership has been established in Euro-Med relations – one that is definitely more cogent than the mere principle introduced

### 1.3. Dualism, coordination and harmonisation in the UFM

<sup>9</sup> Within the EMP, the Senior Officials have acted in two different configurations: as members of the "Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process" (the Euro-Med Committee in short) – in charge of preparing the meetings of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, taking stock and evaluating the follow-up to the Barcelona Process, and also of updating its work programme – and as participants at the meetings found mentioned in the Work Programme annexed to the Barcelona Declaration, namely meetings "to conduct a political dialogue", within the framework of the implementation of the Declaration's first chapter on the political and security partnership. The early format envisaged both configurations of the Senior Officials as meetings gathering the EU troika and one representative of each Mediterranean partner. After the second EMP ministerial conference in Malta, in 1997, it was decided that representatives from all the EU countries would participate in the meetings (see Geoffrey Edwards, Eric Philippart, "The EU Mediterranean Policy: Virtue Unrewarded Or ...?", in *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 1, Summer/Fall 1997, pp. 185-207). Given that the same people have always participated in the two gatherings, the difference between the two configurations has been only formal in nature and has in fact become blurred.

by the EMP at the beginning of the 2000s (in parallel with the setting up of the European Neighbourhood Policy-ENP). The logic of the newly-created UFM institutions is one of equality in the cooperation between EU and non-EU partners, in a far more stringent way than was the case in the EMP. With the UFM, the EU is no longer running a policy of its own. It will have to negotiate policies with its non-EU partners and also modify its own policies to account for the UFM.

More generally, the need to negotiate the common agenda is what the UFM has of most innovative in comparison to the EMP. In the EMP, partners would discuss, alter and at times even reject EU proposals. Yet the agenda was always set out by the EU. In the new context, the EU must now negotiate and achieve consensus on the agenda. This is true not only at the level of the Co-Presidency, but of the UFM as a whole, from the JPC right through to the G-Med. The inter-governmental character assumed by Euro-Mediterranean relations within the UFM makes the need to negotiate the agenda something the organisation cannot escape. This is a new situation, particularly for Europeans. The participating parties may be able to overcome this difficulty, yet it may also prove an obstacle to the implementation of the UFM.

The second issue that needs tackling is *the leadership in the management of the UFM agenda*, which is also the key question as regards the inherent tension between harmonisation and competition. In practice, this question pertains to the respective role of the UFM Secretariat and the EU Commission, or the EU more generally. In the EMP, while the organisation as such has no Secretariat of its own, the Barcelona Declaration indirectly tasks the Commission to act as the Secretariat to the EMP, particularly with reference to the Senior Officials.<sup>10</sup> It must here be added that the secretarial functions for the Senior Officials have been performed by the Secretary of the Council within the framework of the EMP-wide coordination assured by the Commission. Will the Commission maintain the same role in the UFM?

The French diplomacy has always had in mind, and apparently still supports, an UFM-wide secretarial role for the UFM Secretariat replacing that of the EU Commission, or at least a good part of it. This is coherent with the shift from an EU to a shared policy framework, yet prudence is required. As stated by a competent observer, "The French would also like to see the [UFM] Secretariat support the work of the Euro-Med Committee, meetings of the Foreign Ministers and other activities", thus replacing the functions of the Commission. No wonder "the idea of extending the brief of the [UFM] Secretariat beyond UFM activity met with firm opposition from the European Commission".<sup>11</sup>

The Commission's desire to preserve its role clearly surfaces in the 20 May 2008 Communication, where it illustrates what, in its view, should be the job of the UFM Secretariat. According to the Commission, the UFM Secretariat "would suggest projects to the Euro-Mediterranean Committee" and would "report to the Euro-Mediterranean Committee", who would in turn approve "the composition of the staff".<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, the Commission would continue to act as the Euro-Med Committee/Senior Officials Secretariat, mediating and coordinating relations between the UFM Secretariat and the Senior Officials. However, the Senior Officials have remarkably revised this point in the Paris Declaration, by stating that the UFM Secretariat will play "a key role within the institutional architecture" and "will work in operational liaison with all structures of the process".<sup>13</sup> The Senior Officials, i.e. the governments, thus see the UFM Secretariat as a rather autonomous central body, which does not require mediation and management by the Commission. Furthermore, the Marseille Statement plainly abolished the Euro-Mediterranean Committee.

This is the most outstanding difference at present, and one that should not be considered secondary, seeing as this is precisely the kind of difference that is bound to impact on the way the UFM is managed – in other words, whether the amalgamation will take place in a scenario of harmonisation, or in one of competition.

The French preference for a central role of the UFM Secretariat (shared by several Arab partners) is in tune with the overall goal of the UFM, namely, the wish to promote greater co-ownership in Euro-Mediterranean relations. However, this preference clashes with a number of practical circumstances: the expected limited size of the UFM Secretariat, its supposed focus on a reduced number of projects, and the fact that it will be located far from Brussels and the Senior Officials (although, admittedly, Barcelona is not that far away, in contrast with previous candidates, such as Tunis or Valletta). All these circumstances make it difficult for the UFM Secretariat to devote itself to much more than preparing the key projects. It will thus hardly be able to act as the general secretariat for the entire UFM, including the EMP's heritage. On the other hand, the Commission cannot really believe that everything would be

<sup>10</sup> "Appropriate preparatory and follow-up work for the meetings resulting from the Barcelona work programme and from the conclusions of the 'Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process' will be undertaken by the Commission departments" (i.e. directorates).

<sup>11</sup> Richard Gillespie, "A 'Union for the Mediterranean'? ... or for the EU?", in *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 13, No. 2, July 2008, pp. 277-286; see pp. 282-3.

<sup>12</sup> COM (2008) 319 (Final), cit., para. 32, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Paris Declaration, para. 24, p. 15.

altered to then have nothing to actually change. Given that the new policy is based on an inter-state organisation, its role, as well as the role of the EU as a whole, is to become in a sense external to the UFM. In any case, it could no longer play the central role it once played in the EMP. The reason – as was just pointed out – is that this new policy is an inter-state, rather than a communitarian endeavour. The new policy assumes shared decisions, rather than EU tutorship. It must nonetheless be noted that however external and diminished the role of the Commission and of the EU may become, they will not cease to be relevant in terms of the crucial inputs they will continue to provide the UFM, and Euro-Mediterranean relations in general. As such, a certain balancing act is necessary if amalgamation is to proceed within a framework of harmonisation rather than competition.

What form could this balancing act assume? For the time being, it would be difficult to articulate it in institutional terms. The Commission and the Council Secretary should be pragmatically left to play a secretarial role with respect to the Senior Officials, although the UFM Secretary's presence should be assured in all the relevant decision-making and coordinative forums. This suggestion is illustrated in Chart 2, where it is compared to both the Commission's proposal, as well as that stemming from the Paris Declaration. While Chart 1 outlines the standard EMP organisation, as provided by the Edwards & Philippart article quoted above.

The third matter to consider regards *funding management*. The funding of the UFM will be assured, on a case-by-case basis (that is, on the basis of the key projects launched by the UFM), by both non-EU and EU sources.

In the press conference held after the 13 March 2008 European Council, President Sarkozy stated: "Nous sommes d'accord sur le fait que c'est la Commission qui doit gérer les fonds". The total or partial funding for key projects submitted by the UFM Secretariat to the EU financial instruments will be considered by the Commission and the Council according to current procedures. Once accorded, however, funds should be entrusted to the UFM Secretariat by means of ordinary contractual instruments. The UFM Secretariat would then be held accountable by the EU.

As long as the UFM is using EU funds, this 'dependence' may stir perceptions of a threat to the UFM's autonomy and eventually have a real or imaginary impact on the performance of what is expected to be a light-footed Secretariat. In this sense, a synergetic scenario could create the conditions for an attenuation or even disappearance of this perception.

A further question regarding funding is the need to deal with the expected combination of private and official funds and/or funds derived from different sources. The UFM Secretariat will be provided with a legal personality and an autonomous status. This will allow the Secretariat to sign contracts with the Commission, in order to accede to EU funding, as well as with private or other official fund-givers, to which it will then become accountable.

All in all, the problem remains that the UFM Secretariat will have too reduced a size to effectively manage the framework's complex administration, in addition to its task of promoting, implementing and monitoring the various projects. Furthermore, as neither the UFM Secretariat nor the UFM itself will have an independent budget, fund-givers will demand joint control and guarantees. In all these contingencies, it would be advisable that the UFM take advantage of its natural proximity to the EU and sacrifice some of its autonomy. The UFM leadership will have to regulate the area of funding more carefully in order to avoid confusions and to prevent the UFM from becoming a competitive exercise.

The fourth and last issue to be examined here is *potential duplications and the need for cooperation with regard to the key sectoral projects* for which the UFM was created. As a matter of fact, while the UFM identity stems from its purpose of conceiving and implementing a number of key regional projects, this kind of project is admittedly not unknown to the Commission or the EMP. Many such projects – or at least elements of them – belong to the EMP's experience, particularly as a result of the sectoral initiatives developed by the EMP over time (energy, transport, environment and so on).<sup>14</sup> From the Work Programme annexed to the Barcelona Declaration, through to the Five-year Programme endorsed on the occasion of the 2005 anniversary summit conference of the EMP, it is clear that sectoral planning and projects are an important part of the EMP experience, even if this experience may not have been as successful as originally hoped.

The way in which the UFM's projects approach will pursue goals similar to those of the Commission may make a difference from a political point of view, yet the risk of duplication remains in the operational, technical and economic arenas. No doubt there will be a

<sup>14</sup> See Michael Emerson, op. cit. Making Sense of Sarkozy's Union for the Mediterranean, CEPS Policy Brief, No. 155, March 2008.

strong need for coordination between the new projects of the UFM and the old sectoral approaches of the Commission. On this point, there are two key passages present in the two documents that established the UFM: the Paris Declaration says that the "Secretariat will work in operational liaison with all structures of the process" and both the Declaration and the Commission's Communication reiterate that "the conclusion of all ministerial meetings will remain in force". This means that the projects developed by the UFM will have to be coordinated in tandem with the EMP "acquis" and, more generally, with the action of the Commission. The Co-Presidents should be primarily responsible for such coordination. Having said that, the presentation of the UFM and EMP's respective Work Programmes considers the latter in a strictly separate way, even when they address over-lapping matters.

The added value of the UFM emerged as an important argument in the debate that followed Mr. Sarkozy's proposal and the decision to develop it after his election as President of the French Republic. Very briefly, the value brought by the UFM to the EMP is one of greater political significance and economic effectiveness. Economic effectiveness would reinforce political significance and thus strengthen Euro-Mediterranean relations. The present French government, along with other Euro-Mediterranean governments, is convinced that the Union format is better than that of the Partnership. For this reason, even if a merging of the two formats was to be accepted, as was already mentioned, the tendency towards the gradual replacement of the EMP would remain by assuring UFM's leadership in Euro-Mediterranean relations. In contrast, the European debate that brought about the plugging of the UFM in the Barcelona Process has seen the UFM's added value as a complement to the EMP: it would be channelled into the EMP and re-shape the Partnership, without replacing it. This notion of a complementary added value has been outlined very clearly in, ironically, a French report – the so-called 'Reiffers Report', named after the head of the institute that promoted it. The Reiffers Report points out that "l'approfondissement des politiques européennes mise en oeuvre aujourd'hui doit être poursuivi en ayant clairement conscience des leurs limites. Mais ce sont précisément ces limites ... qui justifient la création d'une Union Méditerranéenne"; hence the conclusion that the UFM "pourrait avoir une place complémentaire importante".<sup>15</sup> The argument outlined in this report refers mostly to the economic dimension of the UFM, yet it may also be true from a political point of view.

More specifically, the UFM's added value relates to two principal aspects: (a) first, its inter-governmental, inter-state or international shape, entailing an equal and full representation of the UFM partners; whereas in the EMP, the Southern partners are only granted a status of "guests" or junior partners. The equality of the UFM is expected to provide non-EU partners with a fuller sense of ownership and, consequently, allow for greater cohesion and more chances for joint action, and perhaps even – as Gillespie points out – a "sharper strategic determination";<sup>16</sup> (b) second, its focus on few key projects with a strategic regional relevance, whose results and success would strengthen Euro-Mediterranean political cohesion by enhancing the visibility of UFM activities and bringing these closer to the people, which was one of the weaknesses of the EMP: in its Communication, the Commission says "an additional deficit of the Barcelona Process has been its weak visibility and the perception by citizens that little is done to tackle their daily problems and their real needs".

This section discusses, firstly, the UFM's added value from a politico-institutional perspective, and then from an economic one. Finally, some consideration is devoted to the security dimension, which at present has very little place in the UFM.

From the political and institutional point of view, two ingredients are expected to provide added value to the UFM with respect to the EMP: (a) the equal composition of the Union and its joint decision-making mechanism; (b) the top level political participation in the biennial summits of Head of States and Governments. As pointed out, the argument is that these two factors would promote non-EU partners' involvement and sense of ownership – something which did not emerge in the EMP experience.

This argument is far from new. It can be traced back to the very birth of the EMP. The Arab partners, in particular, have always objected to the fact that the European desire for common political action was inherently undermined by the unilateral context in which proposals were put forward. Hence the widespread conviction, on both sides, that a more equal status for the Southern Mediterranean partners would prove conducive to a more intense and fruitful political dialogue and would allow for common decisions that would otherwise not be possible. This argument was considered during the negotiations on the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Development. With the failure of these negotiations in the 2000 Marseille ministerial conference (for a complex cluster of reasons), the argument was reconsidered in the Senior Officials' deliberations that took place in 2006-07, after the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference's fiasco in 2005. As part of these discussions, several countries submitted non-papers on institutional reforms. In particular, France submitted a non-paper presenting proposals quite similar to those currently underpinning the UFM. It must also be noted that, on the side of the Commission and the EU, the failed negotiations on the Charter triggered a debate that brought about the conceptualisation of co-ownership as a methodology and prioritised the goal of further developing relations with Southern Mediterranean countries. The EMP's practice of co-ownership can be regarded as the forerunner for the institutional parity aimed at in the UFM.

## 2. Assessing UFM's Added Value

### 2.1. The political and institutional added value

<sup>15</sup> The Reiffers Report was pioneer in declaring the need to make the UFM complementary to the EU. Had President Sarkozy followed the Reiffers Report's suggestions, the European diplomacy would have wasted a lot less time and the EU would have avoided suffering political shocks. See Institut de la Méditerranée, Rapport du Groupe d'experts réuni par l'Institut de la Méditerranée sur le projet d'Union Méditerranéenne, Marseilles, October 2007 (Reiffers Report), quotations from para. 27 and 33.

<sup>16</sup> Gillespie, op. cit., p. 281.



Parity having been enacted, will it work? Will it generate the desired political cooperation and common action? The response is uncertain, maybe because the question is not based on a clear rationale, seeing as nothing can assure a correlation between policy cooperation and institutional equality. The Euro-Mediterranean political dialogue within the EMP framework failed because European demands for cooperation were unpalatable to Southern partners, from both a security and political point of view, and not because of partners' pride or a deficit of legitimacy in their relationship with the EU within the EMP. The full legitimacy of the Southern partners that is now recognised within the UFM, strengthening their stand, may only entrench their unwillingness to cooperate if EU demands continue to be unpalatable to them. This effect has already been observed in the implementation of the ENP's bilateral relations, the result of which was not one of greater political cooperation across the board, but rather only in those instances when partners could gain from cooperation because their national interests happened to be convergent with the demands put forward by the EU. A convergence of interests would also be the catalyst in the UFM. Cooperation, if any, would stem from policy convergence, rather than institutional parity.

As such, the will for political cooperation depends on the convergence between the respective agendas. Will they converge? While in the EMP experience the EU tried to implement an agenda based on political reform, which is anathema to most Southern partners, in the UFM, political reform definitely seems less pressing, if not altogether absent. This may help foster political cooperation. On the other hand, developments after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, and their international consequences, have led the EU and individual European countries to securitize a set of issues<sup>17</sup> in convergence with those already securitized by the Southern partners well before the 11 September events.<sup>18</sup> In particular, terrorism stemming from Islamist extremism is now a common foe, whereas before 11 September, Islamist opposition was seen in many European countries in terms of domestic political opposition to regimes broadly regarded as authoritarian by the EU – so that, more often than not, EU states ended up providing militants with the status of political refugees. Today, things have changed completely and, as a result, in the past few years, cooperation between governments across the two coasts of the Mediterranean Sea in suppressing Islamist terrorism and regulating immigration has increased markedly, in both the bilateral and the EU/EMP framework. These developments have sidelined the EU agenda for domestic political reform and enhanced the need for stability. Thus, what may ultimately help strengthen political cooperation is the kind of political convergence already at work in inter-Mediterranean relations, rather than UFM institutional progress. To conclude the argument, this convergence is also fostered by the realist approach underpinning the traditional inter-state character of the UFM, whereas the normative approach adopted by the EMP made convergence uneasy.

Many in Europe will regret the (far from glorious) end of the normative approach<sup>19</sup>, which was meant to underpin EU relations with the Mediterranean, and the return of a policy with a more traditional and realist flavour. However, more than simply the outcome of President Sarkozy's conservative approach, this policy originates in the broad political trend of "re-nationalisation" that has emerged in Europe since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, as a consequence of the EU enlargement, and ultimately, in the aftermath of the 11 September attacks and the preference for bilateralism, within the framework of securitization policies. The ENP – where the Commission is alone in promoting political reform and human rights – represented a first step in the shift from reform to stability and from normative to realist approaches that is now affecting EU and, in turn, also Euro-Mediterranean relations. In this sense, a conservative North-South political cooperation is fairly possible within the Euro-Med circle and may well succeed where the early EU reformist approach failed.

From yet another angle, there is an incongruity of sorts in the relationship between successful cooperation and the level of political representation being asserted by UFM's supporters. The higher level of political representation is construed as a factor conducive to enhanced political cooperation. At the same time, the basic agenda of the UFM is less politically-, than development- and business-oriented. In its early formulation – referring here to the original agenda of the "Union Méditerranéenne" – the political hardships that contributed towards the EMP's pitfalls were clearly sidelined. Ultimately, what the UFM agenda suggests is that high-level political leaders, such as the Heads of States and Governments and the Foreign Affairs Ministers, would meet only to decide on issues of indirect political character, as vital as these same issues (e.g. water, energy, training, and so on) may be from other angles. Why choose a developmental agenda run at the highest political level? One may wonder what the UFM really wants to achieve: a more political, or a more developmental agenda?

17 T. Balzacq, S. Carrera, "The EU's Fight against International Terrorism. Security Problems, Insecure Solutions", CEPS Policy Brief, No. 80, July 2005; Sarah Collinson, "Security or Securitisation? Migration and the Pursuit of Freedom, Security and Justice in the Euro-Mediterranean Area", EuroMeSCo Papers, No. 19, November 2007.

18 Francesca Galli, "The Legal and Political Implications of the Securitisation of Counter-Terrorism Measures across the Mediterranean", EuroMeSCo Papers, No. 71, September 2008.

19 On normative power and its limits, see Nathalie Tocci, "Profiling Normative Foreign Policy: The European Union and its Global Partners", in N. Tocci (ed.), "Who is a Normative Foreign Policy Actor? The European Union and its Global Partners", CEPS, Brussels, 2008, pp. 1-23.

This slight incongruence seems to nonetheless present the UFM with a useful course of action. A point that is outlined more often than not is that the success of this "union of projects" would contribute towards making the UFM more visible to the public and lending it legitimacy. This would reinforce the UFM, allowing it to deal with political issues and conflicts that the EMP was unable to tackle for lack of consensus and visibility. In other words, by successfully implementing projects that affect the daily life of the Euro-Mediterranean population, the UFM would create the conditions necessary for an effective political capability. This suggestion would entail a two-stage strategy: namely, an initial period devoted to assuring development, which would lay the ground for a second period during which political cooperation would become feasible. If all is made clear from the beginning, this prudent, more gradual approach of "low politics first, high politics after" may help foster cooperation and greater success in the future.

All the difficulties mentioned so far as regards "equality" in the UFM do not lessen the interest or the potential of the central shift brought about by the UFM with respect to the EMP – more specifically, that of a shared institution, based on co-decision and co-management, with far more chances to become co-owned by all the concerned parties than the EMP had ever offered.

Besides this main argument, there are further minor points that also invite prudence. The first regards the Co-Presidency. As has already been highlighted, a cohesive co-leadership will be essential, especially during the UFM's first years of life, to strengthen the institution and stimulate its motion. Secondly, the rhetoric of a light-footed body – distinguishing the UFM from the EMP – may end up submerged under the G-Med crowd of 44 members. Moreover, this group is affected by a root imbalance, seeing as EU states outnumber the non-EU partners by far. Furthermore, a good deal of the UFM's non-EU members may be destined for the EU. A formula to reduce EU representation – similar to the EMP's early format of the EU troika plus willing EU countries, dismissed in Malta in 1997 – could prove helpful<sup>20</sup>, as might the use of "reinforced cooperation".

A third argument regards the management of summitry in a situation where cohesion is not a given at departure, but must rather be gradually acquired. Summitry is always double-edged. Its "atout" (the highest political level of power) may definitely play a decisive role in providing responses and enforcing solutions; but, if it proves none the less unable to deliver, it weakens both itself and the chance for any solutions. With its long-standing, hard-to-die conflicts, the Mediterranean represents an extraordinary challenge, even for the highest political layers. Thus, the G-Med agenda will have to be set out in a very judicious way. This has various implications. Most importantly, the G-Med should deal with regional conflicts and other key political issues only if and when the UFM has acquired the necessary capability to do so. Here, the two-stage strategy of the UFM just discussed reveals its significance.

One has to say that in this sense the Paris Summit was a disappointment. It was packed with a number of more or less trivial political shows (President Sarkozy's peace-making with Syria; the congratulations and support given President Abbas; hands-shaking between Israeli and Palestinians; and so on) that were not pertinent to the Summit agenda, which at the end of the day aimed at establishing a Union for the Mediterranean tasked with implementing key projects of an economic and social nature. In this aspect, the Paris Summit proved ironically in line with the EMP tradition, established at the 1997 Malta ministerial conference by the futile Dutch Presidency's insistence on a meeting of the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to shake hands during a time when they were actually sharply at odds and nobody – less so the EU – could do anything to recover the Oslo process.

The wrong message sent out by such misuse of the Euro-Mediterranean institutions is two-fold: not only does it mislead the media and the public about the goals of these institutions, but also weakens their legitimacy as soon as the media and public opinion understand that they are in fact unable to deliver. A prudent and wise management of the G-Med will, therefore, be of extreme importance if we are to avoid past mistakes and to ensure the success of this new Euro-Mediterranean endeavour.

In conclusion, the potential for a true added value is present. Yet as the political upgrade established by the UFM is not in itself conducive to success, a prudent management of the new institutions' agenda is crucial to making such success attainable.

20 Gillespie, op. cit., p. 282, guesses, in contrast, that "North-South imbalances and the asymmetry of the current Partnership could be exacerbated if ... the EU's representation were to be reduced to an 'open troika' ... for the gain in reduced number would be offset potentially by increased coherence on the EU side", and by this token downsize the "equality" introduced by the UFM. He also maintains that EU members would not accept the troika approach for fear of being sidelined from decisions affecting "major strategic issues".



## 2.2. The economic added value

At the root of the EMP crisis lie a set of political and institutional factors, many of which have been outlined in the previous sections. Yet economic reasons are no less important. The EMP's crisis also reflects an economic deficit, although much less significant than the political one. This deficit is reflected less in the economic performance of the Southern Mediterranean partners than in the EU's contribution towards that performance. While it proved far from bad, the EU's policy impact on this performance must definitely be improved. It has already advanced somewhat thanks to the introduction of the ENP, but further improvement is needed. Could the UFM be the right response to this deficit, in addition to the benefits already provided by the EMP and ENP?

This section discusses the added value of the UFM with respect to the EMP and ENP on economic grounds. It very briefly considers, firstly, the economic performance of the Southern Mediterranean countries. Secondly, it comments on the contribution of EU policies to that performance. Finally, it evaluates the response the UFM is intended to provide and its potential in adding value to EU policies, making European input towards Southern Mediterranean and regional development more effective than is the case at present.

More often than not, analysts point out the economic "fracture" between the two shores of the Mediterranean.<sup>21</sup> A gap undoubtedly exists. However, whereas the gap had seriously widened in the second half of the 1990s, today it has narrowed remarkably and one should not overlook the fact that growth is now more noticeable along the Southern shores of the Mediterranean than on northern ones. The subsequent table, drawn from a study conducted by Bénédicte de Saint Laurent,<sup>22</sup> very aptly illustrates the present picture in comparative terms:

**Table - Gross national product real growth (yearly average, sdv %)**

	Real GNP			Per capita real GNP		
	1975-2007	1975-2000	2000-2007	1975-2007	1975-2000	2000-2007
EU-27	2,4	2,5	2,0	2,1	2,2	1,9
MED-10	4,2	4,1	4,4	2,0	1,7	2,8

Many factors have helped narrow this gap (despite remaining as wide as 1 to 4 in terms of purchasing power, and even more in terms of current prices). First, per capita income improved thanks to the slowing down of demographic dynamics. This has, in turn, allowed for a significant control over unemployment, although it remains a serious problem in most Southern Mediterranean countries. According to the Commission,<sup>23</sup> the unemployment rate fell from 15,3% in 2003 to 12,39% in 2007; so, although it continues significantly high, it is improving.

Second, the economic reforms implemented over the last fifteen years, partly supported by the EU and partly by international economic organisations, have tremendously improved the business environment, as well as the policy capabilities of state intervention on economic grounds. These reforms, along with privatisation, have strongly modernised institutions and policies, permitting the upgrade of productive systems and the emergence of a new class of entrepreneurs and businessmen. Furthermore, they provided the Southern Mediterranean countries with a solid macroeconomic base. The Southern Mediterranean states have modernised economically, technically and administratively, while maintaining their authoritarian political character. While the political regimes themselves have hardly changed, this generation of emerging economic leaders is more modern and internationalised than the previous one, and has played an important factor in making this economic progress possible.

Third, direct investment from abroad has significantly increased. This is probably the main reason for the broad economic improvement in the region just outlined. Increased investment from abroad results from the factors already mentioned, as well as the liberalisation pursued within the EMP framework. Although liberalisation has so far failed to translate into the free trade area contemplated by the EMP, it has nonetheless created enough expectations and opportunities to contribute towards an upgrade in investment from abroad. Furthermore, in the first part of the current decade, the Gulf oil-exporting countries redirected part of their investment from Western to Southern Mediterranean destinations, as a consequence of the political turmoil that emerged in the aftermath of the September 11 events. In 2006, the Gulf countries were the top investors in the South-

<sup>21</sup> See, for example: Denis Bauchard, "L'Union pour la Méditerranée: un défi européen", *Politique Etrangère*, No. 1, 2008, pp. 51-64.

<sup>22</sup> Bénédicte de Saint-Laurent, *Barcelone, processus inaccompli...*, 28 December 2007: [www.animaweb.org/uploads/File/AIN\\_BSL\\_BilanEcoProcessusBarcelone\\_28-12-07.pdf](http://www.animaweb.org/uploads/File/AIN_BSL_BilanEcoProcessusBarcelone_28-12-07.pdf). The economic picture of the Mediterranean is constantly updated and evaluated in different periodical reports, among which are those by Femise, the European Investment Bank, and the World Bank. A recent illustration is provided by Jean-François Jamet, "The Political and Economic Challenges of the Union for the Mediterranean", *European Issues*, No. 93, 25 March 2008.

<sup>23</sup> European Commission - Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, *European Neighbourhood Policy: Economic Review of EU Neighbour Countries*, "Occasional Papers" n. 40, August 2008, p. 24.

ern Mediterranean area (33%), and in 2007, the principal investors were the Europeans (39%). Altogether, investment from abroad increased from 10 billion euro in 2003 to ca. 60 billion in 2006-2007.<sup>24</sup>

EU policies have certainly contributed to this overall progress. As said, liberalisation, no matter how delayed and partial as it has proved to be, has put many Mediterranean countries irreversibly on the path of globalisation, allowing them to enjoy related advantages. The main contribution offered by the EU – and one still pursued by both the EMP, in a broad perspective, and the ENP, on a country-by-country basis – is the transition of the Mediterranean from a stagnant and internationally-closed area, to one of dynamism and international integration. The Mediterranean economies undoubtedly still have a long way to go, yet now they are at least marching in the right direction.

Reforms were an outcome of the development plans implemented within the EMP framework with EU cooperation and, since 2004, of the Action Plans encompassed in the framework of the ENP.

On the other hand, EU policies have revealed some limitations in their contribution to pulling the Southern Mediterranean countries out from the stagnation that prevailed in the mid-1990s. The holistic approach of the EMP, targeting too many sectors and details, has constrained its achievements. Furthermore, the regional dimension proved impervious because of objectively different capabilities and willingness on the side of the partners. This is why the goal of creating a free trade area by 2010 has been put off and why the ENP, with its bilateral and differentiated perspective, was put on track. Finally, the EU sometimes failed in selecting and ranking priorities, as happened with education for instance.

In conclusion, EU policies towards the Mediterranean should be maintained, while being complemented by new policies intended to achieve relatively quick development in strategic sectors. We have already quoted the Reiffers Report in saying that, while EU and EMP policies should be further developed, the UFM initiative may helpfully complement such policies with a view to overcoming their limitations. The Report confirms this argument in another passage: "... il ne s'agit pas d'une action de substitution, mais ... au contraire l'action engagée [by the EU within the EMP] doit être poursuivie et approfondie".<sup>25</sup> While the EU and the EMP would continue to support the globalisation and modernisation of the Mediterranean partners' economies, the UMF initiative, focused on implementing a set of more specific key regional projects, should help overcome the limits inherent in EU and EMP policies.

Do UFM projects have the strategic and dynamic character to supplement the long-established framework provided by the traditional policies of the EU and EMP? If they do, the UFM would definitely add value to the EMP; if not, then it will not prove useful, or only to a limited extent. In this perspective, let's comment on the projects selected by the Heads of State and Government.

The Paris Declaration outlined six foci (or priorities): 1. De-pollution of the Mediterranean; 2. Maritime and Land Highways; 3. Civil Protection; 4. Alternative Energies: Mediterranean Solar Plan; 5. Higher Education and Research, Euro-Mediterranean University; 6. The Mediterranean Business Development Initiative. These priorities have been preceded by other similar shopping lists. An informal note from the French government, circulated in mid-January 2008, listed specific initiatives rather than priorities. It outlined 16 such initiatives (namely, a Mediterranean Sustainable Development Agency; Mediterranean Energy Office; Mediterranean Transport Agency; Mediterranean Agency for University Cooperation; Mediterranean Research Centre; Mediterranean Office for Culture; Mediterranean Office for Agriculture; Mediterranean Public Health Cooperation Centre; Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency; Mediterranean Infrastructure Fund; Fund for Financing Innovation; Mediterranean Centre for Vocational Training; Mediterranean Economic Cooperation Centre; Mediterranean Migration Bureau; Organisation for Judicial Cooperation; Mediterranean Civil Protection Centre), each tasked with the development of clusters of specific projects.

The mid-January note was conspicuous for its tentative and hotchpotch character. It proved less convincing than the more comprehensive and fitting foci identified in previous French statements. For example, in the October 23 2007 speech given at the Palais Marshan in Morocco,<sup>26</sup> President Sarkozy mentioned several foci, including sectors reminiscent of Europe's concerns when it began its own unification experience (sustainable development, energy, transport, and water) and a set of sectors that – according to President Sarkozy – Europe had subsequently neglected, such as culture, education, health, and human capital development. In any case, at the European Council of March 13 2008, the notion

<sup>24</sup> These figures come from the MIPO data base in [www.anima.org](http://www.anima.org).

<sup>25</sup> Rapport Reiffers, op. cit., para. 33.

<sup>26</sup> Présidence de la République, Discours de M. le Président de la République sur le thème de l'Union de la Méditerranée, Royal Marshan Palace, Tangiers, Tuesday 23 October 2007.

of agencies, centres, offices and the like, which had been mentioned in the mid-January note, altogether disappeared and the 16 initiatives were scaled down to five main foci: namely, improving energy supply, fighting pollution, reinforcing control on maritime traffic and civil security cooperation, setting up a Euro-Mediterranean Erasmus-like student exchange programme, and fostering a Euro-Med scientific community. These foci have been substantially incorporated by the Paris Declaration, which has gone on to outline the more specific projects encompassed within each focus (for example, a solar energy project in the framework of the broader objective of “improving energy supply”).

The selection of projects presented by the Paris Declaration is reasonable, but will certainly undergo further changes or emphases. The important question, however, is whether these key foci or sectors have the dynamic character required to complement and add value to the ongoing EU programme.

The Reiffers Report mentions the need to alter starting conditions for individuals and firms operating in Southern countries. This is quite a sensible strategic rationale. If endorsed, it will quickly emerge that, while the development of energy and transport is bound to contribute only to a small extent towards altering individuals’ and firms’ starting conditions in non-EU partner countries, education and the development of technology and science, on the other hand, would have a far greater impact. In fact, the Reiffers Report is quite insistent on these two points, providing extended recommendations about what the UFM should do in the fields of education, science and technology.<sup>27</sup> The UFM, in contrast, has only weakly invested in this field, as can be seen in the project on “higher education and research”, which – at least for the time being – boils down to merely developing a University.

The Marseille Final Statement tasks the Senior Officials to “approve guidelines and criteria for assessing the merits of project proposals”. Meanwhile, it highlights that projects should be “guided by a broad, comprehensive and inclusive approach ... which could be mutually-beneficial and aiming at the prosperity of all”, and also “contribute to stability and peace in the whole Euro-Mediterranean region”. Although these indications are obviously very general, they nonetheless set a question similar to that stressed here, which alludes to a set of criteria to compare projects and to evaluate their strategic character in terms of development. At no point do the UFM constitutive papers provide a rationale to evaluate the developmental effect of these projects. This rationale is something the Secretariat will have to set out, to be subsequently politically-backed by the G-Med.

To conclude, let us approach this argument from another angle. While the key projects indicate the right direction to be followed, any added value would ultimately be determined by their content. What should be the content of such projects? Why the Heads of State and Government selected the six projects just mentioned over other alternatives is not clear. Actually, beyond the slogan of “key projects”, there was no discussion about which projects should be selected and implemented. Such debate must take place in order to establish what criteria and guidelines will be used to discriminate between project proposals. With this in mind, Europe and its partners should quit discussing whether the UFM is good or not, because the UFM is now here to stay, and instead begin debating which are the best projects to promote within the UFM framework.

### 2.3. Some remarks on security

Should the key projects only have economic goals? Although the debate leading to the establishment of the UFM mostly revolved around key projects of an economic nature, and the initiative as a whole may appear largely business-oriented, the response is no. Not only did President Sarkozy – as in the speech at the Palais Marshan quoted above – mention priorities as diverse as “culture, education, health, and human capital development”, but the priorities listed in the Paris Declaration also encompass “higher education and research” and “civil protection”. More generally, seeing as the G-Med is composed of the highest Euro-Mediterranean authorities, nothing can prevent them from adopting projects that concern security, as well as any other matters. The issue of security shall be considered in this section.

The first part of the Paris Declaration, taking note of the EMP “acquis”, summarizes the security objectives (para. 5) of the first pillar of the Barcelona Declaration. Most of these refer to issues of hard and military security (e.g. non-proliferation, confidence-building measures, sufficient defence, and so on) that the Euro-Med partners were supposed to develop, but proved unable to do so. The same is done in the Marseille Final Statement. As regards the UFM, however, there is no doubt that it was not created to deal with such security issues. Military and hard security has been consciously omitted by the UFM organisation. Al-

though, as noted, the Heads of State and Government remain free to pick up hard security issues within the G-Med forum, it seems unlikely that the UFM will become involved in such issues, at least in the short-term. The central concept of the UFM is to – at present – tackle a number of strategic social and economic problems involving both sides of the Mediterranean, so as to strengthen solidarity in the area, and to foment – in the future – a higher degree of political and security cooperation than exists today. In this sense, and as highlighted in previous sections, the UFM seems bound to develop its potential through two stages: in an initial stage, implement the key strategic projects that, contingent on their success, would hopefully foster effective political solidarity, thus enabling, in a second stage, members to undertake joint action, even in the field of security and political cooperation.

While security is not central to the UFM programme for the time being, it is also not negligible. As previously mentioned, civil protection is one of the six foci outlined by the Paris Declaration. Furthermore, the Paris Declaration and the Marseille Final Statement envisage an institutional competence for the JPC that essentially concerns civil security (perhaps in a broader sense than civil protection), stating that “it may also act as a mechanism to react rapidly if an exceptional situation arises in the region that requires the consultation of Euro-Mediterranean partners”.

On the other hand, civil protection is far from new to the circle of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. It is in fact quite a well-developed programme, stemming from the reinforced cooperation between Italy and Egypt that was set up in 1996 within the EMP. Once this partnership-building measure had proved efficient, in 2004 it was expanded to most members of the EMP in the form of the “Euro-Med Civil Protection Bridge Programme” concerning prevention, mitigation and management of natural and man-made disasters.<sup>28</sup> It is currently co-piloted by Algeria, Egypt, France, Italy, the EU Commission, and the EU Council.

The Marseille Final Statement points out that the Ministers, after taking note of the Euro-Med “Civil Protection Bridge Programme”, “laid the foundations for a Long-Term Programme, the ‘Euro-Med Programme for the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters’ – PPRD (2008-2011)”. A broad shift from the Commission to the UFM Secretary in competences concerning civil protection is highly probable, especially considering the task institutionally assigned to the JPC. However, it seems likely that this new programme will build on previous ones. While its coordination should be assured by the UFM Secretariat, cooperation with the EU and the Commission will be compulsory. There will probably be a double move: towards greater governmental, rather than communitarian responsibility, and towards a more intense co-management between northern and southern UFM members – which corresponds to the broad logic of the UFM.

As was repeatedly argued in this report, a synergetic, as opposed to competitive approach between the UFM and the EU in the implementation of such a double shift, would be advisable. As a matter of fact, a trend towards pragmatic and diffuse cooperation between governments and the EU Commission is already at work within the EU sphere, as well as in a set of sub-regional initiatives, such as the Black Sea Synergy and the Nordic Dimension. Such synergy would also be in order in the case of the UFM, with a view to granting the UFM full enjoyment of the Commission’s services and capabilities<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> See <http://www.euromedinfo.eu/site.313.content.en.html>. Pedro Courela, Civil Protection as a Euro-Mediterranean Project: the Case for Practical Co-operation, EuroMeSCo Papers, No. 34, 2004.  
<sup>29</sup> See Michael Emerson, op. cit. Making Sense of Sarkozy’s Union for the Mediterranean, CEPS Policy Brief, No. 155, March 2008.

### 3. UMed in the Regional and International Context

While the EMP proved to be a relatively relevant experience, in economic terms, of regional integration and cooperation, it was far less so from the political point of view. As an international actor, the EMP ended up being weak and sometimes irrelevant. What is the prospect of the UFM in this same respect? If co-decision works, the role of the UFM may even dramatically improve in comparison with the EMP. However, the political role of the UFM will also be affected by EU ability and willingness to reinforce its foreign policy and make it more cohesive. No doubt, the EMP's negligible political impact resulted, to a large extent, from the poor substance and cohesion of the CFSP. If this factor were changed – with the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, for instance, or merely by the EU taking firm action (as recently, in the Georgian-Russian crisis) – the UFM's chances of becoming more relevant on the political ground would also increase.

The role of the UFM as a political actor in the international arena was presented in the Introduction to this report as a question of “compatibility”. Its role can be considered from different angles. The three most worth considering are: the UFM's impact on (a) intra-EU politics, (b) relations with the United States and (c) with the Middle East.

#### 3.1. Intra-EU politics

The UFM may be regarded as an interesting case in the field of intra-European politics and also in what concerns the long-standing question of the EU's centre of gravity and its internal balance between the most important European areas and/or member countries. According to a recent theoretical paradigm, when taking part in communitarian politics, members of groupings such as the EU can aim at either “Europeanizing” their own policies and interests, or “nationalizing” policies and interests stemming from the EU. The first is defined as a bottom-up approach (namely, an initiative by a single member state that eventually becomes EU-owned), while the second, as a top-down approach (an EU initiative becoming owned by single state members).<sup>30</sup> In this perspective, two students recently employed the paradigm to analyse the case of the Barcelona Process and the ENP in Spanish foreign policy, in which the Barcelona Process is seen as a Spanish bottom-up approach and Spain's incorporation of the ENP as a top-down one.<sup>31</sup> Southern Europe has often been analysed according to such a perspective of intra-alliances competition – within the EU, as well as NATO – with frequent allusions to possible situations of “free riding”.<sup>32</sup> Given that the original “Union Méditerranéenne” was initiated by France out with the EU, it can hardly be considered through the prism just discussed. By contrast, the “Europeanized” UFM is certainly an example of a bottom-up approach, promoted by both France and the broader Southern European membership.

In this view, the initial vision of a Mediterranean-only, non-EU-embedded “Union Méditerranéenne”, immediately stirred concerns within the EU. It should be noted that the EU debate focused far less on whether the “Union Méditerranéenne” could fit in line with the EMP's urgently-needed reform, than on any eventual competition between the two projects, or even between the EU as a whole and its Southern European sub-region. Thus, as soon as France accepted the Europeanization of the “Union Méditerranéenne”, Germany bought into the French project without confirming whether it was also a good purchase on the Euro-Mediterranean market. In fact, Germany's alarm as regards President Sarkozy's Mediterranean-only project emerged primarily within an EU perspective. It was two-fold: (a) a central EU country such as Germany could not remain outside any collective European arrangement regarding an area as significant as the Mediterranean one; (b) an exclusive Southern European initiative towards the Mediterranean could bring about countervailing initiatives from other EU sub-regions, resulting in possible EU fragmentation. Certainly, Germany's policy was also guided by a concern to limit the empowerment of the French leadership and to prevent a widening gap in Franco-German relations. However, Germany was less worried about limiting France's broad influence than about including the UFM in the EU, in a bid to maintain European political cohesion and to prevent competition and fragmentation among the EU sub-regions.

The Italian-Spanish December initiative (the “Appel de Rome” of December 20 2007) and, more decisively, the German initiative presented during the Franco-German bilateral March 3 2008 meeting in Hanover, jointly averted the risk of a weakened EU cohesion. Poland and other Central-Eastern EU countries have announced their intention to promote a similar framework between the EU and those Eastern European countries with no accession perspectives at present, principally the Ukraine. This is not in itself a worrying perspective from the point of view of EU cohesion: most Southern European countries would support such a move and some, such as Italy, Greece and France, may even be genuinely interested in it. However, even if the risk of fragmentation is averted, the issue of the EU's internal balance of power and its potential for competition remains. For, in a sense, these elements

Mo Simon Bulmer and Claudio M. Radaelli, “The Europeanization of National Policy towards the South”, in S. Bulmer and Ch. Lequeune (eds.), *The Member States of the European Union*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2005, pp. 338-359.

<sup>31</sup> Esther Barbé, Laia Mestres i Camps, Eduard Soler i Lecha, “La política mediterránea de España: entre el Proceso de Barcelona y la Política Europea de Vecindad”, *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, No. 79-80, December 2007, pp. 35-51.

<sup>32</sup> Within this perspective, the literature on Southern Europe, with regard to both the EU and NATO, was quite extensive before the end of the Cold War, including: Roberto Aliboni (ed.), *Southern European Security in the 1990s*, Pinter Publishers: London & New York, 1992, pp. 40-51; Douglas T. Stuart (ed.), *Politics & Security in the Southern Region of the Atlantic Alliance*, MacMillan Press, 1988; John Chipman (ed.), *NATO's Southern Allies: Internal and External Challenges*, London, New York: Routledge, with Atlantic Institute for International Affairs, 1988. A post-Cold War appreciation of the same issue can be found in Roberto Aliboni, “EU Security in the Mediterranean: The Role of Southern Europe”, in S. Bazzoni, M. Chartouni-Dubarry (eds.), *Politics, Economics and the Search for Mediterranean Stability*, IEPM: Principauté de Monaco, 2001, pp. 59-77.



are physiologic to the overall functioning of the EU. While the “Union Méditerranéenne” represented a threat to EU cohesion, the UFM will merely be one more ingredient among many others in the standard competition that characterises the EU’s ordinary functioning. In this sense, the UFM seems fairly compatible with the EU and its development.

This conclusion must be accompanied by several comments. First of all, the UFM’s new kind of political ambitions – of a more realistic, rather than normative nature – may weaken the interest of the EU’s Northern and Eastern European members in the Mediterranean area. The decisions of the March 13 2008 European Council and the Paris Summit confirmed these members’ recognition of the “Mediterranean”, as part of the EU’s fundamental “acquis” they are firmly loyal to; yet they may nonetheless find that the UFM is less in tune with their top-down approach to the EU than was the EMP. In a sense, the politically-downsized EMP of the last eight years (post-Marseille, and especially, post-Barcelona 2) may have been more palatable to EU Eastern members’ limited interest in the Mediterranean, as well as more in tune with the foreign policy goals of Northern and “neutral” members than are the renewed political ambitions of today’s UFM. This is particularly true for Northern members. While they were certainly at ease with the EMP’s focus on political reform and protection of human rights within a broad framework of good “socialization”, they may not be with the UFM’s realist approach to Mediterranean politics.

This brings us to our second comment. Reinforced cooperation in the UFM would allow for a healthy co-habitation between the differing approaches and interests of EU members: some EU members will coalesce among themselves and with select Mediterranean partners to undertake joint actions; some EU members will not, while not preventing others from acting. In this sense, the use of reinforced cooperation in the UFM will play an important role, hopefully helping to overcome intra-EU political differences. However, the use of reinforced cooperation may become uneasy in matters relevant to all EU member states, such as terrorism and migration. Furthermore, competition over funding may arise under certain circumstances, especially when such funds come from EU instruments.

The third and final comment is that the UFM is developing within an overall EU picture quite different from that in which the EMP had emerged. In this new context, as Emerson points out, “The EU has actually been making progress in adapting its working methods for external policies that should not needlessly be encumbered with the attendance of all 27 members”.<sup>33</sup> An example of this tendency could be the early provision, found in the Barcelona Declaration, for an “open” troika representing the entire EU in the shared EMP organs: the EU was to be represented by the troika and those members willing to attend. As is known, the 1997 ministerial conference in Malta (not the most recognised for its wisdom) abandoned this original arrangement in favour of an all-encompassing presence of EU members. That presented in the previous paragraphs seems to suggest a return to an open troika of sorts.

The EU’s current neighbourhood relations include initiatives along the borders of the Union, involving either a portion of EU member countries and/or EU institutions, as is the case with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) organisation and the Northern Dimension, or then the entire EU membership, as happens with the UFM. The flexible representation present within frameworks like the BSEC and the Northern Dimension should be extended to the UFM. In the Northern Dimension, where the EU is only represented by EU-scale institutions, those EU members wanting to participate can nonetheless do so. By the same token, in the UFM, in which all members participate, some mechanism of limited representation should be enforced, at least at the Senior Officials’ level. True, this may not be easy in a framework such as the UFM, which re-emphasises national representation and re-evaluates sovereignty, yet it may be worth considering.

Will the birth of the UFM have an impact on transatlantic relations? The Mediterranean is not regarded by the US as a strategically-unified area. From Washington’s vantage point, there are many strategic foci and issues at work in the Mediterranean, yet the region as a whole has no over-arching strategic coherency. However, seeing as the Mediterranean area includes a number of its bilateral allies (in the Arab world), distinctive strategic hotspots (the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; Cyprus and Turkey; the Western Sahara conflict in the Maghreb; etc.), as well as the Southern Flank of the Atlantic Alliance (with its Mediterranean Dialogue), it is nonetheless strategically relevant to the US.

The Euro-Mediterranean framework initiated by the EU and, over the years, managed in different formats – from the 1970s Comprehensive Mediterranean Policy, to the Barcelona Process, the EMP, and now, the UFM – is important to the United States because it contrib-

### 3.2. UFM and the United States

<sup>33</sup> Michael Emerson, *Making Sense of Sarkozy’s Union for the Mediterranean*, pp. 6-7.

utes towards an upgrade in regional governance, easing its own role in the Mediterranean and reinforcing allies on both sides of the basin. More often than not, the United States and the Europeans have divergent ideas on how the region should be managed from the political and economic point of view. However, the US has little interest in being directly involved in the Euro-Mediterranean regional alliance. All in all, despite differences and, at times, even tensions, the US believes that the Euro-Mediterranean regional frameworks set up in the last fifteen years are useful instruments and work in favour of its interests.

Against this backdrop, the UFM has sparked interest in the United States, yet as an expression of France's new foreign policy approach, rather than in and of itself. While reaffirming a number of traditional Mediterranean policy trends, France's stance towards the United States is changing on a broader level and is thus, among other outcomes, opening the way to greater collaboration in the Mediterranean area. US collaboration is not expected to take place with or within the UFM. It will instead continue to cooperate with individual European countries and through NATO. However, and contrary to the past, this collaboration will include French participation, rather than its opposition or absence. As was noted by a recognised American author writing on the Mediterranean: "France will be the critical interlocutor here".<sup>34</sup>

Thanks to the new French approach to the United States and NATO, cooperation between the EU and NATO in the Mediterranean will certainly be improved and extended, where and when it proves fitting. An enhanced EU and European cooperation with the US does not, however, automatically imply better relations between the UFM and the United States. Even if Arab relations with the US in the Mediterranean were to improve, such improvement would be more evident in bilateral relations and within the multi-bilateral NATO Mediterranean Dialogue (where relations are already very good), rather than in a collective regional forum such as the UFM. That having been said, the UFM, as an intergovernmental undertaking, may converge more closely with the United States on political grounds than was the case under the EMP. Furthermore, most of the projects that the UFM aims to implement (energy, civil protection, etc.) are also of interest to the United States. These projects may, in addition, constitute an opportunity for the participation of the United States in the cooperative web of the Mediterranean. In this sense, and following in the footsteps of improved Franco-US relations, the new Euro-Mediterranean regional framework may assume some relevance in the sphere of transatlantic cooperation.

### 3.3. The UMed and the Middle East

The question to be tackled here is how the UFM may come to affect EU relations with the Middle East and with those Middle Eastern countries not included in the initiative.

Although Libya has not accepted to become a member of the UFM, it is a long-standing member in the Western Mediterranean "5 + 5" group (where it does well and wishes to stay). Interestingly, Libya had also refused full membership of the EMP. The EMP model, while appreciated in broad terms by the Arab Gulf states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, has been rejected as a model for their relations with the EU ever since EU-GCC relations began to take shape some twenty years ago. The Gulf Arabs hesitate to include anything concerning political reform or human rights in their agreements with the EU, but are nonetheless willing – and even eager – to establish a political dialogue with the Europeans in more traditional terms. There had been talks in the past about including Iraq in the EMP, yet this idea was dropped because the Mediterranean Arabs were not prepared to welcome Iraq and because the EU's position in the Gulf did not allow it to undertake such a bold move. The UFM would, in principle, encounter the same difficulties as regards Iraq as were in evidence under the EMP.

Apart from the two very particular cases of Libya and Iraq, the UFM may be of interest to EU-GCC relations. Although, as was already said, the Gulf Arab countries' broad approach to Euro-Mediterranean relations is fundamentally open, the UFM format may enhance their interest since it is based on a notion of "equality" and would thus interfere less than the EMP model. Yet while Euro-Mediterranean models may have an impact on EU-GCC relations, the Gulf and Mediterranean Arabs will hardly be willing, or even able, to develop relations with the EU through a unified framework until such Euro-Mediterranean relations include Israel. The EU will sooner or later outline a strategy that encompasses the entire Middle East,<sup>35</sup> yet it cannot be based on the enlargement of the UFM "East of Jordan". EU strategy will have to become regionally articulated, albeit resting on transversal objectives and instruments. In this perspective, the UFM model may prove more transversal than that of the EMP.

34. Ian Lesser, *Rediscovering the Mediterranean: A Transatlantic Perspective on Security and Strategy*, a GMFUS Policy Brief (no date available) based on a presentation by the author at a conference organised in Barcelona by the CIDOB and the Spanish Ministry of Defence, on November 5-7 2007.

35. Felix Neugart, Tobias Schumacher, "Thinking about the EU's Future Neighbourhood Policy in the Middle East: From the Barcelona Process to a Euro-Middle East Partnership", in C.P. Hanelt, G. Luciani, F. Neugart (eds.), *Regime Change in Iraq*, RSCAS Press: Florence, 2004, pp. 169-92; Roberto Aliboni, "The Geopolitical Implications of the European Neighbourhood Policy", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Spring 2005), p. 1-16.



The Arab League was included in the UFM at the Marseille ministerial conference. Press reports suggest that the League will participate in all UFM meetings, albeit without a right of vote. This development attests to the good relations between the EU and the Arab League, which may lend towards an interesting future collaboration within the context of the projects to be developed by the UMF. Yet the League's influence on the UMF as a political endeavour will most likely remain very limited.

## 4. Conclusions

The UFM initiative is predicated on three main pillars: (a) equality among members within a context of strong co-ownership and effective joint action, with a view to superseding the weak political capabilities of the EMP that stemmed from EU tutorship; (b) a mostly inter-governmental approach, based on traditional diplomacy and political realism, thus shifting the EU's normative approach onto the back burner; (c) a focus on select economic and social projects, which present a transversal and strategic perspective, and whose success is expected to reinforce political dialogue and promote political cooperation.

Such an approach has gradually emerged through previous Euro-Mediterranean experience, with the adoption of co-ownership in implementing the EMP and, most neatly, in ENP policies of the early 2000s. The UFM, however, is bound to consolidate this orientation by institutionalising an organisation of peers. The central tenet of the UFM is co-decision and co-management, at the top rungs, as well as throughout the entire organisation.

The UFM may in this sense definitely represent a step forward in Euro-Mediterranean relations. Success will depend on the capacity of the UFM's mixed organisation to outline and implement its programme and on the willingness of the G-Med political leadership to compromise where necessary and lend impetus to the initiative. Both the organisation itself, and its leadership, will face significant challenges and obstacles.

This new entity is emerging in an EU context where complementary relations and continuity with the EMP experience are strongly supported throughout Europe. How will the new and the old, the past and the present, cohabit? No doubt, the role of the Commission, and more generally, the role of communitarian factors in the UFM will tend to weaken. It would be a mistake to allow such a role to decline, though. As a matter of fact, the long-standing EU policy towards the Mediterranean has created a large and important area of integration and cooperation, especially in economic and commercial relations, which can only be managed by the Commission. On the other hand, the UFM Secretariat is a reduced task force and, although it would be unable to manage the "acquis", the latter is essential to guaranteeing the success of the strategic projects the Secretariat is tasked to run. Furthermore, the "acquis" requires stability and protection to overcome any possible disagreement between the new institutions and to provide the UFM with the necessary impetus. In this case, the Commission and the network of bilateral agreements will operate as a safety net. Competition between the old and the new Euro-Mediterranean institutions is to be expected and may, to some extent, also prove helpful. Such competition must, however, be judiciously channelled towards creating greater synergy and cooperation, and preventing any destructive effect.

The debate that stimulated the establishment of the UFM was more focused on EU cohesion than on the merits of the initiative itself and of the Mediterranean area. This may prove a weakening factor for the UFM in the future. For this reason, far from taking the UFM for granted, the project must be submitted to further debate.

## 5. Recommendations

1. The UFM is the new EU policy towards the Mediterranean. Its amalgamation with the EMP will thus have to be considered. This may give rise to a degree of dualism within the Barcelona Process for some time, seeing as such incorporation may be governed by harmonisation and synergy, or separation and competition. The first recommendation is to ensure that **amalgamation takes place in a balanced and prudent way, with reference to the complementary relations and continuity** set out by the March 13 2008 European Council.

2. In the UFM, the Secretariat will play a central role. It must be noted, however, that the role of both the Commission and the EU will not cease to be relevant because of the crucial inputs they shall continue to provide and the important "acquis" it will still manage in Euro-Mediterranean relations. Furthermore, the Commission has already launched and consolidated a number of partnership-building measures, such as the "Civil Protection Bridge Programme" and EuroMeSCo, whose management will certainly continue to require the Commission's contribution. Thus, **a balancing act between the UFM Secretary and the EU Commission is necessary if amalgamation is to proceed within a framework of harmonisation rather than competition.**

3. The key projects UFM is expected to launch have significant antecedents and often overlap to a large extent with sectoral and even more general activities regularly conducted by the Commission within the framework of the EMP's different Work Programmes. For this reason, and where appropriate, **the key projects must be carefully coordinated with the Commission's past and current sectoral activities, as well as with its broader activities**, such as in the area of migration. Such coordination would primarily be the task of the Co-Presidents.

4. UFM institutions have fundamentally been structured to assure co-decision and co-management in Euro-Med relations; however, there is no doubt that, in shaping the UFM, initiatives have so far mostly originated from the EU side. In contrast, as a working organisation, the UFM should base itself on joint planning efforts in order to coordinate common action. The implementation of the UFM in this respect will be fundamental to assuring its success. **There should now be a sustained effort to engage the partners in the execution of the UFM, as there should have been to involve them at the time of its conception, which did not happen.** The active participation of members in the project would help reinforce their sense of ownership.

5. Care should be taken in choosing those who will compose the UFM Secretariat. A balanced composition is not easy to envision. As such, **a transparent detailing of the criteria of selection is necessary.** Furthermore, those responsible for setting up the Secretariat's team must assure the ways and means to guarantee homogeneity, especially in a situation where individual positions will be very different from one another.

6. Given that the UFM, despite its innovations, remains vulnerable to disagreements stemming from outstanding conflicts in the Euro-Mediterranean area, **a prudent and gradual approach of "low politics first, high politics later"** should be adopted, whereby the G-Med should aim, particularly during the early years, to ensure the success and visibility of UFM projects, so as to adequately deal, in a second stage, with political and security issues from a strengthened position.

7. **A formula to reduce EU representation in the rather crowded (and imbalanced) UFM membership**, similar to the EMP's early format of the "open" EU troika (consisting of the troika plus willing EU countries), **should be adopted**, on a case-by-case basis, or more generally.

8. There is no doubt that effective political understanding between the two UFM Co-Presidents in planning the agenda and coordinating the organisation will be a decisive factor in its overall success. Asymmetry between the two Co-Presidents as regards duration and legitimisation may prevent the emergence of effective understanding and coordination. While a simultaneous mandate could hardly materialize, it seems advisable to **adopt measures to ensure harmonisation and continuity – such as, for instance, co-presidential teams, similar to the ancient EU troika, which would work as required by the Co-Presidency's action.**

9. **Reinforced cooperation should be generally allowed and practised** by UFM members, as well as those of the EU.

10. The Marseille Final Statement provides only very general criteria for the selection of projects to eventually be adopted by the UFM, and hence also mandates the Senior Officials to build on these conditions. While the existing criteria will certainly be helpful, **a convincing developmental strategic rationale for this selection must still be outlined.** On

what basis should projects be chosen in order to fulfil a key strategic role in Euro-Mediterranean regional development? The Reiffers Report mentions a primary need to **alter the starting conditions for individuals and firms in the Southern countries**. If this objective were to be pursued, education and the development of technology and science would have a more dramatic effect in changing the starting conditions for individuals and firms in non-EU partners than what could be contributed by the development of energy and transport. Consequently, offering a broad rationale, in economically-strategic terms, for the selection of the UFM's key projects would certainly add to their success, as well as to their visibility.

11. The UFM is not endowed with a budget of its own. For this reason, **the limits of the UFM's financial relations – be they with the EU or with other funding entities – must be carefully stated** so as to preserve the UFM's essential autonomy and to assure all the necessary EU support in managing UFM funds.

12. **Financial resources should also be mobilised, whenever possible, from non-EU partners**, with a view to reinforcing a sense of co-ownership.

13. Many of the elements one would expect to be present in an effort, such as the UFM initiative, to renovate the Barcelona process, are in fact missing. It would be unfair, however, to highlight such things given that, understandably, those promoting the UFM hope that the initiative will be evaluated for what it has pledged to achieve, rather than what, according to different opinions, it should do. Furthermore, that missing in the UFM's programme may easily have been encompassed by the EMP's. None the less, there is at least one question, namely that of immigration, which deserves a mention because of its central role in Euro-Mediterranean relations. While all the EMP channels towards the Mediterranean are integrated within EU's current securitized policy, the UFM could **seek to propose some bolder, broader projects**, in a bid to improve migratory conditions across the Mediterranean, at least within the circle of Euro-Mediterranean relations. **Immigration should be taken into consideration when evaluating the UFM's possible priorities**, pursuing a more liberal perspective than that of the EMP.

14. The Marseille Final Statement emphasises the need to work in tandem with and with the support of Euro-Mediterranean civil society; it also mentions the Euro-Med Parliamentary Assembly. The UFM tracks the EMP's experience in this area, which despite committed efforts, did not prove very successful. The UFM's constitutive documents are silent about how it would maintain contact with civil society. As such, and inspired by its fresh goals, **the UFM should outline a clear policy in this direction by taking stock of the EMP's experience**.

Table 1 - Trade between the European Union and its main partners

## Annex

EU IMPORTS			EU EXPORTS			IMPORTS + EXPORTS		
Partner regions	Millions of euros	%	Partner regions	Millions of euros	%	Partner regions	Millions of euros	%
World	1.350.494	100.0	World	1.166.109	100.0	World	2.516.604	100.0
NAFTA	206.646	15.3	NAFTA	313.438	26.9	NAFTA	520.084	20.7
Latin America	78.372	5.8	Latin America	62.857	5.4	Latin America	141.229	5.6
EU accession candidates	67.542	5.0	EU accession candidates	94.663	8.1	EU accession candidates	162.206	6.4
EFTA	153.106	11.3	EFTA	129.028	11.1	EFTA	282.134	11.2
<b>Med countries</b>	<b>60.016</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>Med countries</b>	<b>59.886</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>Med countries</b>	<b>119.902</b>	<b>4.8</b>
ASEAN	78.190	5.8	ASEAN	48.422	4.6	ASEAN	126.612	5.0

Source: EUROSTAT (Comext, Statistical regime 4) DG Trade, 07 August 2007.

**NAFTA:** Canada, Mexico, USA; **Latin America:** 20 countries; **EU accession candidates:** Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania & Turkey; **EFTA:** Iceland, Norway, Switzerland; **Mediterranean countries** (excluding Turkey): Algeria, West Bank & Gaza Strip, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia; **ASEAN:** Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam.

Table 2 - Intra-regional trade in 2003

PARTNERS	Maghreb	Mashrek	Israel	Turkey
Maghreb	1.2	2.3	0.02	2.1
Mashrek	1.1	6.8	0.36	2.2
Israel	0.0	0.7	0	2.3
Turkey	2.9	4.1	1.48	0

Source: UN ComTrade.

Table 3 - Regional trade across regional bodies

REGIONAL BODIES	% of intra-regional trade
APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation)	70
EU (European Union)	62
NAFTA (North-American Free Trade Agreement)	50
ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations)	22
MERCOSUR (Common Market of the South)	20
UEMOA (Economic Community of West African States)	12
GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council)	5
UMA (Arab Maghreb Union)	3

Source: "An Evaluation of the Benefits and the Challenges of the South-South Integration among the Mediterranean Partners Countries", Research no. FEM 22-27, February 2006, Femise Research Programme 2004-2005, p. 7.

Table 4 - Public expenditure priority areas

RANK	COUNTRY	Public expenditure on healthcare (2004)	Public expenditure on education 2002-05	Military expenditure (% of National Revenue)
23	Israel	6.1	6.9	9.7
56	Libya	2.8	2.7	2.0
84	Turkey	5.6	3.7	2.8
86	Jordan	4.7	4.9	5.3
88	Lebanon	3.2	2.6	4.5
91	Tunisia	2.8	7.3	1.6
104	Algeria	2.6	n.a.	2.9
108	Syria	2.2	n.a.	5.1
112	Egypt	2.2	n.a.	2.8
126	Morocco	1.7	6.7	4.5
137	Mauritania	2.0	2.3	3.6

Source: UNDP, Human Development Report 2007-2008, pp. 294-296.

Table 5 - Human Development Index (HDI) of MENA countries 2007-2008

RANK	COUNTRY	Life expectancy	Literacy rate	Income per capita \$US
23	Israel	83.3	97.1	25.863
56	Libya	73.4	84.2	10.335
84	Turkey	71.4	87.4	8.407
88	Lebanon	71.5	Ind	5.584
91	Tunisia	73.5	74.3	8.371
104	Algeria	71.7	69.9	7.062
108	Syria	73.6	80.8	3.808
112	Egypt	70.7	71.4	4.337
126	Morocco	70.4	52.3	4.555
137	Mauritania	63.2	51.2	2.234

Source: UNDP, Human Development Report 2007-2008, pp. 229-231.

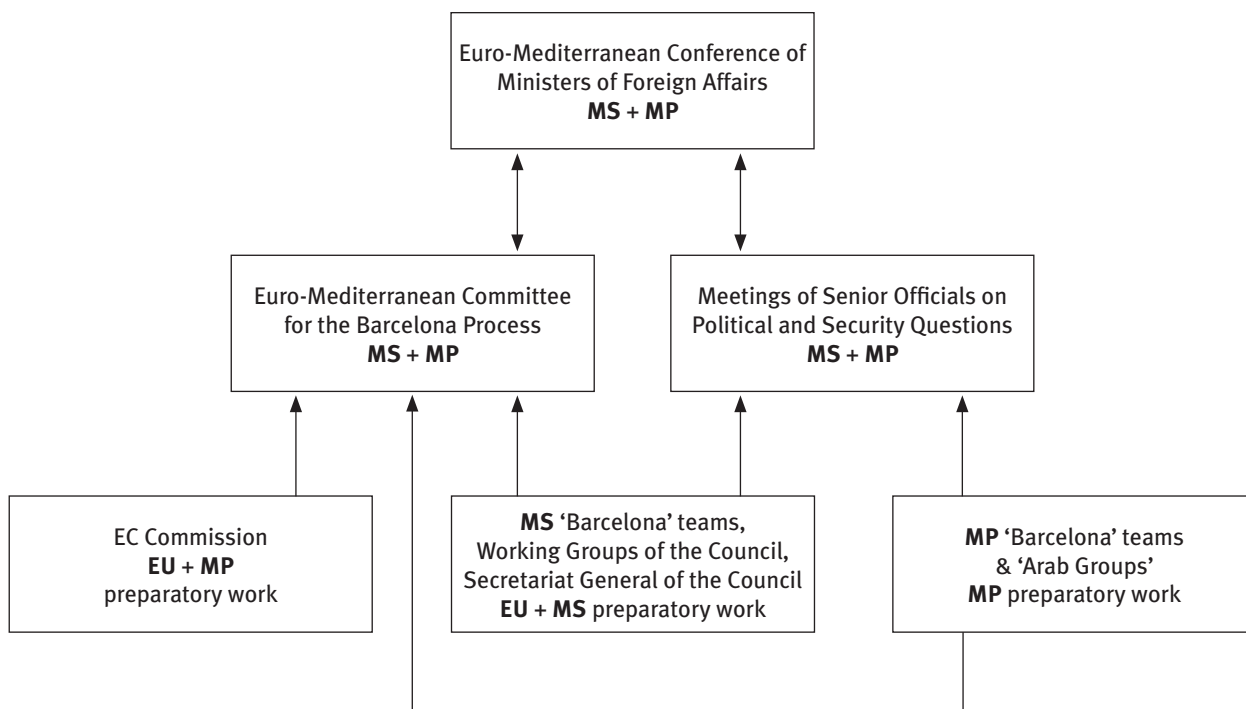
### Chart 1 - EMP's organisation

Source: Geoffrey Edwards, Eric Philippart, "The EU Mediterranean Policy: Virtue Unrewarded Or ...?", in *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 11, No 1, Summer/Fall 1997, pp. 185-207, annex 1.

**EU:** European Union institution

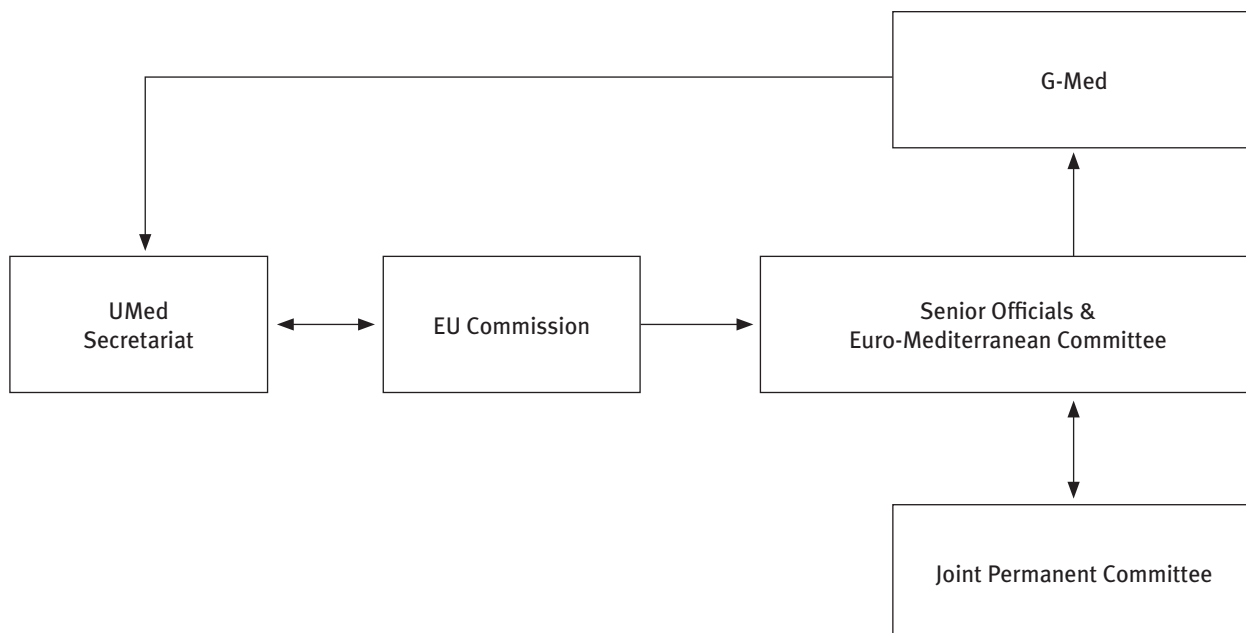
**MS:** Member States of the European Union

**MP:** Mediterranean Partners



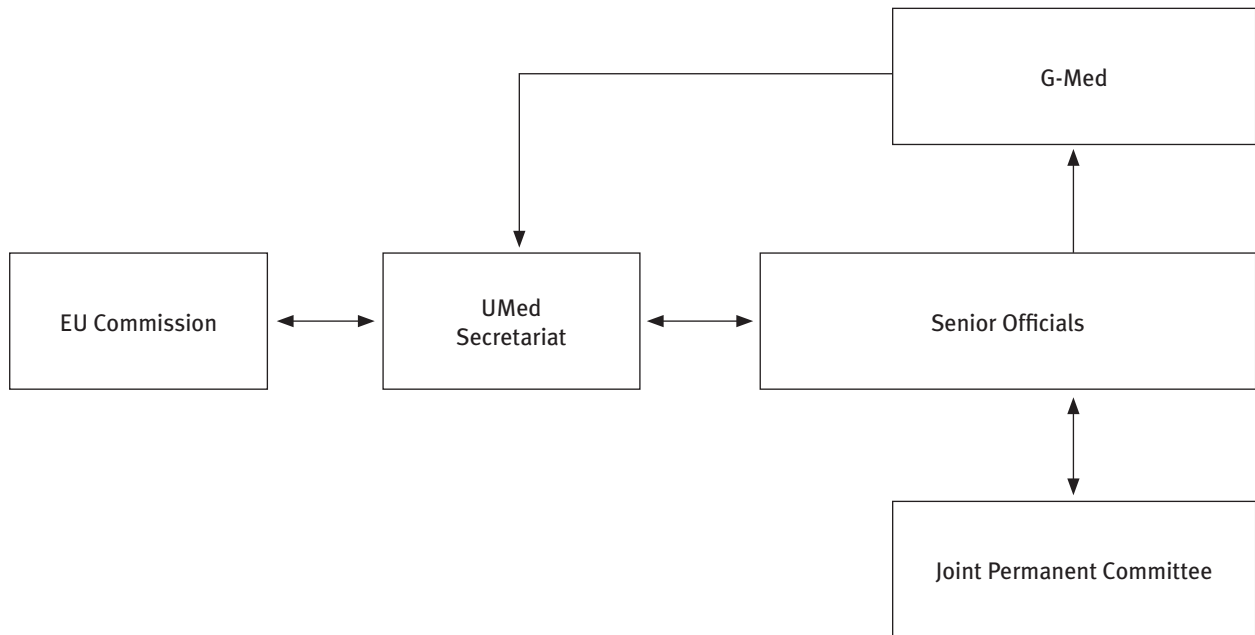
### Chart 2 - Harmonisation and Competition in the UMed organisation

#### 2.1: The UMed according to the EU Commission

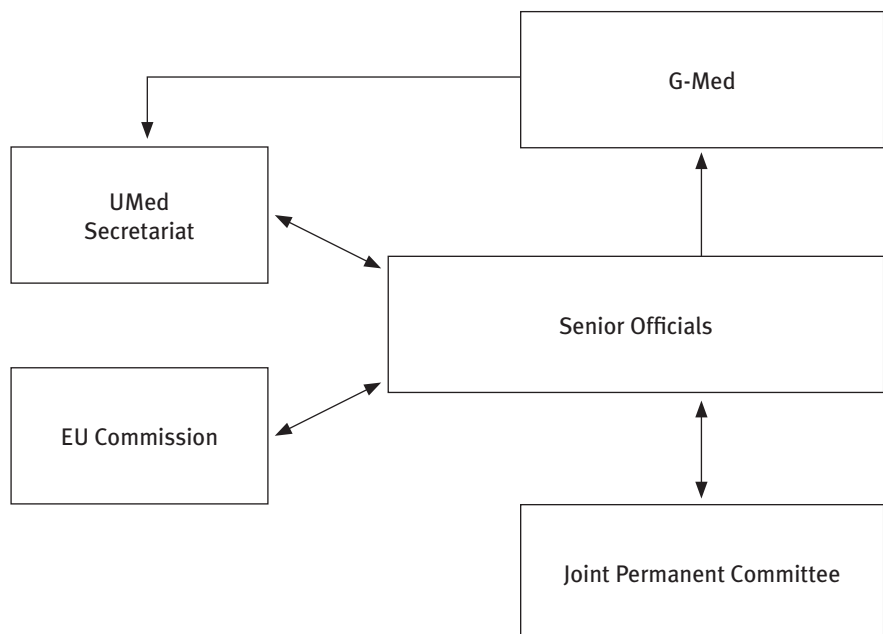




## 2.2: The UMed according to the Paris Declaration



## 2.3: A synergetic perspective



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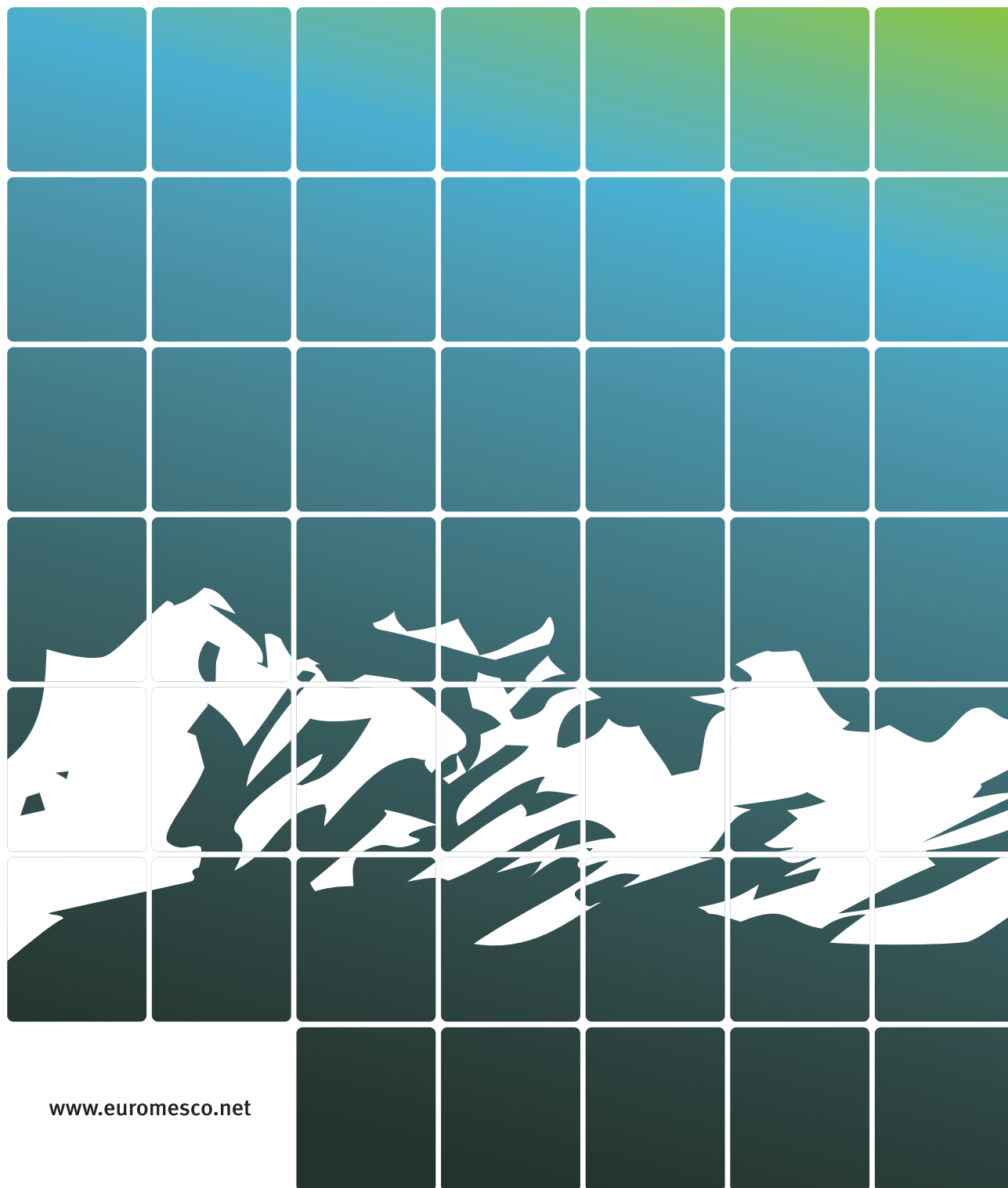
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