

The Euromed Dream in the New Hobbesian International Wilderness

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The Barcelona Constellation

The Euro-Mediterranean project was engendered through the Final Declaration of the First Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference in Barcelona on 25 November 1995, in a particularly favourable international geopolitical constellation, whose optimism thoroughly influenced the project's content. On 25 December 1991, after the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, the Soviet flag was raised for the last time over the Kremlin towers. It was the end of the confrontation between blocs and the end of the bipolar world in which blocs of countries and the major systems of capitalism and communism had faced off. Francis Fukuyama hailed it as the 'end of history' in his seminal 1989 article, later expanded into his famous book. Fukuyama foresaw 'the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.' Western-style democracy and the free market economy would thus signal the final stage of historic evolution, understood as a history of struggle whose end would give rise to a sort of perpetual peace like that imagined by Kant two centuries earlier, in which international cooperation would prevail over confrontation. With the end of the Cold War also came the end of confrontations by proxy in the developing world.

The failure of real socialism likewise entailed the discredit of the Third-World leftism and socialist leanings that had prevailed in the mindset of the leaders

in the developing world and throughout its societies. The new philosophy of international cooperation thus left behind the manipulation it suffered during the bipolar era to culminate – after a series of preliminary conferences under a positive climate with winds of hope – in the United Nations Millennium Declaration on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), that was finally approved in 2000. Clearly, the preparation and final declaration of the Millennium Goals were one of the most obvious expressions of the atmosphere of optimism permeating the international stage after the end of the Cold War, auguring a major era of peace, progress and international cooperation. In the strictly political sphere, talk also began of a 'third wave' of democratisations, as announced by the title of the well-known book by Samuel Huntington. It seemed clear that the third wave of democratisations that began in southern Europe with the democratic transitions of the 1970s in Portugal and Spain would reach, and was already beginning to reach not only Latin America and certain Asian countries but, progressively, the rest of the world. Obviously, the democratic transitions already underway at the time in Central and Eastern Europe were an important part of such change.

The Middle East Peace Process, to which we will return later, seemed particularly auspicious, in the 1995 Barcelona constellation with the 1991 Madrid Conference and the Oslo Agreements pointing towards the possibility of reaching a lasting peace in the Middle East under the principle of Israel and Palestine as two States coexisting next to one another in peace.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 had provided the great, unexpected opportunity for Germany's reunification, which Chancellor Kohl effectively and vigorously managed to bring about. At the same time, the fall of the Iron Curtain gave all of Europe the great

opportunity of attracting to the European Union, still under construction, all Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) that had remained hidden and separated behind the Iron Curtain for decades, under Soviet domination. And this was when a major pact was made, symbolised by Chancellor Kohl and the President of the Spain, Felipe González: Europe would launch a major cooperation operation with the CEECs through the PHARE and TACIS programmes, with the end goal of bringing them closer to the European Union, while at the same time launching another major operation towards the South, a major Euro-Mediterranean policy to attract Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries (SEMCs) to the EU orbit. This major pact, concluded at the Cannes Summit among the leaders of EU countries, would facilitate the first Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference in Barcelona and the approval of its Final Declaration in November 1995. In both cases, the European Union did what it knew best: applying the experience of building the EU as an area of growing integration. First cooperation, then progressive commercial, economic and finally political integration. This involved applying what we now know as the 'integration method' to foreign policy. It has been occasionally said that the EU's most successful and efficient foreign policy was precisely its enlargement process. The latter has profoundly marked EU foreign policy and its evolution. Their joint emergence in that great European Pact at the Cannes Conference demonstrates the profound, close connection between both processes, preparation for enlargement to the East and association to the South.

What would eventually become the pre-accession policy for the East European countries was clearly based on a philosophy of integration. The profound transformation aimed at and expected of the CEECs was based on their progressive approximation to the EU. These countries would have to change not only their political systems – as had occurred in the countries joining the Union in the 1970s, with Greece, Portugal and Spain going from dictatorial systems to democracies. Besides democratising their political systems, the CEEs also had to change their entire economic systems, adapting them to the market economy. The manner considered most efficient for achieving this immense transformation was their approximation and 'regulatory' adaptation to the European Union. Accepting the EU's *acquis com-*

munautaire would completely transform their institutional organisation and regulatory system political organisation to technical regulations for product manufacture, not to mention the immense, prolific body of legislation accumulated by the European Union over the course of decades. The effort required of the CEECs was immense, but so were the rewards: their complete integration into the sphere of the European Union, as well as their inclusion as full members under the protective umbrella of NATO, keeping at bay any possible blows by the fearsome Soviet bear, now a friendly country but one of formidable scale within the confines of Eastern Europe and the vast Eurasian area.

The 1995 Barcelona Declaration is not just supposed to be a charter regulating relations among countries. It goes far beyond this by proposing an immense project for change and transformation towards modernisation of the Mediterranean Partner Countries

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), traditionally also known as the Barcelona Process, was designed as a major association or partnership project whose policies also partake of the integration method. This aspect would become much more explicit through President Prodi's later announcement of a new stage of bilateral development of the Barcelona Process via the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), in this case, the Southern Neighbourhood.

Barcelona Process: Goals and Approach

As is well known, what was proposed in the 1995 Barcelona Declaration was the construction of an area of peace and stability, of shared economic progress and understanding and intercultural dialogue among the peoples living along our Sea. But it is not just supposed to be a charter regulating relations among countries and between North and South. It goes far beyond this by proposing an immense project for change and transformation towards mod-

ernisation of the Mediterranean Partner Countries such that, in a manner clearly reminiscent of the integration method applied in Central and Eastern Europe, they can come into alignment with the system prevalent in the EU. It is thus an immense, ambitious, modernising project designed to upgrade the societies of those countries through the modernisation of their institutions and economies, allowing them to close the economic gap between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean Basin, a process of modernising the prevailing cultures and mindsets and a progressive coming together of countries. This immense political project fundamentally had an economic motor that consisted in creating a free trade area to revitalise countries' economies and modernise their institutions and economic policies along with their trade. The implementation of this economic motor for the great Euro-Mediterranean political project would moreover be reinforced by financial aid, which was to contribute to upgrading both sectoral policies as well as companies and economic organisations throughout the Euro-Mediterranean countries.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was built as of 1995 based on what was actually the EU foreign policy remit or areas of competence at that time; thus fundamentally comprising foreign trade and tariffs measures, and technical and financial cooperation for development. This had been the true foundation of any presence in third countries and foreign action by the European Union, through the Commission's, aid programmes in any sector, as part of a common EU policy, that of cooperation for development or foreign commercial policy, but not included in any common policy internal to the EU. Then, with the progressive expansion of the EU's own remit, policies in different spheres or topics would be introduced. The entire Barcelona Process appears as a major operation of development aid that offers as well a limited integration through the use of the same methods with partner countries as those used as a pre-accession system for candidate countries to the EU. This method, the EU method, is radically different to the classic diplomacy that continues within the sphere of exclusive or nearly exclusive powers of Member States. As indicated earlier, this method, ultimately limited to 'soft power,' is in the very genes of both EU institutions and civil servants. As Pierre Vimont indicated, to attempt to overcome it, the

Commission officers still perceive conventional diplomacy, based more on interests and *Realpolitik*, as contrary to the principles and the spirit of the EU's community approach since its founding, more focused on values and the principle of legality.

The reality is that all of the Partner Countries had democracy nominally enshrined in their constitutions or legislation and in their proclamations, but with differing degrees of conviction, and practically in no case are they intended to be applied immediately or in the short term

One of the most important applications of the method of integration to the Barcelona Process is the consideration of democracy and human rights as values commonly accepted as universal and as the foundation for the Partnership. The basis is therefore a traditional concept of modernisation understood as the convergence of different human societies towards the model developed first in Europe in the Western World, and that has, according to this view, gradually become the universal model through globalisation. It is a modernisation project considered 'universal' and acceptable by all. It is assumed that social and economic structures will be capable of progressively adapting and become flexible in order to advance towards each country's own modernisation through integration in the Euro-Mediterranean normative area modelled on the EU's *acquis communautaire*. More specifically, referring to Mediterranean Partner Countries, it is thus assumed that their traditional authoritarian regimes will accept and encourage their opening up and democratisation, although in a slow, progressive manner. Thenceforward, the hypothesis is followed of developmentalism as inducer of the modernisation process. That is, it is believed that economic liberalisation, both national and international, with countries opening themselves to international trade and competition and encouraging the national application of free market principles, will induce economic growth in these countries. And with this economic growth,

structural, economic and social changes will take place along with an effective development process. Finally, and this is the critical point of the developmental hypothesis, the economic and social changes will be followed by political change that will progressively accompany the process of modernisation.

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In other words, the traditional Arabic authoritarian regimes, through the growth and development brought about by partnership with Europe, would gradually modernise their political structures as well to eventually embrace the values of democracy and human rights declared as shared, according to the commitments accepted by all countries in Barcelona '95. The reality is that all of them had democracy nominally enshrined in their constitutions or legislation and in their proclamations, but with differing degrees of conviction, and practically in no case are they intended to be applied immediately or in the short term. The 'langue de bois' was a common feature to different degrees in all countries. Some, such as Syria and above all, Libya, straight out rejected such a prospect and remain on the margins of the Euro-Mediterranean process, and in the case of Libya, without accepting any agreement whatsoever. But what is certain is that all countries, even those most inclined to accept the long-term developmental and democratising approach, would in fact only accept the 'method of integration' in its economic aspects, and even then only partially. There is not only the political reticence of the regime, but also the great pressure of the ruling classes in each country, whose 'vested interests' advocate resistance to liberalisation. Moreover, when liberalisation entails privatisation, in many cases these privatisations are to the benefit of those participating in power. As had occurred in Europe in the century and a half before the EU was formed, it is a social pressure with protectionist proposals, are attempting to stem any ex-

ternal economic liberalisation, demanding internal regulations benefiting each group and industry. Despite this, the progress made by the Barcelona Process in this regard is undeniable, though to different degrees according to the country. With Tunisia and Morocco in the lead, there has been progress towards adapting the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's postulates by applying the respective agreements with the EU. The intention was to reach the major goal of bridging the economic gap between the North and South Mediterranean through economic modernisation and growth. And indeed, this was the case to a significant degree during the Barcelona Process's first ten years or 'classic period.' Together with the application of reforms, with support from MEDA funds, European technical assistance consolidated the economic reform processes that had already begun under the auspices of international financial institutions since the late 1980s. The strengthening and advance of these policies within the Barcelona Process certainly fostered improved economic performance levels and even some approximation of per capita income levels to the EU average, despite the enormous distances still is. This was particularly the case in countries that progressed most in reforms induced by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, above all in Tunisia and Morocco, as indicated, and lagging behind in Jordan, Lebanon and above all in Egypt, a key country for its demographic and economic dimension as well as its political centrality within the Arab World.

What Went Wrong?

Paraphrasing a famous title, we could also pose the question *What went wrong* with the Euro-Mediterranean project? Clearly, the Euro-Mediterranean project today must contend with a geopolitical environment that could be qualified as a new Hobbesian jungle in which, in addition, there is no Leviathan that could impose order like the State did in traditional Nation-States.

To answer the question '*What went wrong?*' we must refer to the various phenomena foreign to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, some of them of great global impact, that have developed in the Arab-Mediterranean World in recent years.

- First of all, the derailment of the Middle East Peace Process. The lack of understanding between Israel and the Arab World has been growing. Suffice it to recall that on both sides, the greatest symbols of willingness to understand and negotiate – Israeli President Yitzhak Rabin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat – were assassinated by radicals of their own camp. The opportunities for peace were criminally sabotaged by extremists on both sides. The idea was to demonstrate that these were two incompatible projects, one side proposing the creation of a strictly Jewish State and the others proclaiming the desire to throw the Jews into the sea. Despite the previous groundwork – the agreements reached at Camp David as of '78 and then Oslo as of '93 – no-one ever even considered exploring the possibilities offered by the Arab Peace Initiative put forth by Saudi Arabia and all Arab States in 2003, just as there has never been a capacity to control violent anti-Israeli and by extension anti-Western extremist groups.
- The Arab Mediterranean countries accepted some of the economic modernisations offered by the Barcelona Process and certain social, education or health-related modernisations, etc. Nonetheless, as has been said, it can be observed that they never seriously considered complying with the commitments made in 1995 in Barcelona to progressively democratise their political structures. This is why the 'Arab singularity' continues to be discussed. The majority of them dragged their feet, practicing the 'langue de bois' while others, particularly Syria, and even more so Libya, flat-out rejected the notion point-blank.
- The societies of the Arab Mediterranean countries, however, are modernising. Their newest citizens – youth and the new professional classes – are beginning to express growing discomfort with the inherited authoritarian systems. The regimes are thus at odds with both the more or less underground, pro-leftist democracy protesters and Islamist movements. And sometimes pitting them against one another. Regarding the phenomenon of corruption pervading the traditional authoritarian regimes, even constituting the essential kleptocracy of the regime in the case of Tunisia under Ben Ali, the Islamists put themselves forth as pure. Especially for the pop-

ular classes, who have not enjoyed the advantages of a higher education, Islam-inspired movements appear as the defenders of their Palestinian brothers, as denouncing corruption from their religious stance, and as denouncing the process of Westernisation of traditions that governments are attempting to impose.

- For reasons fundamentally foreign to sphere of the Mediterranean Partner Countries, the fact is that we are witnessing an upsurge of radical Islamist movements with terrorist acts that are growing in force. In 1978, the Saur Revolution, of a communist inclination, began in Afghanistan, which immediately led to Soviet intervention to defend it against Mujahideen insurgents. This would lead to a long period of war lasting from 1978 to 1992. The first part of the Afghan Civil War ended with the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 on Gorbachov's orders and the growing involvement of the United States in the area, especially through covert operations in support of the anti-communist Mujahideen insurgents. Finally, in 1996, the Taliban took power and imposed Sharia, and Afghanistan became an incubator State for all sorts of Jihadist groups, above all al-Qaeda, which began to propagate international terrorist violence, especially against their former US and Saudi sponsors.

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- The Khomeini-led Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the United State's great humiliation from the takeover of its embassy began a period of increasing perplexity and incomprehension by the Western World regarding what was really happening in the Muslim world. The Iran-Iraq War contained the situation in the area, which was broken by the invasion of Kuwait and the First Gulf War. In the Euro-Mediterranean region, meanwhile, there was the extremely cruel civil war in Algeria in the years following the coup in

1991, which robbed the Islamists of their electoral victory, increasing the perplexity and sensation of difficulty in comprehending the Muslim Arab World among Westerners. Finally, the 11 September 2001 attacks in New York and Washington DC definitively changed the course of history. The American response, at first supported by the international community regarding the intervention in Afghanistan and later outside international legality with the occupation and accumulation of errors committed in Iraq, has led to a new world in which violence is unleashed, preventing the normal evolution of the Arab World in general and the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Partner Countries specifically.

With the arrival of the Arab Spring and Arab Revolutions in 2011, what we encountered was the crisis of the Arab authoritarian State. The progress of the new independent, secular and markedly Arab nationalist States insofar as education, construction of the basic State structures, and modernisation of society and mindsets clashed with the authoritarian patrimonialisation of the State by the groups in power. Abuse, kleptocracy and lack of freedoms only increased this contradiction and made it more obvious. The mega-attacks of 11 September 2001, moreover, strengthened authoritarian leaders in the Arab World, who presented themselves as guarantors of anti-terrorist cooperation and containment of Islamist movements, by then feared throughout the West. Revolutions broke out with the immolation of young Bouazizi in Tunisia. At that point, in the countries of the Arab World, a struggle emerged that had been concealed by the authoritarianism practised by the regimes; a struggle between on one side young people and modern-leaning citizens and on the other Islam-oriented movements that connect particularly well with the traditionalism of the popular classes, especially in rural areas, and that are aided in one way or another by external support and financing from the Gulf States.

As a consequence of the Arab Spring, we now have a Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Basin that is more differentiated than ever, as per the results of the popular movements in each country. Different typologies can be distinguished among the Mediterranean Partner Countries at present. The first would be those countries that have most advanced in their

internal transformation along the lines of their Barcelona 1995 commitments and the aspirations of their populations, whether through a revolutionary youth and educated professional movement in their countries, as in Tunisia, which managed to overthrow the Ben Ali dictatorship, or through a process of reform from above to attend to popular demands as in the case of Morocco and, to a lesser extent, Jordan.

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In the case of countries with natural gas or oil revenues available, as with Algeria, and as has been the case in the Gulf States, reforms have simply consisted of raising civil servant and general employee salaries and increasing employment in public institutions and the administration, debiting the cost to the budget, and little more. The case of Egypt is particularly significant because of its role as centre of gravity within the Arab World, from a demographic as well as historical and political standpoint. When the citizen revolution beginning in Tunisia with the self-immolation of young Bouazizi and the overthrow of Ben Ali spread to spark the popular revolts in Cairo, it became clear that the phenomenon was going to spread one way or another, with one or another result, throughout the Arab World. The Administrations of President Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood, which, through its political arm, succeeded in winning the elections, were an important sign of the advance of movements of Islamic tendencies throughout the Arab World. For the same reason, the Thermidorian reaction of the army and a significant section of the secular, modern-leaning population behind President al-Sisi marked a new direction to keep in mind in the Arab World, whether it be a return to the traditional authoritarian habits or the correction of past errors. Finally, we have the case in which the failure of the revolts has led to chaos and civil war, as in Syria and Libya. The emergence of the new phenomenon of terrorism on a large scale, with occupation and control of the territory and a prelude

of the Islamic State in the bloody maelstrom of Syria and Iraq has triggered alarm bells among the international community.

In this situation, Europe and the West should clearly help and exercise much greater influence, in a positive sense, on the evolution of the Arab World, particularly in the Mediterranean Partner Countries. It is obvious that the internal conflicts in the Arab World and the Muslim World must be settled internally and that any foreign intervention does nothing more than aggravate the situation. But it is also obvious that the role incumbent upon Europe especially and the West in general is of extraordinary transcendence. And one of the key problems, from this perspective, resides in the shortcomings of the instruments and the conventional 'European approach' of cooperation for development and the offer of limited regional integration, as a European foreign policy towards these countries to deal with the current situation. One could say that the candid Euromed is surrounded by the Hobbesian jungle that the current international stage has become, for which it lacks the tools for reaction precisely in the most severe cases. Preaching European values is of little use in such circumstances, if not wholly counterproductive by provoking much greater rejection than acceptance.

What Direction Now? What Should Be Done?

It seems that the massive arrival of refugees to the EU from across the Mediterranean under dramatic conditions, with the many deaths occurring on the way and the overcrowding of refugee camps together with the aggravation of the situations of State implosion and war, in Syria in particular as well as Libya, have managed to awaken the European conscience with an awareness that something must be done. To do this, there must be a profound reflection on foreign and internal policy of the EU and its Member States towards the Mediterranean region. It seems evident that EU 'soft power' as a major instrument of social transformation is absolutely incapable of handling the situations of instability and violence on the short and medium terms. The European Union is also applying its instruments of Humanitarian Aid and Emergency Aid that have conventionally accompanied humanitarian cooperation policies when necessary. We should be able, in the first place, to handle

the humanitarian and refugee emergencies, which we are far from achieving. It seems clear that all the EU's soft power instruments can help to bring about change in the medium and long terms in countries with governments that are firm, stable and willing, but they cannot cope in the short term with the situations of crisis and conflict, nor address the causes that, beyond development shortcomings, are fuelling the current situation of conflict. Europe, the European Union, has not been using the instruments of *Realpolitik*, whether they be in the hands of EU coordination organs or fundamentally by the Member States. And when it has, as with Libya, serious errors have been committed. With the current extremely conflictive situation on the one hand and the reform process of the European Neighbourhood Policy launched by EU institutions on the other, it could be an opportune time for Europe to create the legal changes and generate the political will to enable it to rise to the occasion.

The decision-making capacity lies with the States, but this does not mean action is impossible. States must finally realise the need for a great common European foreign policy, in full synergy with the foreign policy of the individual governments

European foreign policy consists of two parts: the EU foreign policy on the one hand, which has been called 'exterior action' to date, focussing on instruments of 'soft power' and the foreign policy of Member States on the other. Where the former was based on promoting European values and 'soft' attraction to Europe, doubtless of great political and economic interest to all in the long term, the latter dealt with the promotion and direct protection of national interests. After the application of the Lisbon Treaty, as indicated above, the situation has not changed greatly. The distribution of powers among the EU institutions and in Member States continues to be fundamentally the same. The creation of the European External Action Service and the strengthening of the role of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy as Vice-President of the Commission at the same time does not preclude a fundamental consideration: the

power continues to be fundamentally vested in the States, which must approve all sorts of action through the Council, and anonymously at that.

The decision-making capacity lies with the States, which moreover have the operative means, especially insofar as security; but this does not mean action is impossible. States must finally realise the need for a great common European foreign policy, in full synergy with the foreign policy of the individual governments. EU institutions will have to grow accustomed to protecting the interests of Member States in addition to working towards high European values, while the Member States will have to get used to having a common foreign policy and undertaking joint concrete actions in this field, coordinating amongst themselves and with the EU institutions through a Common Foreign and Security Policy worthy of the name. While the instruments of security policy, on both the police-judicial and the military levels continue in the hands of the States, close coordination within the framework of joint European action is absolutely essential, especially with the serious situation in the Mediterranean and Middle East regions. It also follows that we must go beyond this, and that 'more Europe' is the solution.

Currently, there is a need for coordination in the first place among both EU institutions and Member States. And likewise between the whole of Europe and the different international institutions and actors within the framework of the United Nations, with allies as the United States and with NATO as a whole. The classic adage 'si vis pacem, para bellum' ('if you want peace, prepare for war'), sadly, becomes necessary in times of crisis. The ideal of military strength is one that does not need to be used, but its availability is a prerequisite for this ideal. And in the case of the conflicts in the Arab World, as indicated, this is all the more true since any foreign intervention in their territory is and will be absolutely counterproductive. But first we must convince the powerful in the Arab World – with the political, economic or security-oriented arguments appropriate for each case according to the country – to exercise their influence to pacify the Arab world and not by funding violent movements of which they that eventually even lose control.

Insofar as coordination among institutions within the EU, it seems clear that the distribution of instruments and powers between the Commission and the European External Action Service are not the most propi-

etious for efficient action. Foreign policy and its execution supposedly fall within the remit of the European External Action Service, whereas the main financial and cooperation instruments, beginning with the ENP, to all effects continue in the hands of the Commission. If any policy measure falls under the Common Security and Defence Policy, its control by the Council, where any Member State can veto a decision due to the rule of unanimity, makes it difficult to achieve a foreign policy and effective external action. Moreover, although much progress has been made, at least insofar as the Mediterranean Partner Countries, in decentralising from Brussels to the EC Delegations (today EU Embassies) in Partner Countries, there is still much to be done on the ground regarding coordination between the EU Delegations and Member State Embassies. It would be particularly useful if, in the process of preparing and approving the Action Plans of the European Neighbourhood Policy, these Action Plans translated into real joint action by the European Union as a whole the Commission and the European External Action Service in conjunction with the policies and cooperation carried out by Member States. Although the strictly EU Action Plans should continue to exist, there should at least be higher planning and a coordination schemes to include EU and Member State action, possibly re-vamping and modifying insofar as necessary the former Indicative Programmes to increase synergies and political weight through coordination of all European action in each country.

Regionalisation in Globalisation

One of the fundamental aspects of the consultation by the Commission and the High Representative regarding overhauling the European Neighbourhood Policy referred to the geographic sphere of reference. To date, the European Neighbourhood Policy, like the Barcelona Process in its classic period, has aspired to its application in the strict sphere of the Euro-Mediterranean Partner Countries, that is, the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries with a Mediterranean coastline, as well as Jordan.

What we are really discussing in the Euromed project is the role that the European Union should play on the international stage in a globalised world. Clearly,

Euro-Mediterranean policy can neither be applied the same to all Mediterranean seaboard countries. Nor can it be considered separately from the impact that other countries, the neighbours of our neighbours, have in the area. First of all, there are the Gulf States, including Iraq, the countries of the Arabian Peninsula and Iran; secondly, there are the countries of the Horn of Africa; and thirdly, the Sahel countries. Hence it would seem appropriate to distinguish between three levels of countries to which the EU should apply different political action structures.

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First and foremost, regarding the Euro-Mediterranean Partner Countries, we should distinguish between those that have a true Euro-Mediterranean vocation as such, as is fundamentally the case with Morocco and Tunisia, and the rest of countries, which participate but with limited when not decreasing enthusiasm depending on the case. There should be a clear differentiation between two levels of Mediterranean Partner Countries. The first would be the 'Preferential Partner Countries,' with whom the EU would aspire to build an integrated Euro-Mediterranean area. The countries of this first level should have a privileged status in their relations with the EU, clearly differentiated and favourable to them. It should be a status that countries should apply for in order to become first candidates and eventually members of a possible Euro-Mediterranean Economic Integration Community. Clearly, as in all areas of advanced integration, although the fundamental aspects may be economic, there are political aspects of enormous significance as well. Both the 1995 Barcelona Final Declaration and the European Neighbourhood Policy concept, not to mention the Morocco's Advanced Status or the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements, move along these lines. Attaining such status should constitute a differentiated privilege not automatically extensible

to the rest of the Partner Countries. The remainder of the countries should be able to see the advantages of belonging to such a Euro-Mediterranean Economic Integration Community and aspire to become members themselves, being ready to carry out the necessary changes. Only thus will the effects on the countries joining said Community be equivalent to those attained in Central and Eastern European Countries before their integration into the EU.

The remaining Euro-Mediterranean Partner Countries would be on a second level, as members of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Euro-Mediterranean policy in general, with the application of the ENP on their level. In the third place, a new concentric circle of privileged relations should be established beyond our immediate neighbours in order to reach our neighbours' neighbours as well. For this second external neighbourhood area the most appropriate scheme would probably not be a uniform approach, which would be impossible to conceive and even more so to execute, but rather a series of agreements of privileged relations with those countries, in groups or individually and at a level of formalisation and commitment greater than the current one. This is the case with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council or Iraq, as well as Iran, the countries of the Horn of Africa and the Sahel Countries.

It is clear that in all cases, independently of the geographic area, the principles of differentiation and conditionality must be applied. But clearly, the greatest differentiation should consist in belonging or not to each concentric circle of this European structure for integration or international cooperation, which decreases towards the outer circles to reach areas solely of cooperation and therefore with decreasing application of conditionality.

Insofar as the thematic spheres, it seems clear under the current circumstances that, in applying the necessary coordination among Member States and EU institutions, new thematic areas of cooperation must be fostered, reaching, if need be, spheres such as reform of the security sector, in both police and judicial cooperation aspects, as well as and in particular its military security aspects. In other spheres, there should likewise be coordinated action between Member States and EU institutions, as in the case of migration and taking in both immigrants and refugees.

The case of Euro-African cooperation merits particular consideration within regional globalisation. Once

colonial ties were broken, with better or worse outcomes, Europe has tended to overlook Africa. Yet Africa is an important part of the future of Europe and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership offers a particularly interesting angle to approach Euro-African relations. The participation of North African Mediterranean Partner Countries in Euro-African cooperation is of particular interest due to the special complementarity, synergies and capacity for action existing between the EU and its Member States, and the Mediterranean Partner Countries, which would allow them to act jointly in negotiating and implementing projects and broad cooperation agreements with Sub-Saharan countries.

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Turkey is also a special case because it is a Mediterranean Partner Country and at the same time, a candidate for membership in the EU, as well as enjoying an agreement since 1996 now that goes beyond a free trade area to institute a customs union with the EU and its Member States. Turkey has based its progress on moving towards convergence with Europe and the Western World over the past 90 years. Over the past few decades it has increased this convergence exponentially through its economic relations with the EU, especially through the benefits of the trade agreement instituting the Euro-Turkish customs union. But there are also pulsations in Turkey moving in the other direction, of moving closer to the Turkic countries of Central Asia and the Arabic ones of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. There has been discussion of the intention of building a neo-Ottomanism lending Turkey a key role in the geographic regions formerly constituting the Ottoman Empire and beyond. It is crucial that Europe make an effort to let Turkey understand that its best future consists of playing that important role in said region as part of a broader Euro-Mediterranean project to its own benefit, to play that major role as a European country with a diverse and rich heritage.

Urgent Tasks

At the present time, when there has even been talk of the end of the Southern Neighbourhood as a reality and an economic project, and when we are witnessing a disruption of political and even social structures among Mediterranean Partner Countries, it is clear that, in addition to fostering modernisation and adapting its own instruments and political approach to the Euro-Mediterranean area, Europa , the EU institutions and the Member States must carry out urgent action preventing the cataclysms we are all beginning to discern on the horizon.

In the first place, massive assistance is absolutely necessary for countries that share values with the EU and that should be included in the first circle of economic, and to a large extent, political integration with the EU. In the case of Tunisia in particular, which is under serious and peremptory threat from those who wish to end the Tunisian democratic experience, the EU must effect a massive aid operation. The EU has gradually expanded its funds, especially for Tunisia, through new aid instruments of support to democratic transitions and civil society, beyond the conventional ENP funds. Nonetheless, we continue to work on an unrealistic scale. All told, this aid hardly reaches 200 million euros per year for Tunisia, when in the internal European crises we have experienced, the amounts handled were always in the billions. The aid packet currently being negotiated with Greece may reach 85 billion. Although in this case, it may fundamentally consist of loans, it is clear that the amounts cannot be compared with the meagre 200 million allocated to Tunisia. This amount should at least be multiplied by ten to reach 2 billion in non-returnable funds, apart from the EIB loans, which to date have more or less doubled the current amount of donation aid.

In the second place, we must act more decisively with humanitarian and emergency aid in the face of the enormous crises being experienced in Syria and its neighbouring countries. It is true that EU and its Member States have donated nearly 3,500 million euros in emergency and humanitarian aid to offset the consequences of the war in Syria. However, it seems obvious that this is not enough and that the EU must increase the calibre and efficiency, as well as the political and public communication of its aid if we do not wish to see to even greater catastrophes.

In the third place, we must undertake an exercise of convergence of *soft power* with *Realpolitik* as a joint EU policy to negotiate and offer the Thermidorian regime in Egypt economic and political support that enables it to overcome its current situation as quickly as possible and allow Egypt to advance with security and confidence towards a modernised country with a positive economic evolution, stably and in democracy. In this regard, of course, in Egypt as in other countries in the area, security aspects cannot be ignored. We cannot look the other way. Al-Sisi already has the firm political and financial support of Saudi Arabia, and it is crucial that Europe offer him other perspectives as well.

In the fourth place, Europe, with the entire weight of the EU and its Member States behind it, should participate in a determined, uninhibited manner in the pacification of Syria and Libya. As in all the current conflicts in the Arab World, *the need for solutions to be internal to the Arab World* must be reiterated. It is essential that the Arab countries themselves decide that none of them should support any of the forces or groups involved in the conflicts. And the same should be done to convince Iran. Negotiations with Iran constitute a good precedent in this regard, with the prominent role played by the EU and its High Representative Mogherini. But it seems clear that the efforts being carried out in both Syria and Libya by the United Nations representatives in these countries must attain significant, decisive and effective support from the EU and its Member States. Especially in order to convince the regional powers to play a pacifying and not incentivising role in the confrontations. The entire political, economic and military weight of the EU and its Member States, as well

as its allies, in particular the US, must attempt to get the regional Middle East powers to stop pouring oil on the fire of conflict and foster peace.

On reading the Barcelona Final Declaration today, twenty years after the fact, you will realise almost with surprise that it remains entirely valid

All in all, it can be concluded that the future will continue to be extraordinarily complicated and that we may have to get used to managing the crisis for many years to come. Nevertheless, we must bear in mind that in the long run, social transformations will prevail and will eventually bear fruit. Hence the need for urgent tasks in the face of the current episodes of crisis and the need to renew the arsenal of instruments of influence in the face of the major challenges in the region should not lead us to conclude that the conventional approach of cooperation through integration in the Euro-Mediterranean sphere is no longer appropriate. On reading the Barcelona Final Declaration today, twenty years after the fact, you will realise almost with surprise that it remains entirely valid. It is the continuation of this long-term task of helping our neighbours and partner countries in their process of modernisation, progress and development that will allow the realisation of the dream we had envisioned in 1995, that of building a Mediterranean area of peace and security, shared economic progress and intercultural understanding and dialogue among peoples and cultures throughout our seaboard.