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**THE OSCE MEDITERRANEAN DIMENSION:  
CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT**

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## *The institutional environment*

The place of the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension today is illustrated in the 1994 Budapest Document, which says that "the participating States decide to intensify the dialogue with the five non-participating Mediterranean States" and provides measures for such reinforcement to be implemented. Despite the political will expressed by the Budapest Document, however, one can hardly believe that the modest role played by the Mediterranean Dimension in the CSCE, since its inception in 1975 as part of the Helsinki Final Act, is going to change substantively in the OSCE. After the Budapest Conference, the measures set out by the Budapest Document have been implemented but only to show that on both sides of the sea basin the notion and the aims of the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension remains weak and uncertain. What Professor Victor-Yves Ghebali had pointed out in 1989<sup>1</sup> remains still today a substantially true picture of the Mediterranean Dimension: the non-member Mediterranean states have the possibility to be given audience by the OSCE member states but without any legal (and political) chance to influence the decision-making process in the organisation.

The most serious attempt at shaping out of the CSCE a fully-fledged organisation aiming at cooperation and security in the Mediterranean area - like a fully armed Athena from Jupiter's brain - was the proposal of establishing a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) that the Spanish and the Italian governments put forward in the September 1990 CSCE meeting in Palma de Mallorca. Initiated within the CSCE process, the CSCM -whenever implemented - would have retained a strong political link with the CSCE, though it would have acquired a specific role and a distinctive organisation that would have replaced and enlarged the CSCE Mediterranean Dimension. With respect to the "centre-periphery" model of Euro-Mediterranean relations included in the CSCE, the CSCM model represented an attempt at enhancing Euro-Mediterranean relations by creating two parallel organisations.

Resumed again and again<sup>2</sup>, the CSCM proposal has never been implemented so far (and probably it will never be so). Meanwhile, two unrelated political-institutional developments are now envisaging -like the CSCE - conflict prevention and management in the Mediterranean: the peace process in the Middle East, initiated by the 1991 Madrid Conference, and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, started only recently by the November 1995 Barcelona Conference. Eventually, they might implement the CSCE/CSCM legacy.

The multilateral dimension of the Middle East peace negotiations includes the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS), which in the last years brought forward a non-conclusive but important work in parallel to political negotiations. On the other hand,

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1 "le contenu de la Déclaration sur la Méditerranée se ramenait à une corbeille politico-militaire vide, à une corbeille économique rédigée em termes flous, à une vague allusion concernant une hypothétique réduction des forces armées étrangères à la région et, surtout, au principe de la poursuite du dialogue": La diplomatie de la détente: la Csce d'Helsinki à Vienne (1973-1989), Etablissement Emile Bruylant, Bruxelles, 1989, p. 373.

2 Eventually by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, IUP, which organised two non-governmental CSCM sessions, first in Malaga (15-20 June 1992: see Bulletin Interparlementaire, No. 2, 1992) and then in Valletta (1-4 November 1995: see Union Interparlementaire, Ite Conférence Interparlementaire sur la Sécurité et la Coopération en Méditerranée, Document Final, La Vallette (Malte), 1er-4 Novembre 1995).

the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership aims at establishing a "zone of peace and security" by working out a shared policy of conflict prevention and management in the Mediterranean. The emphasis is on two different though overlapping areas, the Middle East and the Mediterranean, and while it is on conflict resolution in the Middle East, conflict prevention seems to prevail in the Mediterranean.

Given the importance of both economic and cultural cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the latter seems to emerge as the framework that may borrow the most from the CSCE/CSCM blueprints. However, the role of economic cooperation within the Middle East peace process (i.e. the multilateral Regional Economic Development Working Group, REDWG, and the MENA Economic Summit process) cannot be overlooked either.

At this point in time, it is not up to anybody to say what will be the institutional framework wherein the "Mediterranean Dimension" will really be evolved, whether in the OSCE, in the Middle East peace process or in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (with its related WEU Mediterranean Dialogue), or eventually in the NATO Mediterranean Dialogue (and the emerging proposal for a Partnership for Mediterranean). What can be clearly understood, however, is that the questions related to the implementation of the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension must be regarded in a sort of competitive institutional environment - a development that is not that new in the post-Cold War era. In other words, one possible response to questions related to crisis prevention and management in the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension can well be that Mediterranean crisis prevention and management could better take place elsewhere or in combination with other institutional contexts.

In this moving institutional landscape, the future of conflict prevention and management in the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension can be taken into consideration from two different points of view. One can wonder whether the longstanding Mediterranean Dimension included in the CSCE and inherited by the OSCE will be able to develop into something more solid than what it has been so far. Otherwise, one can inquire whether, more broadly speaking, the fundamental experience made in the CSCE/OSCE conflict prevention and management can be translated - and to which extent - to the Mediterranean, within the OSCE as well as other institutional frameworks.

This paper proceeds on the second path. It discusses conflict prevention and management in the Mediterranean independently of any given institutional framework and seeks to understand to which extent conflict prevention and management experiences made in the CSCE/OSCE (and elsewhere) can be brought to bear in the Mediterranean environment. After this discussion, though, it goes back to the issue of the institutional framework.

### ***Lessons from the CSCE/OSCE and insights from the CSCM***

There are transformations taking place in the shift from the CSCE to the OSCE worth being reminded here. The CSCE was a large-scale, politically-binding conference diplomacy in which the emphasis fell on conflict avoidance<sup>3</sup> by mean of arms control and the establishment of CBMs. The OSCE is an institution with the legal task of preventing and - to a less clear extent - managing crises.

Because of the end of the Cold War, conflict avoidance purposes are truly marginal within the OSCE today. The three generations of CBMs that were worked out within the CSCE in 1975 (Helsinki Final Act), 1986 (Stockholm Document) and in 1990-1992 (the two Vienna

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<sup>3</sup> For the notion of conflict avoidance see Luc Reyckler, "The Art of Conflict Prevention", in Werner Bauwens, Luc Reyckler (eds.), *The Art of Conflict Prevention*, Brassey's Atlantic Commentaries No. 7, Brassey's, London, New York, 1994, pp. 1-21.

Documents) "have become a routine matter of military cooperation in the framework of the European Security Forum", according to Hans Günter Brauch. The same author notes that the CBMs are just of no use with respect to the new kind of conflicts that emerged in Europe with the end of the Cold War: "they did not yet address the new violent conflicts both with respect to their prevention and post-conflict peace-building"<sup>4</sup>.

The structures and the institutions established within the OSCE clearly show the importance and preminence acquired by crisis prevention and management, in tune with the transformation of the European security context (from a world of overwhelming military threats to one in which societal and cultural risks tend to prevail and low-intensity violent conflicts are erupting): the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Conflict Prevention Centre included in the Vienna Secretariat, the varying OSCE missions (essentially related to prevention and post-conflict peace-building), and the High Level Planning Group which plans the OSCE peace-keeping force for Nagorno-Karabakh.

How much is this CSCE/OSCE evolution relevant to the Mediterranean/Middle East situation? With the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the peace process in the Near East, the (North-South) Mediterranean and Middle Eastern security context has changed in the same direction of the European one, i.e. from a context in need of conflict avoidance<sup>5</sup> through one mostly in need of conflict prevention and management. To be sure, there is a debate about CBMs within the framework of the (South-South) Middle Eastern peace process to which the CSCE has some relevance<sup>6</sup>, but the risks which by far command the stage are socio-economic, cultural and political in their character and what is clearly in order is preventive diplomacy (i.e. "concerted action designed to resolve, manage or contain disputes before they become violent"<sup>7</sup> including some management and containment of conflicts underway<sup>8</sup>), conflict prevention (actions aiming "at the supposed roots of ... conflict: poverty, environmental degradation, overpopulation, resource competition, and lack of legitimate institutions"<sup>9</sup>) and crisis

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4 Hans Günter Brauch, "Confidence (and Security) Building Measures: Lessons from the CSCE Experience for the Western Mediterranean", in Antonio Marquina and Hans Günter Brauch (eds.), *Confidence Building and Partnership in the Western Mediterranean. Tasks for Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Avoidance*, UNISCI, Papers No. 1, Madrid, 1994, pp. 185-228.

5 During the Cold War the Mediterranean and the Middle East were conspicuous beside other areas as possible sources of "horizontal escalation". However, no conflict avoidance effort was pursued in the Mediterranean Dimension of the OSCE. On the other hand, non-CSCE efforts to establish measures of confidence and arms control at sea were pursued only to a very limited extent (see Marco Carnovale, guest ed., Special issue on "Naval Arms Control and Maritime Security in the Mediterranean", *The International Spectator*, 28, 4, 1993).

6 Hans-Heinrich Wrede, "Applicability of the CSCE Experience to the Middle Eastern Conflict Area", *The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations*, 14, 2, 1992, pp. 114-22. More in general, see: Geoffrey Kemp, *The Control of the Middle East Arms Race*, Washington DC, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1991; Shai Feldman (ed.), *Confidence Building and Verification: Prospects in the Middle East*, The Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, The Jerusalem Post & Westview Press, Jerusalem & Boulder (Co.), 1994; Mohamed Nabil Fahmy, "Egypt's Disarmament Initiative", *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November 1990; Gerald M. Steinberg, "Middle East Arms Control and Regional Security", *Survival*, vol. 36, No. 1, Spring 1994, pp. 126-141; Ariel Levite, "Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in the Middle East", in Chantal De Jonge Oudraat (ed.), *Conference of Research Institutes in the Middle East. Proceedings of the Cairo Conference (18-20 April 1993)*, UNIDIR, United Nations, New York and Geneva, 1994, pp. 97-102.

7 Stephen John Stedman, 'Alchemy for a New Order. Overselling "Preventive Diplomacy"', *Foreign Affairs* (New York), 74, 3, May-June 1995, pp. 14-20.

8 Margaretha af Ugglas, 'Conditions for Successful Preventive Diplomacy', in Ministry for Foreign Affairs, *The Challenge of Preventive Diplomacy. The Experience of the CSCE*, Stockholm, 1994, pp.11-32.

9 Stedman, op. cit.

management, particularly in the form of post-conflict peace-building.

In this sense, while the CSCE experience may be of some value to the on-going peace process in the Near East within the framework of the ACRS, in as much as the broader Mediterranean context (more or less the context singled out by the Barcelona process) is concerned what is relevant is the on-going OSCE experience with crisis prevention. In particular, it must be noted that the idea of a Pact of Stability (Euro-Mediterranean Pact in the Barcelona Declaration wording) is sketched out by the Barcelona Declaration and is supported by European governments, especially France's.

This may be an important indication for those who have now the task of putting wine in the empty bottle of the "area of peace and stability" envisaged by the Barcelona process. However, governments have to account for lasting fundamental differences in the two frameworks, the European and the Mediterranean. To begin with, these differences can be pointed out by referring to the intellectual process which has accompanied the debate on the CSCM.

The CSCM's intellectual contribution has been admirably summarized by José A. Sainz de la Peña<sup>10</sup> in reporting the debate which supported the working out of the CSCM proposal in Spain:

Two main differences were found when trying to adapt the CSCE system to the Mediterranean. Firstly, due the risk of military confrontation in Europe, the security "basket" had priority in the CSCE. Whereas in the Mediterranean, other "baskets" such as Cooperation and Human Rights were emphasized because of the great disproportion in the military capacity between the north and south shores.

Secondly in the CSCE there was a great cultural homogeneity among the participants who shared the same system of values. Whereas in the Mediterranean both shores had different cultures which had been often confronted in spite of common origins, history and a literature based on mutual tolerance.

The second point is most relevant for our discourse. In the OSCE framework, two powerful factors seem to make crisis prevention and management possible - though neither necessarily successful nor applicable or easily applicable (as in the case of former Yugoslavia): (a) countries affected by crises in Central-Eastern Europe are very willing to comply with Western European or, more generally speaking, Western values and goals, as to a lesser or greater extent they are strongly interested in being integrated into Western institutions; (b) both international conflicts and domestic conflicts with international implications are viewed as shared security threats or risks by regional actors, in Central-Eastern as well as in Western Europe.

The same is not true in the Euro-Mediterranean region, where countries on respective shores pursue forms of international cooperation but do not pursue any goal of integration. For example, this is even symbolically portrayed in the EU decisions in relation to future membership whereby a line has been eventually drawn between those countries in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean (Cyprus and Malta) that are eligible as members of the EU and those that are not and will not (with Turkey maybe somewhat in between).

It may be aptly assumed that this line is also separating two different areas of crisis prevention and management opportunities and policies<sup>11</sup>.

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10 "Confidence Building Within the Frame of Cultural Dialogue", in Antonio Marquina and Hans Günter Brauch (eds.), op. cit., pp. 245-256.

11 It may be noted that the above mentioned line also crosses the OSCE, cutting Russia and large sectors of the CIS out of the more integrative Western-Eastern European core. In this sense, a broader analytical framework could be developed wherein there would be two areas (a "Partnership for Peace" area vs. an area including Russia,

While a common integrative ground eases crisis prevention and management in the European scenario within the OSCE, the absence of a common integrative background may make crisis prevention and management in the Euro-Mediterranean area more difficult than in the OSCE circle. This is not to say, however, that crisis prevention and management in the Euro-Mediterranean area cannot be pursued: the fact is that they may require other instruments and ways. There may be other common grounds conducive to crisis prevention and management. For example, in the Middle East both Israel and the Arab states have no other real option than to proceed towards a peaceful arrangement, however warm or cold they may feel about it. Such a context - quite different in its character from the European drive towards integration and probably more impervious to progress - unifies the region and makes crisis prevention and management possible.

Let's try to summarize the conclusions that have been pointed out in this section:

- (a) the security context that is prevailing in today's Euro-Mediterranean relations needs a collective effort of crisis management, particularly in the shape of conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building;
- (b) in this sense the Euro-Mediterranean context is similar to the present OSCE context and a Pact of Stability may be put forward in the Mediterranean too;
- (c) however, unlike the OSCE, the Euro-Mediterranean context is not predicated on strong tendencies to political and cultural integration; consequently, the policies directed at preventing conflict and the conditions for these policies to succeed must be predicated on common grounds that may be different from what is suggested by the OSCE experience.

These different common grounds must be duly investigated, because understanding what is, or what may be, the shared Euro-Mediterranean security ground (vs. OSCE's) is an essential condition for proceeding to elaborate on what kind of crisis prevention and management is allowed for in the area. In order to understand what common ground would allow for crisis prevention and management in the Euro-Mediterranean framework, an analysis of mutual perceptions of security is needed. This point is dealt with in next section.

### ***The shared Euro-Mediterranean security ground***

In this section European and Arab mutual security goals and perceptions are first pointed out. These security goals and perceptions will help defining a common Euro-Mediterranean security ground. The latter should allow for identifying more precisely which actions would fit better with collective security cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean framework.

As already noted, with the end of the Cold War the threat to Western Europe from the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern areas, mostly in the shape of "horizontal escalation", has come to an end. The security situation which has replaced that prevailing during the Cold War - repeatedly analyzed by the literature<sup>12</sup> and officially received by the Heads of state and government in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Rome on 7-8 November 1991 ("The Alliance's Strategic Concept") - is predicated on non-military factors, be they socio-political, economic or cultural in their character. Military risks, like those brought about by unconventional proliferation, are not missing in the Mediterranean picture. However, they are

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part of the CIS, part of the former Yugoslavia and the Mediterranean) to which different conflict resolution schemes would apply.

12 Roberto Aliboni, *European security across the Mediterranean*, WEU Institute for Security Studies, Chaillot Papers, 2, Paris, 1991; José-Luis Buhigas, "Una política de seguridad para el Mediterraneo", *Revista Española de Defensa*, 29-30, 1990, pp. 78-85; Miguel Angel Moratinos Cuyaubé, *La seguridad europea y el Mediterraneo*, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Informativo 7, 1990.

not regarded and perceived as immediate and effective threats. This is shown, for example, by the fact that in Western Europe the development of an anti-missile technology is eventually lagging behind (with the exception of Israel). The reasons Europe feels its security affected with respect to the areas south of the Mediterranean sea are to be found elsewhere.

Three main factors have a security impact on Europe: (a) the demographic reversal taking place between the northern and southern shores; (b) the slow economic growth and high unemployment rates of southern Mediterranean countries; (c) the political vacuum arising from the inability of Arab regimes to broaden their bases by creating the consensus which would legitimize their regimes and, along with liberal opposition, integrate political Islam within national political systems.

These factors present the EU with increasing migrations and a weak and unstable regional economic neighbourhood. Migration from Muslim countries, particularly those surrounding the Mediterranean basin, brings cultural opposition inside Europe itself. It puts the EU members thorny political and cultural dilemmas. It exposes historical, political and cultural differences towards inter-cultural relations between the EU member states and makes freedom of personal movements within the EU more difficult. As for the economic weakness of the Mediterranean neighbours, it is more and more regarded by the EU as a danger in a world in which globalization seems to go hand in hand with stronger and well balanced proximity (i.e. regional) relations. While Japan and US economic relations with their respective regional neighbours are reasonably solid and well balanced and mutually reinforcing, the same is not true for EU relations with the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern areas<sup>13</sup>.

On the Arab side, the end of the Cold War, the 1990-91 War against Iraq in the Upper Persian Gulf and the beginning of the peace process in the Middle East have changed Arabs' strategic self-perception and their security vision and brought about strong feelings of insecurity and threat. The collapse of the Soviet Union has suddenly and unexpectedly eliminated the only factor which made the attainment of pan-Arab regional claims (Palestine) and international ambitions credible and feasible. Faced by one single superpower, without the possibility to appeal to anybody more against the US, first the Arabs felt they had to participate in the Gulf War beside the US and the UN coalition and, then, they understood there was no way out of the necessity to go to peace with Israel.

Both the Gulf War and the beginning of the negotiations with Israel, however, have reinforced and multiplied domestic political opposition against the regimes in power from many quarters, particularly from nationalist and - most of all - religious groups and parties<sup>14</sup>.

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13 Nazih N. Ayubi (ed.), *Distant Neighbours. The Political Economy of Relations between Europe and the Middle East/North Africa*, Ithaca Press, Reading, 1995; I. Bensidoun, A. Chevallier, "Les échanges commerciaux euro-méditerranéens", *Economie Internationale* (Paris), 58, 1994, pp.111-130 ; Robert Bistolfi (sous la direction de), *Euro-Méditerranée, une région à construire*, Publisud, Paris, 1995, pp. 57-100; Bichara Khader, *L'Europe et la Méditerranée, Géopolitique de la proximité*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1994, pp. 251-261.

14 A very good summary of the Arab public opinion's perceptions after the beginning of the Arab-Israeli peace process and its insistence on the use of a double standard by the West against the Arab and Muslim world has been made by David McDowall, *Europe and the Arabs. Discord or Symbiosis?*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Middle East Programme, London, 1992; on the impact of the Gulf War see: Salah Bassiouni, "L'impact de la guerre du Golfe sur la politique au Moyen-Orient", and Mustapha Sehim, "Le vecu de la guerre du Golfe", both in *Fondation pour les études de défense nationale, Séminaire sur la sécurité et la coopération en Méditerranée*, Paris, 30-31 octobre, 1991 (ronéo); Abdelwahab Biad, "Le Maghreb et la guerre du Golfe", in *IREMAM, Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord*, vol. 29, Paris, Editions du CNRS, 1992, pp. 439-52; Nadji Safir, "Les opinions maghrébines et la guerre du Golfe", *Peuples Méditerranéens*, No. 58-59, January-June 1992, pp. 39-47; Yahia Zoubir, "Reactions in the Maghreb to the Gulf Crisis and War", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Winter 1993, pp. 83-103.

Threats to Arab regimes today are no longer and not primarily coming from external sources, like Israel, Western imperialism, tensions within the East-West confrontation and inter-Arab rivalries. To be sure, several of these threats have not yet disappeared nor related perceptions have completely changed. However, threats are stemming primarily from domestic politics. These threats, in turn, are more or less directly related to the new international situation and Western policies. The latter are not of much help to current Arab regimes. UN/US policies in Somalia and European policies with respect to Bosnia or to migrant peoples are regarded by Arab public opinion as anti-Arab or anti-Muslim and tend to reinforce Islamist and non-Islamist oppositions grievances about present Arab governments and their links with the West. Furthermore, the West is not supporting Arab regimes as strongly as the latter would like. In fact, the majority of Western governments is well aware of the non-democratic character of religious and other opposition movements to current Arab governments, but is no less aware of the fact that the latter are authoritarian and repressive and are unable and unwilling to introduce more pluralism and democracy in their society.

Though the West supports present Arab regimes, it doesn't really consider them fully legitimate, a situation that is obviously dangerous and insecure for the Arab regimes. Given this situation, two fundamental reasons have pushed the Mediterranean Arab countries to confirm their interest in the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension as well as the WEU and NATO Dialogues and, eventually, to join the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership beside the Middle East process: (a) the importance of establishing a strong and structured economic cooperation with the the European Union in order to help stopping the downgrading of the socio-economic situation in their countries and the consequent increase of political opposition stemming from unemployment, poverty, social inequalities and so on; (b) the importance of sharing international institutions for cooperating with Europe and, in the end, have a say in their political processes related to the Mediterranean situation.

Given these respective security visions and requirements, what is the security pact, if any, underlying the Euro-Mediterranean relations? From the European point of view, the goal is to strengthen the economic and political performance of the Mediterranean area by more or less gradually introducing pluralism. This is particularly evident in the fresh Barcelona process, which will increase instability in the short term but is expected to secure Arab world's stability, strength and flexibility in a more distant future and provide security to the EU by containing migrations and securing a stronger regional partner to the EU within the context of global economic competition. From the Arab point of view, the security cooperation expected from the implementation of a Euro-Mediterranean framework has two inter-related goals: upgrading the European political and economic support and preventing and/or containing European and Western ingerence and interference into domestic politics.

The common ground is therefore here: though for different reasons, Arabs and Europeans have both an interest in going to the the "supposed roots of ... conflict: poverty, environmental degradation, overpopulation, resource competition, and lack of legitimate institutions".

This common ground clearly emphasises, on the Arab as well as on the European side, the need to develop a stronger crises prevention capacities in the Mediterranean in a distinctive joint political and institutional Euro-Mediterranean framework.

Though there is a strong Euro-Arab convergence on crisis prevention, the extent the latter is going to be applied is somewhat limited. These limitations stem from the difference between the Euro-Mediterranean and the OSCE frameworks. The root of these differences lies on two factors: (a) first, the EU is interested in more pluralism and the assertion of democracy

and human rights in the Mediterranean countries but, unlike what happens with Central-Eastern Europe (and even Russia and the western parts of the CIS), the absence of pluralism, human rights and democracy in these countries is not regarded in itself as a strategic threat to the future political and economic development of the Union (pluralism and the like are instrumental to stability and security and less precise standard will be required); (b) on the other hand, the Arab countries will never even consider common discussions about minorities in their countries, like Central-Eastern European countries have done within the OSCE and the Stability Pact, as that would be considered an ingerence and a threat to their fundamental political stability. Unlike Central-Eastern and Western European countries in the OSCE, the Euro-Mediterranean partners will never act against common threats but only to smooth or eliminate reciprocal risks and threats. This will limit the range and even the substance of joint action for preventing crises.

With these limitations, crisis prevention will be largely possible, however. A Euro-Mediterranean pact of stability, dealing through *ad hoc* "round tables" with issues as diverse as water allocation, boundary conflicts regulation, infrastructures implementation, and the like, is certainly the most important and substantive development to be expected within the Euro-Mediterranean framework. An improvement of the modest mechanism for political cooperation set out by the Barcelona Declaration should also be possible and could work to upgrade crises prevention capacities. Whether a common center for monitoring, analysing and preventing crises will be possible in the Euro-Mediterranean framework remains to be seen and will probably be the result of some meaningful success in dealing with less engaging measures in the beginning.

### *Crisis management in the Mediterranean?*

If a distinction is made between crises prevention and management in the sense that the latter entails most of all peace-keeping and peace-enforcing, one can wonder whether the Euro-Mediterranean context can go beyond crises prevention or, put otherwise, what room is left for crises management in the "Mediterranean Dimension".

Leaving aside Cyprus, in the Arab and Arab-Israeli areas peace-keeping under the direct leadership of the UN has been limited but not unsuccessful (as in the case of UNIFIL)<sup>15</sup>. Arab states tend to accept Arab (Arab League) crises management, much less so interventions from non-Arab entities. Post-Cold War experiences with the Gulf, former Yugoslavia and Somalia have been evaluated in a very negative way by both Arab governments and public opinions. As we have already noted in the above, in the new international situation crises management - whichever its leadership - is perceived by the Arabs as an instrument of Western interference and domination, basically anti-Arab or anti-Muslim in its character. In this sense, for example, the prevailing humanitarian operation in the Iraqi Kurdistan is largely considered by Arab public opinions as directed against Iraq's territorial integrity. Contents and emphases are obviously varying according to whether such conclusion comes from governments, liberal and nationalist oppositions or religious groups, but the substance of the conclusion is the same. This attitude is confirmed by opinions and perceptions related to re-arrangement underway in Western security alliances. The upgrading of forces mobility within the alliances (e.g. the CJTFs), the establishment of the NATO standing naval force in the Mediterranean, the military triangular cooperation between France, Spain and Italy in the Western Mediterranean area and their "Helios" satellite project as well as, eventually, the setting up of Euromarfor and Eurofor within the WEU are regularly regarded as instruments with poor broad security rationales, then

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<sup>15</sup> Georgios Kostakos, 'UN Peace-keeping Missions in the Mediterranean Region', in Richard Gillespie (ed.), *Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 1, Pinter Publishers, 1994, pp. 58-81.

presumably and potentially directed against the Arabs and their interests.

In this framework of misunderstanding or poor understanding it is not surprising that the dialogue with a number of South Mediterranean countries (and Mauritania) launched by the WEU in 1992 has proved unable to produce any significant result so far. A recent proposal for a joint Euro-Mediterranean effort to manage crises in Sub-Saharan Africa<sup>16</sup> has been broadly well received, but it doesn't solve the question of a joint Euro-Mediterranean crises management in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

While the OSCE doesn't envisage explicit means and ways to extend to the Mediterranean Dimension its facilities and capacities for crises prevention and management, beside crises prevention policies<sup>17</sup> the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership adopted in Barcelona in November 1995, plans (though in a very loose way) a number of policies which may bring about common actions in the field of crises management and even crises avoidance (in the shape of CBMs, anti-proliferation measures, the establishment of free-weapons zones and arms control). Nonetheless, whether the Barcelona process will be able to go into crises management and avoidance remains to be seen.

There are factors that may act in the next future towards establishing a general framework of trust and confidence and give way to an expansion of presently limited opportunities for Mediterranean crises prevention and, most of all, management. First, the success of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the expansion of the scope of its presently very limited Political Cooperation mechanism might be one such elements of increased confidence in the Mediterranean Dimension. Second, the success of IFOR in Bosnia may also be very instrumental in convincing the Arabs that Western and European security alliances are not necessarily against them and the Muslims. If circumstances will allow for increasing basic political confidence in the Mediterranean Dimension, the actual fragmented situation in the area - as reflected in the following table - could be superseded by a more diffuse and flexible capacity for crises prevention, management and resolution and give way to an appropriate institutionalization.

<i>leader</i>	<i>framework</i>	<i>type of action</i>
US	Middle East process	Crises avoidance & prevention
UN/NATO	IFOR	Crises management
EU	Euro-Med. Partnership	Crises prevention

16 W. Kühne, G. Lenzi, A. Vasconcelos, WEU's Role in Crisis Management and Conflict Resolution in Sub-Saharan Africa, Institute for Security Studies of the Western European Union, Chaillot Papers, No. 22, Paris December 1995.

17 "The Parties will consider practical steps to ... - promote conditions likely to develop good-neighbourly relations among themselves and support processes aimed at stability, security, prosperity and regional and sub-regional cooperation; - consider any confidence and security-building measures that could be taken between the parties with a view to the creation of an 'area of peace and stability in the Mediterranean', including the long term possibility of establishing a Euro-Mediterranean pact to that end." In the view of this author the use of the terms of CBMs and CSBMs in a context prevalently referred to prevention is inappropriate.

To this broad conclusion about crises management in the Mediterranean Dimension two footnotes must be added in relation to "conditionality" and "migration". In fact, both of them may be regarded as special cases of crises management.

First, the Barcelona process includes conditionality, in the sense that EU financial support is contingent to the observance by the Mediterranean partners of the principles related to democracy, pluralism and human rights adopted by the Barcelona Declaration. True, the Barcelona Declaration points out that these principles have to be adjusted and interpreted according to inter-cultural diversity. In any case, it is evident that this aspect might introduce tensions within the Euro-Mediterranean "pact" by asserting elements of crisis management and unilateral security enforcement which go against Arab expectations.

Second, there is no doubt that in the Mediterranean Dimension migration is probably the most serious crisis in being, a crisis that would require management. Quite surprisingly, however, migration is almost missing in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, which in principle is the most fitting framework for the migration issue to be faced. The reason is that the EU cannot act in the field of migration if their members are unable to come to the necessary agreements for a number of fundamental policies related to immigrated peoples to be shared. In other words, the EU is not prepared to discuss and implement a joint trans-Mediterranean migration policy. This is a serious shortcoming. In the Mediterranean perspective, there is no doubt that migration plays a much more relevant role with respect to security perceptions and requirements than many other issues.

### *Some conclusions*

The Mediterranean Dimension can be defined in many ways. If the Middle Eastern dimension is emphasised, the CSCE past experience with crisis avoidance and management is more relevant than current OSCE experience with crises prevention. The opposite is true whenever the OSCE and Barcelona process notion of Mediterranean Dimension is adopted.

Between crises prevention in the "Mediterranean Dimension" and crises avoidance in the "Middle Eastern Dimension", the scope for developing some joint capacity or framework for crises management seems to remain limited. It may be expanded, however, if crises avoidance and prevention will succeed.

Which institution may be more fitting with the aim of developing crises prevention and management in the Mediterranean? To the question that has been raised in the first section of this paper an answer cannot be easily provided. Like the CSCE, also the OSCE seem focussed on Europe. The scope of the Middle Eastern process, despite its importance, tends to be more limited in its scope than the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The latter will certainly be able to develop as the most important factor for crises prevention, but its range in the field of security remains rather narrow and undefined. A joint security-related framework might be developed within NATO (a Partnership for Mediterranean?<sup>18</sup>) or the WEU, but NATO-WEU relations within the Western security structure need to be previously clarified. Furthermore, whether a separation between security and non-security frameworks will be accepted in trans-Mediterranean relations remains also to be seen. Competition and absence of coordination in the European as well as in the Western and inter-Arab world seem to prevail. They are not positive factors for more cooperation and security to be developed in the Mediterranean

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<sup>18</sup> The concept of a Partnership for Mediterranean has been introduced by the Italian Defence Minister, Gen. Domenico Corcione, at the informal meeting held by the NATO Defence Ministers in Williamsburg on 5-6 October 1995; see Atlantic News, 6 October 1995, pp. 1-2.

Dimension.