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The ENP between Ambitions and Delusions: Analysing Europe's Misconceptions in Supporting Democratisation in Egypt

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The ENP between Ambitions and Delusions: Analysing Europe's Misconceptions in Supporting Democratisation in Egypt

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Introduction

Through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), the EU has presented itself since 1995 as a normative actor in its southern neighbourhood encouraging democratic principles including the rule of law, democracy, human rights and liberties. The EU portrays itself as a promoter of reform and democracy to the countries of the south of the Mediterranean (Karakir, 2014). Egypt's Association Agreement was signed in 2001 and entered into force in 2004. The rationale behind the EMP was that the promotion of democracy and the facilitation of economic growth would transform the Mediterranean region into a secured and stable area, thereby containing fundamentalism and illegal migration. However, while the partnerships achieved some progress in the trade and cultural spheres, progress in the political sphere has been limited (El-Molla, 2009). In 2004, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was launched and bilateral Action Plans were signed with most of the southern neighbours to define the priority areas for the beneficiary of the financial aid with the aim of achieving a comprehensive set of reforms in the political, economic and social spheres. It also identified suggested timeframes for attaining these goals. In Egypt, the Action Plan was approved in 2007 and currently the agenda of EU-Egypt relations is set out in this Action Plan. However, worries about the costs of democracy – particularly in terms of rising political Islam or in terms of losing authoritarian but geopolitically influential allies, which was the case with Egypt – limited the EU's commitment to democracy promotion in the region. As a result, there was only modest progress with respect to achieving the ENP's objectives.

In this context, the explosion of the Arab uprisings in general and the Egyptian one in particular triggered questions with regard to the efficiency of the EMP and the ENP. The EU was neither able to anticipate these events nor capable of influencing them. Taking into consideration the crisis that affected the Mediterranean such as the Arab uprisings since 2011 and the open conflicts in Libya and Syria afterwards, and those that affected the countries of the eastern partnership such as the conflict in Georgia in 2008 and the one in Crimea since 2014, EU policy makers called for a revision of their old policies toward their neighbours. Therefore, three major revision documents were issued by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission in 2011 and 2015. The first one is the Joint Communication on a "Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity",[1] issued in March 2011. This first Communication is directed to the Southern Mediterranean countries only and based on the second one, issued in May 2011[2] and entitled "A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood". This May 2011 Communication was designed for the mid-term review (2011) of the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI: 2007-2013) and affects the neighbours as a whole. The third Joint Communication, issued in November

1 For more information, please see European Commission (2011, March 8). Joint Communication to the European Council, the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean. COM (2011) 200 final. Retrieved from http://eeas.europa.eu/ euromed/docs/com2011_200_en.pdf

2 For more information, please see European Commission (2011, May 25). A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood. A Review of European Neighbourhood Policy. Joint Communication by the High Representative of The Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission. COM (2011) 303. Retrieved from http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/com_11_303_en.pdf

2015[3] and entitled "Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy", follows a request of the European Commission President and was preceded by a consultation process. This November 2015 Joint Communication contains proposals for the 2017 mid-term review of the second financial instrument, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI: 2014-2020), and is also directed to the European neighbourhood as a whole. Hence, with a special focus on Egypt, this paper suggests emphasising the content, tools and targets of the EU's policy for supporting democratisation and political reforms in the Mediterranean countries and in the Neighbourhood as it appears in these guiding documents and practically applied on the ground. The term democracy is defined throughout this paper as the way of making effective claims for a more just and egalitarian common world (Mitchell, 2012). This implies drawing attention, in this paper, to the conditions facilitating or constraining better chances of socioeconomic inclusion and socio-political participation.

3 For more information, please see European Commission (2015, November 18). Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy. JOIN (2015) 50 final. Retrieved from http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/documents/ 2015/ 151118_joint-communication_review-of-the-enp_en.pdf

The Promotion of Democratic Norms: Revising Old Paradigms?

In this section, this paper will discuss four paradigms that the EU is adopting and according to which it is seeking to promote democracy in its southern neighbours, namely the transition paradigm, the liberal paradigm on the socioeconomic and socio-political level and the security paradigm. It will attempt to demonstrate that these paradigms, which were re-adopted in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings through the three 2011 and 2015 Joint Communications, are facing serious deficiencies which render EU policies for supporting democratisation or/and political reforms, particularly in Egypt, unable to meet their targets.

The Transition Paradigm versus Open-Ended Transformation Processes

As Huber (2013) notes, the EU has mainly perceived the uprisings in Arab countries through the lens of the democratic transition paradigm. The former European Commissioner Stefan Füle has, for instance, interpreted the processes that developed since the uprisings as "democratisation" even though he also specified that he believes that this would be a long process (Huber, 2013). However, this interpretation is problematic since open-ended results for transformation processes and the complexities of political transformations are not taken into consideration. More dangerously, it inherently implies that the stalemate of this "perceived democratisation" automatically means the failure of the transition to democracy. As this paper will show later, this positioning is unconsciously affecting EU policy makers when strategising; and thus might lead them to either recycle their old and less successful tools for supporting democratisation as is the case in the March and May 2011 Communications, or even, implicitly, de-prioritise the issue of political reforms as is the case with the November 2015 Communication. For these reasons, it might be more helpful for the EU to understand that in the aftermath of the 2011 uprisings Egypt is continually undergoing a process of political transformation, whose results remain open. The latter are subjected to the actors' choices and the formation of more organised societal structures that are able to push for a change. Accordingly, the EU should shape policies that can effectively support, and even influence, the path of these, de facto, ongoing socio-political dynamics toward a democratic transformation.

The Liberal Paradigm on the Socio-Political Level: Political Liberalisation versus Democratisation

By perceiving the Arab Spring through the lens of its own democratic historical trajectory and concepts, the EU is liable to impose a liberal paradigm that attributes liberalisation to democratisation. The EU has over time presented definitions of human rights and

democracy in Commission and Council documents and gave the definition for human rights – that is, liberal defence rights, civil and political rights, and elections. As Huber (2013) notes, the EU sees democracy and human rights as interdependent and the latter as a prerequisite for a democratic society. However, this positioning is problematic since it leads EU policy makers to fall into the trap of neglecting to address more structural conditions that are necessary to either achieve a successful transition toward democracy or further steps toward genuine democratisation.

Along these lines, free and fair elections, for instance, should be perceived as a necessary but not sufficient condition for achieving democracy. The March and May 2011 Communications both considered free and fair elections as a cornerstone for a transition to democracy. The March 2011 Communication, for instance, mentioned that the commitment to adequately monitored, free and fair elections should be the entry qualification for Partnership (European Commission, 2011a). The May 2011 Communication mentioned that several elements are common to building deep and sustainable democracy, including free and fair election, freedom of association and expression, rule of law as well as security and law enforcement sector reform (including police) and the establishment of democratic control over armed and security forces (European Commission, 2011b). Accordingly, the EU praised the fairness of the presidential electoral process in Egypt in 2012 (Council of the European Union, 2012). On the other hand, it presented its support to Morsi's rule despite the multiple setbacks that followed those free elections. The elections, held in a contested framework, had led to conflicts and backlashes toward authoritarian governance instead of democracy. In contrast to the Tunisian case, the electoral game was freely "played" but the rules of the games were contested. The existence of a consensual framework (or consensual rules) was the missing condition for the evolvement of the system toward democracy on the eve of the 2012 Egyptian presidential elections. Therefore, contrary to the expectations of the EU policy makers, holding free and fair elections did not mean that Egypt was necessarily heading toward democracy since the more structural conditions necessary for the achievement of the latter were already missing.

Furthermore, this EU positioning is problematic because it leads EU policy makers to support actions that are not necessarily leading to democratisation but only to greater political liberalisation. The protection of human rights is a necessary condition for democracy, yet it is not sufficient. If democracy promotes the protection of human rights, the latter does not necessarily lead to democracy since, as Carothers and Ottaway (2009) note, it does not change the power structures or amend power relations. Thus, the link between human rights and democracy, which is the result of correct observation, is also the consequence of false logic (Carothers & Ottaway, 2009). Furthermore, by making this link, the EU risks

forgetting the issue of political reform and limits itself only to the promotion of human rights, which imposes no challenge to the "liberalised autocracies" (Brumberg, 2002). More concretely, by putting in place more or less liberal measures, even in terms of human rights, the Mubarak regime has, for instance, easily managed to consolidate its authoritarian rule for decades. Nevertheless, in the current situation in which Egypt suffers from deteriorating socio-political conditions, the EU's support for political liberalisation and for the opening of the political sphere through continuous discussions should be encouraged. Nevertheless, it should be considered as a step toward further democratisation but not as a long-term target.

The Liberal Paradigm on the Socioeconomic Level: Economic Liberalisation versus Political Liberalisation and Socioeconomic Inclusion

The three Communications have all represented an intensification of rather than a substantial change in the EU's pre-2011 commitment to free trade, considered as a pathway to development and stability. According to the first March 2011 Communication, economic growth is driven by privatisation and market liberalisation, which is supposed to free up enterprise to produce wealth; and this dynamic is supposed in return to lead to sustainable growth as well as to reduce poverty, thereby achieving political stability (Teti, 2015). Along these lines, the second May 2011 Communication reversed the causal mechanism between democratisation and socioeconomic issues: not greater socioeconomic justice enabling democratisation but the latter as a cause of economic growth. Hence, for the May 2011 document, it is through growth that socioeconomic inclusion is best addressed (Teti, 2015). As for the third Communication of November 2015, no reference to the link between democratisation and socioeconomic inclusion was made. Trade and market access (which become shaped by more flexibility) remained a key tool for achieving economic and social development. Open markets and growth (with the addition of prospects for youth) were highlighted as a key to stabilising societies in the neighbourhood. However, this logic does not help the EU much in its aim of supporting political reforms and democratisation, particularly in Egypt. On the contrary, the EU should reconsider its economic agendas, especially because neo-liberal economic policies only led to the increase of poverty and multiplied social grievances before the 2011 uprising. Thus, two major principles adopted by the EU need to be reviewed.

Firstly, the principle of growth as leading to social inclusion and thus political stability needs to be revised. The early results of the European Commission's sustainability impact assessment of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade area as early as 1999, which were

delivered in 2005 and in 2007, highlighted not only the very negative impact in the short term on manufacturing sectors in Arab countries, but also its adverse social effects, including on the Millennium Goals of poverty reduction (Youngs, 2001). Actually, the neoliberal practices and the narrow focus on macro-economic stability constrained socioeconomic inclusivity (Bicchi, 2014). Indeed, Egypt's strong export growth and FDI inflows under the EMP have not translated into similarly strong economic and social progress. On the contrary, the outcome of the EMP has been disappointing with regard to key macroeconomic variables and social indicators. From a medium-term perspective, the launching of the EMP improved the Egyptian GDP average growth, which increased from 5% in 1995-2000 and 3.2% in 2000-2005 to 6% in 2005-2007 (Saleh & Aboulkheir, 2013). Moreover, the share of exports in Egyptian's GDP jumped from 23% in 1994 to 33% in 2008, the average rate of Egypt's exports to the EU increased from 12.4% in 1998-2002 to 22.6% in 2003-2007 and the share of Egypt's exports in total world trade increased from 0.067% in 1995 to 0.116% in 2007 (Saleh & Aboulkeir, 2013). The FDI increased from an average of 1% of GDP in 1995-2000 to 8% of GDP in 2005-2007 (Saleh & Aboulkeir, 2013). However, the "trickledown effect" on which the western experts had based their neoliberal economic strategy was never achieved. Thus, despite the GDP growth at the macroeconomic level, real wages did not increase, and in many cases they actually declined. According to El-Naggar (2009), the ratio of wages to GDP decreased from 28.6% in 1995 to less than 20% in 2007. The average unemployment rate increased from 8.5% of the total labour force during the period 1995-2000 to 10.3% during 2005-2007. The average inflation rate increased from 5.4% in 1995-2000 to 8.6% in 2005-2007 (Saleh & Aboulkeir, 2013). Moreover, there was no evidence of accelerated change in the structure of production of the Egyptian economy since 1995. The relative share of industrial value added in GDP increased slightly between 1995 and 2007, while that of services decreased slightly, and the same applies for agriculture (Saleh & Aboulkeir, 2013).

Secondly, the principle of economic reform through its liberalisation as a prerequisite for political reform should be revisited. The EU has consistently relied on the idea that economic liberalisation would contribute to political liberalisation. However, this principle has never been proven. In contrast, the liberalisation of the economy especially in Egypt was accompanied by a political de-liberalisation (Kienle, 2001). The economic growth that preceded the 2011 uprising was accompanied with the formation of an oligarchy. Moreover, the privatisation process, which was conducted with a total lack of transparency (El-Naggar, 2009), has resulted, at least partially, in a remarkable concentration of capital in the private sector. Therefore, as a result of a widespread corruption in the sale of public enterprises, a small number of entrepreneurs succeeded

in establishing huge commercial empires (Roll, 2013). Moreover, the advocacy of the NDP reformers for the primacy of economic reforms offered them a pretext for completing them while maintaining the authoritarian bodies and the security apparatus of the regime. The same goes for the current Al-Sisi regime, which cannot complete economic reforms without maintaining the authoritarian bodies given the exacerbation of social grievances that occurs as a consequence of these steps.

Hence, it should be noted that the exclusive focus on market-driven strategies for growth, which are combined with the marginalisation of the question of social and economic rights, prevents social inclusion and thus constrains building an infrastructure for democracy in Egypt. Therefore, the EU's efforts to support economic growth in Egypt should be correlated by efforts to address the structural reasons that constrain the chances of a better socioeconomic inclusion and thus narrows the perspective of socio-political participation. Moreover, EU policy makers need to better examine the relation between the EU policies and the shifts in socio-political distributional coalitions and alliances that can be assessed as crucial to determining the democratising impact of economic change (Youngs, 2001). Hence, a more comprehensive analysis of the complexities of the relationship between economic and political reform needs to be conducted in the ENP's framework (Youngs, 2001).

The European Security Paradigm: Stability versus Democracy

For many perceived soft and hard security threats emanating from inside the MENA region, the EU has been entrapped for decades, as Isaac (2013) notes, in the dilemma of how to cope with two contradictory security requirements: one is the need to promote good governance, which is considered part of a long-term solution to many soft economic, social and demographic security threats. The other is the need to preserve in the meantime the political stability of the authoritarian regime – especially the Egyptian one – because of its moderate foreign policy, its strategic outlook and geopolitical significance, and its cooperation with many EU countries in fighting terrorism and limiting illegal migration (Isaac, 2013). Indeed, the clash between power politics and normative dynamics in EU foreign policy has always resulted in the victory of the former, especially when it comes to Egypt.

The instability of the Arab region and the triggered conflicts witnessed in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings pushed the EU to maintain the same strategic and security considerations in its relation with the Southern Mediterranean countries. These considerations have thus shaped even more the EU's approach to democratisation in

the aftermath of the uprising. This becomes more obvious and explicit in the proposals regarding the mid-term review of the ENI (Communication of Nov. 2015), which clearly mentioned that the most urgent challenge for the EU is to achieve stabilisation (European Commission, 2015b). To achieve this objective, strong partnerships are supposed to fight the destabilising factors in the neighbourhood. On the other hand, the long-term engagement of Europe toward its neighbours in terms of supporting reforms comes as a second priority.

Practically, this kind of (de) prioritisation was clear with regards to the geopolitically important Egypt: despite being ruled by an authoritarian regime, the latter conserved the same position as its pre-2011 predecessors in terms of preserving European strategic interests. Indeed, Morsi's rule deployed many efforts to prove itself as reliable to the west in terms of foreign and security policy but made fewer efforts to avoid serious setbacks in term of democratisation. For its part, the EU has praised Egypt's cooperation in the area of foreign and security policy as well as in regional conflict prevention.[4] Furthermore, this stability versus democracy dilemma becomes more apparent at the level of the Member States. Indeed, this situation affects even more the EU's capacity to shape a more coherent policy in terms of democracy support since members such as France, Italy or Spain, which enjoy close relations with their Mediterranean counterparts, are, in light of their security and trade interests, more reluctant to exert pressure in terms of political reforms and democratisation. This fact was confirmed by the close relations that Egypt have had under the Al-Sisi regime with France and Italy, for instance, in terms of trade. The relative deterioration of the Egyptian-Italian relations occurred only recently because of the death of Giulio Regeni, the Italian PhD student who was conducting his field research in Egypt. The signs of torture found on the student's body pushed Italy to suspect the security apparatus of being behind this terrifying incident ("La Repubblica: The Italian prosecution", 2016).

Importantly, in order to avoid EU pressure for democracy, the Egyptian regimes have smartly exploited the EU's security concerns either before or after the 2011 uprising. The Mubarak regime has, for instance, exploited the Muslim Brotherhood's relative success in the 2005 parliamentary elections to prevent EU policy makers from exerting pressure with regards to political reforms or democratisation. From this time on, the EU's response to setbacks in the Egyptian political reform process have indeed declined (Karakir, 2014). Furthermore, the exploitation of the EU's concerns in terms of illegal migration and terrorism in a regional context where Arab State failure becomes increasingly the feature of this era has continued under the Al-Sisi regime, which is seeking to avoid either pressure in terms of democracy or even critics in terms of

4 Isaac notes that this became clear in the aforementioned progress reports, referring to Egypt's effective role in, firstly, helping reach a conciliatory agreement between the Palestinian factions, which was signed in May 2011, in Cairo; secondly, the Shalit Swap deal of October 2011; and, thirdly, the Gaza ceasefire in November 2012. For more information, see: Isaac, S. (2013, August 1). The EU's democracy-stability dilemma persists in Egypt. *E-International Relations*. Retrieved from http://www.e-ir.info/2013/08/01/the-eus-democracy-stability-dilemma-persists-in-egypt/

crackdown on human rights. This was, for example, clear in the interview that President Al-Sisi gave to Lyse Doucet (chief international correspondent of the BBC) in November 2015. In this interview, he stressed the importance of dealing with terrorism. He also presented critics to the West's "little success" in countering Daesh. Moreover, he kept on coming back on the Egyptians' fear of the State collapse in neighbouring Libya, and the chaos in Syria. Finally, to avoid commenting on the deterioration of the state of human rights in Egypt, he announced that Westerners, rather than being preoccupied by the political activist's news, should be more worried about the poor socioeconomic conditions of the majority of the Egyptian population (Doucet, 2015).

While the current Egyptian regime is exploiting its geo-strategic importance, as well as its capacity to avoid State failure and its ability to prevent flows of migration toward Europe, the latter should consider its security paradigm. On the one hand, EU's security concerns and fears of further destabilisation in its neighbourhood are understandable, namely because of the geographic proximity and the increasing interdependence. On the other hand, trying to deal with the current destabilising factors only through the security dimension would be neither efficient nor helpful. Hence, the EU needs to create a balance between its short-term and long-term considerations for both security and democratisation with regards to a region in turmoil. Concretely, while strengthening its security cooperation with its southern neighbours to achieve stability and border control, the EU (and its Member States) should also consider discussions over the situation of political reforms as equally important and necessary. In doing so, a united EU is necessary in order to increase the EU's leverage, on the one hand, and guarantee the EU Member States' willingness to give some priority to the issue of reforms in the southern neighbourhood, on the other.

The New ENP's New/Old Instruments: Rethinking the Tools?

In the aftermath of the Arab uprisings, the revised ENP, which was manifested by the March and May 2011 documents, presented the principles of conditionality and the more-for-more approach as elements of "fundamental change" in the EU's relation with its neighbours. The Nov. 2015 Communication considered this approach as being less efficient, especially when the incumbent regimes are reluctant to implement reforms (European Commission, 2015b). This is the case for example of the Egyptian regime. As Karakir (2014) notes, the EU's ability to influence the Moroccan reform agenda increased with the character and priorities of King Mohammad VI, who has been willing to carry out reforms in the fields of human and women's rights. Conversely, under Mubarak's rule, the EU was unable to advocate the implementation of substantial reforms. Moreover, the success of this conditionality tool with regards to democracy promotion requires the presence of a similar understanding of sovereignty and external interference in the internal affairs of the State (Balfour, 2012). As Asseburg (2013) notes, the lack of agreement among Arab countries regarding the EU's role in Arab transformations has been most obvious in Egypt where EU offers for support in security sector reform have not been embraced and civil society support has been hampered by a campaign against "foreign agendas". Hence, contrary to the Eastern European countries, in Egypt, EU interference sometimes triggers colonialist fears and raises nationalistic feelings. More dangerously, those feelings are often exploited by the current regime in order to harm the credibility of those who are willing to promote liberal values in Egypt.

While the positive conditionality tool (as presented by the first two 2011 Communications) is not fundamentally new in comparison to the original 2004-ENP (Balfour, 2012), the third Communication did not mean either that the EU's instruments have fundamentally changed. It has only meant that the way Europe shapes the usage of these tools has differed. The 2015 proposals for the mid-term review of the ENI has focused, similarly to previous documents, on the EU's already available tools, and thus offered much of the same of what the other Communications already offered. Thus, trade (biased in favour of the EU) and limited aid remained the major new/old instruments of the Revised ENP (European Commission, 2015b). Accordingly, the "3Ms", that is, money, mobility and market access, is the form of support or at least the areas of mutual cooperation that were suggested in the three Communications. However, instead of referring to "the more-for-more approach" as a determinant of the EU's usage of these tools, the latter referred to the principals of ownership and differentiation (European Commission, 2015b). The latter should shape the EU usage of these tools in its relation with its neighbourhood. Hence, in this section, the paper will discuss these instruments. It will argue that, on the one hand, the EU lacks vision in term of pushing for political reforms in its neighbourhood and that, on the other, its market-driven strategies remain unable to achieve socioeconomic inclusion and development while the "mobility" and "money" tools are too weak to exert a significant influence, at least in the Egyptian context.

The proposals for the mid-term review of the ENI (Nov. 2015) mentioned that the purpose of the review of the ENP is to propose how the EU and its neighbours can build more effective partnerships that would lead to the achievement of stabilisation. While "the more-for-more approach" was the hallmark of the first two 2011 Communications, differentiation and greater mutual ownership became the hallmark of the third 2015 Communication. The latter recognised that not all partners aspire to EU rules and standards. Therefore, it proposed to reflect the priorities of each country concerning the nature and focus of its partnership with the EU (European Commission, 2015b). While this vision acknowledged Europe's neighbours' objection to what they perceived as a unilateral approach, it poses several problems that significantly affect the EU's normative role in its southern neighbourhood. First, the principle of ownership as presented would concretely mean that, for the European Union, inciting southern neighbours to put in place political reforms is no longer a priority in the bilateral agenda since the southern neighbours, Egypt included, would be expectably reluctant to consider it as an integral part of the agenda. Second, the November 2015 Communication made no clear reference as to what differentiation concretely means. Along these lines, this 2015 Communication acknowledged the lack of leverage that the EU has in terms of pushing for reforms, a fact that is of course true in the case of a geopolitically critical country such as Egypt, which is also heavily supported by the Gulf States. On the other hand, the document did not mention how the EU intends to increase its leverage in order to play a more positive and efficient role with regards to democracy support. Obviously, the 2015 Communication as presented proves the EU's lack of vision when it comes to its normative role in the region.

As to the 3Ms (money, mobility and market access), the analysis of their impact proves their limited capacity to encourage substantial political reforms, at least with regards to Egypt.

First, with regards to the financial assistance instrument or the "money" tool, it should be noted that in the aftermath of the uprisings special programmes for a speedy recovery of the southern economies were neglected (Bauer, 2013). Hence, the economic needs of the Arab countries, Egypt included, which become far greater than in pre-Arab Spring times, were not addressed. The EU allocated a total of €5.7 bn to the Southern Mediterranean region from 2011 to 2013. The European Commission allocated for Egypt a sum of €100 million on 17 August 2011 (Isaac, 2013) while Egypt estimated a debt of $184bn in June 2010 (89.5% of the country's GDP) (Isaac, 2013). In 2012, in addition to the traditional cooperation assistance managed by the European Commission, the EU and EU financial institutions (EIB and EBRD) provided a package of €5bn long-term assistance to support Egypt in different frameworks (Delegation of the EU to the US, n.d.). For the year 2014-2016, the EU's bilateral assistance to Egypt ranges between a minimum of €311 million and a maximum allocation of €380 million (European Commission, n.d.a).

In contrast, the Gulf States, namely Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have together since 2013 poured an estimated $25 bn to $41.5 bn into Egypt in the form of grants, soft loans, and oil and gas products (Sailer, 2016). Thus, contrary to the Gulf States that strengthen their leverage over Egypt through loans and grants (not conditioned on further democratisation), the EU is not able to enhance its influence. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia's and the UAE's generosity is declining today, especially because of the decreasing price of oil. This was already evident in Saudi Arabia's new support package for Egypt, announced in December 2015, in which it held out the prospect of state investments over a period of three to five years, but no new grants (Sailer, 2016). However, the Gulf's decrease of support does not mean it will soon end. For Saudi Arabia and the UAE, Egypt remains a key partner in the region in turmoil and a cornerstone of regional equilibrium. Furthermore, the Gulf's declining aid does not automatically mean that the EU is in a better position to influence Egypt by using conditional aid. The lack of the EU's leverage rather than being a consequence of the Gulf States support to Egypt is a result of the limited EU assistance (in the form of grants or investments) to Egypt. Along these lines, the strategy of diversification of economic alliances with other economic powers such as China or Japan, which is pursued by the current Egyptian regime, broadens the country's future economic channel of support, thus possibly decreasing in the future its need for trade with the EU.

Second, as to the "mobility" tool, it is worth mentioning that, historically, the Egyptian regime has considered migration as an important pillar in its economic strategy and "a way of letting pressure out of the labour market, and providing financial gains that outweighed the cost of thebrain drain (Seeberg, 2013). According to the World Bank Migration and Remittances Factbook, Egypt is, with 3.7 million emigrants, number one among the top ten emigration countries in the Middle East (Seeberg, 2013). However, the mobility partnership with Egypt remains in its very early and modest stage.[5] Actually, a long-standing dialogue on migration and mobility was launched at a Ministerial Conference in November 2014 in Rome in the framework of the Khartoum Process. Led by a Steering Committee, comprised of five EU Member States (Italy, France, Germany, UK, Malta) as well as the European Commission, the European External Action Service and the African Union Commission on the African side, it would firstly concentrate on the very modest target of addressing trafficking in human beings as well as smuggling of migrants together with five African partner countries, including Egypt (European Commission, 2015a). In any case, the conclusion of mobility partnerships with Morocco and Tunisia – whose outcome had not yet materialised – seems to have a rather limited developmental impact (Noutcheva, 2015). According to Noutcheva (2015), first estimations of these partnerships reveal that they impose disproportionate obligations on the partner states, such as strict control of their external borders, cooperation with Frontex and negotiation of readmission agreements with the EU, against visa facilitation

5 It is worth noting that Egypt, which was under the SCAF transitional rule, declined in 2011 the offer made by the EU to start a Dialogue on Mobility, Migration and Security, leading towards the conclusion of a Mobility Partnership. For further information, please see: Egypt: ENP Memo 2013, EU Neighbourhood Library. Retrieved from http://www.enpi-info.eu/library/content/egypt-enp-memo-2013

for restricted categories of their citizens (students, researchers, business leaders) and vague opportunities for legal migration to interested EU Member States (Carrera, den Hertog & Parkin, 2012, in Noutcheva, 2015). Indeed, the security approach tends to prevail over a more socio-political view of offering more opportunities for legal migration to third-country nationals (Noutcheva, 2015).

Third, with regard to the "market" tool, it is worth noting that, in principle, the EU is well positioned to support trade, as it is Egypt's biggest trade partner. The EU covered 22.9% of Egypt's trade volume in 2013 and ranked first both as Egypt's import and export partner, accounting for 49.5% of Egyptian exports (European Commission, n.d.b). A Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) is the long-term incentive offered in the March and May 2011 Communications and which was again presented in the November 2015 Communication as a tool for shared prosperity and stabilisation. It is considered as an upgrade compared to the Free Trade Areas, which were one of the Association Agreements' objectives. In December 2011, the EU foreign ministers agreed to start negotiations for a DCFTA with Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco and Jordan. On 25 February 2016, Michael Kohler, Director for the Southern Neighbourhood at DG NEAR, visited Egypt to start negotiations related to the DCFTA with the Ministries of Industry and Trade ("The Minister of Industry", 2016). However, the potential of the DCFTA to generate economic growth in the neighbourhood in the short term triggers doubts. The first estimates of the DCFTAs suggest that they require costly regulatory convergence for the neighbours. Therefore, these adjustment costs can be perceived as high for economies which remain at a lower level of development (Dreyer 2012, Liargovas 2013 in Noutcheva, 2015). Importantly, negotiations on DCFTAs are expected to get stuck quickly once they touch on the issue of liberalisation of services as, while inducing a mobility of capital from north to south, it is also supposed to produce a flow of human mobility from south to north. Worth noting is that EU exports of services to Egypt are dominated by business services, while the EU imports from Egypt consist mainly of travel services and transport (Delegation of the EU to the US, n.d.).

In fact, DCFTA does not represent a new tool. It is just representing an acceleration of the economic liberalisation instrument that the EU has referred to, in the framework of the EMP and ENP, despite this instrument's limited pre-2011 success. At the most general level, it should be noted that the market approach has already suffered, in the Egyptian context, from major problems. On the one hand, the exports to the EU have been hampered by complex EU norms and standards which decreased the capacity of Egypt's weak manufacturer sector to compete and even constrain the agriculture exports. As a consequence, most of Egypt's exportation to the EU was of less value added, a fact that

did not help the formation of the dynamic process of industrialisation in Egypt (Saleh & Aboulkeir, 2013). On the other hand, the EU's southern Member States have sometimes objected to the easier access of the southern neighbours' agricultural goods to the EU internal market as it rivals their own production (Noutcheva, 2015). It is worth noting that during 1998-2010, the EU was the largest importer of Egypt's agricultural exports, representing 33.6% of Egypt's agricultural exports (Torayeh, 2013), and that by the end of 2010 the exports of Egyptian agricultural products to the EU totalled €637.5 million in value (Torayeh, 2013). The EU was thus perceived in Egypt as pursuing an asymmetric process of liberalisation that is privileging its own comparative advantages. As Youngs (2001) notes, it would be difficult to deny that the EU's approach to support democratisation and political reforms would have been invested with greater coherence if trade policies towards developing countries had been more generous and symmetrical.

In the same vein, it should be highlighted that the lack of coherence of the EU economic policies in general and the trade policy in particular has remarkably affected the attractiveness of the EU offered incentives. In this frame, conditioning aid from the EU's side is more likely to push Egypt to seek other markets (in Asia or Africa), which have easier standards to meet and to look for other trade partners as is the case today. It is worth noting that the volume of trade between China and Egypt already reached $7.3 million in 2012 (American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt, n.d.). Importantly, it should be noted that the whole market driven strategies as a tool for supporting economic and political development needs to be revisited. This method, which is the product of the EU's available instruments, has already proven to be less efficient in promoting either economic or political reforms. The obvious reason behind this is that they have failed to address the structural reasons and the key problems that hinder socioeconomic equitability and sustainability in Egypt. As previously mentioned, this approach did not contribute to the achievement of economic development nor to the improvement of social indicators. Examples of suggested alternative economic tools that can support the Egyptian economy, thereby increasing the European leverage, are the following: on the one hand, supporting technological upgrading and growth of domestic value added in the manufacturing sector (Saleh & Aboulkeir, 2013) as well as providing support in terms of harmonisation of the possibly competitive Egyptian industries with the European and International Standards. On the other hand, increasing support to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) since this could help to create job opportunities and thus facilitate economic development (Isaac, 2013). To sum up, EU policy makers not only need to rethink the whole set of tools that the EU is using to support inclusion and participation – namely in terms of exclusive market driven strategies and conditionality – but also the type of relations that it wants to develop with the Southern Mediterranean countries, Egypt included.

Democracy Assistance Recipients: Rethinking the Targets?

In principle, the EU has adopted both a top-down approach within frameworks of the EMP and the ENP, and a bottom-up approach within the framework of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), which was replaced in 2014 by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). The latter became the key EU financial instrument for EU cooperation for the period 2014-2020 (European Commission, n.d.a). Through top-down programmes, the EU aimed at improving the functioning of State institutions. On the other hand, bottom-up strategies mainly include financial and technical support for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). While the first two 2011 Communications were supposed to present a new approach, they nearly adopted the older one. The former highlighted more the need of fostering the "supply-side" of democracy by focusing on the State's "capacity-building" whereas the latter focused more on fostering the demand side of democracy by broadening the EU's reach to CSOs (see Teti, 2015). As to the 2015 Communication, the reference for both the State's capacity building and support for CSOs remained (European Commission, 2015b). Nevertheless, this reference came only as part of a document whose primary focus was stabilisation. Pushing for democracy and the rule of law appears to be more at the end of the EU's list of priorities. In this respect, the 2015 Communication might be considered a setback in comparison with the preceding documents. In this section, this paper will present a critical analysis with respect to the targets of democracy support. It will demonstrate that while the ENP focus on State institutions is theoretically an efficient tool, it needs to be correlated with a more strategic vision of reforms. Moreover, it will prove that the lack of funding for democracy and issues related to political reforms question the EU's normative approach. It will argue that the EU has to work more on supporting the building of an infrastructure for democracy in Egypt while avoiding stabilising authoritarian structures, on the one hand, and that it should widen its definition of civil society and extend its outreach and support programmes, on the other.

As previously mentioned, the emphasis on "supply-side" approaches to democratisation become more noticeable in the May 2011 Communication. The Communication introduced its key concept of "deep democracy" that is described as the kind (of democracy) that lasts because the right to vote is accompanied by rights to exercise free speech, form competing political parties, receive impartial justice from independent judges, security from accountable police and armed forces, and access to competent and non-corrupt civil service (Teti, 2015). Accordingly, the focus on the capacity-building side of those institutions that can act as suppliers of democracy becomes more evident as a guiding principle. The focus on the capacity building of State institutions remained in the November 2015 Communication, as it was considered necessary to promote good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights, which are considered as the EU's

tool for achieving the EU's main aim, which is stabilisation. In this framework, it is worth mentioning that the successive reshuffles of the Egyptian governments in the aftermath of 2011 induced either the cancelation or the delay of several of the EU's programmes that were targeting governmental authorities or executive bodies. This has negatively affected the EU's capacity to influence political reforms in Egypt.

In all cases, the focus on building the capacity of the institutions of the State and offering technical assistance and knowhow to them is important for producing a reform dynamic in Egypt. In this respect, the EU needs to take into account two elements while planning the cooperation with its southern neighbours, Egypt included, on the institutional level. On the one hand, the cooperation should be based on field research, leading to a deeper understanding of the problems that Egypt faces and the rationale behind its resilience toward reforms, and a better understanding of what can motivate the authorities to implement reforms. On the other hand, this cooperation should be based on a more strategic approach. Thus, the European countries should identify the areas of cooperation, which are not only considered as fields of common interest (as the 2015 proposals for the mid-term review of the ENI entails) but that can also lead to a trickle-down effect in terms of domestic reforms. In all cases, cooperation in areas of common interest can open the door for a deeper cooperation in political reform areas whereas exclusion will only push the reluctant regimes to make connections with authoritarian countries such as Russia and China. Furthermore, cooperation with what has generally been referred to as "political society", defined as a distinct sphere existing between civil society and the exercise of executive power, should be enhanced (Youngs, 2001). Providing training for the judiciary sector can be considered as a concrete example here. Hence, the mutual transfer of know-how and technical capacity building is supposed to lead, in the longer term, to deeper political, yet gradual, reforms. Moreover, the increase of exchanges and training experiences that promote the values of accountability, good governance and democracy when reaching a critical level will, in the medium or longer term, create lobbies among these institutions that will exert internal pressure and thus push for further reforms. In addition, in order to assure results open up the space for the possibility of reforms, European policy makers should consider three points: (a) following up on the implementation of its programmes and benchmarking the latter, (b) establishing a carrot system that can push the government to go further in implementing reforms, (c) conditioning the cooperation with the security sector in terms of capacity building or technical assistance by the acceptance of the latter to equally receive technical training for the personnel on combining efficiency with respect of human rights.

With regard to the focus on the demand side of democracy, the EU has committed funds for the period 2011 to 2013 of €22 million for the ENP countries (of which €11 million

is for the southern neighbours) (Balfour, 2012) while a sum of €15 billion was committed to the ENP countries through the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) over the period 2014-2020 (European Commission, n.d.a). The first March 2011 Communication has explicitly emphasised the support of civil society. Along these lines, it announced a creation of the Civil Society Neighbourhood Facility, which aimed at developing the advocacy capacity of CSOs and increasing their ability to monitor reform and the strengthening of political actors through the European Endowment for Democracy (EED). In this context, contrary to the March 2011 Communication, in which support for CSOs was considered as a backbone of the EU Strategy for supporting democratisation, in the 2015 Communication support for CSOs was, to a certain extent, downgraded.[6] It was only considered as part of a bigger European strategy that prioritises stabilisation. While the ENI was presented as the EU's instrument for supporting cooperation on the civil society level, support for CSOs was mentioned in the document, but only vaguely.

With regards to Egypt, the EU's bilateral assistance committed for Egypt under the ENPI totalled €1 billion for 2007-2013 (European Commission, n.d.a): for the year 2007-2010, a total budget of €558 million was allocated through the ENPI for Egypt, and for the year 2011-2013, a budget of €449.3 million was allocated for the National Indicative Programme (NIP) (EU Neighbourhood Library, 2014). For the year 2014-2016, the EU's bilateral assistance to Egypt decreased to range between a minimum of €311 million and a maximum allocation of €380 million (European Commission, n.d.a). According to the change in the European strategy toward democracy as mentioned in the 2015 Communication but also because of the deterioration of both the economic and political situation in Egypt, the EU's priorities in terms of cooperation with Egypt on the level of the civil society were also amended. While the main areas of cooperation during the period (2007-2013) were political reform and good governance, competitiveness and productivity of the economy, and socioeconomic sustainability of the development process, in 2014-2016 the focus has been mainly put on providing assistance to the socioeconomic sector. Accordingly, in 2014-2016, the EU's assistance to Egypt as applied by the Single Support framework (SSF) under the ENI focuses on three priority sectors: Poverty Alleviation, Local Socioeconomic Development and Social Protection; Governance, Transparency and Business Environment; Quality of Life and Environment (European Commission, n.d.a).

In this framework, three remarks are to be made with regards to the ENP policy on to the support of civil society.

Firstly, the decrease of the funds allocated to Egypt under the ENI for the years 2014-2016 combined with the non-allocation of funds for the areas related to the progress of

6 For more information, please see European Commission (2015b, November 18). Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy. JOIN (2015) 50 final. Retrieved from http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/documents/2015/151118_joint-communication_review-of-the-enp_en.pdf

political reform and democracy building for Egypt not only reveal the deterioration of Egypt's political situation but also the EU's de-prioritisation of providing support in issues related to political reforms. In the aftermath of 2013, the EU assistance to Egypt was reviewed and the area of democracy and political reforms was completely omitted. Instead, the focus has been put on assistance in the socioeconomic sector (European Commission, n.d.a). Nonetheless, it should be mentioned that the EU's funds reserved for democracy and human rights in Egypt were also little in comparison with the other fields of funding, either before the 2011 uprising or after. Therefore, only 7% of the total budget provided for Egypt under the ENPI for the years 2007-2010 was allocated for reforms in the area of democracy, human rights and justice (El-Molla, 2009) and only 11% of the budget for the National Indicative Programme (NIP) 2011-2013 was consecrated for these areas (EU Neighbourhood Library, 2014). This fact indeed questions the seriousness of the EU's normative approach.

Second, the EU, while focusing on socioeconomic development as mentioned by the Single Support Framework (SSF) for the year 2014-2016, has to avoid falling into the trap of providing funds that stabilise autocracy rather than build a wider infrastructure for democracy in Egypt. The lack of infrastructure for democracy made itself evident through the choices that have been made by several segments of Egyptian society during the post-revolutionary period. In fact, social and economic needs pushed segments of the population to support authoritarian options. Hence, for the EU, building an infrastructure for democracy, which pushes for further inclusion and participation, would not only mean supporting organisations working on socioeconomic rights and development projects but also referring to a rights-based approach while supporting such activities. In other words, development projects (which develop human capacities and socially empower people) linked with a rights-based approach should be one of the main targets of the EU. This would mean that the EU should condition funds' reception to the promotion of a culture of accountability among the beneficiaries of the funds. The target groups should not only benefit from funds that develop their capacities but should also learn to ask for their rights and push the government to be more accountable. In the same vein, the increase of investment in human capital (health and education) and the work on issue-based programmes that have developmental aims can help build more infrastructures for democracy.

Finally, the EU belief in the importance of the advocacy-oriented CSOs in supporting further democratisation needs some revisions when it comes to the Egyptian context since these organisations remain (with some exceptions) disconnected from the wider society. While the presence of these NGOs is important for the promotion of liberal

values among the society, they remain, to a certain extent, unable to fully reach the latter. Suffering from discursive and structural deficiencies, they remain unable to reach grassroots and thus are unable to counterbalance the State's authoritarianism. In this context, it should be noted that the birth of these organisations working on civil and political rights was not the result of a social dynamic. On the contrary, some of these organisations are completely dependent on foreign funds and thus, at least partially, dependent on the donors' agenda. Along this line, it should be mentioned that the exclusive focus on CSOs has previously hindered a better articulation between civil and political society. The fact that external funding was so heavily biased towards NGOs encouraged many activists to form NGOs rather than concentrate their energy and talent on forming political entities and trying to bring together a broader range of demands to be filtered into incipient democratic political processes (Youngs, 2001). Importantly, the concept of civil society favoured by the EU appeared to be narrow since the relationship between civil-political and socioeconomic rights is tipped in favour of the former. Obviously, while organisations focusing on specific categories of civil and political rights receive considerable attention, those working on socioeconomic rights remain absent (Teti, 2015).

Therefore, the EU should work on extending exchanges and training experiences with the broader civil society (advocacy of NGOs included), on the one hand, and with institutional powers such as legislative institutions, on the other. These exchanges that promote values of accountability, good governance and democracy, when reaching a critical level, are liable to create, in the medium or longer term, societal lobbies that will exert pressure on the ruling power and thus push for reforms. Furthermore, in a long-term perspective, the EU needs to take into account the new societal actors that are emerging within civil society (in its wider definition) that can be catalysts of change in the longer term, such as young scholars in universities, youth groups, trade union leaders or developmental initiative leaders. However, in the current situation where activists or societal actors cooperating with foreigners are discredited internally, EU needs should focus more on long-term projects that build an image of the EU as a partner in the process of socioeconomic development and institutional building. Hence, while the EED is, in theory, an efficient tool to support activists and active groups, it is, in practice, only counterproductive in the Egyptian context. EU policy makers should work on convincing the Egyptian regime to re-open the channels of cooperation in social sciences research, political reforms and human rights areas and facilitate the work for European civil society organisations. The latter can thus offer the wider Egyptian civil society knowledge, exchange of experiences and programmatic support.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Arab uprisings have highlighted the EU's lack of means to react decisively to the events occurring in its neighbourhood as well as its inability to promote its values outside of its borders. In fact, the three documents issued by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission have mainly reflected the lack of EU vision when it comes to supporting democratisation or political reforms in the south of the Mediterranean in general and in Egypt in particular. While the first two 2011 Communications reflected the willingness of EU policy makers to revise their old strategies, the documents have neither formulated new paradigms nor developed new tools or instruments with regards to supporting the political changes going on in the region. The November 2015 Communication, by making stabilisation the main target of the EU and differentiation and ownership the shaper of the European Neighbourhood Policy, has not only confirmed Europe's lack of vision but also its inability (and maybe unwillingness) to act as a normative actor.

In the same vein, while EU cooperation with Egypt, under the Mubarak regime, brought some fruits on the economic level, it brought limited success on the political level. In the aftermath of the 2011 uprising, European efforts to support democratisation through positive conditionality proved to be inefficient not only because of the lack of EU leverage on Egypt but also because the latter has exploited its geopolitical leverage to curtail EU pressures. After 2013, democracy became neither a priority for Europe nor for Egypt. By prioritising stability and security in an increasingly challenging regional context, the EU has obviously neglected its normative role.

In this framework, this paper suggests some recommendations for EU policy makers with regards to the content, tools and targets of the European Neighbourhood Policy in the south of the Mediterranean, particularly in Egypt, as follows:

1. The EU should shape policies that can effectively support, and even influence, the path of the ongoing socio-political dynamics in Egypt. Rather than conceiving the deterioration of the political situation through a deterministic lens, it should perceive it from a more dynamic perspective: Egypt is continually undergoing a process of political transformation, whose results remain open and subject to the actors' choices.

2. The EU's support for political liberalisation and for the opening of the political sphere through continuous discussions is encouraged. However, the EU should avoid imposing a liberal paradigm that attributes liberalisation to democratisation because in doing so it may fall into the trap of neglecting to address more structural conditions, which are necessary to achieve further democratisation.

3. The EU needs to create a balance between its short-term and long-term considerations for both security and democratisation with regards to a region in turmoil. It should not deal with the current regional destabilising factors only through a security dimension. While willing to strengthen its security cooperation with its southern neighbours with the objective of achieving stability and border controls, the EU (and its Member States) should also consider integrating, within these cooperation agreements, discussions over the deteriorating socio-political conditions in the neighbour countries.

4. The EU needs to revise both the principle of market-driven strategies for growth as leading to socioeconomic inclusion and the principle of economic reform through its liberalisation as a prerequisite for political reform. In fact, the market-driven strategies have already proven to be less efficient in promoting either economic or political reforms in the Egyptian context. The obvious reason behind this is that they have failed to address the structural reasons and the key problems that hinder socioeconomic equitability and sustainability in Egypt. Examples of suggested alternative economic tools that can support the Egyptian economy, thereby increasing the European leverage are the following: on the one hand, supporting technological upgrading and growth of domestic value added in the manufacturing sector as well as providing support in terms of harmonisation of the possibly competitive Egyptian industries with the European and International Standards. On the other hand, increasing support to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) since this could help the EU in creating job opportunities and thus facilitate economic development.

5. While focusing on capacity building and cooperation with State institutions, the EU should follow a more strategic approach. EU Member States should identify the areas of cooperation, which are not only considered as fields of common interest but can also lead to a trickle-down effect in terms of domestic reforms. In order to ensure results that would open up the space for the possibility of reforms, EU policy makers should consider three points: (a) following up on the implementation of its programmes and benchmark, (b) establishing a carrot system that can push rulers to go further in implementing reforms, (c) conditioning the cooperation with the security sector in terms of capacity building or technical assistance by accepting that the latter equally receives technical training for personnel on combining efficiency with respect for human rights.

6. The EU, while focusing on socioeconomic development in Egypt as mentioned by the Single Support Framework (SSF) for the year 2014-2016, has to avoid falling

into the trap of providing funds that stabilise autocracy rather than build a wider infrastructure for democracy in Egypt. For the EU, building an infrastructure for democracy, which pushes for further inclusion and participation, would not only mean supporting organisations working on socioeconomic rights and development projects but also referring to a rights-based approach while supporting such activities. This would mean that the EU should condition reception of funds with the promotion of a culture of accountability among the beneficiary of the funds.

7. The EU should work on extending exchanges and training experiences with the civil society in its wider definition, on the one hand, and with institutional powers such as legislative institutions, on the other. These exchanges that promote values of accountability, good governance and democracy, when reaching a critical level, are liable to create in the medium or longer term societal lobbies that might exert pressure on the ruling power and thus push for reforms. Furthermore, the EU needs to take into account the new societal actors that are emerging and who can be a catalyst of change in the longer term, such as young scholars in universities, youth groups, trade union leaders or developmental initiative leaders. However, in the current situation where activists or societal actors cooperating with foreigners are discredited internally, EU policy makers should avoid direct contacts but work on convincing the Egyptian regime to re-open the channels of cooperation in social sciences researches, political reforms and human rights areas and facilitate the work for EU civil society organisations. The latter can thus offer wider Egyptian civil society knowledge, exchange of experiences and programmatic support.

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EuroMeSCo

Comprising 106 institutes from 32 European and South Mediterranean countries, the EuroMeSCo (Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission) network was created in 1996 for the joint and coordinated strengthening of research and debate on politics and security in the Mediterranean. These were considered essential aspects for the achievement of the objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

EuroMeSCo aims to be a leading forum for the study of Euro-Mediterranean affairs, functioning as a source of analytical expertise. The objectives of the network are to become an instrument for its members to facilitate exchanges, joint initiatives and research activities; to consolidate its influence in policy-making and Euro-Mediterranean policies; and to disseminate the research activities of its institutes amongst specialists on Euro-Mediterranean relations, governments and international organisations.

The EuroMeSCo work plan includes a research programme with four publication lines (EuroMeSCo Joint Policy Studies, EuroMeSCo Papers, EuroMeSCo Briefs and EuroMeSCo Reports), as well as a series of seminars, workshops and presentations on the changing political dynamics of the Mediterranean region. It also includes the organisation of an annual conference and the development of web-based resources to disseminate the work of its institutes and stimulate debate on Euro-Mediterranean affairs.

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