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JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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corrections are not made, seems to be in doubt, since it started on wrong assumptions and on an unsatisfactory institutional set up.

Leading European powers, such as Germany and France, characterise their countries' relationship with Turkey as a strategic partnership. They also seem to favour Turkey's entry to the EU. If one is to follow this logic, then excluding Turkey from European crisis management is all the more inexplicable.

Some European countries, in search of an excuse for their refusal to agree on satisfactory and inclusive arrangements for Turkey's participation in military and non-military crisis management operations, assert that the contribution of Turkey to such operations would be welcomed. Seen from a Turkish perspective, such an attitude amounts to confining Turkey's contribution to that of a sub-contractor. It is evident that such a role will be totally unacceptable for Turkey.

SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

M. FATİH TAYFUR

INTRODUCTION

The security environment and co-operation mechanisms in the Mediterranean have been changing since the end of the Cold War and, in parallel with these changes, the importance of the region has increased for the Western alliance. First, the number of security issues in the Mediterranean has increased. Second, the US, EU and NATO have redefined their Mediterranean policies and established new co-operation mechanisms in response to the changing security environment. In this context, the aim of this paper is to highlight the security and co-operation issues in the Mediterranean in the post-Cold War period and to discuss the European, American and NATO's policies towards the Mediterranean separately and in relation to each other. A third aim of this study is to evaluate Turkish foreign policy towards security and co-operation in the Mediterranean and the Turkish position *vis-à-vis* the European, American and NATO initiatives in the region.

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During the Cold War period, the Mediterranean was thought of in the context of the East-West confrontation and the Middle East conflict. In the post-war years, the Soviet threat to Greece and Turkey, the US commitment to the security of Israel and increasing Soviet and Non-aligned influence among the Mediterranean Arab states in the 1960s, led to a permanent American military presence (the Sixth Fleet) and involvement in Mediterranean affairs. In this period, the Europeans (except France) were not willing or were unable to develop a European policy for the Mediterranean. Accordingly, the USA defined the strategic environment and the priorities for the Western alliance in the Mediterranean. However, Western strategic thinking was focused on the Central Front in the Cold War period and the Mediterranean remained secondary in importance and was considered as a strategic backwater for the Alliance.¹

The end of the Cold War, however, changed the established practices in the Mediterranean and led to alternative definitions of Mediterranean security within the Western alliance. The differences between the American and European perceptions of the Mediterranean, which developed steadily from the mid-1970s,² became clear. The most important reason for this diversity over the definition of Mediterranean security in the post-Cold war period was the disappearance of the unidimensional Soviet threat. A Soviet-free world emancipated Europe from the strategic protection of the Americans³ and the EU, which now emerged as an important political and economic seat of power, developed its own policy and promoted its own interests in the Mediterranean.

1 See S. Larrabee, et. al., *NATO's Mediterranean Initiative: Policy Issues and Dilemmas*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1998, p. 1 and I. Lesser, 'The Changing Mediterranean Security Environment: a Transatlantic Perspective', paper presented at the meeting on 'Building the Euro-American Partnership in the Mediterranean', Porto, 22-23 June 1998, p. 6.

2 For an account of the emergence and development of a European perception of the Mediterranean see C. Calabrese, 'Beyond Barcelona: the Politics of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership', *European Security*, Vol. 6, No. 4, winter 1997, pp. 86-110.

3 See S. Larrabee, 'The United States and Mediterranean', paper presented at the meeting on 'Building the Euro-American Partnership in the Mediterranean', Porto, 22-23 June 1998, p. 1.

THE EUROPEAN PERCEPTION OF SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Perhaps, one of the most important reasons that made the Europeans develop their own policy towards the Mediterranean was the changing nature of the security issues in the Mediterranean. The European understanding of security in the Mediterranean shifted from military to non-military security issues in the post-Cold War period. The non-military security challenges came onto the agenda of Europe as the results of the increasing gap between the 'Rich North' (Europe) and the 'Poor South' (the Maghreb and Mashreq countries) and the rapid population growth in the southern Mediterranean.⁴ These two phenomenons led to the high unemployment rates, poor economic conditions and weak social services in the South, which resulted in the migration of people (economic refugees) from the southern Mediterranean to Europe. Other important security issues were the increase in Islamic fundamentalism, political discontent and political instability in the South in reaction to the poor economic and social conditions, and the 'oppressive' reactions of the governments to these phenomena. Civil wars and intra-state conflicts also led to the migration of people (political refugees) to Europe. These non-military challenges, originating mainly from the poor socio-economic conditions, directly influenced security perceptions because they have produced political and social problems in Europe. For instance, the Europeans argue that migration from the South has increased intolerance, hostility, crime, xenophobia and terrorism, and the rise of extreme right-wing political parties and movements in the European countries.⁵

A second important reason that made the Europeans take steps towards a European Mediterranean policy was the economic security

4 For a detailed analysis of the post-Cold War security issues in the Mediterranean see L. Brnjar, 'Security Challenges in Europe's Mediterranean Periphery - Perspectives and Policy Dilemmas', *European Security*, Vol. 8, No. 4, winter 1999, pp. 27-56.

5 See C. Calabrese, 'Beyond Barcelona...', op. cit., p. 91.

considerations in the field of energy. There is a considerable degree of European dependence on southern Mediterranean gas and oil supplies and increasing European investments in the energy sector in the South⁶ have made the Europeans vulnerable to any instability, civil war or conflict in the region.

All these considerations made the Europeans build a coherent and effective policy *vis-à-vis* those non-military security threats. And, not surprisingly, the initiative for a European Mediterranean policy came from some of the EU's Mediterranean members, namely Spain, Italy, France and Portugal, because geographical proximity makes these countries directly open to the security challenges coming from the Maghreb. Accordingly, economic and social aid and assistance, increasing trade relations, as well as military co-operation appeared as the basic means of dealing with the security challenges coming from the South to Europe.

In fact, European initiatives for a Mediterranean policy first started in the early 1970s.⁷ However, the Euro-Arab dialogue and the EEC's Global Mediterranean Policy in the 1970s and 1980s remained inactive because of the Cold War environment and disunity among EEC members over a common Mediterranean policy. In the late 1980s, as a response to deteriorating socio-economic and political conditions in the South, the Italians and Spaniards proposed a pan-Mediterranean security and co-operation initiative. Later in this period, Italy, Spain and Portugal started initiatives for a constructive dialogue between EC and the Maghreb countries. The non-governmental Mediterranean Forum, the French Five-Plus-Five initiative, and the Spanish-Italian initiative for a Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) were all aimed at establishing a viable co-operation mechanism between EC and the Maghreb countries. All these efforts led to the declaration of

the EC's Revised Mediterranean Policy in 1990, which envisaged financial aid for structural adjustment in the South. The Gulf War and the Islamists' electoral victory in Algeria increased the EC's concerns in the South and in 1992, the EU approved a Euro-Maghreb Partnership framework that envisaged economic and political co-operation and dialogue. The emphasis was on free trade, balance of payments loans, human rights and the creation of a Euro-Maghreb Bank. But, the downturn in economic conditions in Europe and domestic political considerations among the EU countries undermined the success of this initiative too.

EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP (BARCELONA PROCESS)

After the failure of the Euro-Maghreb Partnership, the next EU initiative in the Mediterranean came under the heading of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) or Barcelona Process' in September 1995. Unlike the Euro-Maghreb Partnership the EMP embraces the entire Mediterranean and, in this sense, it is a very ambitious, multifaceted framework for co-operation. However, the Maghreb, again, was given special importance in the EMP.⁸ The EMP came into existence first, as a result of the special efforts of France, Spain and Italy, and second, as a result of bargains between the EU's Mediterranean and northern members (Germany, the UK and the Netherlands) on the EU's enlargement towards the eastern Europe. A consensus was reached on dealing with the security challenges coming from both the East and the South and hence re-balancing the distribution of EU's financial resources between the eastern and southern peripheries.⁹ During the intra-EU bargaining, the Mediterranean EU states managed to draw others' attention to the point that the security challenges in the Mediterranean was also a major problem for the northern Europeans.¹⁰ The Mediterranean EU

⁶ See L. Brnyjar, 'Security Challenges in Europe's Mediterranean Periphery', *op. cit.*, p. 43 and I. Lesser, 'The Changing Mediterranean Security Environment', *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

⁷ For an account of the European policy towards the Mediterranean until the second half of the 1990s (i.e. the Barcelona Process) see C. Calabrese, 'Beyond Barcelona...', *op. cit.*, pp. 94-98.

⁸ See C. Calabrese, 'Beyond Barcelona...', *op. cit.*, pp. 99-102.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

¹⁰ See V. Perthes, 'Germany Gradually becoming a Mediterranean State', *EuroMesCo Papers*, No. 1, February 1998.

states convinced the northerners of the dangers of spill-over effects from Mediterranean security issues – e.g. political instabilities and violence, terrorism – all over Europe and of the issue that southern Europe is a gateway for immigrants on their way to north.

BARCELONA DECLARATION

The EMP or Barcelona Declaration aims to establish a multilateral framework of relations among European and Mediterranean states through the establishment of a comprehensive partnership comprising three Chapters relating to political and security, economic and financial, and social, cultural and human affairs. It promotes the idea of “establishing a common area of peace and stability”, “creating an area of shared prosperity” and “developing human resources, promoting understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies” in the Mediterranean region.¹¹

In the Chapter on the Political and Security Partnership, where issues of peace and stability are emphasised, the EMP stresses the need for enhanced political dialogue, evolutionary and progressive development of partnership-building measures, good neighbourly relations, regional co-operation and preventive diplomacy.¹² The Political and Security Chapter also emphasises the importance of the development of the rule of law and democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the combat against racism and xenophobia, strengthening co-operation against terrorism, organised crime and drug trafficking in the region.

The objective of the Economic and Financial Chapter is to accelerate the pace of sustainable socio-economic development, improve living conditions, increase the employment level, reduce the development gap in the Euro-Mediterranean region and encourage

¹¹ See ‘Barcelona Declaration’, adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, Barcelona, 27-28 November 1995.

¹² See ‘Chairman’s Formal Conclusion’ in the Third Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference (Barcelona III), 15-16 April 1999, Stuttgart, Paragraph 11.

regional co-operation and integration.¹³ With a view to achieving these objectives, the Declaration envisages the establishment of the free trade area by 2010, the implementation of appropriate economic co-operation and concerted action in the relevant areas, and a substantial increase in the EU’s financial assistance to its EMP partners. In the Work Programme, co-operation in the fields of investment, industry, agriculture, transport, energy, regional planning, tourism, environment, science and technology, water and fisheries are given prime importance.¹⁴

In the Chapter on the Partnership in Social, Cultural and Human Affairs,¹⁵ the EMP emphasises the necessity for the development of human resources through enhancing the educational level throughout the region. Dialogue between cultures and civilisations, close interaction between the media, and youth exchanges between the Euro-Mediterranean partners are considered other important issues under this third pillar of the Declaration. The EMP also envisages contributing to social development through improving living and working conditions and increasing the employment level in the Mediterranean. Finally, this chapter promotes co-operation in the fields of health, migration, terrorism, drug trafficking and organised crime, and illegal migration.

AMERICAN PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

In fact, all the security challenges identified by the Europeans in the Mediterranean are included on Washington’s agenda.¹⁶ Accordingly, the Americans consider the gap between the rich North and poor South, high unemployment, immigration,

¹³ See ‘Barcelona Declaration’, adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, Barcelona, 27-28 November 1995.

¹⁴ See ‘Barcelona Declaration’, Annex on the Work Programme, Barcelona, 27-28 November 1995.

¹⁵ See ‘Barcelona Declaration’ and Part IV in the Annex on the Work Programme.

¹⁶ For an extensive discussion on the American perception of the security challenges in the Mediterranean see S. Larrabee, ‘The United States and Mediterranean’, *op. cit.*; S. Larrabee, et. al., *NATO’s Mediterranean Initiative*, *op. cit.*; and I. Lesser, ‘The Changing Mediterranean Security Environment’, *op. cit.*

political instabilities and their spill-over effects in Europe, energy security, the threat posed by terrorism and radical Islamic movements to be important 'soft security' challenges in the Mediterranean in the post-Cold War era. However, the Americans put their emphasis also on the hard security issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict, instability in the Balkans, the Turkish-Greek dispute and the Cyprus issue in the Mediterranean. Accordingly, despite significant overlap, there are also significant differences between the American and European perspectives on the Mediterranean over the definition and conceptualisation of the challenges as well as the degree of importance attached to them.

First, the Americans and the Europeans diverge on the geographical boundaries of the Mediterranean region.¹⁷ For the Americans, the 'Mediterranean' means the Middle East, 'Eastern Mediterranean' means Turkey, Greece, Cyprus and the Gulf, while the Western Mediterranean does not attract their attention. For the Europeans, however, 'Mediterranean' means 'Western Mediterranean'. In fact, the Americans view the Western Mediterranean (North Africa) as a legitimate sphere for European leadership¹⁸ and, furthermore, the soft security issues in the region are seen as the natural preserve of the EU.¹⁹ Thus, in American strategic thinking, while the Western Mediterranean refers to the legitimate sphere of influence and leadership of the EU, the Eastern Mediterranean is thought of as in the sphere of influence and under the leadership of the US. Second, the West-East division refers to a division of labour in the Mediterranean between the EU and US for soft (political and economic) and hard (military-power projection) security issues, respectively.

17 See S. Larrabee, 'The United States and Mediterranean', *op. cit.*, pp. 9, 17.

18 In fact, in the post-war period, the Americans have traditionally given priority to the Europeans in their former colonies. See, P. J. Schraeder, 'Bureaucratic Incrementalism, Crisis and Change in US Foreign Policy towards Africa', in J. A. Rosati, et. al. (eds.), *Foreign Policy Restructuring*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994, p. 114.

19 See I. Lesser, 'The Changing Mediterranean Security Environment', *op. cit.*, p. 4.

A second difference between the American and the European approaches is that, while the Europeans (EU) have developed a global policy towards the Mediterranean, the US has never had a Mediterranean policy as such. Rather, the Americans think of the Mediterranean in terms of either Europe and the Middle East (with North Africa as a minor subset of the Middle East) or in terms of specific issues.²⁰ Accordingly, the Mediterranean matters to the Americans because it matters to Europe.²¹ In other words, if the Europeans are concerned over migration, instability, etc. from the South, the Americans pay attention to European concerns. On the other hand, the Mediterranean matters to the Americans because of its importance for key US interests in the Middle East and Eurasia (unrestricted access to the oil, Arab-Israeli conflict and Middle East Peace Process, Turkish-Greek conflicts, Cyprus and the disputes in the Caucasus). This approach, which sees the Mediterranean as a strategic gateway to the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, dominates American thinking in the Mediterranean in the post-Cold War period. According to the Americans, the ability to project effective military power in the Middle East largely depends on unrestricted access to the sea and communication lines in the Mediterranean. The importance of the Mediterranean as a strategic gateway has increased because of the issue of transportation of the Caspian oil to the world market through the Mediterranean – most probably through the Ceyhan terminal in Turkey. Thus, for the Americans, the main security challenges in the Mediterranean are particularly in the Gulf and in the Eastern Mediterranean and, accordingly, the US emphasises the need to build up military capabilities that can deal effectively with regional contingencies.

Another divergence between the Americans and the Europeans is that the Americans view Mediterranean security challenges from a 'global-functional' rather than a regional perspective.²² This means

20 *Ibid.*, p. 2 and S. Larrabee, 'The United States and Mediterranean', *op. cit.*, p. 9.

21 I. Lesser, 'The Changing Mediterranean Security Environment', *op. cit.*, p. 4.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

that the functional concerns in the Mediterranean, such as the issues of migration, refugees, terrorism, human rights, drug trafficking, etc., are all considered in global and not regional terms. According to the Americans, these problems are global problems and increased interest in these issues in the Mediterranean is simply a by-product of that fact.

A fourth US-EU difference concerns the role of the EMP in the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP). The global Mediterranean character of the EMP made the EU an actor in the MEPP when the Europeans declared an organic link between the EMP and the MEPP.²³ The Arabs who are not happy with the dominant American role in the MEPP have also given their support for an active EU role in the process. However, the Americans, who have traditionally been the main actor in the MEPP, do not like the European initiative for playing a major diplomatic role in the process and do not want to share influence with the Europeans in the MEPP.²⁴ The Americans feel that European involvement in the MEPP will not contribute militarily and, furthermore, will lead to difficulties in policy co-ordination. Moreover, the relatively pro-Arab position of the Europeans also makes the Americans sceptical about a political EU role in the MEPP.

The Americans are not very enthusiastic about the EMP²⁵ because of the Europeans' focus on the priority areas of Eastern and Central Europe and the fear that the EMP area, which is often regarded as marginal and distracting, will drain resources that could be directed to Eastern Europe. Another reason about why the US is not enthusiastic about the EMP may be that the EMP is not a transatlantic but an EU regional initiative, and the US does not have even a symbolic role in the Barcelona Process. However, the Americans also declared their support for the EMP as long as it promotes economic development and stability in Europe's southern periphery and does not divert substantial resources from Eastern and Central Europe.²⁶

²³ See C. Calabrese, 'Beyond Barcelona...', *op. cit.*, p. 105.

²⁴ See S. Larrabee, 'The United States and Mediterranean', *op. cit.*, p. 15.

²⁵ I. Lesser, 'The Changing Mediterranean Security Environment', *op. cit.*, p. 2.

²⁶ S. Larrabee, 'The United States and Mediterranean', *op. cit.*, p. 14.

Another major divergence between European and American policies towards the Mediterranean in the post-Cold War period focuses on Turkey. For the Americans, Turkey is one of their most important strategic allies because it plays a key role in many issues important to the US in the Eurasian continent including NATO, the Balkans, the Aegean, Cyprus, Iraqi sanctions, Russia, Caucasus, Central Asia and transit routes for gas and oil.²⁷ The Americans emphasise that security and Western interests in the Eastern Mediterranean will be strongly affected by the future character of the relationship between Turkey and the West.²⁸ Thus, the US attaches great importance to Turkey's integration into the EU. However, the Europeans, though accepting Turkey's strategic importance to the West, are not clear about Turkey's status in the EU in the future, even after the 1999 Helsinki Summit in which Turkey was given a candidate status.

There are some other Mediterranean issues over which the USA and Europe have their differences.²⁹ These issues are, first, the issue of 'Rogue States' (such as Iran, Iraq and Libya) in which the Europeans do not agree with the Americans on using sanctions and military force but prefer a policy of 'constructive engagement'. A second issue of disagreement is Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Here, while the Americans have placed increased emphasis on the proliferation of the WMD in the South, the Europeans are following a low-key policy and believe that the Americans are exaggerating the WMD threat. A final disagreement is over NATO's role in the Mediterranean, which I shall focus on in the next section.

NATO AND THE MEDITERRANEAN IN THE POST-COLD WAR PERIOD

NATO's main task in the Mediterranean during the Cold War years was to contain the Soviet Union and the spread of communism. However, in 1990, with the end of the ideological differences

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁸ I. Lesser, 'The Changing Mediterranean Security Environment', *op. cit.*, p. 10.

²⁹ For more information see S. Larrabee, 'The United States and Mediterranean', *op. cit.*, pp. 19-24.

between the East and West and after the Gulf War, NATO redefined and broadened its security concept.³⁰ NATO's new strategic security concept now included the non-military risks originating from political, economic, social and environmental factors. In this new security environment, stability and peace in the Mediterranean was declared a priority for the Alliance. Yet, developments in Eastern and Central Europe and in the Balkans diverted NATO's attention from the southern to the eastern periphery of Europe and the Mediterranean continued to be a marginal area on NATO's agenda. Only in January 1994, because of the efforts of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) and positive developments in the Middle East Peace Process, did NATO declare its willingness to open a dialogue with the countries in the region.³¹ The declaration came out because of pressures coming from Spain, Italy and Portugal. In fact, there were divisions among NATO members for a NATO initiative in the Mediterranean. The US was anxious about the status of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and France supported a European initiative through the WEU. Furthermore, many other NATO states supported the policy of increasing ties with the East rather than diverting scarce resources to the South. However, developments in Algeria and Arab states' reluctant attitude the non-proliferation of WMD warned NATO of the need to take an initiative in the Mediterranean. So, in February 1995, NATO declared its Mediterranean Initiative.

NATO'S MEDITERRANEAN INITIATIVE

NATO's Mediterranean Initiative aims at contributing to security and stability in the Mediterranean, achieving better mutual

30 For a detailed account of the development of NATO's Mediterranean policy see R. C. Ewing and C. Ramjone, 'NATO and Mediterranean Security', Atlantic Council of the United States, 31 March 1997, Vol. VIII, No. 4 and G. Winrow, 'Security in the Mediterranean: NATO and the Development of a Dialogue between North and South', in *Suna Kili'ye Armağan*, Istanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1998, pp. 411-431.

31 'The Mediterranean Dialogue', *NATO Basic Fact Sheet*, No. 16, May 1997.

understanding and correcting misperceptions about NATO among Mediterranean countries.³² The NATO Mediterranean dialogue is progressive and bilateral in form although it allows for multilateral meetings on a case by case basis. The dialogue also reinforces the other initiatives taken in the Mediterranean by the EMP, MEPP, WEU and OSCE without either duplicating them or intending to create a division of labour. The political dialogue provides an opportunity for extensive briefings on NATO's activities and, in turn, Mediterranean partners are expected to share their views with NATO on stability and security in the Mediterranean region. The Mediterranean partners are invited to participate in specific activities, such as science, information, civil emergency planning and courses at NATO schools on peacekeeping, arms control, etc.

In 1995, a political dialogue was started with Egypt, Israel, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan. However, the dialogue appeared to be a dialogue between the Political Affairs Division of the international staff of NATO and the officers from the embassies of the non-member Mediterranean states in Brussels. Thus, it turned out to be a diplomatic-administrative rather than a political dialogue since neither NATO nor the NACC was directly involved in it.³³

An important problem for NATO's Mediterranean Initiative is that the Alliance operates on the principle of unanimity and there are still differences of opinion among NATO members on the security issues in the Mediterranean. While some of NATO's Mediterranean members – Spain, Italy and Portugal – are actively supporting a strong role for NATO in the Mediterranean, others interested more in the East and believe that there is no direct or clearly defined threat from the South.³⁴ There are serious problems especially between the US and Europe over NATO's role in the Mediterranean. The US has a reserved position towards NATO's role in the Mediterranean and

32 Ibid.

33 See G. Winrow, 'Security in the Mediterranean', op. cit., pp. 415-16.

34 See R. C. Ewing and C. Ramjone, 'NATO and Mediterranean Security', op. cit.

does not support NATO's Mediterranean Initiative with real enthusiasm.³⁵ The American position is based on the belief that NATO's Initiative might divert resources from NATO's eastern enlargement or interfere with the MEPP. Moreover, for the Americans, the Initiative an Italian and Spanish initiative and does not have the true support of the others. Finally, the Americans do not like the French position for Europeanisation of both Mediterranean security and NATO's Southern Command through replacing AFSOUTH's American Commander with a European one. The US, however, is promoting the idea of embedding NATO's Mediterranean Initiative in a broader southern strategy that includes the big strategic issues of the Gulf and Eastern Mediterranean. According to the Americans, it is only through establishing a linkage between NATO's Mediterranean Initiative and the broader US agenda in the region that the NATO's Initiative would obtain backing in Washington, and they imply that, without strong US backing and active engagement, it is unlikely that the Initiative would become a major NATO priority.³⁶

TURKISH PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN³⁷

The Mediterranean is not conceptualised as a totality in Turkish foreign policy.³⁸ There is no single comprehensive definition or conceptual appreciation of the Mediterranean region in Turkish strategic thinking. The Mediterranean region is under the surveillance of different functional departments in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Turks perceive the Mediterranean as composed of the Middle East, Greece and Cyprus, the Balkans, and Europe. In particular, the concept 'Mediterranean' means 'Eastern

³⁵ See S. Larrabee, 'The United States and Mediterranean', *op. cit.*, pp. 22-24.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

³⁷ This section is mainly based on an article by M. Fatih Tayfur, 'Turkish Perceptions of the Mediterranean', *EuroMesCo Papers*, No. 8, Lisbon: IEEL, March 2000.

³⁸ Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999.

Mediterranean' in Turkish strategic thinking. This is primarily because the 'Eastern Mediterranean' displays a variety of problems that are perceived as important threats directed against Turkish territorial integrity and vital national interests. The problems with Greece and Syria, the Cyprus problem, the Arab-Israeli conflict and its spill over in the region, Iraq and Iran, and instability in the Caucasus constitute the main preoccupations of the Turkish foreign policy élite in the Mediterranean overall. On the other hand, the relatively stable western Mediterranean, from which Turkey does not anticipate any serious direct threat, is not considered a priority area.

The Turkish outlook on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) has been marked by a degree of indifference since its inception in 1995. Thus, the EMP is not on the immediate agenda of Turkish foreign policy. Turkey is an affiliate to the programme, but as a reluctant partner.

According to the Turks, the EMP is an ambitious and comprehensive regional project and the EU's perception of the Mediterranean played the most important role in its creation because the EU has long been concerned about the economically poor regions on its southern periphery.³⁹ For instance, migration from North Africa to the EU for economic and political reasons has been one of the immediate concerns of Europe. Economic underdevelopment coupled with domestic and regional political problems may lead to an unstable region on the periphery of the Union which, in turn, would affect the peace and the well-being of Europe itself. Thus, in order to meet these security challenges, the EU came up with a Mediterranean project envisaging economic and security co-operation in the region that the southern states could not otherwise establish.

On the other hand, some of the foreign policy élite thinks that the EMP is an unrealistic project mainly because of the

³⁹ Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999.

heterogeneous characteristics of the states in the region.⁴⁰ It is argued that the internal problems of these countries and the intra-regional conflicts do not make the EMP a promising model for co-operation. Furthermore, they argue, the establishment of a global co-operative model for the Mediterranean would be very difficult to achieve because of the differing importance of hard and soft security issues in the eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean.⁴¹ Some find the Barcelona process to be an imperialist project, designed only to promote the interests of the Europeans in the region.⁴²

Indeed, the main reason for Turkish indifference is based on the political assessments of the Union regarding the status of Turkey within the EMP. The foreign policy élite thinks that the EMP is not suitable for Turkey because it reduces the country's status in the EU into a neighbouring country.⁴³ They argue that Turkey cannot be considered together with the Maghreb and Mashreq countries and, furthermore, Turkey has signed Association and Customs Union Agreements with the EU that envisage full membership and thus the EMP cannot be an alternative to Turkey's ultimate aim of integration in the Union.⁴⁴ However, they also point out that there is no reason to stay out of the EMP and they see no problem in low-profile participation in it. They expect neither major gain nor loss from participating in the EMP.⁴⁵ However, after acquiring EU candidate status in Helsinki, it seems that Turkey's 'status problem' within the EMP has entered a new phase.

In the economic sphere, the Turkish vision of the EMP is relatively positive. Turkey supports the EU's goal of establishing a

40 See S. Taşhan, 'Mediterranean Security and Western Security Institutions', *Foreign Policy* (The Quarterly of the Turkish Foreign Policy Institute), Vol. XX, No. 3-4, 1996, pp. 29, 31 and 33.

41 *Ibid.*, p. 31

42 See S. Taşhan, 'Avrupa Birliğinin Akdeniz Politikası ve Türkiye', *Dış Politika Dergisi* (in Turkish), Cilt, VII, Sayı 3-4, 1997, p. 28, and also S. Taşhan, 'Mediterranean Security and Western...', *op. cit.*, p. 61.

43 Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999.

44 Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999.

45 Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999.

Mediterranean Free Trade Area in the year 2010.⁴⁶ However, a thorny issue between Turkey and the EMP is the financing of MEDA projects.⁴⁷ For political reasons, no money has been extended to Turkey from the EU's Mediterranean funds. This has been partly because of the Greek veto and partly because of EU pre-conditions that the grants must be spent in southeastern Turkey and on human rights projects. Turkey rejected these pre-conditions because no condition can be imposed on the allocation of MEDA funds. However, after Helsinki, the Turkish foreign policy élite argues that Turkey is going to be more active in the economic chapter of the EMP and upgrade its participation in the meetings.⁴⁸ According to the Turks, Turkey now feels closer to Europe and thus is willing to participate and increase its weight in the EMP.

However, the Turkish outlook for the EMP in the security field is still rather pessimistic for it is viewed as a utopian initiative.⁴⁹ Turkish policymakers see no future for the EMP in the field of hard security issues primarily because the Arab-Israeli conflict has placed its stamp on every single security issue in the Mediterranean region. According to the Turkish approach, there is little that can be done in this area because almost all the hard security problems in the region are, one way or the other, linked to the Middle East Peace Process. Turkey does not view the Middle East through the Europeans' lenses and emphasises the importance of the Middle East Peace Process for the solution of the problems in the region.

Turkey also puts emphasis on NATO's Initiative regarding the security of the Mediterranean.⁵⁰ The Turks argue that, unlike in the EU, Turkey is powerful in NATO because it participates in its decision-making process. Accordingly, Turkey gives its full support to security

46 Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999.

47 Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999.

48 Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 2000.

49 Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999.

50 Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999.

initiatives in the Mediterranean if they are organised under NATO's umbrella. In fact, even after Helsinki, the Turks are not enthusiastic about the EMP's security perspective. Officials from the security departments of the Turkish Foreign Office point out that Turkey is not a full member of the EU and this creates problems especially for security issues. Accordingly, until Turkey becomes a full member in the Union, the Turks will not be active in the security field.

Furthermore, Turkish policymakers argue that Turkey is not particularly keen on EU initiatives in the Mediterranean because it has already established very good security co-operation with Israel, Egypt and Jordan.⁵¹ Moreover, the recent Adana agreement with Syria and improving relations with Iran are other steps Turkey has taken to improve the security environment in the broader Mediterranean region. Turkish policymakers emphasise that the EMP is not the only mechanism through which relations are established among the Mediterranean countries. Finally, Turkish policymakers believe that the EU's Mediterranean initiative, which mainly focuses on the Western Mediterranean, will not bring significant outcomes for Turkey in the field of security.

As for the soft security issues, Turkey strongly supports international co-operation against terrorism and illicit drug trafficking. However, the Turkish government is convinced of the weakness of Euro-Mediterranean co-operation against terrorism since the Ocalan case. The Greek attitude during the Ocalan affair, coupled with earlier incompetent Italian policy towards Ocalan, whose organisation has been declared terrorist by the Turks and some Western States, like the USA and Germany and which is aimed at the disintegration of Turkey, caused the Turkish foreign policy élite to think twice about the effectiveness of Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. Such co-operation is, after all, supposed to emphasise the importance of and the need for co-

⁵¹ Interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials, January 1999. On this point, see also S. Taşhan 'Mediterranean Security and Western...', *op. cit.*, p. 31.

operation among Mediterranean countries in the fight against terrorism. Not surprisingly, these developments negatively influenced Turkish attitudes towards the EMP project.

In fact, Turkish policymakers see the EU as an ineffective actor and not an honest broker in the Mediterranean and this perception directly affects the Turkish vision of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. In particular, the EU's decision in December 1997 to start negotiations with Cyprus for full membership strengthened the Turkish view that European interests clashed with vital Turkish interests and that the EU sided with Greece against Turkey in the Mediterranean. The Turks believe that the EU has chosen Greece as its strategic partner in the Eastern Mediterranean and sacrificed the friendship of Turkey.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the Cold War, there was relative unity in the West's Mediterranean policy and the central aim of that policy was to contain Soviet ambitions in the region. However, Western security considerations were focused on the Central Front and the Mediterranean was of secondary importance in the Western strategic thinking.

With the end of the Cold War, relative unity in the Western strategic thinking towards the Mediterranean came to an end and the importance of the Mediterranean increased as a result of the changing security environment in the region. New non-military security challenges originating from political, economic and social conditions emerged, and the geographic scope and the meaning of military security in the Mediterranean enlarged. These developments, in turn, led to divergences within the Western Alliance over identifying priorities among the security challenges in the Mediterranean. With the disappearance of the common Soviet

threat, the actors in the Western Alliance began to emphasise their own national, regional and global interests in the Mediterranean.

In the new Mediterranean environment, the EU and US appeared as the main actors, presenting menus for the others. The EU's menu gives priority to its sub-regional concerns and soft security issues, focusing mainly on the Western Mediterranean. The national interests of some of southern EU members also gain priority in defining the security environment in the Mediterranean. The US, on the other hand, presents a broader menu, and focuses mainly on the Gulf and the Eastern Mediterranean, with a special emphasis on hard security issues. The global, regional and national interests of the US, some of which are in conflict with European interests, are the defining characteristics of the US's Mediterranean policy. In between the US and EU, NATO appears as an ineffective actor. Although, NATO presents its own initiative in the Mediterranean, it is by no means independent of EU and US influence. It seems that NATO's Mediterranean Initiative does not have American backing because of its 'limited' and 'sub-regional' scope, and because it is a southern European initiative.

The Turks, on the other hand, view the Mediterranean from the perspective of their own national interests. The Turkish view of the Mediterranean is more similar to the US's than the EU's definition of the region. This is primarily because, like the Americans, the Turks give priority to the Eastern Mediterranean, the Gulf and the Caucasus in defining their priorities in the security environment of the Mediterranean. Moreover, the Americans give utmost importance to Turkey while the Europeans are still uncertain about Turkey's place in the EU. Furthermore, with similarities to the American position, the Turks do not conceptualise the Mediterranean as a totality in their foreign and defence policy, and it is under the surveillance of different departments. Moreover, the Turks emphasise the importance of the Middle East Peace Process

and refer to NATO's Mediterranean dialogue in the security field. It seems that Turkey is more sympathetic to US-led initiatives in Mediterranean security issues, although it supports the EMP in the economic sphere and is willing to contribute to this process.

On the other hand, the Turks remain indifferent towards the EMP primarily because that they do not accept the role given to Turkey in the Mediterranean. The EU considered Turkey a peripheral southern country inside the EMP. In fact, the EU has seen Turkey as a peripheral country not only in the EMP but also on all other issues. Accordingly, Turkey was not given a clear perspective for full EU membership when, in Helsinki, it was placed among the second category countries for a future EU enlargement. Thus, even after Helsinki, the Turks generally do not see the EMP as a promising initiative in the political and security fields.

The dramatic events of the 1990s brought revolutionary changes throughout the world and the Mediterranean region was no exception. The post-Cold War world order is still in the making and the interests of the various international actors are being defined and redefined continuously. Accordingly, the future of the Mediterranean is also in the making. For the time being, the Americans and Europeans are trying to shape the new order in the region according to their own interests.

Unlike in the Cold War years, it seems that there will be different but specialised co-operation mechanisms in the Mediterranean in the future. Probably these specialised mechanisms will be functional in the various sub-regions of the Mediterranean depending on the specific needs of that sub-geography. However, the success of each of those security co-operation mechanisms in the Mediterranean will most probably depend upon harmony and complementarity rather than on competition between them.