



MEDITERRANEAN PAPER SERIES 2011

IN THE WAKE OF THE REVOLUTIONS RETHINKING MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY AND STRATEGY

A REFLECTION ON THE 5TH MEETING OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY GROUP, BARCELONA
OCTOBER 19-21, 2011

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of the United States

STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

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About the Mediterranean Strategy Group

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Cover photo: Migrants arrive on the Italian island of Lampedusa after a five-day trip from the port of Misrata in Libya
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IN THE WAKE OF THE REVOLUTIONS: RETHINKING MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY AND STRATEGY

A REFLECTION ON THE 5TH MEETING OF THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY GROUP¹

MEDITERRANEAN PAPER SERIES

NOVEMBER 2011

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¹ This paper is based on discussions held at the fifth Mediterranean Strategy Group meeting, “After the Revolutions: Rethinking Mediterranean Security,” organized by The German Marshall Fund of the United States in cooperation with the Centro de Estudios y Documentación Internacionales de Barcelona (CIDOB), the Patronat Catalunya Món and the Italian Institute for International Affairs (IAI), and in partnership with the Compagnia di San Paolo, ENEL, OCP Foundation, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, and the Luso-American Foundation, on October 19-21, 2011. See the Annex for the agenda of the meeting and list of participants.

Emiliano Alessandri is a Transatlantic Fellow with The German Marshall Fund. He wishes to thank participants for their contribution of information, ideas, and perspectives from around the Mediterranean. The opinions expressed in the paper are the author’s only.

As the anniversary of the Arab uprisings approaches, the popular phrase “Arab Spring” is increasingly in question. The uncertain future of the ongoing transitions, and the risk of protracted instability and violence in some of the affected countries, suggest that the use of a less emphatic and more open-ended term, such as Arab “transformations” might be more appropriate. In fact, some go so far as to question “Arab revolutions,” at least in some cases. Was Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak’s ouster the outcome of a revolutionary act or a military coup? This is no academic question given the uncertainty surrounding the role that Egyptian military elites and other segments of the old regime will keep playing even in the new context. Moreover, while some actors in the region, notably Saudi Arabia in the Gulf, are pursuing a counter-revolutionary strategy aimed at reversing the tide, first-rank players such as Iran in the Middle East and Algeria in North Africa have for now been able to contain or manage the wave of change.

There is no downplaying the importance of the Arab uprisings of 2011. Some of the longest-ruling Arab leaders fell in a matter of just weeks or months as a result of mass mobilizations that had not been seen in such scope and scale since the decolonization movements. Other Arab leaders will probably follow down the same path in due course. The demise of authoritarian Arab regimes has opened the door for new political and socio-economic experiments to emerge. Free and fair elections are being held or are scheduled in countries that for a long time, or ever, had known one of the kinds. Yet, it remains unclear in which of the affected countries the social basis of political power will truly shift and whether, in the process, the foundations of genuinely democratic systems will be laid. While representative governance is undoubtedly among the demands of the masses who have taken to the streets, the vision of liberal

pluralistic political systems arising from the ruins of the crumbling authoritarian Arab regimes may to a large degree be a projection of Western wishes (and a delusion after the failure to anticipate the uprisings). 2011 was unquestionably a watershed year for the Arab world, which abruptly set a region (in)famously known for its immobility on a path of reform and change. Will it also be remembered as a turning point for Arab democracy? This question unfortunately still begs a definitive answer.

Even if democracy were to take root in most of the countries in transition, there is a growing realization that the Mediterranean security equation will possibly become only more complex as a result of ongoing political transformations. The sudden and inordinate disintegration of the old regional order has already highlighted new security challenges, especially for Israel and Western countries. To the extent that the authoritarian stability model now being contested provided Western countries with Arab leaders willing to subscribe to the West’s main regional priorities, from Israel’s security to the fight against Jihadist terrorism — the new regional context has become less predictable and less safe for Western interests. At least in the short term for the West, more Arab democracy will not automatically translate into greater security. On the other hand, the rise of representative and democratic politics in the region will likely give greater prominence and urgency to issues of direct interest to the Arab peoples, which had been never fully addressed by Arab dictators, such as the right to mobility (including long-term migration) and the access to jobs and resources that are key to economic development and individual well-being. Concerns for human, urban, and food security, in addition to conventional security issues such as arms proliferation, terrorism, and the ever present risk of inter-state conflict, will rise in importance in the months and years to come, significantly expanding the scope and diversifying

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the content of the traditional Mediterranean security agenda.

The combination of these developments forces Western countries to review and rethink Mediterranean strategy in the light of new factors. What follows is an attempt to identify some of the new priorities and sketch out policy options and challenges for actors and institutions involved.

The New Strategic Environment

Although the recent transformations in the Arab world have been triggered by demands and will have their most immediate impact on domestic political and socio-economic balances, they will also have significant implications for regional and international relations. Since the old regional order was guaranteed, and was actually embodied, by Arab autocrats and their regimes, the fall of these regimes is enough to reshape the strategic landscape. The emerging strategic environment seems characterized by two broad, and partly conflicting, trends. On one hand, public opinion, if not democratic politics, is emerging as a powerful force and a key factor in determining the political course of regional actors, including their future foreign policy posture and priorities. This is a transversal, and potentially unifying, dynamic at play in the region. On the other hand, the strategic landscape is becoming more differentiated as the affected countries embark on different trajectories of change (or in some cases resistance to change). In the process, new powers will emerge or re-emerge. Some will have false starts or face setbacks. For others, change has already led to internal crisis or civil conflict and will translate into a loss of international standing. The case of Syria is tragically emblematic in this respect. The new environment will be as diverse as it will be plural. External actors, Western as well as non-Western, will continue to play a significant role in the region as more dynamic and possibly more

open Mediterranean societies will seek closer connections with countries in adjacent regions and basins (Eurasia, Africa, the Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic approaches) and with larger global trends.

Previous analysis has pointed out that the Mediterranean has become more globalized over the decades, emerging as a “global transit space” increasingly integrated into the world economy.¹ The events of the Arab Spring, opening the way for external actors to gain even greater influence in the new fluid context, is furthering multipolarism in the Mediterranean. China suffered setbacks in Libya and other countries in which its investors and firms were represented, but the country seems set to play an increasingly prominent role as the region’s need for investment and goods will hardly be met by traditional (Western) actors. Russia is coming back to the game, and its abstention on the Libya operation and veto on global sanctions against Syria have already affected the way the international community has been able to influence developments on the ground. Brazil has expressed a new interest in the Arab world in recent years, while taking controversial stances on sensitive regional issues such as the Iranian nuclear program. The ongoing democratic wave might give it the chance to exert an influence that is based not only on its fast-growing economy and expanding connections with new regional players, but on it being a leading democracy from the developing world. Gulf countries have long since been part of the Middle Eastern equation and were all forced to react to the new dynamics. Some have actually been directly affected by the larger movement in the region. If Saudi Arabia has for now chosen a strategy of containment and restoration, as was

¹ See the conference report of the fourth Mediterranean Strategy Group meeting, “Maritime Commerce and Security in the Mediterranean and Adjacent Waters,” by Emiliano Alessandri and Silvia Colombo, December 22, 2010, http://www.gmfus.org/cs/publications/publication_view?publication.id=1547

on display in its military intervention in Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, on the other hand, have tried to channel the currents of change to serve their regional interests, and have joined forces with NATO and Western countries in the international response to the Libyan crisis. Iran's and Turkey's regional hegemonic ambitions are augmented by both the new fluidity on the ground and by Western weakness. But while for Turkey the main challenge seems to be the new diffused instability around its southern borders, including the risk of a reinvigorated Kurdish separatist movement, the risk for Iran is much higher: contagion.

The debt crises in the eurozone, together with the larger crisis of institutions, leadership, and vision in the EU, have constrained Europe's response to the opportunities and challenges unveiled by the unfolding Arab transformations. More seriously, they prompt the question of whether the EU, through its markets, financial instruments, and regional policies, will be a resource for regional development or will it become paradoxically a destabilizing factor through its internal failure, adding further uncertainty to the future of the regional order. As far as the United States is concerned, opportunities for a more democratic Middle East coexist with concerns about how the new regimes will deal with Israel and whether radical Islamist forces will manage to wed democratic politics with anti-Western objectives. In the eyes of the Arab peoples, moreover, Washington's enduring strategic relationship with Saudi Arabia undermines the United States' credibility as an agent for change. U.S. drawdown from Afghanistan and complete military withdrawal from Iraq while the region is in flux risk reinforcing the perception of weakness and strategic retrenchment. Iran may gain in the short term from the combination of these developments and the fall of Western-leaning Arab dictators.

The Arab transformations are also redefining some of the old divides in the larger region. North Africa overall seems to hold better prospects for democratization than the Levant, where transitions for now have been less in number and less successful. Challenges, however, are not lacking.

First of all, while Tunisia has just held its first post-Arab Spring elections, Egypt's transition remains very much uncertain. The military is still in charge of the country and political parties are either weak or at odds with the transitional elites. The various rounds of elections will keep the country in a prolonged state of uncertainty as to the new political settlement. Episodes of inter-religious violence have multiplied after the relatively peaceful revolts in the Spring. The anti-Israel, anti-Western orientations of segments of the Egyptian public may enter the calculus of Egypt's new elites as the weight of public opinion increases. Libya has been "liberated," but only after a protracted civil conflict and foreign military intervention. It may have become more divided and weak in the process, with newly risen warlords exerting control over different cities and regions and claiming personal dividends for the successful rebellion against Colonel Gaddafi's regime. For Libya, the end of Gaddafi's rule opens —not closes— serious questions about the future of the country, especially as a united entity.

Reform in North Africa, moreover, does not automatically mean greater stability. The Maghreb seems increasingly affected by dynamics in the Sahel, where security challenges, including Jihadist terrorism, remain significant even in the new context. Moreover, the rivalry between Algeria and Morocco over Western Sahara, which has been a main impediment to bilateral cooperation and regional integration for years, continues to undermine order in the Western Mediterranean even now. Algeria is, in fact, one of the big question marks of the Arab transformations. For now,

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the Algerian government has used oil and gas-derived state revenues to address popular demands and contain internal dissent. But Algiers fears encirclement by a ring of emerging North African democracies, and its political future is far from assured. Algeria also opposed Western intervention in Libya, again choosing the opposite position from Morocco which while pursuing internal reform has actively worked in the region with Western partners, such as through involvement in the so-called Libya Contact Group established after the outbreak of the civil war.

Already very active in the the Levant, Turkey is asserting a new interest in North Africa, adding further complexity to the picture. Despite the new pro-democracy rhetoric coming from the political leadership in Ankara, Turkey's influence seems to be increasing in status quo-oriented Algeria. Even when Turkey has thrown its weight behind the rise of new democracies, the full international implications of Turkey's engagement remain the subject of debate. Turkey was the first among Western countries to ask Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to step down and has since then cultivated the image of champion of democracy in its fast changing neighborhood. Ankara has also hinted at a new "axis" with Cairo. With Turkish-Israeli relations still suffering from unsolved bilateral issues and the stalemate in the Middle East peace process, the prospect that Turkey and a new Egypt could unite behind the common goal of weakening Israel's position through a unilateral revision of the regional order that emerged after Camp David cannot be discarded.

Egyptians, for their part, were disappointed with the United States for its late and initially timid support to their rebellion and have since looked with suspicion upon the United States' closeness to the country's military elite currently in charge of the transition. Criticism extends to the United States' (and Europe's) limited economic assistance

since the overthrow of the Mubarak regime. Instead, it is possible to see a growing "Gulfization" of Egypt, with expanding Saudi Arabian influence on the Egyptian economy. Islamist groups in Egypt also have close contacts with Saudi Arabian counterparts.

Although North Africa is far from stabilized, its challenges remain far less than those facing countries in the East. For months, the Eastern Mediterranean has witnessed a violent repression in Syria. Both strategies of engagement and containment as regards the Iranian nuclear question seem to have failed in deterring the Iranian leadership from pursuing the atomic bomb. The Middle East peace process remains stalled while the quest for Palestinian statehood at the UN has for now only dramatized the lack of agreement between the parties and within the international community. The uncertain future of Afghanistan and Iraq post-U.S. withdrawal adds further questions marks. Long-standing issues such as Kurdish separatism and the question of Cyprus further complicate the security environment. The Eastern Mediterranean has also seen a lot of dynamism, as Turkey has become a lead actor in recent years. Turkey, in fact, sees itself at the center of many larger regional dynamics. The much-publicized Turkish model may be a questionable formula, but there is no doubt that Turkey has risen as a more independent player in the region thanks to its vibrant economy, proactive diplomacy, and the ability of Ankara's leaders to present themselves as the spokesmen of Muslim communities around the region, in the transitional countries as well as in the Palestinian territories. A neo-Ottoman strategy, although denied by current Turkish leaders, seems to have been revived. For some, Turkey's influence goes beyond its proactive and multi-directional economic and diplomatic engagement with its neighbors. To the extent that it stands as a successful example of reconciliation

between democratic politics and Islamic tradition and culture, Turkey is influential because of what it represents, in addition to what it does.

Behind these different strategic dynamics, there is the largely similar social and demographic reality of a region with deep imbalances. Both in the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, weak economies that remain underdeveloped and are only limitedly integrated in the global economy structurally generate unemployment. Youth unemployment is a particularly intractable problem and may continue to be a driver for political unrest even in the next context. As new elites will be voted in and out for failing to satisfactorily address social and economic imbalances that have accumulated for decades, the new regimes will be hard to govern, largely irrespective of the political orientations of the parties in power. The risk of weak, inherently unstable regimes is common to the Southern Mediterranean as a whole and could emerge as a transversal negative trend, offsetting the unifying and uplifting one of the spread of representative governance. In the worst case scenario, the strategic landscape of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region may come to resemble that of sub-Saharan Africa, with failing states proliferating across the Arab world. This would take the security and strategic challenges mentioned above to a whole new different level.

Migration and Human Security

Among the few certainties about the new Mediterranean environment is that the demographic outlook of the North and the South will continue to be very different for some time to come, with a still growing, mostly youthful, population in Southern Mediterranean countries and an ageing, slow-growing, or even stalling population in Southern Europe. This difference in demographic trends, together with the traditional development gap and economic imbalances

across the Mediterranean, will continue to sustain significant migration flows from South to North. The creation of new economic opportunities in the local economies of the South will hardly keep up with the needs of the growing workforce. It is estimated that for many of the Arab countries, only double-digit GDP growth rates could ensure low levels of unemployment. The Arab transformations, however, have for now slowed down the local economies, either because of the impact of domestic unrest or as a result of dropping foreign investment flows and shrinking trade volumes and touristic revenues. Protracted political uncertainty in some of the affected countries may further delay recovery, creating even stronger demographic pressures.

The new challenges concerning regional migration in the post-Arab uprisings context are several. Political and economic instability, and in some cases civil or sectarian conflict, will likely translate into high levels of forced migration. The available figures for the first half of 2011 are actually strikingly contained. Around 60,000 immigrants reached the northern Mediterranean shores in the months of the unrest in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. Many of these people were only transiting through North Africa from sub-Saharan countries or the East. This number is quite small when compared to the hundreds of thousands of displaced persons in Libya alone and the close to a million refugees that the tiny country of Tunisia, (with a total population of over 10 million), has received in 2011 as a result of regional turmoil. All this raises the question of whether the reaction in Europe was proportionate. Countries such as Italy and France hinted at a revision of the intra-EU Schengen regime of free circulation as part of larger plans to deal with the emergency of expected massive influxes of refugees. But flows may become more sustained in the months and years to come due to the challenges

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involved in the ongoing transitions and the risk of spreading violence.

A second, possibly more structural, development is related to the rise of democratic politics in the region. As soon as the Arab uprisings started, anxious European governments rushed to start talks with the new regimes on border management and migration control more specifically. A new migration agreement between Italy and Tunisia, for instance, was reached in April 2011, including facilitated repatriation procedures. But as regimes in the region become more dependent on public support for their survival, will they be able to accommodate European demands for restrictive migration policies? This problem may become increasingly more acute as even the most effective governments in the region could fail to create the domestic conditions for growth and development, leaving migration as the only option for many.

For now, the EU has responded to the new demands and context by proposing mobility partnerships with its southern neighbors. However, it remains unclear whether these partnerships will be implemented in a timeframe that meets local demands and in a way that incorporates southern perspectives on the issue. For now, for instance, the targeted groups for visa facilitation are the educated youth and businessmen. Both are powerful but limited segments of Arab societies. More critically, perhaps even more so now than in the past, EU countries seem inclined to look at migrants as a threat, or a challenge to manage, rather than as a resource. This patently clashes with the views from the South.

The securitization of migration continues, as demonstrated by the growing budget of the EU agency for border control, FRONTEX, even as EU countries are forced to pursue austerity policies to contain their debts. Immigration as a security challenge tends to clash with the notion advocated

by a growing number that the right to migrate should be seen as an inalienable human right and should therefore be looked at through the prism of human security, as often argued in the sending countries. The EU's main priority even in the recently reviewed European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), however, seems to be to secure borders not to safeguard migrants. If the human security perspective would gain traction, distinctions that have been critical for Europeans, such as the one between legal and illegal immigrants, would be mitigated. Attention would then largely shift on to integration policies and the task of persecuting traffickers of migrants and illegal employers in the receiving economies.

The link between migration and human rights seems set to only gain more relevance in the new context of the Arab world. Turkey, which unlike EU countries has pursued a rather liberal mobility policy in recent years, could again act as a spokesperson for Southern neighbors in this respect, lending support to initiatives aimed at a paradigm shift in Europe as well.

On a different level, the Arab transformations are clearly dramatizing the new nexus between interconnectedness, both at the economic and human levels, and human mobility. The spread of the popular movements of the Arab Spring were made possible by a new connectivity among the peoples within their country and across the region. As technology shrinks distances and creates common trans-national references and aspirations, as well as a shared world map of opportunity and risk, it becomes harder to imagine how mobility can be constrained. The realization in Europe should be that in the interconnected world of the 21st century, mobility and migration will become even more significant trends for human societies than in previous eras.

Cities and Security

Problems related to integration of immigrants will also be exacerbated as a result of greater mobility, and they will be felt particularly in large urban areas around the region. Cities are indeed rapidly becoming a hot spot in the new Mediterranean security environment, and should become a focus of policy and strategy. For the first time in history, more than half of the world population lives in urban areas and urbanization has been one of the key underlying developments behind the evolution of Mediterranean politics and economics over the past decades. The transformations in the Arab world call for greater attention to the relationship between spreading urbanization and new security trends.

Although not all the protest movements started in a metropolitan environment, the future of the ongoing political transitions will be largely decided in urban areas where the new social contracts will be arrived at, or civil unrest and violence may break out again as a result of unmet demands. Cities are also the place where new employment opportunities could be created, otherwise becoming the hotbed of new revolts motivated by social exclusion. Criminal organizations, gangs, and other nonstate actors have often targeted large urban areas as the center of their illicit activities, penetrating and sometimes transforming both the informal and formal economies, with serious consequences for the fabric of society as a whole. This has been true in both the northern and southern cities of the Mediterranean. As migrants head for the wealthiest cities of the Mediterranean, the risk of ethnic tensions will increase, particularly in contexts where integration policies are unavailable or ineffective.

Urban security, broadly defined, that is, the variety of domestic and international challenges that come with the management of ever expanding metropolitan areas, will become a salient issue for

the Mediterranean countries and their neighbors. But urban planners and urban sociologists and economists have often only limited interaction with the larger community of policymakers, let alone being involved in discussions with state officials on how to respond to larger geopolitical developments. As the Arab transformations unfold, integrating urban security into the larger Mediterranean security agenda will likely become a matter of higher priority.

In some of the affected countries, notably Libya, cities will be at the center of post-war reconstruction and might be at the heart of re-emerging societal cleavages. Benghazi and Tripoli represent different regions as well as different affiliations within Libya's complex tribal structure. Libya has no experience with political parties and with formal institutions. This problem is even more acute at the national level. The Transitional National Council, which has coordinated the rebellion against the Gaddafi regime, was born and based in eastern Libya. Representativeness has been and remains a challenge of the transitional period. Inclusiveness will be a critical principle in post-reconstruction and reconciliation efforts. Its implementation will greatly depend on the involvement of elites from various cities that have participated in varying degrees and roles in the liberation of the country. For now, cities are militarized, militias and regular citizens have not been fully disarmed, and war lords who have emerged during the conflict now claim a role in the creation of the new order. The risk of fragmentation is real. If federalism will be the system that holds Libya together, it could be an urban federalism as much as a regional or tribal one.

Cities, in fact, will have to connect at some point with the respective hinterlands. There is a wide consensus that the successful revolutions will be the ones that ultimately receive support from the rural masses. With the partial exception of the Iranian

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revolution in 1979, which was predominantly an urban phenomenon, shifts of political power in the Mediterranean and neighboring regions have proved successful when urban movements have found allies in the larger population.

Despite their rising importance, cities in the North and South have been left more and more alone in coping with globalization. Although they are sometimes the only institutions that can exert effective control over the territory and keep a country connected internally through their webs of interactions, their role in policy has been often limited by states reluctant to devolve or share powers. In the present context of widespread indebtedness, Mediterranean cities have often seen their budgets shrink as a result of austerity plans that tend to shift the burden from the national to the local level. Where decentralization has been pursued, results have been mixed, however, with dangerous centrifugal tendencies emerging.

In Morocco, for instance, there is a growing recognition that decentralization has developed to a point where the emergence of new local elites, whose future depends so strictly on local dynamics is undermining cohesion. A national debate capable of raising the country's standards to the level of popular aspirations is also impeded by elites narrowly focused on local constituencies and goals.

Another trend relevant to Mediterranean security is the enlargement and diversification of cities. In Turkey, for instance, cities have expanded but also become more ethnically diverse as minority groups from rural areas such as the Kurds have followed larger patterns of urbanization. Among the unemployed youth, there are now also alienated and radicalized components of Kurdish separatist movements. This could bring a new scale and intensity to Kurdish terrorism, including in Turkey's western provinces. Similar phenomena may affect other countries in which sectarian and

ethnic divides often overlap with the map of the country.

In some cases, the sheer dimension of cities will pose security challenge. The record shows that urban areas passing the threshold of 10-15 million inhabitants face manageability problems similar to those of states, but without having the means and sometimes the resources of sovereign entities.

Hard security issues will also intersect with the spread and evolution of urbanization. Some argue that the development of large urban areas in the Middle East has already influenced the regional security agenda as urbanization is allegedly one of the reasons why some of the local actors have invested in the creation of weapons of mass destruction. The effectiveness of such weapons, from biological to nuclear, is highest in densely-populated urban areas.

Cities will largely determine patterns of state stability or decline in the context of growing globalization. While sovereignty, even though challenged by interdependence dynamics, remains at the state level, state power and resilience will increasingly depend on the ability of central authorities to manage challenges at the urban level, while at the same time channeling resources in a way that metropolitan areas become elements of the new order as opposed to hubs of insecurity.

Food Security

As in other regions of the developing world, feeding local populations remains a key challenge in the southern Mediterranean. With the rise of democratic politics, access to food will increasingly be part of the national agenda in the countries in transition. As is the case with mobility, food security will be more closely connected with development as well as with the protection of human rights. Food insecurity, however, will be with the Arab countries in the years to come. The

agricultural potential of Southern Mediterranean countries, which remain heavily invested in agriculture as far as their workforce is concerned, is currently so underexploited that even agricultural reform would not be able in the short term to lead to self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency, moreover, would in most cases be a misleading objective in a region that is very water scarce and not rich in arable land. Water is so valuable in many of the Arab countries that its use for agriculture has to be limited. Southern Mediterranean countries import on average around 50 percent of their calories for consumption. Eighty percent of calories consumed by the average Egyptian are generated outside Egypt. Southern Mediterranean countries are also the largest importers of cereals in the world.

Knowing that import dependency on agricultural products will continue for the foreseeable future, Arab economies will have to generate revenues that are high enough to secure international supplies. Trade policy therefore becomes key as food independence is not attainable.

The problem of food insecurity in developing countries of the Mediterranean and other regions, however, has been exacerbated in recent years because of increased food price volatility and spiking food prices. Food prices have continued to spiral up even after the historic spikes of 2008. Volatility in food prices is even more challenging because it creates uncertainty of profits and complicates economic planning and production. Moreover, swinging prices work against international cooperation between producing and consuming countries. When prices are high, producers are not interested in agreements for supplies at a guaranteed price. When prices are low, on the other hand, Southern Mediterranean countries are less anxious about securing supplies from European partners.

The rise in food prices is due to a range of factors, but growing demand from population growth and ever higher energy prices seem to be two central drivers. Trade, energy, and population policies should therefore all be parts of an encompassing food security policy. Although population policy is always controversial and might not be sustainable in the long run, countries that have tried it are now faced with more manageable demographic trends. Bio-fuels have also driven up the price of food by diverting the use of crops from food to energy production. As the rise of bio-fuels seems to be more strictly related to the high price of oil than to climate change considerations, the link between energy and food security looks even more apparent. The change in the Asian diet to include a greater use of meat, finally, is also a powerful factor in the increase in world demand for food since raising meat uses so many more resources than raising vegetables or grains. This creates a tension between local development and international food security as diet patterns vary greatly even within the developing world.

Climate change-related developments may further aggravate food security, as a large part of the earth, including some of the areas more intensively used for agriculture today, will suffer from higher temperatures and greater weather volatility. This is a particularly serious concern for the countries of the MENA region, many of which are already negatively affected by desertification of arable lands and might in the future have adverse impacts from the rise of sea levels along their relatively fertile coasts. Social conditions in the MENA region, such as underdevelopment and unemployment, also exacerbate the problem of food security for Arab countries as the share of income invested in food for the poor is much higher than for the wealthy.

In the wake of the revolutions — some of which started as bread revolts — the new regimes will try to promote exports in various sectors to generate

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Persistent inter-state rivalries and different national trajectories for change may work against regional coordination even in the new context.

the necessary revenues to secure food supplies. At the same time, they will face pressures to modernize their agricultural sectors to develop rural areas that often remain backward and isolated from the rest of society. Developing rural areas will become more critical in the context of the transformations of the Arab world. As noted, the successful transitions will be those whose benefits will be felt in urban and rural areas alike, possibly overcoming or reducing internal imbalances.

While reforming their respective agricultural sectors, Southern Mediterranean countries seem forced to explore new forms of sector-based regionalism. Many recognize that regional integration could create the necessary economies of scale to alleviate food security. South-South integration would have greater impact than North-South integration as all gains deriving from trade creation and higher competitiveness would be reaped locally. Persistent inter-state rivalries and different national trajectories for change, however, may work against regional coordination even in the new context. Both the Maghreb and the Levant are among the least integrated regions of the world and it remains unclear the extent to which this will change as a result of the spread of democratic politics in the region. A first step in the direction of regional integration, short of the liberalization of national markets would be the creation of regional food storages for emergency purposes only.

Finally, to the extent that food security will be part of the overall Mediterranean security equation, the developed countries of Europe will be forced to explore the feasibility of trade liberalization and to further invest in development policies as part of their security agenda. As Western countries hope for democratic transition in the MENA region at large, a Western priority will be to avoid the collapse of the new regimes under the pressure of food emergencies. There is a real risk that in the unstable conditions of the new economic and

political context, the emerging democracies will be associated with food insecurity, which might undermine not only the legitimacy of new leaders but the appeal of democratic politics more broadly.

**A Look Forward:
Elements of a Mediterranean Strategy**

The fact that change in the Arab world has come at a time of Western weakness means that Mediterranean strategy for transatlantic allies will depend even more greatly than in the past on coordinated action and greater reliance on regional partners. The popular notion of a new division of labor might never be fully translated from words into deeds, but a broad agreement on main tasks and responsibilities can be explored.

The United States' drawdown in Afghanistan and military withdrawal from Iraq have been read as signs of a strategic retrenchment. In any case, these actions leave open questions as to the future stability of both countries and the influence that America's rivals in the region, such as Iran, will acquire as a result. But the United States' disengagement from the two Middle Eastern wars of the 2000s should not be confused with general retreat from the region. The United States will continue to play a key role through its relationships with some of the main players, from the Gulf to Middle Eastern and North African countries, and will remain the key external actor in the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, although not a sufficient one. The United States will also continue to play a critical role in the security and strategic regional equation by using this leverage on military and political elites in the Arab countries, starting with Egypt, where Washington's pressure was crucial in prompting President Mubarak's ouster.

The United States' influence will also be felt through NATO. NATO's Libya mission shows the potential of engaging individual Arab countries and finding constructive positions with the Arab League

as a whole. There are limits, however, to how NATO operated and what it achieved. According to many, Libya is not a replicable case. In fact, NATO's Libya operation was made possible by a vast international consensus that has already proved impossible to repeat in the Syrian crisis. The absence of U.S. vital interests in Libya; the Arab regimes' own issues with Colonel Gaddafi; Libya's only indirect bearing on the regional order on which Israel's security depends; and domestic circumstances, such as President Nicolas Sarkozy's urge to clearly signal a change in France's regional policy after the initial dilemmas and teetering before the Arab uprisings all make NATO engagement in Libya a successful but unique case of intervention.

What NATO can do, on the contrary, in the months and years ahead is to further develop its regional partnerships such as they have been built through the NATO Mediterranean Dialogue, started in 1994, and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative as launched with Gulf Countries in 2004. While bilateralism will become an even more necessary tool to deal with countries engaged in different trajectories of change, NATO initiatives could also help sustain a larger security dialogue at the multilateral level through the existing mechanisms. NATO will also continue to collect and share intelligence at the Western level, thus contributing to continuing efforts to eradicate Jihadist terrorism from the region. On a different and perhaps more critical level, NATO should work with the new emerging regimes in critical areas for the successful completion of the political transitions, such as civilian control of military forces and defense budgets, and security sector reform more broadly.

Moreover, as missile defense cooperation is further developed among Western allies, including Turkey, arms control and counter-proliferation should further rise in security talks between NATO and Southern Mediterranean countries. NATO's regional involvement will be limited to security and

strategic dialogue, but as the security environment rapidly changes and becomes more complex, the Alliance's regional role is bound to become more significant, largely irrespective of the launch of further out-of-area operations.

Despite the activism shown in the Libyan case, European countries will hardly take on major security tasks in the region, beside what they already quite efficiently do in the realm of maritime security and law enforcement, broadly defined. Europe will remain involved in international missions such as the one in Lebanon, but, as far as the Common Foreign and Security Policy is concerned, there seems to be little to be expected, at least until EU countries will be able to address their internal financial and institutional challenges. Europe's strongest economy, Germany, is also the one historically least engaged in the Mediterranean and Middle East regions, especially as far as security and military tasks are concerned. Germany's abstention from the UN Security Council's authorization of the international mission in Libya, although due to specific considerations, was seen as a sign of a larger orientation. Europe's leadership in the Libya mission, moreover, would not have been possible without the pivoting role that the United States initially played in forging international consensus and would have hardly translated into tangible results on the ground had been not for the unique capabilities that Washington provided at the outset as well as throughout the mission. While the EU will remain involved in security promotion, the United States and NATO will remain the key military and security actors.

Europe's influence on regional security and stability will be greater through political and economic diplomacy. The EU has put forward a revised neighborhood policy (ENP) that now places greater emphasis on democratization as a factor for EU engagement (as captured in the formula "more for more": more cooperation when/if there

What NATO can do in the months and years ahead is to further develop its regional partnerships.

The new EU approach will need the necessary flexibility to deal with countries that will face setbacks in the process towards full democratization.

is more reform in the partner country). The new policy, however, remains for now largely on paper, as competing priorities risk undermining implementation of some of the new proposals, such as the creation of a European endowment for democracy. More broadly, while appreciating the need for greater differentiation through increased bilateralism, the new ENP has hardly managed to incorporate the reality of a neighborhood that is increasingly diversified, multipolar, and more strictly interconnected with larger, inter-regional, and sometimes global dynamics.

In this context, while pursuing conditionality and the more-for-more approach, the EU should be very careful about binding its hands to successful democratization in the South. The “less-for-less” formula should be rejected as the EU might need to maintain workable relationships even with some of those countries that do not democratize. More critically, the new EU approach will need the necessary flexibility to deal with countries that will face setbacks in the process towards full democratization. Differentiation and the right mix of bilateralism and multilateralism may be a best way to streamline efforts than to simply sever or downgrade relations with those regimes that will remain authoritarian.

As to the three main requests coming from Southern Mediterranean countries — money, markets, and mobility or the “three Ms” — the EU will have significant difficulties in delivering until its own financial and economic difficulties are over. Once again, bilateralism may prove to be a superior strategy as it will allow selectivity. In order to address the specific issue of food security, liberalization of agricultural markets would undoubtedly help, but it will remain a difficult goal to achieve in the light of protectionist pressures from within the EU. Food security agreements or treaties could be negotiated even outside the process of further market liberalization. Managed

trade is a highly controversial notion in economic circles, but if it meant agreements on negotiated volumes of food supplies from EU countries in exchange for greater market access in other areas, many recognize that it could be explored. The EU could also promote regionalism, including by drawing attention to the potential for greater integration between North African and sub-Saharan countries, some of which have under-exploited agricultural resources and could produce large quantities of essential food products such as wheat.

Mobility partnerships, already mentioned in the new ENP, should be rapidly implemented but also extended to lower-skilled workers if circular migration agreements could be agreed with select Southern Mediterranean countries. More broadly, the EU should encourage a shift of approach in national capitals from migration as security to regional mobility as part of EU’s own economic development. After all, Europe’s declining competitiveness in world markets is, among other things, due to its less than stellar performance in the global competition for labor. At the same time, there is a wide consensus that more targeted education and training programs in Southern Mediterranean countries would help both the local economies produce jobs in needed sectors and European countries absorb those workers who will try to enter the European workforce.

As far as border management is concerned, the coordination between FRONTEX and other EU agencies should be further developed with a view to fully incorporating human security concerns into the approach of law-enforcement actors. EU countries that have not done so, moreover, should sign or implement the relevant conventions on human rights that recognize the rights of the migrants. This would be an important political signal for the Southern Mediterranean countries to

receive and would have significant legal and policy implications for the European countries.

Moving from human to urban security, EU countries should involve cities and local authorities in discussions about regional stability, acknowledging that local budgets will be more critically tied to security goals moving forward. Over time, Europe should be able to more closely interconnect concerns for security at the local level with larger considerations about European security. This would greatly contribute to developing a bottom-up perspective to social and international order. In the context of new initiatives fostering regionalism, the EU should explore the use of existing frameworks for dialogue and cooperation for Mediterranean cities and regions as security fora opened also state and international actors.

While pursuing these policies from its side, the EU would gain significantly from closer cooperation with regional allies, starting with Turkey. As the accession process with Turkey remains stalled, the EU should explore other ways to cooperate with the country. Strategic cooperation and joint economic initiatives in the common Southern neighborhood should become a priority. The dialogue on this issue has already started but disagreement on the degree of institutional involvement (should Turkey have access to the relevant meetings of the European Council?) and reluctance in some quarters to grant Turkey such a prominent role within EU discussions have for now impaired progress towards tangible results. This should be overcome as Turkey becomes more and more aligned with EU and U.S. positions on key strategic issues, from Syria to Iran. A more political task for the partnership would be to work towards rapprochement between Turkey and Israel in the name of a common interest in democratic stability in the region and the common alliance with the United States. Israel's growing isolation in the context of a fast-changing regional environment

means that Jerusalem should feel under growing pressure to find a solution to the peace process, by securing final borders for its state. The EU, together with the United States, should deter Turkey from pursuing a strategy that further isolates Israel in the region while at the same time work for a restored Turkey's role as mediator between Arab regimes, Israel, and the West.

In a regional context in which countries will look around for examples of success, both the democratic transitions in what are now EU members and in Turkey will have important lessons. A dialogue between Turkey, the EU, and the United States on democracy support should complement strategic coordination.

Mediterranean Strategy Group

Barcelona

October 19 – 21, 2011

“After the Revolutions: Rethinking Mediterranean Security”

AGENDA

Wednesday, October 19

Participants arrive throughout the day at the **Claris Hotel** (*Pau Claris, 150, Barcelona*)

1900 Participants gather in the lobby of the Claris Hotel and depart for **Montjuïc El Xalet**

1930 **Welcome Reception and Dinner**

Location: Montjuïc El Xalet, Avinguda de Miramar, 31, Barcelona

Thursday, October 20

700 – 840 **Breakfast at the Claris Hotel**

840 Participants gather in the lobby of the Claris Hotel and depart for **Fundación Francisco Godia Museum**

900 – 930 **Welcome and Introductory Remarks**

Location: Fundación Francisco Godia Museum

Ian Lesser

Executive Director of the Brussels Office, German Marshall Fund of the United States

930 – 1100 **Session I – Thinking Through the New Strategic Environment: What Has Changed?**

Location: Fundación Francisco Godia Museum

The Arab Revolutions are reshaping the strategic landscape of the Mediterranean region. What are the short-term security challenges and the long-term geopolitical implications of the new strategic environment? What are the prospects for the emergence of a new regional order? What will be its most likely features? What alternative security futures can be envisaged through 2020?

Moderator:

S. Enders Wimbush

Senior Director of Foreign Policy and Civil Society, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Washington

Discussants:

Eduard Soler

Research Fellow, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, Barcelona

Thanos Dokos

Director General, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, Athens

Mansouria Mokhefi

Head of the Maghreb/Middle East Program, Institut Français des Relations Internationales, Paris

1100 – 1130 **Coffee Break**

1130 – 1300 **Session II – Migration and Human Security**

Location: Fundación Francisco Godia Museum

Migration is a longstanding Mediterranean issue, strongly reinforced by ongoing crises in Libya, Syria and elsewhere. In particular, recent events highlight the human security costs of uncontrolled migration, across borders and at sea. What are the leading problem areas, today and over the next decade? Can the revolutionary changes around the region spur a reinvention of migration policies? Should they? What new strategies are required for the north and the south?

Moderator:

Hugo Brady

Senior Fellow, Center for European Reform, Brussels

Discussants:

Jose Angel Oropeza

Chief of Mission, International Organization for Migration, Rome

Ahmed Driss

President-Director, Centre of Mediterranean and International Studies, Tunis

Ayman Zohry

Expert on Migration Studies, Egyptian Society for Migration Studies, Cairo

Klaus Rösler

Director of Operations Division, Frontex, Warsaw

1300 – 1400

Luncheon

Location: Fundación Francisco Godia Museum

1430 – 1630

Session III – Cities and Insecurity

Location: Fundación Francisco Godia Museum

Metropolitan areas have been focal points for unrest in North Africa and the Middle East. But as urbanization trends unfold both in the North and in the South, Mediterranean cities are increasingly at the center of security dynamics in the whole basin. What are the emerging sources of insecurity in the urban environment? What are the lessons from recent experience? What place for cities in the strategic landscape around the Mediterranean?

Moderator:

Emiliano Alessandri

Transatlantic Fellow, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Washington

Discussants:

Soli Özel

Professor, Kadir Has University, Istanbul

Fabio Armao

Professor, Università degli Studi di Torino, Turin

Amal Obeidi

Associate Professor, University of Garyounis, Benghazi

1910

Participants gather in the lobby of the Claris Hotel and depart for **The Royal Palace of Pedralbes**

1930 – 2130 **Reception and Dinner hosted by the Honorable Francesc Xavier Mena, Minister of Enterprise and Labor, Government of Catalonia**

Location: The Royal Palace of Pedralbes, Avinguda Diagonal, 686, Barcelona

Friday, October 21

700 – 840 **Breakfast at the Claris Hotel**

840 Participants gather in the lobby of the Claris Hotel and depart for **Fundación Francisco Godia Museum**

900 – 1030 **Session IV – Food Security and Regional Stability**

Location: Fundación Francisco Godia Museum

Sharp increases in food prices and pressure on subsidies arguably contributed to the political revolutions in North Africa and the Middle East. Looking ahead, price volatility, climate change, and commercial and logistical challenges threaten the food security of the southern Mediterranean and adjacent regions. At the same time, the Mediterranean space includes leading producers, investors and shippers in the food sector. How are the roles of producers and consumers evolving? How will “new” actors such as China and Brazil affect the food security equation in and around the Mediterranean? How can food security be incorporated into the wider Mediterranean security debate?

Moderator:

Ramon Torrent

Professor of Political Economy, University of Barcelona, Barcelona

Discussants:

Nicolas Imboden

Executive Director, IDEAS Centre, Geneva

Peteris Ustubs

Deputy Head of Cabinet, EU Development Commissioner, Brussels

Hassan Benabderrazik

Former Secretary General, Moroccan Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries, Rabat

1030 – 1100 **Coffee Break**

1100 – 1230 **Session V – New Security Tasks: What is Required? Who Can Help?**

Location: Fundación Francisco Godia Museum

The Mediterranean revolutions and ongoing crises are producing a range of new security challenges for southern Mediterranean states. Security establishments may be ill equipped by to address these new requirements, many of which concern border control, maritime security and civil protection. These new challenges will exist alongside more traditional security concerns. How can transatlantic partners respond? What role for NATO, the EU and others? How might existing security cooperation be reshaped? What is the place of security engagement in wider European and American strategy toward the Mediterranean under these new conditions?

Moderator:

Michael Leigh

Senior Transatlantic Fellow, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Brussels

Discussants:

John Koenig

Political Advisor, Allied Joint Force Command, Naples

Hassan Mneimneh

Senior Transatlantic Fellow, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Washington

Oded Eran

Director, Institute for National Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv

Nicola de Santis

Head MD & ICI Countries Section, NATO, Brussels

1230 – 1300 **Concluding Remarks and Next Steps**

Location: Fundación Francisco Godia Museum

Ian Lesser

Executive Director of the Brussels Office, German Marshall Fund of the United States

Jordi Vaquer i Fanes

Director, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, Barcelona

1300 – 1400 **Luncheon and Departure**

Mediterranean Strategy Group

Barcelona

October 19 – 21, 2011

“After the Revolutions: Rethinking Mediterranean Security”

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The image features a solid brown background with several horizontal white lines. Small white dots are placed at various intervals along these lines, creating a minimalist, grid-like pattern. The lines and dots are distributed across the page, with a higher density in the lower half.

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