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The Future of Euro-Mediterranean Regional Cooperation: The Role of the Union for the Mediterranean

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Rym Ayadi and Salim Gadi***

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1. MEDPRO is a €3 million project funded under the Seventh Framework Programme. MEDPRO – Prospective Political, Economic and Social Analysis in the Mediterranean Region, www.medpro-foresight.eu. MEDPRO is a network of 17 research institutes from both shores of the Mediterranean funded under the FP7. The project aims to undertake a deep foresight analysis of the development issues in eleven countries in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean participating in the Barcelona Process and in the Union for the Mediterranean. The project will undertake an analysis of the current state and prospective development in the main areas of socio-economic development: geopolitics and governance; demography, ageing, migration, health and gender issues; sustainable development, management of resources, adaptation to global warming; energy and climate change mitigation; economic development, trade and investment; financial services and capital markets and human capital, education and development of skills. It will then bring the partial foresight analyses in these areas into a broader framework of quantitative general equilibrium modeling, and be completed with qualitative scenarios for regional and broader integration within the region and with the EU and policy conclusions for the EU approach. Countries include Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria and Tunisia + Turkey.

Introduction

Thirteen years after the Barcelona Process was launched, in 2008, Euro-Mediterranean relations were provided with a new framework for regional cooperation: the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). Since then, the institution has attracted wide attention less because of its achievements than because of its stalemate. The much publicized cancellation of Heads of State Summits and Foreign Affairs Meetings, the delays in setting up the Secretariat and the empty chair policies pursued by its members were a blow to the institution's credibility. However, through the UfM's focus on co-ownership and concrete initiatives the institution could be a valuable framework for upgrading Euro-Mediterranean relations by strengthening regional cooperation provided reforms of governance are implemented. This paper reviews the history behind the UfM's creation, analyzes its institutional architecture by delving into its different bodies, and points at the synergies that could be exploited with the EU Neighbourhood Policy.

**From the Barcelona Process
to the Union for the Mediterranean**

Prior to the creation of the UfM, Euro-Mediterranean relations went through four stages. The Global Mediterranean Policy (GMP) was enacted in 1970 and consisted of a series of bilateral cooperation agreements between the EU and South Mediterranean Countries (SMCs) containing commercial, financial and social chapters specifying that grants and loans would be provided to meet the agreement's provisions. In 1990, after the EU's enlargement to Greece, Portugal and Spain, the Renovated Mediterranean Policy (RMP) redefined the objectives of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation with a clear focus on the support for the implementation of the IMF's and World Bank's structural adjustment programs. The RMP deepened Euro-Mediterranean cooperation by financing regional cooperation activities, increasing by 40% official development assistance (ODA) commitments and opening the EU market to SMCs agricultural products.

In 1995, the Barcelona Process (BP) marked a crucial shift in EU relations with its southern shore. From a cooperation framework mostly based on trade, the BP widened the EU's spectrum of relations with SMCs and developed three pillars of cooperation based on political dialogue, economic cooperation, regional integration and socio-cultural cooperation. Previous cooperation agreements were revoked and replaced by bilateral Association Agreements (AAs), whose implementation was managed by yearly meetings of Association Councils. Regional cooperation was also institutionalized as a means to reinforce bilateral relations. The overall administration of the partnership was ensured by the EuroMed Committee, composed of senior EU, Member State (MS) and SMCs officials. As a major innovation of the BP, national parliaments were also involved in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership through the creation of the EuroMed Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA). The EMPA was endowed with consultative prerogatives and brought together parliamentarians originating from all countries of the Euro-Med Partnership. The political guidance of the partnership was ensured by Foreign Affairs and Sectoral Ministerial Conferences. The latter were responsible for defining cooperation activities while the periodic Foreign Affairs Ministerial Conferences took stock of the partnership and monitored its progress.

With the 2004 enlargement and the extension of the EU's frontiers, Brussels' external policies towards bordering countries were redefined through the creation of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The ENP embraces both Eastern and Mediterranean neighbors with a view to further promoting integration with Europe by "offering [them] a stake in the internal market" (De Ville and Reynaert, 2010). The new policy scrapped neither the institutions nor the structuring of Euro-Mediterranean relations inherited from the BP, but sought instead to build on its *acquis* to strengthen Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

Notwithstanding the BP's ambitious objectives of creating a Mediterranean region of "peace, security and shared prosperity"² later pursued by the ENP, an unprecedented institutional framework and increased ODA commitments, little had been achieved in several decades of partnership. For

2. *The Barcelona Process*, http://eeas.europa.eu/euromed/barcelona_en.htm [last accessed: 6th June 2011].

example, while lower middle income countries grew at an average of 5.96% between 1995 and 2008, the figure averaged only 2.9% for SMCs. Over the same period, commercial integration with Europe widened the trade balance by 31% in favor of the former while SMCs remained as little integrated as they were before. Progress on governance was sluggish, and the development gap between the Mediterranean's northern and southern shores all but narrowed.

Owing to the lack of concrete progress since 1995, France urged a redefinition of Euro-Mediterranean relations, arguing that EU initiatives in the region lacked visibility whilst division among SMCs hindered the expected outcomes of cooperation. To overcome these limitations and revive Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, a new institutional architecture was envisaged. Yet the initial framework brought forward by France differed from the actual UfM. The original French proposal, detailed in the *Appel de Rome*³ of 20th December 2007, sought to instill a new dynamic in Euro-Mediterranean relations by associating only EU Mediterranean countries, chiefly France, Italy and Spain, to create "a partnership of equals" with SMCs aimed at promoting "Euro-Mediterranean cooperation rather than integration." In spite of being centered on Mediterranean countries, the original proposal broadly followed the same logic as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: that of reinforcing bilateral relations through a renewed framework governing regional relations without replacing the ENP within a co-development logic.

The exclusion of non-Mediterranean EU countries was frowned upon by other key Member States, chiefly Germany. German Foreign Affairs Minister Frank Walter Steinmeier and Chancellor Angela Merkel openly criticized French President Nicolas Sarkozy's embryonic idea arguing that the EU's budget could not be used to fund initiatives crafted to serve interests of particular Member States, since such a tendency had the potential to unleash adverse dynamics that could ultimately lead to the EU's disintegration. On the other shore, Mediterranean Arab countries were not as enthusiastic as their French partners. Skepticism prevailed, and Paris' traditional partner in the region, Algeria, voiced open criticism of Sarkozy's proposal (Baghzouz, 2009). The SMCs feared that their participation in such mechanisms would entail a gradual normalization of relations with Israel and a loss of sovereignty. Yet most criticisms remained unspoken, as ultimately Sarkozy's proposal would provide most countries with increased visibility on the international stage (Schlumberger, 2011). Germany's position against the original French idea resulted in the proposal for the creation of a Mediterranean Union being blocked at the Council. Instead, Chancellor Merkel put an alternative offer on the table consisting of creating a partnership comprising all Mediterranean Arab countries, all EU Member States, and Mediterranean Balkan countries. Germany's activism led to the integration in the partnership of 43 countries at very different stages of relations with the EU, economic performance as well as human development⁴ (Table 1). Such a framework has the advantage of being inclusive, a feature that could potentially instill a genuine co-ownership of the process. However, the diversity of socio-economic situations, prospects of EU membership and, more generally,

3. *Appel de Rome pour l'Union pour la Méditerranée de la France, l'Italie et l'Espagne, 20 décembre 2007*, <http://www.ambafrance-it.org/spip.php?article2721> [last accessed: 6th June 2011].

4. UfM countries are: Albania, Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, Palestinian Authority, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Kingdom. Libya and the Arab League have an observatory status.

differences in depth of relations with the EU potentially highlight different interests in the partnership while making it difficult to reach consensus over the UfM's decisions.

Table 1: Comparative indicators of UfM countries, 2008

	Relations with the EU	GDP, total (\$ million)	Population, total (million)	GDP/Cap (\$)	Trade (% of GDP)	Net ODA (\$ million)	Governance (rule of law only, regional average)*	Literacy rate of adult population, both sexes**
Mediterranean Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro	Stabilization and Association Agreements for Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Accession negotiations for Croatia and Montenegro	105,332.41	11	8,797.69	104.36	1,171	-0.29	95.94
South Mediterranean Countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia	Association Agreements, Advanced Status for Jordan and Morocco	772,800.90	199	3,870.45	89.60	945.8	-0.28	77.5
Turkey	Accession negotiations	730,337.50	73	9,880.87	52.25	1,115	0.10	91
Mauritania	Cotonou, ACP-EU Agreement	3,588.61	3.2	1,116.19	130.96	319.6	-1.09	57
EU-27	—	12,479,024	497.6	36,835.82	80.51	—	1.13	—

Sources: Eurostat online database, World Development Indicators online database, World Bank Governance Indicators online database, UNICEF online statistics.

*EU Mediterranean countries only: Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain, Slovenia. Data on the rule of law "captures perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence." Data rank on a -2.5, +2.5 scale, the higher the score, the better the governance. For more information, see Kauffmann et al. (2009).

**Israel and Montenegro excluded from the calculation due to lack of data. For Jordan and Lebanon, 2007 data has been used. For Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia, data is for 2007. For Turkey and Mauritania, 2009 figures have been used.

On 13th July 2008, Heads of State and Government of the 43 countries gathered in Paris for a Summit of Heads of State and Government to launch the UfM under the official denomination of "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean". The UfM has sought "to address common challenges facing the Mediterranean Region"⁵ and also to "enhance multilateral relations, increase co-ownership of the process, [...] and translate it into concrete projects, more visible to citizens."⁶

5. *Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, Paris, 13th July 2008*, http://www.eu2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/07/0713_declaration_de_paris/Declaratation_du_sommet_de_Paris_pour_la_Mediterranee-FR.pdf [last accessed: 6th June 2011].

6. Ibid.

Six initiatives forming the UfM's backbone were brought forward to achieve the objectives set by the 1995 Barcelona Declaration:

- De-pollution of the Mediterranean.
- Creation of maritime and land highways.
- Civil protection.
- Promotion of alternative energies and the Mediterranean Solar Plan.
- Higher education and research: Euro-Mediterranean University (inaugurated in 2008 and based in Slovenia).
- Mediterranean Business Development Initiative.

These projects have been selected to engage the Mediterranean basin in sustainable co-development paths. In the case of energy, against the challenges of depleting fossil fuel reserves and a growing demand, the development of solar energy and regional interconnections emerges as the best option to ensure environmental sustainability while satisfying the needs of both shores. Moreover, the Mediterranean is one of the most polluted seas in the world, which threatens fishery resources, biodiversity, tourism and consequently economies dependent on related activities. The long-term sustainability of these territories thus calls for joint strategies on de-pollution and transport across riparian countries. Also, in a region home to the youngest population on earth, the twin challenges of job creation and containment of migration can be met through business development activities the UfM seeks to engage in.

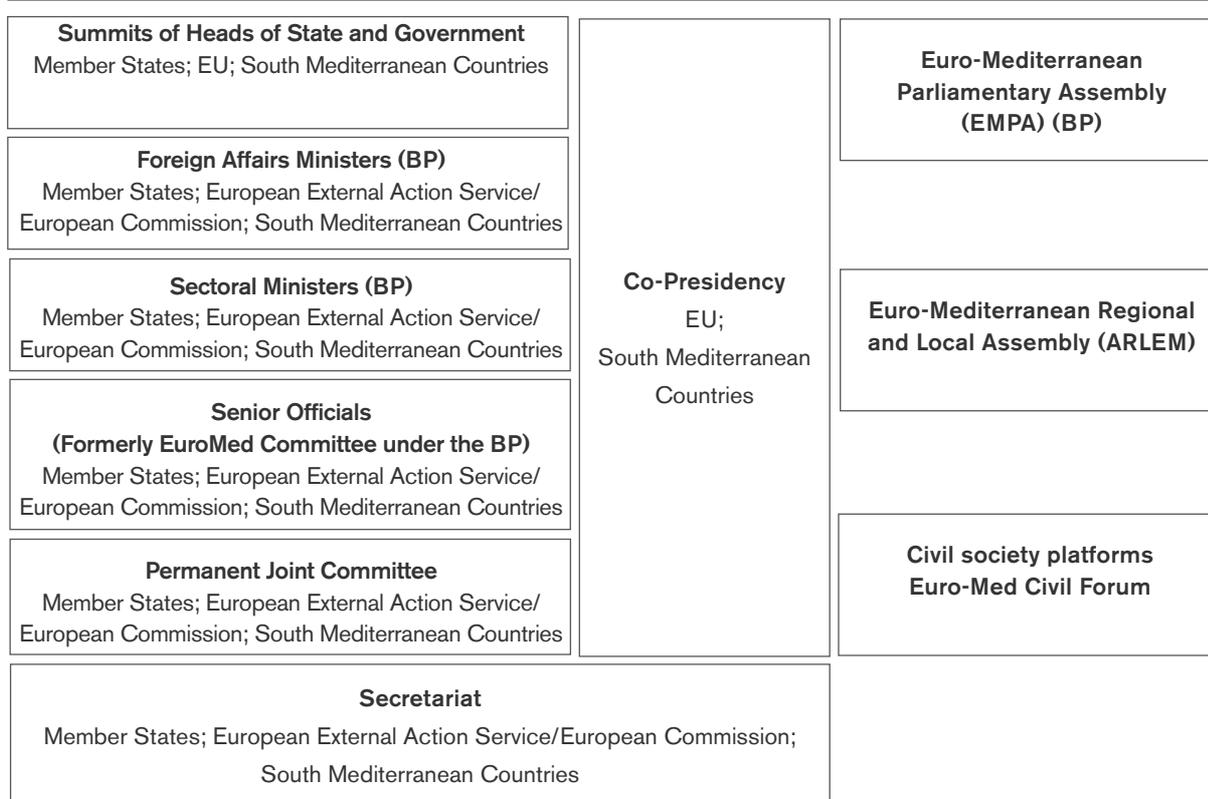
The creation of the UfM did not rule out existing frameworks of EU cooperation, the Paris Declaration specifying that "the priorities set out in the Regional Indicative Programme for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership will continue to apply and any potential Community contribution to the new regional projects [...] will not be financed at the expense of the existing bilateral allocations under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument or the Pre-Accession Instrument (or in the case of Mauritania the European Development Fund)."⁷

7. Ibid.

**Explaining the Union for the Mediterranean's
Institutional Framework**

To revive Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, meet the goals set in the partnership and materialize the six concrete projects, the UfM set up a new and ambitious institutional framework going far beyond the BP and instilling a more political breath in the partnership (Figure 1). The Summits of Heads of State and Government, the Permanent Joint Committee, the Secretariat and the Co-Presidency are the UfM's major institutional novelties while other bodies already existed under the BP. The scattered line represents the "limit" between the UfM and other bodies related to its work but not formally part of it. In terms of governance, to illustrate the "partnership of equals" all UfM decisions have to be taken by consensus.

Figure 1: The UfM's institutional framework



Source: Johansson-Nogués (2011).

Structuring of the Union for the Mediterranean's Institutional Bodies

Summits of Heads of State and Government, Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meetings

The Summits of Heads of State and Government are by hierarchy the UfM's most important organ. Their role is to give political guidance to the partnership by adopting a two-year work program and

appointing Co-Presidents. However, no Summit has taken place since 2008 owing to the Israeli Palestinian conflict. As a consequence, Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meetings were also cancelled, since the latter are responsible for preparing the Summits, reviewing the implementation of their conclusions and approving new projects whenever necessary. In 2009, Mediterranean Arab countries boycotted both the Summit and the Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meeting to protest against the Israeli “cast lead operation”.⁸ In 2010, foreign affairs ministers cancelled their meeting to protest against the presence of Israeli Foreign Affairs Minister Avigdor Lieberman. Paralysis at the UfM’s highest level has resulted in a total stalemate of the institution’s political role.

Co-Presidency

Next to the Summits in order of importance comes the Northern and Southern Co-Presidency. After the UfM’s inauguration, the Northern Mediterranean Co-Presidency was attributed to French President Nicolas Sarkozy and the Southern to Egyptian ex-President Hosni Mubarak for a two-year term. The Co-Presidency is responsible for calling and chairing the Summits, Foreign Affairs and Sectoral Ministerial Meetings, as well as ad-hoc meetings within each initiative. It also submits the meeting agendas to the parties for approval and acts as the UfM’s consensus-building body.

The Co-Presidency has faced two major obstacles preventing the UfM from moving forward. First, owing to uncertainties in the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, no clear time limit was given to the Northern Co-Presidency, whereas Hosni Mubarak’s UfM mandate was expected to end in 2010 (Emerson et al., 2011). Since no Summit took place after 2008, a new Southern Mediterranean Co-President has not yet been appointed. Second, the EU’s representation in the institution has been – and perhaps remains – all but clear. The Paris Declaration states that “from the EU side [the establishment of the Co-Presidency] must be compatible with the external representation of the European Union in accordance with the Treaty provisions in force.” Hence, in line with the Lisbon Treaty, the Northern Co-Presidency should not be attributed to France but to the EU, which would then be represented by the President of the Council, Herman Van Rompuy, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission (HRVP), Catherine Ashton, as well as by the rotating EU Presidency. No clear decisions on this setting have been taken, less publicized but, according to reports, the Northern Co-Presidency will be assumed by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the HRVP, the latter believed to appoint a deputy for the UfM (Johansson-Nogués, 2011).⁹ Besides calling, chairing and submitting the agendas for the meetings, the Co-Presidency acts as the UfM’s consensus-building body. The rationale behind this rule lies in the fact that the Co-Presidency provides all partners with the possibility of increased leverage in negotiations so as to reach a consensus over the decisions affecting the partnership (Johansson-Nogués, 2011). However, the already high number of countries involved in the partnership, their different socio-economic characteristics, and the

8. The “cast lead operation”, also known as the Gaza War, is a military campaign conducted by Israel against Gaza. After rockets were fired from Gaza to the South of Israel in December 2007, the Israeli army conducted a surprise air strike while invading the Strip on the ground.

9. If such rumors echo positive developments in overcoming the institution’s deadlock, Brussels’ attitude towards the French-backed initiative has not always been pro-active: in February 2011, when asked about the consequences of Mubarak’s ousting, a HRVP spokesman recognized that “problems [were] accumulating on HRVP’s desk, while UfM’s statutes had not yet been modified to ensure compliance with the Lisbon Treaty’s dispositions”, “La tormenta egipcia barre la Unión por el Mediterráneo”, *ABC*, 2nd February 2011, <http://www.abc.es/20110204/internacional/abci-union-mediterraneo-201102040308.html> [last accessed: 7th June 2011].

diversity of policy frameworks in the relations they pursue with the EU complicate the UfM's governance and could result in a fossilization of the institution's work. A possible way to overcome this potential deadlock could be to lift the consensus rule and to adopt qualified majority as the UfM's governance rule. Yet given the high number of countries involved, to be effective and to match the Mediterranean spirit of the Union, such a rule should be supplemented by the condition of reaching a majority among Mediterranean countries.

Sectoral Ministerial and Senior Officials' Meetings

Despite the paralysis at Heads of State, Co-Presidency and Foreign Affairs Ministers levels, sectoral cooperation went somewhat further, with Ministerial and Senior Officials' Meetings regularly taking place. Ministers are in charge of reviewing the progress made in each policy area of the partnership. They are seconded by Senior Officials responsible for preparing Ministerial Meetings, developing project proposals, taking stock of the UfM's advances and naming the Secretary General as well as the six Deputy Secretary Generals (one Deputy Secretary General per initiative). Both Ministers and Senior Officials have become the institution's most important actors. Nevertheless, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has hindered their work. In 2010, for example, in spite of agreeing on all technical matters, the ministerial conference on water failed to adopt an action plan due to a disagreement over an official denomination of territories under the administration of the Palestinian Authority. Since no solution to the conflict is foreseeable in the near future, the 43 countries should work to agree on a common denomination of the latter territories to avoid a total paralysis of regional cooperation under the UfM's umbrella. An acceptable compromise could be to agree on the use of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) denomination across all UfM initiatives, that of Palestinian Administered Areas.

The Permanent Joint Committee

Contrary to Summits, Senior Officials', Foreign Affairs and Ministerial Meetings which existed under the BP, the Joint Permanent Committee was established under the UfM. It is composed of national representatives of the 43 UfM countries based in Brussels and whose mission is to assist Senior Officials in the preparation of their meetings. The Joint Permanent Committee is also supposed to react under exceptional circumstances requiring the consultation of Mediterranean partners. But in spite of the ousting of Tunisian and Egyptian presidents in less than one month, the Joint Permanent Committee held a deafening silence, failing both to meet and to issue a statement on these circumstances.

The Secretariat

While the institution's other bodies are credited with more high-level political functions, the UfM's "concrete projects" endeavor rests on the Secretariat, which is based in Barcelona. From a development policy perspective, the Secretariat has a big responsibility in the partnership since it has

to identify viable projects fitting the institution's initiatives, raise the funds necessary for their realization and monitor their implementation. The Secretariat consists of a Secretary General and six Deputy Secretary Generals, one for each UfM initiative.

To achieve these functions, the Secretariat enjoys an independent status and a separate legal personality. Yet, in spite of its central role in the UfM's objectives, the Secretariat has suffered from the many pains affecting the institution. First, it was established only in 2010 as a consequence of the empty chair policies and the cancellation of Summits and Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meetings. Second, once it was established, only one candidate emerged for the Secretary General position. The Jordanian Ahmed Massade'h was named in March 2010 but resigned in January 2011, arguing some Northern European countries did not transfer the resources they had initially committed, thus preventing him from continuing his work.¹⁰ Massade'h was replaced in May 2011 by Youssef Amrani,¹¹ Secretary General of the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In spite of being publicized only after Massade'h's resignation, the lack of resources for the Secretariat is nothing new. Indeed, soon after the UfM was on track, an informal communication by the German government called on EU countries to "adopt a minimalist approach towards the Secretariat" (Schumacher, 2011) contrasting with the conclusions of the 2008 Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meeting which stated that "the running costs of the Secretariat [...] will be funded by an operating grant on a shared and balanced basis by the Euro-Mediterranean Partners."¹² The German position points at different foreign policy interests within the UfM's governments.

The lack of resources is a serious obstacle in the UfM's mission since the high level of human capital required by the Secretariat's mandate is unlikely to be attracted. Yet overcoming this obstacle is all but unfeasible. Funding requirements could be met by channeling a share of ODA commitments from bilateral or multilateral donors for the Secretariat. This seems highly feasible since the operating costs put forward by Massade'h amounted to €16 million. Also, to avoid empty chair policies and increase co-ownership of the partnership, SMCs could also contribute to the Secretariat's budget.¹³

Fulfilling the Secretariat's mandates could also be facilitated by the renewed international focus on the Middle East and North Africa region. With the G8 and international community voicing open

10. "La UpM sofre un duro golpe tras la dimisión de su secretario general", *ABC*, 26th January 2011, <http://www.abc.es/agencias/noticia.asp?noticia=667444> [last accessed: 7th June 2011].

11. "Youssef Amrani, nouveau SG de l'UpM : une réussite pour la diplomatie marocaine", *Le JMED*, 28th May 2011, <http://www.lejmed.fr/Le-diplomate-marocain-Youssef,1046.html> [last accessed: 7th June 2011].

12. *Final Statement of the Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meeting, held on 3rd and 4th November 2008 in Marseilles*, <http://www.parlamento.it/documenti/repository/affari%20europei/APEM/dicFinaleMarsigliaUfM.pdf> [last accessed: 7th June 2010].

13. A possible way to make South Mediterranean Countries contribute to the Secretariat's budget would be to channel a small share of their ODA flows to the UfM. Taking the 1% benchmark of total EU commitments to Morocco for the period 2011-2013, the country would have contributed with €5.8 million to the Secretariat's operating budget. On a yearly basis, Morocco would only have met up to 23% of the Secretariat's yearly operating costs. Excluding Israel and Palestine, there are 8 SMCs benefitting from the EU's ODA funding requirements of the Secretariat that could be largely met without inflicting damage. According to the European Commission's 2011-2013 National Indicative Programme for Morocco, the EU institution's ODA commitments amount to €580 million. Palestine is not included in the allocation since a high share of its ODA is for humanitarian purposes. Data for Palestine have been checked on the OECD's Creditor Reporting System Database.

support to economic development, regional integration, and investments in infrastructures, the Secretariat could act in coordination with international donors in the stages of project identification, implementation, and monitoring. One can even envisage extending the Secretariat's mandate to manage a grant portfolio fed by multilateral donors that would support blended finance mechanisms for the projects identified. Blended finance mechanisms are a mix of grants, loans and guarantees used to decrease risk borne by investors within projects characterized by high sunk costs, risky and/or uncertain environments. With the consequences of the economic and financial crisis, the importance of these financial mechanisms is very likely to increase in ODA (Behrens and Núñez Ferrer, 2011).

Other Bodies

The UfM also seeks to develop relations with parliaments, regional representations and civil society, but none of these three types of organizations is institutionally linked to the partnership. The EMPA was created in 2003 under the BP. It gathers parliamentarians appointed by national authorities from Member States, South Mediterranean Countries, and the European Parliament. The EMPA's role is purely consultative and focuses on sectoral issues through working committees. Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) has similar attributions, but its members originate from Mediterranean countries only.

Territorial cooperation is also sought to be developed through the Euro-Mediterranean Local and Regional Assembly (ARLEM). ARLEM is composed of 84 members: 32 regional representations from the EU's Committee of Regions, 10 representatives of EU and international associations with activities in the region as well as 42 representatives from South Mediterranean Countries appointed by their governments. The institution is loosely affiliated to the UfM but is seeking to obtain an observatory status.

Both the UfM and the BP were keen on integrating civil society organizations in the partnership, but little has been achieved since 1995. No concrete framework has been created to instigate dialogue with civil society organizations (CSOs) on issues affecting the partnership. The reason can perhaps be found in the little interest SMCs had in opening the partnership to CSOs, since authoritarian regimes have a tendency to favor intergovernmentalism as a mode of cooperation (Schumacher, 2011). The progress towards democratic reforms could trigger a role for CSOs in the UfM, which could be a valuable asset, especially when envisaged as complementary to the political and technical work undertaken by the Ministers and the Secretariat. The creation of a framework granting both the ARLEM and CSOs a consultative role to complete the other bodies' attributions would allow the UfM to address policy issues in a broader perspective.

**What Role for the Union for the Mediterranean
in Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation?**

The UfM sought to boost multilateralism through an institutional framework that suffered from many intra-European dissensions leaving Euro-Mediterranean regional cooperation in the hands of the European Commission managed in Brussels. Historically, a regional approach to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation was first established under the RMP and reinforced in all subsequent policy frameworks. Between 1995 and 2009, under the BP and the ENP, a total of € 1.5 billion has been committed by the EU institutions to regional cooperation initiatives to support the objectives set out in the Barcelona Declaration, the Association Agreements and the ENP Action Plans.

Most regional cooperation initiatives consist of training for SMCs civil servants in different administrations and members of CSOs, funding of pilot projects (such as rural pilot projects for rural development), financing of awareness-raising activities implemented by SMCs administrations and/or CSOs, and funding of SMCs' CSOs. Funds are also earmarked for the European Investment Bank's (EIB) Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) which later provides loans for projects matching the objectives of Euro-Mediterranean policy. Between 2002 and 2010, FEMIP has benefitted from a yearly allocation of €32 million. Table 2 gives some examples of EU-funded regional cooperation programs for the period 2010-2013.

On administrative grounds, regional relations are structured similarly to bilateral relations with a clear separation between policy design and implementation. Traditionally, the Directorate General for External Relations (DG RELEX) and the European Cooperation Office (EuropeAid) were tasked with regional policy. Assuming that after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty the EEAS will fully take over the DG RELEX's roles and that the DG for Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO) will supplement EuropeAid in managing the project cycle, the EC's services follow a six-step procedure to bring about regional cooperation:

- The EEAS designs regional cooperation policy in the form of Regional Strategy Papers and Regional Indicative Programs.
- The EEAS and DG DEVCO work together in translating the regional cooperation policy into strategic objectives.
- Once the regional cooperation policy is designed and translated into strategic objectives, DG DEVCO identifies the relevant actions and initiatives. The outcome of this process is a set of financing proposals for the projects identified. The EEAS does not intervene in this stage.
- After the identification process, DEVCO checks the financing proposals and proceeds with the inter-service consultation with the EEAS so as to sign the final financing proposal.
- DEVCO issues calls for tenders and/or calls for proposals so as to select the parties that will implement the projects.
- Once the projects' activities are finished, DEVCO puts an end to the financial contracts and evaluates the outcomes of the projects.

Table 2: Selected regional cooperation programs financed by the EC and links with UfM initiatives

Field of action	Initiative name	Type of initiative	Description	Funding (€million)
Environment	Sustainable Water Management and De-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea	Training	The program foresees the promotion of the enforcement of sustainable water management policies through policy dialogue, training, raising awareness. Its objective is also to contribute to the realization of the Horizon 2020 Initiative through the development of planning and management skills of the Mediterranean Partner Countries. It also intends to support the Mediterranean Water Strategy which ministers failed to adopt	22.00
Transport	Euromed Transport Project	Training	The Euromed Transport Project is aimed at supporting the implementation of the regional transport through feasibility studies, the provision of technical assistance and training. The project is also in charge of monitoring at the country level the implementation of the regional transport action plan	6.00
Trade	INVEST in MED	Raising awareness	Program aimed at trade facilitation and investment promotion through the organization of business to business meetings	9.00
Energy	MED-EMIP Energy Cooperation	Training	Program establishing a regional platform for energy policy dialogue and providing demand driven support to partner countries based on their needs	4.10
Civil protection	Civil protection (PPRD South)	Training	The Program for Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-Made Disasters aims at developing a Euro-Mediterranean system of mitigation, prevention and management of natural and man-made disasters through capacity building, training and region-wide coordination	5.00

Source: Own compilation based on EuropeAid (2010).

As it is, the process excludes the UfM from taking part in the EC's regional cooperation framework giving the impression that both institutions pursue different tracks, while both actually pursue the same broad policy objectives. It is true that they have different mandates and prerogatives: the

UfM focuses on the six concrete initiatives while the EC's regional cooperation initiatives support the work it undertakes under bilateral relations. Yet both are bound to support SMCs in addressing the challenges ahead of them, and the current lack of integration between the two policies prevents synergies from arising.

Against the backdrop of the so-called "Arab Spring" and in line with the EC's willingness "to play a bigger role in the UfM" (European Commission, 2011), close coordination between the two institutions should be explored (Ayadi and Fanelli, 2011). First, the EC's regional cooperation policies could be jointly designed and translated into strategic objectives by the EEAS, DG DEVCO and the UfM's Secretary General via a consultation mechanism. Second, the UfM's Deputy Secretary General could cooperate with DG DEVCO in the project identification process for initiatives relevant to their area of expertise. More specifically, projects relevant for the development of solar energy could be identified jointly by DG DEVCO and the Deputy Secretary General for alternative energies; and initiatives concerning small and medium sized enterprises could be developed jointly by the DG DEVCO and the Deputy Secretary General for the Mediterranean Business Development Initiative. As regards education, both institutions could devise avenues of cooperation between Erasmus Mundus, Tempus and the Euro-Mediterranean University.

Prospective benefits from such an approach are twofold. First, the Secretariat's investment identification and fundraising mandates provide it with first-hand information on investors' concerns. The Secretary General's participation in designing EU regional cooperation with the Mediterranean could relay these matters and translate them into EU strategic objectives. Moreover, the process would be reinforced with the Deputy Secretary Generals' involvement in the project identification phase, where their technical expertise would allow targeted initiatives to be crafted. Second, close contacts with EC services would conversely give them access to privileged information, which can then be relayed to potential investors in order to build confidence. For the much needed infrastructure projects in the Arab Mediterranean, such mechanisms would allow mitigation of the adverse effects of the 2011 uprisings and the predicted political transitions by reducing legal uncertainties and anchoring investors' expectations on regulatory developments.

In addition, the involvement of the Secretariat in EU regional cooperation policy would instill a genuine co-ownership dynamic in Euro-Mediterranean relations. Criticisms have been numerous against an approach lying somewhere between enlargement without membership and a more traditional partnership. Some of the UfM's Deputy Secretary Generals originate from SMCs and their inclusion in the ENP's administration of the partnership would give a strong signal on Europe's willingness to build new cooperation frameworks that would move towards a co-development logic.

Conclusion

The UfM has introduced a new logic in Euro-Mediterranean relations and an ambitious institutional framework for regional cooperation. However, due to political obstacles chiefly as a consequence of the Middle East conflict, it has until now struggled to deliver results to meet the high expectations at the moment it was launched. As the so-called “Arab Spring” raises international awareness of the enormous developmental needs of the region, the French-backed institution could be revitalized and work towards meeting the long-standing challenges ahead of the Mediterranean. Yet institutional reforms appear necessary to help the UfM realize its potential as a multilateral framework for co-development: lifting the consensus rule in decision-making; attributing the Northern Co-Presidency to the EU in line with the Lisbon Treaty’s provisions; fostering Mediterranean Arab countries’ participation in the Secretariat’s budget and extending its mandate to the management of a grant portfolio for blended finance mechanisms; creating a framework to integrate civil society organizations into the partnership; and coordinating with EC regional cooperation policy. These are all steps worth taking to instill a new dynamic in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

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IEMed.

The European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), founded in 1989, is a consortium comprising the Government of Catalonia, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and Barcelona City Council. It incorporates civil society through its Board of Trustees and its Advisory Council formed by Mediterranean universities, companies, organisations and personalities of renowned prestige.

In accordance with the principles of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's Barcelona Process, and today with the objectives of the Union for the Mediterranean the aim of the IEMed is to foster actions and projects which contribute to mutual understanding, exchange and cooperation between the different Mediterranean countries, societies and cultures as well as to promote the progressive construction of a space of peace and stability, shared prosperity and dialogue between cultures and civilisations in the Mediterranean.

Adopting a clear role as a think tank specialised in Mediterranean relations based on a multidisciplinary and networking approach, the IEMed encourages analysis, understanding and cooperation through the organisation of seminars, research projects, debates, conferences and publications, in addition to a broad cultural programme.

EuroMeSCo

Comprising 62 institutes from 33 European and Mediterranean countries, as well as 26 observer institutes, the EuroMeSCo (Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission) network was created in 1996 for the joint and coordinated strengthening of research and debate on politics and security in the Mediterranean. These were considered essential aspects for the achievement of the objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

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

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