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# EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

## TALKING, LEARNING, WORKING, AND LIVING TOGETHER

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A Conference at Villa Vigoni, Loveno di Menaggio, Italy
20th to 22nd April, 2015

# Contents

# Foreword

The Romans called the Mediterranean *Mare Nostrum* (*Our Sea*). But even before, and particularly after the end of the Roman Empire, a succession of powers originating from all sides, has been struggling over centuries to answer the question whose sea it really ought to be. Throughout the 19th century and until the end of World War II, various European powers claimed predominance.

In the early 1970s, the Mediterranean reentered the European scene, when the European Community (EC) decided to establish a common foreign policy for the then six member states. In the Treaty of Rome, signed in 1957, the special relationship with the countries of Northern Africa had already been recognized; in the 1960s association agreements had been concluded with Greece and Turkey. Treaties regarding trade relations with single Mediterranean countries followed up until 1971. In November of 1972, however, the Council decided to change the approach and base the relationship on principles of a Global Mediterranean Policy. Equal conditions would be offered to any Mediterranean country (and Jordan), in case they wished to embark on a closer economic relationship. At the same time, due to pressure from various Arab governments, efforts were made by Europeans to contribute to solving political conflicts in the Mediterranean, first and foremost the Palestinian-Israeli issue. The Euro-Arab Dialogue and the Venice Declaration (1980) were the results of these efforts and they were to play a significant political role in Europe's neighbourhood.

After the end of the East-West conflict, the role of the enlarged European Union (EU) in its immediate neighbourhood became the subject of intense debates. There were voices advocating two separate areas of responsibility: an alliance between Central and East-Central, East, and South-East Europe based on the partners' geographical proximity and historical relationship; and an alliance between the EU's Mediterranean members and the countries on the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Eventually, the answer to this was the Barcelona Process, initiated in 1995; the EU at large would be in charge of shaping the relationship with both their eastern and southern neighbours.

Ten years on, an assessment concluded that the Barcelona Process had not been a success story. The reasons were manifold: a lack of readiness for fair economic cooperation, serious political divergencies, conflicting interests, and deep rooted mistrust regarding the other side's commitment to come to arrangements on an equal footing. The (most commonly French) idea of replacing or supplementing the Barcelona Process by an initiative for a Mediterranean Union however, met with doubt and resistance on both sides

from the beginning, and became obsolete when the Arab Spring broke out at the end of 2010.

Relations between the Northern and Southern shore have since become still more complex and difficult. The rise of the tide of people desperately trying to reach the Northern shores as refugees, as asylum seekers or simply looking for a better life, has added another dimension. Even before that, the financial crisis had undermined the EU's enthusiasm to interact with its neighbours, internal challenges being given priority. When the dramatic changes in the Arab neighbourhood did take place, the EU was left without any stringent concept to react to them. While a parcel of measures was implemented to support single groups and emerging forces who seemed able to lead their countries towards a new political order, the fundamental dilemma became apparent, when the revolt ended in political stalemate, new repression and brutal local conflicts. Given the perspective of an ongoing and long-lasting political crisis with some of the non-European participants in the former Barcelona process and with no end in sight to the financial crisis in Europe (which may well politically destabilize single EU members), the prospect of resuming an engaged and meaningful dialogue and cooperation with the Mediterranean neighbourhood at government level is dim.

All this is hardly a matter of debate. There is, however, another side of the coin. Struggling for a new political order which will permit people to live in dignity, the Southern shore challenges the Northern shore of the Mediterranean to enter into a comprehensive alliance to shape conditions for a common future and living together in peace. With governments constrained by many other reasonings, civil society emerges ever more strongly as the arena in which such an alliance may be shaped, developed and tested. For *Our Sea* to become the paradigm of an including vision and of the awareness that in the 21st century the quality of mutual relationships will determine the place of Europe and its Mediterranean and Middle Eastern neighbourhood in the global order, citizen action beyond the mechanisms of government intervention is of essence.

Our initiative to remain in touch and develop closer relations with societal forces in Europe's Mediterranean neighbourhood has to be seen against this backdrop. We are aware of the tremendous storm which resulted in initial changes. We have also seen the countless young people who want change – albeit in different ways, with different agendas and different scopes of political institutions; and we are convinced that in spite of the setbacks they are still there and the dynamics unleashed have not fundamentally run out of steam. We have heard their claims that democratic constitutions and the rule of law should be established. In short, we have heard their call for dignity to be respected for each and every human being in society.

In the absence of governmental institutions by which to reorganize dialogue and cooperation it is for us to take the initiative and keep alive the vision of a common future, based on multifold political, economic and cultural ties throughout a long common history.

Hence the somewhat vague title of the project, initiated by the Maecenata Foundation in 2012:

**Talking, Learning, Working, and Living Together – Europe and the Mediterranean**

A first workshop was organized in cooperation with the German-Italian Centre of European Excellence at Villa Vigoni on Lake Como in 2013[1]. It was agreed to hold a second, larger conference to explore the matter in more detail, and to invite participants from as many different countries and as many walks of life as possible in order to discover starting points for a shift of outlook. Not what divides us but what we have in common it was felt should be the basis of our interaction.

Against this backdrop, the conference organized by the Maecenata Foundation and the Governance Center Middle East | North Africa of the Humboldt-Viadrina Governance Platform in April of 2015, focussed on the issues determining the historical and cultural traditions and facts which constitute the perception of commonness; delegates from Kosovo, Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Malta, Spain, Italy, France, United Kingdom, Austria and Germany were invited to discuss to what extent these are valid and instrumental to substantiate the vision of the future politically, culturally and economically. How can we find each other anew? How can we dissolve the contradiction of, on one hand, feeling close to each other in terms of political values and, on the other hand, being so distant in political reality? What are the new conditions under which we may build our common – Mediterranean – house? How may citizens be and remain involved in shaping the common future? These were some of the questions we wished to tackle.

Experts were invited to present and discuss their arguments both in plenary sessions and informally in the beautiful setting of Villa Vigoni. The format of the conference aimed at providing as much time as possible for discussion. The group which eventually assembled at the Villa Vigoni was a balanced mix from

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[1] A report on this workshop by Piero Antonio Rumignani may be found in the 2nd volume of proceeds of the project (Udo Steinbach, Rupert Graf Strachwitz, Piero Antonio Rumignani (Eds.): Europe and the Mediterranean – Talking, Learning, Working, and Living Together 2, EBU No. 12, Berlin: Maecenata Stiftung 2015, http://www.maecenata.eu/europa-bottom-up).

every point of view: male and female, older and younger, academicians and practitioners[2].

In particular, the following subjects were brought up in the course of 48 hours:

- Our common cultural history;
- Migration: Advocating transnational and transcultural citizenship;
- New political models: Can the nation state be overcome?;
- Economic models: The viability of differing financial systems;
- Civil society as a catalyst of commonness;
- The role of the media.

Given the prevailing political conditions and circumstances, the organizers feel much encouraged by the response they received. The conference became a manifestation of the Mediterranean universe.

In this volume, a report on each of the sections of the conference is presented to the interested public. Special thanks are due to the rapporteurs who contributed to this report and to Julia Peter who helped finalize the publication. In a second volume, additional documents, some prepared before the conference, others reflecting on the outcomes, will be published.

The organizers wish to thank all participants for attending the conference and for contributing to its success through their invaluable input and contributions as well as their readiness to engage in this somewhat unusual format. Special thanks are due to Professor Immacolata Amodeo, Secretary General of the German-Italian Centre of Excellence of Villa Vigoni, and her wonderful team for her cooperation in hosting this event. Finally, on behalf of the organizing institutions and of all participants, we wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Mercator Foundation, the Allianz Cultural Foundation, and to a private donor, without whose financial and intellectual support holding this conference would not have been possible.

Berlin, July 2015

Udo Steinbach          Piero Antonio Rumignani          Rupert Graf Strachwitz

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[2] See list of participants below.

## Participants

Jaafar Abdul Karim (Deutsche Welle, Berlin, Germany)

Prof. Dr. Immacolata Amodeo (Villa Vigoni, Loveno di Menaggio, Italy / Jacobs University of Bremen, Germany)

Dr. Hind Arroub (Think Tank Hypatia Institute, Rabat, Morocco)

Robert Attallah (UNHCR – Syria Operation, Cairo, Egypt)

Aida Ben Ammar (Group of International Financial and Technical Partners to Support the Tunisian Media Sector, Tunis, Tunisia)

Prof. Dr. Yamina Bettahar (Université de Lorraine, Nancy, France)

Filiz Bikmen (Social Investment and Philanthropy Adviser, Istanbul, Turkey)

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Manuel Borutta (University of Bochum, Germany / Käte Hamburger Kolleg | Centre for Global Cooperation Research, Duisburg, Germany)

Luis Castellar Maymó (EU Delegation to Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Andreu Claret (Former Executive Director, Anna Lindh Foundation, Alexandria, Egypt)

Nora Derbal (Free University of Berlin, Germany)

Julia Dreher (Sorbonne University Paris, France)

Hadeer Elmahdawy (Freelance Journalist, Cairo, Egypt)

Prof. Dr. Henry Frendo (University of Malta, Valletta, Malta)

Rana Göroğlu (Mediendienst Integration, Berlin, Germany)

Anne Grüne (University of Erfurt, Germany)

Prof. Dr. Kai Hafez (University of Erfurt, Germany)

Prof. Dr. Sahar Hamouda (Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center / Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria, Egypt)

Mevlyde Hyseni (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Prishtina, Kosovo)

Kristina Kausch (FRIDE – Foundation for International Relations and Foreign Dialogue, Madrid, Spain)

## Opening Session

By Julia Dreher

In his welcome and introduction speech, *Dr. Rupert Graf Strachwitz* (Maecenata Foundation, Berlin, Germany) recounted that two years ago another conference was held at Villa Vigoni where a small group of people defined the areas of human interaction relevant for this year's conference: "Talking, Working, Learning, and Living Together – Europe and the Mediterranean". While the issue of migration had already been a major concern of public discourse at the time, the recent sharp increase in refugees desperately trying to reach Europe imbues the issue with even greater urgency: one day before the conference, yet another boat with hundreds of migrants and refugees on board capsized off the Libyan coast. This incident is among the recent shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea with the highest death toll, with casualties amounting to around 800. *Strachwitz* asserted that the many cultural, political and economic differences of the entire Mediterranean region contribute to the complexity of the issue at hand. Nevertheless, he believes that we have to talk about the commonalities among the Mediterranean societies and by doing so we have the opportunity to influence the general public discourse. Alluding to the informal EU meeting taking place one week prior to the conference, where the future of the European Neighbourhood Policy was discussed with Southern partners, *Strachwitz* gave the floor to *Prof. Dr. Udo Steinbach* (Governance Center Middle East | North Africa / Humboldt-Viadrina Governance Platform, Berlin, Germany) by posing the open question: "Who is setting the agenda? Is it them, or is it us?"

"We cannot refrain from speaking politically", *Steinbach* stated before presenting his vision of political change regarding the current situation of the EU and the Mediterranean. He then put forward the following seven theses for further discussion:

1. Despite the disasters occurring on the Southern shore of the Mediterranean we are gradually becoming closer to each other. Eventually, new orders will emerge which will provide a solid basis for strong cooperation rooted in shared political and humanistic values.
2. The importance of the historical dimension of current changes must be acknowledged since developments have only started and will last for some time. At the moment, we are at the beginning of an ongoing process the results of which we may see only by 2020 or 2025.
3. Any attempt at perpetuating old orders should be rejected. The main incentive should be to bring about change: Mediterranean and EU politics should foster a comprehensive solidarity with the aim of

building pluralistic and democratic societies – both on the Northern and the Southern shore.

4. With regard to authority and structures of power, we have to change our focus, approach and perception. We have been indulging in an exclusive approach between the Northern and Southern shore. In the future, we have to work for a comprehensive alliance instead (i.e. pursue an inclusive approach), because we are faced with similar societal, religious, political and economic challenges both in the North and the South.

5. The implications of a thorough change of politics must be considered.
First, a shift from governmental cooperation to building strong civil societies is needed because the real, i.e. continuously working, forces are the societies and their organizations and not governments, which change from election to election. It is the societies themselves that push forward change.
Second, we have to change the approach to migration across the Mediterranean as a precondition for finding a solution, which is more than *ad hoc* crisis management. The Mediterranean is our common sea and it is for that reason that interaction between the North and the South is crucial. Everybody may be considered a migrant. A sense of solidarity and mutual responsibility should be the guiding spirit to create a region of close political and economic interaction.

6. There is no real communality without contributing to the solution of conflicts. Therefore, military action that is internationally legitimized is sometimes needed. It should be based on a comprehensive and commonly shared concept of the principles of peacefully living together. While preferably action should be political, in certain cases military action should not be excluded.

7. Civil society has to be involved more strongly. One might think of a Mediterranean assembly, where people from both sides of the shore decide about their future. On a broader level, this assembly should be linked with the EU and the Arab League.

In general, any regional integration should be driven by the perspective of a common future for both, the Northern and the Southern shore of the Mediterranean.

## Questions

*Do you mean that we should overcome capitalism and nation states?*

*Steinbach*: "No, I don't mean that. What I mean is that we should overcome the feeling that still prevails in the EU, i.e.: 'we are superior to the South'. I am not convinced that the nation state can be overcome. We have to live with it. Europe

has shown that nation states can work at larger dimensions. It's for this reason that in Arab countries, nation states which are connected on a broader level, and where borders are integrated into larger units, can also be achieved. A supranational order of the EU and the Arab League is an opportunity that has to be considered while preserving the nation state at the same time."

*Considering the current and 2011 Arab revolt as a fight between regional powers: Do we have the right means and should we be the ones driving changes? Should we differentiate where we can't change anything? Where must Arab countries resolve conflicts themselves?*

*Steinbach*: "The 3rd Arab Revolt has one context and numerous subtexts. It started in a very poor part in Tunisia in 2010. But it was different in other Arab countries. I am well aware of the contradiction but, nevertheless, we should aim at getting a national legitimation, because we are talking about a Mediterranean policy. Should the EU become involved? I would say yes. The case of Syria, when the 'red line' was exceeded in August 2013, should be taken into account when thinking about a Mediterranean approach in this context."

*I don't believe that bombs can bring democracy. I think military intervention is the wrong way to change.*

*Steinbach*: "What I am saying is that sometimes intelligent interference is needed. At the same time, I am very aware of the fact that it can be counterproductive. But nevertheless I wouldn't exclude that possibility. What we really need is an optimistic approach. If we don't have that we can stay at home and read the paper. It's the spirit that we need. We need a vision, otherwise, it's a waste of time."

# Mare Commune – Our Common Cultural History

By Anne Grüne

The second session of the conference focused on the historical traits and the cultural conceptions of the Mediterranean region. Readings of the entangled historical developments at the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea have been subject to both continuity and change. During the session, debates emerged especially about the ways in which shared histories and realities both separate and connect people living in the Mediterranean region. The subsequent discussions also revolved around the general issue of how much history can help to shape the future of the Mediterranean.

In the first input talk, *Jun.-Prof. Dr. Manuel Borutta* (University of Bochum, Germany / Käte Hamburger Kolleg | Centre for Global Cooperation Research, Duisburg, Germany) examined the relation of Europe and the Mediterranean in the Imperial Age 1798 – 1956. He started with the idea that the transformation of the Mediterranean from a *Mare Commune* into a *Mare Nostrum* during this period contributed to the emergence of problems which we are facing nowadays with respect to living together in this region. The colonial history and heterogeneous powers in Europe explain for the contested cultural conceptions of the Mediterranean history. For example, the paradigm of "La Méditerrané", as envisioned by Braudel, was criticized for being highly influenced by the context of Europe's imperial expansion. Concepts of a "Latin Empire" were problematized as well. Outlined by French philosopher Kojève and revisioned by Italian philosopher Agamben, the imagined cultural unity of the European South was criticised for implying a concept of unity not in equal terms but one that is based on European domination over Africa. *Borutta* went on to explore traces of a common rather than a separate history of the shores of the European South and the African North. He illustrated this view by analysing different representations of Marseille, the former symbolic capital of the Mediterranean.

The talk showed that our understanding of the entangled and concomitantly disentangled Euro-Mediterranean history demands further analysis. Reflections about both the "Europeanization" of North Africa and the "Orientalization" of Southern Europe made clear that individual examinations of each phenomenon will not lead to a comprehensive understanding of continuity and change in the Mediterranean region. In conclusion, *Borutta* mentioned the "Musée des Civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée" in Marseille which, in his view, illustrates an attempt to foster a narration of the Mediterranean space as a meeting place of different but entangled cultures.

*Prof. Dr. Sahar Hamouda* (Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center / Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria, Egypt) discussed aspects of a common

history and culture in the Mediterranean in her input talk. She particularly emphasized the bridging rather than the dividing aspects of the region. After tracing forms of cultural fusion in ancient goddesses, she focused on Alexandria as a model of cultural interaction. Founded by an Ottoman foreigner and working with the Millet system, Alexandria flourished on the grounds of its multi-religious, multi-cultural communities. In contrast to later times, foreigners were not considered to be colonialists initially. *Hamouda* then recalled the fact that in the early 20th century, creative diversity was part of everyday culture in various ways. For example, the Victoria College in Alexandria integrated pupils from various ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. Cemeteries existed for almost every ethnic group; even "free thinkers" had their own cemetery. The multicultural creative milieu in Alexandria also stimulated the emerging Egyptian cinema industry in the late 19th century, which was influenced by the work of people of French, Italian and local origin. The cosmopolitan Alexandrian experience even extended to the streets. Especially the history of the local cuisine illustrates a history of bricolage and hybridity, ranging from "baklava" to "mastic gelati".

*Prof. Dr. Bernd Thum* (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology / Fondation Espace du savoir Europe – Méditerranée (WEM), Karlsruhe, Germany) discussed analytical concepts of the Mediterranean cultural space with regard to required future developments in Euro-Mediterranean relationships. First, he questioned the classic approach which understands the Euro-Mediterranean space as an object of geopolitics. Although the Mediterranean space is characterized by multilateral partnership policies, the notion goes beyond this merely geopolitical entity. *Thum* conceptualized the Mediterranean as a space which is shaped by interdependence, dense communication and a culturally specific knowledge ranging "from Dublin to Damascus, from Niger to North Cape".

Though not yet realized, the Mediterranean can be thought of as a "functional space" beyond the traditional geopolitical understanding. In this respect, *Thum* discussed whether the "Polis" and its communal binding force is a more suitable model for the constitution of a sustainable order of societies in the Mediterranean rather than the geopolitical power structures of day to day politics, which are currently in place. In contrast to a geographical concept of the Mediterranean, the concept of the functional space is based on communication, interaction, and common cultural topics as binding forces of plural cultural areas. *Thum* observed that the functional space needs a symbolic capital, institutions, autonomous structures of power and a space of transcultural interpretation. However, these elements have not yet been realized. *Thum* strongly promoted the idea of the Euro-Mediterranean space as a space of common inventories of knowledge. This knowledge does not privilege a classical heritage of Europe but encourages a transcultural semantic power.

Thus, apart from a symbolic capital, a common narrative promotes the creation of a common knowledge and thus, a common cultural space.

**Discussion**

*Christian Much* (German Ambassador to Libya, Tripoli, Libya / German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin, Germany), chair of the session, introduced the subsequent discussion by highlighting three aspects for further elaboration: First, he asked whether the multicultural city of Alexandria as portrayed by *Hamouda* still exists. Secondly, he demanded to further discuss the purposes of the foundation of a common knowledge in a Euro-Mediterranean functional space. Thirdly, he invited the audience to identify the modelling potential of the given historical examples in the present-day Euro-Mediterranean reality.

Following this agenda, further examples of transcultural historical traces in the Euro-Mediterranean space were discussed in the follow-up discussion. There was widespread consensus about the fact that a lot of formerly international cities such as Tunis, Tangier, Aleppo, Damascus or Beirut have lost their hybrid identities due to currently prevailing narratives of national identity which separates people by grouping them into political entities. For example, it was reminded that borders were open during the Ottoman Empire whereas today people are artificially divided along national lines by the underlying politics of Visa and Schengen. Hence, some participants argued that we experience a regressive development in terms of cultural diversity. Newly created global cities such as Dubai were thought to illustrate a modern kind of cultural diversity in which people of different origin and with different cultural habits rather live alongside each other than together.

Similarly, various readings of the Euro-Mediterranean history and present-day reality co-exist at both sides of the Mediterranean shores. There has been a strong call to establish a range of communicative spaces which could help to promote forms of integrative historiography and to revive common cultural narratives of the region. This resulted from the assumption that people need to negotiate in the transcultural reading of history and reality. More precisely, the suggestion was made to implement forums for debate and summer schools, in which people can exchange their experiences and views. Furthermore, the important role of the media was highlighted in both spreading images that suit common narratives as well as in creating an integrative transcultural space of communication and knowledge. However, a transcultural media sphere in the Mediterranean has not yet been realized.

Apart from the exchange of knowledge, the existing general knowledge of Euro-Mediterranean historical relations requires critical engagement in the eyes of the plenary. For example, there was widespread agreement on the need to take into account the Eurocentric origin of conceptions of the Mediterranean.

In addition to these commonly shared views on how to promote common narratives of the Mediterranean history, the session also addressed some forms of criticism. Thus, the discussion revealed a gap between cultural perspectives on the Mediterranean history and perspectives which were much more influenced by "realpolitikal" concerns. Therefore, the question whether history can actually help to shape the future remained highly contested. On the one hand, historical lessons were thought of as important models for adaptation and future ways of organising society and politics. On the other hand, the concrete handling of recent political issues was discussed. It was suspected that current problems such as starvation, oppression of the less powerful, deficits of future perspectives and even questions of military interventions can be faced in a better way with the help of solidarity inspired by cultural developments and imaginations. Moreover, historical models themselves were criticized for reinforcing certain perceptions of the past, which have nothing to do with actual problems of the present.

In conclusion, there is a need to build a bridge between current political agendas and rather long-term transformations of the cultural ideas behind them. As one of the participants reminded the audience at the end of the session, the survival of a system according to Talcott Parsons always needs different factors, including cultural ones. Therefore, the political integration of the Mediterranean space goes hand in hand with the development of a cultural idea of the diverse but commonly shared space of talking, learning, working and living together.

# The Migration Issue

By Luis Castellar Maymó

Migration constitutes an integral part of Mediterranean history and has taken a wide range of forms throughout the past: epic conquests, pilgrimages, pastoral nomadism, transhumance, voluntary relocation or forced expatriation, trade diaspora, and labour movements of many kinds, notably slavery. Travel or tourism is a fairly recent type of migration. The critical factors to distinguish between these various forms are the relative presence or absence of force involved in the process, the motivations and objectives of the migrants, the duration and patterns of expatriation, and whether the place of exile has become a space of belonging over time. Further variables which must be considered are gender, age and generation, social class, family structure, religion, and race of the migrants. These factors determine how individuals or groups perceive their subjective situation and whether they embrace the idea of temporary or permanent expatriation. Until the 19th-century abolition of slavery in Europe and the Ottoman Empire, countless people crossed the sea against their own will. These masses of people in motion brought wide-ranging social changes to the countries or host societies they moved to as well as to those they left behind.

Migration remains a key issue of the relations between the European Union and the Southern Mediterranean countries. Many thousands of people currently risk their lives by fleeing from conflict, political instability or poverty in Africa and the Middle East in an attempt to reach European countries. The number of casualties of the ongoing humanitarian crisis has risen dramatically in the last months. Meanwhile, European crisis-affected societies increase their demand for tighter controls on illegal immigration and European institutions and countries are lacking a comprehensive, long-term approach.

*Prof. Dr. Yamina Bettahar* (Université de Lorraine, Nancy, France) discussed the relevance of the issue of migration in the Mediterranean region in the wider context of the conference. She began by highlighting that the migratory phenomenon is an old phenomenon which is associated with a common belief that has lasted over the centuries, namely that foreigners fascinate and frighten Europeans at the same time resulting in contradictory reactions, both acceptance and rejection. As part of economic globalization, migration is a global issue affecting countries worldwide – in 40 years the migrating population has tripled (230 Million). The migrating population now accounts for 3.2% of the world population, including voluntary and forced mobility of people from one country to another. According to the population department of the United Nations, today 48% of migrants are women and between 20 – 34 years old account for 28% of international migrants, when the age of 20 represent 15%. Conversely, and against common beliefs and prejudices, it is still

a relatively small-scale phenomenon, since actually the number of migrants only account for 3.2% of the world population.

The characteristics of migration flows have radically changed over time, especially when it comes to the scope and diversity of migrant's categories. Countries have developed policies and strategies to regulate migration. There are different forms of mobility, migration strategies, destinations and political relations between the host country and the country of origin.

*Bettahar* then focused on the current situation in Europe and the responses to present migration flows. In her view, Europe is facing both an economic crisis and a deep and lasting social crisis. She asserted that the initial response of the European Union to the increased migratory movements has been to build walls and strengthen border controls throughout the Schengen Area by implementing a variety of measures and programmes[3]. Despite these initiatives, both legal and illegal migration flows have continued at a high rate. This includes the development of organized crime in the smuggling of migrants from Africa to the European Union. Europe continues to be the first continent most international migrants arrive in, particularly those coming from the Southern Mediterranean area, i.e. North Africa, as well as Sub-Saharan Africa.

Nowadays, the migration question has become an issue of worldwide concern. It is at the heart of geopolitical relations between the North and the South. Meanwhile, migrants are objects of dispute between countries of origin and those of destination marked by opposing political and economic objectives, and moreover concerning social, cultural and ethical imperatives. The profile of the most common migrants has expanded and changed. Whereas traditional economic migrants left their original country to go to a host country for work, the motivations of present-day migrants vary and are more complex generally. For instance, Europe today receives waves of migration which are linked to the rise in nationalism and extremism, or a lack of opportunities in the countries of origin.

In addition, the profile of present day migrants is harder to define because information sources are insufficient, statistics are inaccurate, and certain terms have fuzzy meanings. For instance, the difference between a migrant and an immigrant remains unclear. There are a number of complex issues involved such as different passport and migration control policies, the increasing number of crises and conflicts, the extremely heterogeneous nature of the groups of migrants, and the abiding force of the dream of a better life in Europe.

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[3] For instance, the Sea Horse Atlantic network program of cooperation between FRONTEX and third countries, the new generation of Euromed programs and the WAPIS program (West African Police Information System).

The European Union's migration policies have developed over the last years. Since 2005, the EU has made considerable efforts in developing a new comprehensive approach to migration in order to reach a "triple win" situation between the needs of the European labour market, the will to stabilize and secure the migrants' status and the support of the development of the countries of origin. For instance, the EU adopted tools and mechanisms to allow candidates to be better informed before leaving. This is especially the case with recent policies about researchers, students and highly-qualified workers in order to secure some of their rights during their stay and also a better accreditation of their degrees.

Yet, the EU was forced to rethink its immigration policy after the Lampedusa tragedy. The overall policy requires a more comprehensive approach and flexibility, based on long-term strategies in terms of managing migratory flows from Mediterranean countries and tackling humanitarian crises. In addition, opposition to immigration is a growing phenomenon in most of the EU member states, and consequently has become a significant political issue in many countries.

The discussion then revolved around the question of what characterises the new migrants of the 21st century. *Bettahar* maintained that we tend to think of people who leave their country of origin permanently and travel a large distance to a new country. But this kind of migration represents only one of many forms of migration. Migration can be voluntary or involuntary; temporary or permanent; short distance or long distance, cyclical and repetitive. The motives for migration may also vary widely. Migration may occur in reaction to poverty, unemployment, overcrowding, persecution, or dislocation. It may also arise in response to employment opportunities abroad or the prospects of religious or political freedom. Apart from the variables age and sex, migrants can be grouped into various, more or less clear-cut categories such as economic migrants, refugees, stateless persons, skilled elites, students, workers, asylum seekers, members of family regrouping, environmentally displaced people (especially due to global warming), victims of wars, interior and pendular migrants, border workers, and European residents who stay here only for half of the year.

For the countries of origin, emigration can have positive and negative effects. While remittances by immigrants to their country of origin constitute an important advantage, the so-called brain drain, i.e. the loss of human capital, is a clear drawback. In Europe, on a demographic level, immigrants tend to counterbalance the decline in population sizes but not the general tendency of ageing societies.

From brain drain to brain gain: Regarding the migration of elites, which generally represent a relatively small segment in migratory waves, the paradigm of competence circulation has replaced that of the brain drain which served as a characterisation of migration processes out of developing countries in the years between 1960 and 1980. Since the late twentieth century, these waves of skilled migrants – such as graduates, researchers, engineers, doctors, IT specialists, and entrepreneurs – have emerged in a more systematic way. These northbound waves of migration have become transnational and a new kind of diaspora emerged which is characterised by investment returns via remote connections, and the establishment of collaborative networks for the benefit of the country of origin.

The next speaker, *Robert Attalah* (UNHCR – Syria Operation, Cairo, Egypt) traced the route of a Syrian asylum seeker. At first, participants were introduced to the historical background. On the 2nd of November in 1956 during the military confrontation between Egypt on one side, and Britain, France, and Israel on the other, the main transmitters of the Egyptian national radio station had been severely damaged. In response, Syria's national radio station announced "this is Cairo" instead of "this is Damascus", as a sign of solidarity between the two nations. On the 22nd of February in 1958, Egypt and Syria declared their union, forming a short-lived country named the 'United Arab Republic' (UAR), fulfilling the dream of Egypt's president at the time (Gamal Abdel Nasser) of uniting the Arabs. On the 28th of September in 1961, a group of Syrian officers led a coup and declared Syria independent from the UAR, which marked the beginning of an era of diminishing Pan-Arabism, as countries shifted to nationalism where the best interests of each country trumped unification dreams.

Fifty years later, in 2011, a new kind of virtual union started when a wave of demonstrations and protests took place to topple a number of Arab leaders and governments, one of which was the Syrian regime. A survey conducted by 'Gallup World' in December 2011 showed that 56% of Egyptians supported the Syrian protests against Bashar Al-Assad, 31% were neither in favour of nor against them and only 12% opposed them, indicating fairly good support for the Syrian uprising at the time.

The Syrian protests against the regime were also supported by the Egyptian government. This support reached its peak during the last days of Mohamed Morsi's rule and his Freedom and Justice Party, the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood candidate and winner of the Egyptian elections in 2012, when Morsi not only announced the end of the diplomatic ties with the Syrian regime but shortly after stated that "the Egyptian people and army are supporting the Syrian uprising".

A couple of weeks later mass protests spread across Egypt to oust Morsi, and General Abdelfatah El-Sisi announced that the president had "failed to meet the demands of the Egyptian people" and declared that the constitution would be suspended.

The ousting of Morsi coupled with the political polarization of Egyptians supporting the army consequently deteriorated the situation of Syrians seeking asylum in Egypt. People quickly linked Syrian protests to the Muslim Brotherhood and thus they turned against Syrians particularly after some Syrians alleged participation in protests supporting the ousted president Morsi. On the 8th of July in 2013, visa restrictions and security clearances were imposed on all Syrians causing a virtual freeze of new Syrian arrivals.

Although Egypt had signed and ratified the 1951 convention, it had entered reservations to the following articles, making them inapplicable in Egypt: Articles 12 (1), articles 20 and 22 (1), and articles 23 and 24. These cover personal status, unequal treatment of refugees compared to nationals if there is a rationing system in Egypt; and access to public relief. But the two articles having the greatest impact on refugee populations living in Egypt are Article 22 on free primary education and Article 24 on employment. Due to these legal restrictions, refugees in Egypt have no chance to 'integrate'. In addition, Egypt has no local legislation regarding refugees.

Egyptians have been polarized on the issue during and after the political crisis that started on the 30th of June in 2013. This polarization led to a shift in perceptions of and sympathies towards the Syrian community. Some perceptions fed by the media have led to the belief that Syrians against the regime in Syria were aligned with supporters of the ousted former Egyptian president Morsi. Other concrete and drastic measures taken against the Syrian community have included visa restrictions which led to the coerced return of Syrians to their home country. For instance, in July of 2013, passengers on Syrian Airlines flight number 203, arriving in Egypt from the Syrian airport Latakia were not allowed to disembark and consequently had to return to Syria.

Arbitrary administrative detentions continue to be a grave concern for Syrians, not only due to illegal (according to Egyptian law) emigration by sea, but also for those not able to regularize their residence in Egypt. Even though some attempts have been made by the authorities since the beginning of 2014 to release detained Syrians registered with UNHCR, administrative detention continues to be a major problem. The UNHCR is aware of the arrest of 325 Syrian individuals in Egypt since January 2014 for illegally attempting to leave the country by sea.

According to the latest 'Joint Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Egypt' savings were considered the main financial resource for Syrian refugees arriving in

Egypt. These savings have significantly decreased. As for Syrians who arrived in Egypt in 2013 their savings had been exhausted as a result of prior periods of displacement either inside Syria or in Lebanon. The majority of Syrian refugees in Egypt have been struggling to respond to their basic household needs. Increases in prices and rent costs on top of the mostly limited financial resources, and the drop in the level of sympathy of the host community towards Syrian refugees have deteriorated their situation in Egypt dramatically.

## Discussion

Now a truly global and pressing issue, migration constitutes an essential component of international relations. It redefines the sovereignty of host countries, and requires a new diplomacy calling for a worldwide and regional governance of migrations. The participants of the conference debated the following topics and made several suggestions.

**The European Union's migration policy should be reviewed.** The European Commission has announced its intention to undertake a revision of the EU migration policy[4]. Under the heading of "Towards a European agenda on Migration", the EC intends to tackle a number of problems and has defined clear goals in the following policy areas: Reducing the incentives for irregular migration, saving lives and securing external borders, implementing a strong common asylum policy and a new policy on legal migration.

The review should involve all key stakeholders, from EU institutions and member states, to Mediterranean countries, civil society and migrant groups. It should take into account new political and social intervention modalities, define a long-term, sustainable public policy and manage migration focusing on people's needs. Current policies are inadequate and have wasted large resources.

A more open or generous policy could include new approaches to temporary economic or academic migration like the Australian policy. Another policy model which was referenced was a Spanish threefold initiative to manage illegal migration to the Canary Islands:

- fight illegal, engage with local authorities, and intelligence;
- promote regular migration;
- promote development in the countries of origin.

A policy based only on control and the EU's safety is not adequate. Europe cannot get away with building walls. Coherent policies should be negotiated

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[4] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/index_en.htm

with the Mediterranean partner states and a global approach is needed to solve the problems linked to migration.

**The EU and Mediterranean Countries should engage in a comprehensive dialogue on migration in order to build a common and ordered policy to manage the migratory flows.** Accountability, mutual responsibility, and ownership of policies should be the guiding principles of the new common. In-depth analyses of the political situation and background contexts should be carried out, recommendations for future action and an orientation towards win-win outcomes should be the goals of this dialogue.

**Development aid to countries and regions of origin should be increased by adopting adequate strategies according to the specific political and social configuration and circumstances in each country of origin.** The European neighbourhood policy and the role of the Union for the Mediterranean need to be reviewed. The EU should increase its political and development support towards democratic transitions in Arab countries and further promote human rights and economic opportunities. In addition, the EU should support research, economic exchanges, multi-disciplinary projects and cultural actions.

**The participation of civil society within the EU and its Mediterranean neighbours should be increased.** Regular, structured policy dialogue forums between states and civil society should be implemented in order to discuss and take joint actions on migration issues. The funding of civil society should be increased for the purposes of research, capacity building, cultural and social exchanges and public outreach campaigns. The visibility of the new forces which have recently emerged in the different fields after the collective rallying in Tunisia and Greece should be enhanced. These may be efficient mediation groups in helping to solve the problems linked to migrations.

**The narrative in the media needs to change and EU public outreach campaigns should be rolled out highlighting the positive aspects and advantages of migration to Europe.** Sustainable migration should be aimed for. The media should aim for objectivity and provide a comprehensive picture of the public debate. It should enhance the visibility of civil society actors and present their arguments and appeals to fight xenophobia. The media should take action with the decision-makers and the political parties; and counterbalance misconceptions about migratory invasions and inaccurate information disseminated by nationalist groups in order to get more voters by creating a climate of fear.

The major concerns expressed by those opposed to immigration are its supposed effects: economic costs (job competition and burdens on the

education system and social services); a negative environmental impact due to accelerated population growth; increased crime rates, decreased protection against infectious diseases and, in some cases, a threat to the national identity. There may also be a psychological component to prejudices against immigrants, with researchers showing that many people are biased against immigrants partly because they find their cultures and ways of life too difficult to grasp.

**The Integration Challenge must be addressed.** The integration of migrants from Mediterranean countries is one of the challenges which European member states find the most difficult to meet. There is a need for local solutions to a global challenge. Cities must be at the vanguard of integration processes in Europe. They are the initial point of arrival for most immigrants, and have to manage the cooperation between both, local and national institutions. Migrants should be enabled to take an active role in this process and should be encouraged to take on more responsibility for themselves. Their community associations or interest groups should play a greater role in creating a better understanding among migrants and host societies.

**Co-Development should be promoted by employing development strategies which consider migrants to be an asset for their countries of origin.**

**A new approach to manage the current humanitarian crisis is urgently needed.** Strategies of outsourcing the management of migration flows at frontiers (e.g. FRONTEX, WAPIS) have proven not to be the most effective solution. They are the result of emergency situations like in Lampedusa and their cost is not only visible in terms of money, but also implies a high ethical cost with respect to the high number of human casualties. Thus, the measures taken so far are not a viable option in the long term. The EU should coordinate and support Southern Mediterranean countries to modernise their policies and systems.

**The EU must continue to combat migration mafias since organized crime is increasingly part of illegal migrant traffic to Europe.** A better coordination of the actions of the political bodies of the EU and Mediterranean on this issue is required.

# Towards a New Political Order

By Guillem Riutord Sampol

The discussion about the political prospective of the Euro-Mediterranean *demos* focused on the historical phenomena that could help defining the next political order, with particular emphasis on the role of nation-state: is it stronger or weaker today? Will power go global, local or "glocal"? Such debates emerged in the light of the ongoing developments and trends in the Mediterranean region. It was generally considered to be a touchstone theatre to identify the deep changes taking place in world politics.

*Dr. Rupert Graf Strachwitz* gave a presentation on the historical factors that might contribute to outline the new political order (also) in the Euro-Mediterranean region. He made reference to the 1815 Congress of Vienna (in the year of its 200th anniversary). In his view, the congress marked the culmination of nation-state supremacy and formed the basis of the framework for international relations right up until the end of the 20th century (e.g. UN) and even today. Therefore, nation-state supremacy still appears as "the very notion of legitimacy" for international lawyers and intellectuals (Hegel had not in vain considered the state to be the ultimate fulfillment of society). But also, "given the dominance of Europeans in world politics in the 19th and 20th centuries, the concept of the nation state has been imposed" on other parts and societies of the world. Therefore, societal organisations different from the state have been "erased from our political consciousness". *Strachwitz* concluded that this system does no longer fit the Mediterranean area. In this context, the Helsinki Final Act (1975) was presented as the turning point when the decision made by the USSR to preserve borders allowed for concessions to civil rights in exchange. This gave civil society a stronger voice, thus fostering political change (e.g. in Poland, the Czech Republic).

In *Strachwitz'* view, there is a new "universalism", with new emerging entities (e.g. from the Islamic State to the EU) and values (regional, religious, global civil society...) that are in contradiction with the concept of the nation-state. This becomes more evident in the light of the recent, deep demographic and technological transformations the world is going through. *Strachwitz* asked for "a universal debate on how best to organize the welfare of the people", to cope with current civil society challenges, putting into question existing institutions and the concept of nationhood. The protests in Tunisia, Turkey or France are examples of how people have learned to raise their voices. In his view, the answer will not be global, but local, developing ownership, applying subsidiarity rather than hierarchy, and giving a central role to civil society.

Another keynote speech was given by *Kristina Kausch* (Foundation for International Relations and Foreign Dialogue – FRIDE, Madrid, Spain) who initially wondered whether there actually was any political "order" (or maybe rather a "global disorder"?). She then stated that whatever the status quo is in the region it has to do more with global trends than with endogenous ones. So in this era of change, the Mediterranean plays the role of proxy theatre for most global trends in the international relations arena, namely:

- competitive multi-polarity;
- competing agendas among powerful external actors;
- proxy warfare;
- new (non-state) actors in international relations;
- new transnational security challenges.

Even though these factors necessarily entail regional instability, they also have a positive side effect: as challenges transgress national borders, states are pushed to cooperate.

## Discussion

In the ensuing debate, an open exchange of views took place among representatives from institutions, civil society, the media and academia from both the Northern and the Southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The divergence of views and ideas enriched the debate. Nevertheless, some common trends and ideas could be identified:

1. From the perspective of the EU, three events were considered to be historical milestones, or "turning points" defining the current political framework. These were the beginning of the European project by the creation of the iron and steel community (1951); the fall of the Berlin wall (1989) which gave further impetus to West-East solidarity; and the EU enlargement to the East, with 10 new member states joining in 2004. An additional key event was considered a hindrance to the European project: the "No" vote on the European Constitution in 2005. The EU policies in the region were largely criticised for being interest-driven and not taking into account the will of the people will.

2. Three further historical events were believed to influence the present-day situation in the Mediterranean region: 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement on national borders; 1948 agreement between FD Roosevelt and King Al Saud on US-Saudi cooperation; and the creation of Israel in 1948. Yet, since the historical continuity of the first and the second factors was called into doubt, it seems likely that the entire political setting may change again.

3. On the presumed existence of a new "state-less" political order, contradictory views were put forward. Against the post-national

universalism approach initially presented, it was argued that 1916 Sykes-Picot borders had been upheld despite the regional instability. In this sense, even new entities and forms of organised civil society (e.g. the Catalonia request for independence or the "Islamic State") would still aim at establishing a state. An example of such continuity would be the countries in Maghreb.

4. The Congress of Vienna in 1815 was perceived to belong to the time of empire (the notion of which should not be opposed to the state, but rather considered as its extension). In this vein, the reference to the Congress of Vienna was used as a foil against which to describe the current political reactions by Arab states to the so-called Arab Spring. In a way, autocracies and monarchies were supporting each other against political change and the expansion of political Islam, which could be compared to the way European empires agreed to fight against the influence of the French Revolution (with Les Cent Mille Fils de Saint Louis corresponding to the new joint Arab force).

5. Some doubts about the homogeneity of the Euro-Mediterranean *demos* were pointed out. On the one hand the challenges to be faced on each of the shores of the Mediterranean Sea were considered to be very different: Whereas states from the North enjoy political stability and are part of a supra-national project (the EU), the South faces political instability and is the least integrated region in the world. On the other hand, EU success was also put into question as becomes apparent by the increasing lack of social cohesion, or the rise of populism. Thus, ultimately differences between both sides were relativized.

6. The possibility of a global "order" was seriously doubted. Whereas some defended that Hegel's idealist conception of progress had disappeared by the end of the 20th century and that all conflicts were now driven by fights for resources such as energy or weaponry (Fukuyama-like arguments), others argued that ideology, identity and religion still have a major role to play (Huntington-like arguments). The status quo was however never considered stable, but rather a "global competition" or a "global disorder".

7. The need for a new model of democracy was widely agreed upon. It should involve civil society, and address global and local challenges through a reformed institutional setting. There was a clear consensus on the need for official politics to genuinely factor in views and demands coming from civil society (e.g. academia, intelligentsia, etc.). The strategy aims at gaining greater support from all parts of society as well as larger legitimacy of public policies.

Although no univocal conclusions could be drawn, it was generally agreed that:

- Regional powers were put into question due to the "crisis of the state", though the state would still have a role to play in the future.
- Newly emerging non-state actors (e.g. civil society, corporations, religion-driven organisations) are deeply modifying the political landscape.
- Formerly solid political structures have begun to disintegrate. Examples of these historical foundations of the contemporary Mediterranean political systems which are now seemingly dissolving are the Sykes-Picot agreement, the US-Saudi agreement, the equilibrium between regional powers, the model of based on autocracy / monarchy, and the co-sharing of power within Islam between Shias and Sunnis. It remains to be seen what consequences this period of change will have – however, the current political climate does not seem to be conducive to democracy.
- The Euro-Mediterranean political project needs to create more inclusive institutions in order to respond to people's needs.

## It's the Economy, Stupid!

By Guillem Riutord Sampol

Alluding to the title of a political campaign of the former U.S. President Bill Clinton, the discussion on economic issues focused on the state of play of Mediterranean economics and on different ways to further develop the economy in the region. In order to set the basis for discussion, the participants were reminded that the Southern Mediterranean region is the least economically integrated in the world, having a barely developed financial system with a very high rate of wealth concentration and therefore a lack of socio-economic cohesion.

*Prof. Dr. Volker Nienhaus* (University of Bochum, Germany) gave a presentation on the economic policy in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region and the Arab Countries in Transition (ACTs). The very first methodological question was to define what the Mediterranean is: is it these ACTs? Is it the members of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)? Or is it the Arab world? In order to give a comprehensive account of the issue, *Nienhaus* analysed two different sources: on the one hand, a report from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) entitled "Toward New Horizons", which would represent the economic mainstream; and on the other hand, a report prepared by FEMISE, a network comprising more than 90 economic research Institutes representing the around 40 UfM countries. The latter would provide the perspective of the political economy, putting more emphasis on networks and links between politics and economics. According to the IMF, economic measures must be implemented in the Mediterranean region in order to create more efficient markets and stronger competition, increase privatizations, innovation and free trade, and put an end to subsidies. According to the IMF, the expected outcome of these policies would be more trade, larger Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), a balanced budget, an increase of income and more employment. On the other hand, the approach from the political economy would focus its economic policy on other aspects such as the distribution of power, the reduction of privileges and the promotion of better education, combat against wealth concentration and protection, the tackling of corruption in the informal sector, and the reduction of red tape. In this case, the desired outcome would be an increase of imports and thus a reduction of the trade deficit, equal FDI, and possibly a balanced budget and more income (but no "trickle down economics").

*Nienhaus* made clear his preference for the latter approach. He criticised that the EU has entered into bilateral Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with countries in the Southern Mediterranean region, which in his opinion makes regional economic integration more difficult. An additional inherent problem of

Southern Mediterranean economies is the high rate of unemployment, notably among young and skilled workers (the situation is exactly opposite on the Northern shore of the Mediterranean). In his view, the economic agenda for the region should focus on solving the existing problems in the following three fields:

- the lack of competitiveness due to the over-control of economics by old elites;
- the education gap;
- the limited capital market and the difficulty of access to funding, also through Islamic finances (notably for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises – MSMES), as only 5% of companies in the region are funding themselves through the banking system.

Two presentations on models for economic success in the Mediterranean followed. First, *Omar Shaikh* (Islamic Finance Council UK, London, UK) gave an overview of the principles of an Islamic financial system, which was defined as ethical / non-interested and based on private equity with a strong charity element (which is different from corporate social responsibility). The reason for this is that Islam does not tolerate interest (contrary to Christianity). According to the expert, this particular way of banking has grown very fast in the last 15 years. Islamic finance differs from traditional banking in the sense that return from investment does not come from interest (which is prohibited by Islam) but from performance as risk is to be fairly shared between the capital provider and the recipient. Money and debt creation – a thorny issue presently under strong scrutiny and criticism in the western countries – would therefore be based on different principles protecting the economy from those excesses repeatedly witnessed in the western capitalistic world. This has allowed this business model to grow even when going through the toughest crisis of the history of the financial system, which indicates the great stability of the model. The volume of the business of Islamic finance is approximately $ 1.8 trillion and it is expected to increase, not only among Muslims.

Next, *Dr. Alessandro Rospigliosi* (Boldrocchi – Hascon Engineering, Milan, Italy) presented an example of Public Private Partnership (PPP) in Egypt financed by the World Bank (WB), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the French development Agency among other donors. It is an industrial equipment project aiming at improving a steel plant in the city of Cairo. According to *Rospigliosi*, it could be considered a good example of economic contribution to the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and integration. Thanks to technology and public investment, a private company was able to help improve the steel plant and reduce pollution which has been affecting the neighbourhood.

**Discussion**

Following these inspiring presentations, an open exchange of views on economic aspects of the current situation in the Euro-Mediterranean region took place. Among others, the ideas shared included the following:

1. A strong emphasis was placed on the need for environmentally-friendly economic policies, with sustainable development as a clear political priority, which should also be the basis for the creation of new jobs for young people.

2. Economic initiatives for the creation of new jobs should be developed in cooperation with civil society and individuals rather than only state institutions.

3. The access to capital markets was considered an important challenge for Southern Mediterranean economies, as the financial system nowadays covers just a limited part (5%) of the entrepreneurial capital in the region. The financing of projects involving public and private stakeholders was encouraged.

4. New financing systems (e.g. Islamic finance, blended financing by the support of International Financing Institutions – IFIs) were praised as an alternative to financing business in the Mediterranean. It was also stated that financing particular projects could be more effective than financing entire business initiatives.

5. The preeminence of elites on the Southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (concentration of wealth, privileges, corruption) was considered to be one of the biggest challenges for free entrepreneurship and therefore an effective capitalism.

6. The role of Islamic finance was relativized: up to 90% of credit in the MENA region is debt-created (not through Islamic private equity) and the financial activities are not always ethical (limits are only: not-interest driven, weaponry, casinos…).

Regarding FTAs between the EU and the Arab world, it was argued that the fact that most of them are adopted on a bilateral basis cannot be attributed to the EU because

- the EU has promoted regional FTAs wherever it was possible (e.g. in Central America, negotiations took place with MERCOSUR);
- the Arab world is a free trade area *de iure* that has not been realised de facto, as it currently constitutes the least unified regional economic market in the world.

Although views were not always consensual, a few substantial ideas were widely shared:

- Deeper economic integration within the South and between the North and the South is needed in order to promote greater and more inclusive economic growth.
- Larger access to market capital is needed in order to encourage innovation and the setting up of new companies in the South.
- Despite existing economic challenges for both the EU and the Southern Mediterranean region, the regions are very different with regard to their economic development. Therefore, policies should be tailored to the particular needs of the country or region.

# The Role of Civil Society

By Julia Dreher

*Andreu Claret* (former Executive Director / Anna Lindh Foundation, Alexandria, Egypt), the chair of this session, was convinced that the role of civil society constitutes a crucial aspect with regard to the topic of the conference "Talking, Learning, Working, and Living Together – Europe and the Mediterranean." He maintained: "Civil society is here to stay. It's not just à la mode, it's here on the agenda; on the global agenda." Mainly due to his great professional experience and expertise, he was able to make long term observations. *Claret* noticed that especially in the Mediterranean, civil society has gained major importance, not only due to the Arab Spring but also if previous and later developments in the whole region of the Northern and Southern shore are considered. Working with and thinking about civil society is therefore indispensable, according to *Claret*. He underlined that the transformation of civil society is an ongoing process, meaning that new actors and new ways of working together are emerging. Nonetheless, *Claret* pointed out that those newly emerging developments do not always prove successful in the long run. It also has to be kept in mind that certain failures are inherent to the numerous endeavors of civil society. He reminded the audience of the example of the strength of Arab Spring's civil society when toppling old regimes. However, in his opinion, it had inherited the weakness of building new democratic societies at the same time. With this statement he closed his introduction in order to give the floor to the two speakers, *Filiz Bikmen* (Social Investment and Philanthropy Adviser, Istanbul, Turkey) and *Mevlyde Hyseni* (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Prishtina, Kosovo).

In her talk, *Bikmen* focused on the changing role of civil society. By using 'change' as the leitmotif of her input, she carried on exactly what *Claret's* introduction pointed out: civil society has always been there and it will certainly stay. She began her presentation by quoting a definition of civil society by Helmut K. Anheiner: "Defining civil society is like nailing pudding to the wall." She restricted her own definition of civil society to contemporary rights-based civil society and announced that she would consider their future perspective.

In *Bikmen's* opinion three areas of change are of major importance with regard to the changing role of civil society: First, with regard to hybrid funding and operating models she highlighted the factor of 'blurred lines' accompanied by the end of mutual exclusivity. She then described a continuum of different ways of funding and operation in the civil society sector, starting with charity (where no social change is intended but instead basic donations are made for basic needs), followed by philanthropy projects (which is grant funded, without

return on investment) and social impact investment (which relates to highly profitable programs providing return on investment).

Next, *Bikmen* dwelt on the topic of a new order of organization that is currently about to emerge. By using the case of Gucci's 'Chime for Change' advertisement she described how new private sector 'cooperation' models are accomplished and consequently set an end to the lone activist or philanthropist activities.

A third area of change according to *Bikmen* concerns wicked problems that can be traced back to the increasing complexity of both social and economic challenges. She observed that "amazing work" is being done by using new and different tools, especially in the domain of software, education (scholarships, youth employment) and economic empowerment (job training, microenterprise, financial inclusion). *Bikmen* concluded her presentation by citing Albert Einstein: "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." With this in mind she proposed to do away with the 'capacity building, project oriented funder approach' and instead to concentrate on the creation of an ecosystem of hybrid financing that enables collaboration among actors as well as creative and 'blurry' approaches.

*Hyseni* provided valuable insights into civil society developments in the Balkan countries. She explained how civil society is playing a special role in Kosovo, which is the youngest country in the world with the youngest population among the EU countries. But still, the country is suffers from severe structural problems. It is for that reason that the younger generation plays an important role, especially with regard to civil society activities. When the country was still under communist rule there was no space for independent civil society organizations, *Hyseni* explained. But due to the war, an active civil society emerged. During the pre- and post-conflict period, civil society in Kosovo was organized around peace and independence, service-oriented and received support by numerous donors. Since 1999, NGOs have played a key role in policy making, and have partnered with government institutions. Yet, civil society in Kosovo has largely complied with the preferences and goals of national donors. *Hyseni* noted that most NGOs and CSOs are still not able to influence the political agenda. In addition, many citizens are indifferent to politics and CSOs are not sufficiently involved in policy-making processes. In general, there seems to be little interaction between civil society and politics.

## Questions

*What can be done to move the agenda of EuroMed forward, towards a policy dialogue? What can be done to create or enhance an enabling environment for civil society?*

*Bikmen*: "Civil society organizations don't care about the Euro-Mediterranean area. They rather have an inward focus than an outward looking one. There are trends that apply to the region, but there are so many different realities in all those different countries. Every country faces different realities. Concerning the enabling environment, we are making progress but we still don't have that enabling environment we need. The situation in Turkey might be a bit better than in Tunisia or Egypt. But it isn't best practice. What we need is transparency and accountability but in many of our countries this is probably not the case."

*Hyseni*: "The Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Prishtina that I am working for seeks not to impose its agenda onto CSOs – aspect guiding principle which other donors should adhere to as well. Most importantly, an enabling environment has to be created in order to gain people's trust. We have to encourage people to make clear that change is possible."

# The Role of the Media

By Anne Grüne

While the media already became a key issue in various incidental discussions during the conference, the last thematic session of the conference at Villa Vigoni was dedicated explicitly to the specific role of media in Euro-Mediterranean dialogues. Most importantly, its role in shaping imaginations of "us" and "them", of common and separated narratives through representational politics was discussed prominently.

Chair *Jaafar Abdul Karim* (Deutsche Welle, Berlin, Germany) introduced the session with some preliminary observations regarding media usage in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. He highlighted general findings from a recent survey that indicated the continuing importance of television in the region as well as growing media activities with regard to new media tools.

Following these introductory remarks, *Aida Ben Ammar* (Group of International Financial and Technical Partners to Support the Tunisian Media Sector – "Media Group", Tunis, Tunisia) spoke about recent media developments in Tunisia. The country has been experiencing a rapid democratic transition since the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011. Developments in the politicized media landscape are equally influencing the social transition. Although the contemporary constitution of Tunisia guarantees the right of expression, access to information and the protection of journalists, the practical implementation of these rights still face various problems. *Ben Ammar* mentioned arbitrary appointments of media ownership, a national concentration of the media, and new forms of censorship. Moreover, a lack of ethics and control leads to incidents of police violence against journalists. At the same time, Tunisia experiences steady pressure from civil society activity.

With this in mind, *Ben Ammar* then discussed the critical role of the "Media Group", which had been requested by the European Union and was eventually founded in 2011. Highlighting the importance of collaborative work, the group aims at enabling the democratic transition in Tunisia. More precisely, the group supports a transparent and independent media development at the level of professionalism, coordination, partnership and funding. Through the implementation of regular meetings, the group provides a space where various media actors from local and international origin can meet and share information about current developments and projects, financial requirements, funding opportunities, and donation procedures. Thus, the group creates synergies throughout the media sector, supports local and international collaborations, a fruitful exchange of expertise, and thereby accompanies the media transition. Though the agenda of the "Media Group" remains neutral, it

can be understood as a facilitating service for coordination and partnership within and among civil society and the media sector. Partners are several public institutions, universities, and media organisations. However, *Ben Ammar* also illustrated some limits of the "Media Group". Problems exist regarding participants' availability and coordination, red lines and origins of donors and the availability of appropriate arrangements. In conclusion, funding by international actors as well as sustainable support for coordination were recommended. In general, the "Media Group" is seen as a model for other regions in transition (e.g. Egypt, Syria) where it can help to ensure important media reforms, which is an essential basis for the development of an organized civil society.

*Prof. Dr. Kai Hafez* (University of Erfurt, Germany) is an expert specialized in the role of the media in Western and Arab relations. In his input talk he focussed on the media's responsibility for creating problematic stereotypes of "the other" in general and the media coverage of the recent refugee crisis in particular. With regard to the mediated relationship between Europe and the Mediterranean, *Hafez* argued, Europe appears as a sole observer of the internal problems of the South rather than as a dialogue partner on equal terms who shares not only a geographic space but also entangled histories and realities. Generally speaking, the media coverage is, though to varying degrees, influenced by an islamophobic bias. Scholars agree that especially Islam is represented primarily in the context of a narrow agenda in European mainstream media, in a rather stereotyped and conflict-driven way. In this regard, *Hafez* even claimed that the media is also responsible for rightist movements such as "Pegida" to a certain extent. Though media influence remains a contested variable in the creation of stereotypes, one can assume that the images of the Mediterranean presented to the audiences in Europe by the mainstream media remain highly selective.

This also applies to the contemporary humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean Sea. For a long time, *Hafez* argued, the medial representation was highly distorted. The degree to which European politics were responsible for the refugee crisis had not been a major subject of journalistic investigations. In order to illustrate the insufficient framing of the crisis and to explain the problematic effects of the media, *Hafez* pointed out three aspects.

First, journalism did not display the whole arsenal of the conflict up until fairly recently. Although the media has the capacity to encourage empathy, the coverage takes a rather distant stance, much like an observational position. The dominant visualization of the conflict is an overcrowded boat of refugees. Therefore, readers will only get the chance to see anonymous masses. In this respect, the media avoids to depict the individual and emotional depth of the conflict.

Second, the framing is characterized by a prevailing distinction between Europeans ("we") and refugees ("them"), recreating the idea of a border. The media did not recognize and frame the common responsibility for the conflict. The coverage focuses on suffering refugees, whereas Europeans are not part of the visual framing in the mainstream media. Hence, empathy might be inspired but a cosmopolitan recognition of the crisis remains absent.

Third, the coverage rather focuses on structural and systematic analyses of the migrants' home countries' inner problems without considering the long-term consequences of neo-colonialism, neo-liberalism, or weapons policy.

*Hafez* concluded that the media failed its task to create a strong moral consensus in civil society. Hence, although journalism always includes diverse voices, *Hafez* remained sceptical about a mediated integrative effect on the relation between Europe and the Mediterranean. The Euro-Mediterranean is not yet a common issue in mainstream media.

*Rana Göroğlu* (Mediendienst Integration, Berlin, Germany) also questioned the media's contribution to an inclusive vision of Europe and the Mediterranean. In contrast to the analytical points mentioned by *Hafez*, *Göroğlu* focused on concrete initiatives for journalists. She introduced the website Mediendienst Integration which delivers information on the Southern shores of the Mediterranean to journalists. Funded by the German government and closely cooperating with scholars, the platform aims to provide factual background knowledge on all aspects of migration, integration and asylum.

*Göroğlu* followed the basic assumption that media texts powerfully influence opinion and identity formation processes. Similar to *Hafez*, she criticized the negative and selective framing of Muslims in the Western media. The talk highlighted the media's narrow thematic focus on terrorism and the oppression of women. Illustrating the politics of representation, she pointed to data which indicates that although there are just 30% of Muslim women in Europe wearing a headscarf, they are dominantly visualized from the back and covered in a veil.

Thus, the visual and linguistic semantic of the media is often biased and negative, even against migrants from other European countries. *Göroğlu* claimed that we might not speak of a real multicultural society in Germany with only 20% of 'Germans with migration background', of which 60% are EU-citizens. However, media framing stands in contrast to the economic incentives for welcoming migrants in Germany and Europe. Especially in Germany the demographic tendencies are alarming as society is becoming older. Therefore, diversity should be normatively seen as a source of enrichment although it might be conflict-laden at the same time.

*Göroğlu* also called for a knowledgeable use of data. For example, although Germany has admitted the highest number of asylum seekers, this is not true in proportion to its inhabitants. The most asylum seekers are admitted to non-European countries. Although Germany experiences negative developments of right-wing populism, *Göroğlu* ended by highlighting the increasing number of people volunteering for refugees. In her concluding remarks, she demanded more services which publish reliable data, exchange and training programmes for journalists, and a shift towards good practice. The media needs to report different stories, including much more diversity and perspectives as is currently to be found in the mainstream media.

## Discussion

The subsequent discussion focussed primarily on the reasons for a negative and selective framing of the European-Mediterranean relation in the mainstream media as well as initiatives that might help to overcome the negative bias. It was clarified that foreign news coverage from neighbouring countries differ from that of geographically remote countries and in their contextualization and stereotyping. Moreover, journalists themselves do not tend to be islamophobic. However, the overall agenda of the media, which was thought to influence public opinion remains negative and selective.

Reasons for this were uncovered at the level of politics and business, in media organisation and editorial management as well as at the level of the target audience.

First, politicians were considered to have a great effect on setting the agenda. Political mainstream, which experiences a time of growing influence from right-wing populism in Europe, is inextricably linked to the media mainstream.

Second, economic constraints on rapidly changing media environments as well as informal agendas implemented by ownership structures add to inflexible agendas.

Third, internal logics and inflexible cultures of journalistic practice hinder a comprehensive coverage of the Mediterranean reality. A lack of diversity among the journalistic staff in the newsrooms, a serious gap of knowledge about the Middle East, a missing awareness about one's own stereotypes, and a trend towards "lazy journalism" (i.e. one that tends to rely on speedy reporting rather than on thorough background investigation) bar the way to quality reporting.

Fourth, major knowledge gaps were also seen as a general problem among readers and even among intellectuals in Europe. Therefore, the responsibility of the educational system to train pupils and students to become critical consumers of media texts was emphasised.

In order to improve the ways of representing European-Mediterranean reality in mainstream European media, the need for a multicultural identity discourse has been discussed. The journalistic system needs to critically reflect its mechanisms to select stories. The stories of migrants in Europe as well as the stories of everyday lives of Muslim people living in the Southern part of the Mediterranean have to be included. Journalism also needs to critically reflect upon its image of the readership and to consider migrants as relevant parts of the audience.

While these discussions focused primarily on the need of Europe's mainstream media to revise its discursive traditions and to create images and include stories about Muslim and Arab neighbours in the South and next door, the aforementioned transformations in the media sector of Tunisia and Egypt were again resumed. Besides the threats that journalists face especially in Egypt, the problem of polarization and lacking professionalism was mentioned in this context. The rise of social media has created a fragmented media landscape in which important media channels change rapidly. New journalists in social media are not widely approved and there is a gap between traditional and new journalism. Social media has become a personal stepping stone to journalism.

Hence, the role of both long established as well as newly formed media spheres need to be reflected more thoroughly with regard to its important role in creating images about the Mediterranean region and the people living in it. Media was seen as an utterly important factor with the capacity of enabling but also of obstructing a real kind of Mediterranean cosmopolitanism.

## Summing Up

By Luis Castellar Maymó

In his concluding remarks on the conference, *Prof. Dr. Udo Steinbach* maintained that it had provided a forum for the 35 representatives from various fields of expertise and both shores of the Mediterranean Sea to engage in a constructive dialogue with the aim of finding a common perspective for the Mediterranean region. Historical and cultural ties as well as the geopolitical setting were considered to be the major driving forces behind the regional integration. However, local economies and political contexts continue to shape our markedly different social realities. The participants of the conference discussed to what extent these factors are valid and instrumental for shaping a vision of a common region and developing a framework for a common future.

The Mediterranean Sea has played a key role in the history of the region. Right from prehistoric times up until today, it has always been a major site of interactions, trade, and flows of people, resources, ideas, as well as cultural and religious elements. In addition, it has always been connected to other trade regions like the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, Central and Eastern Asia, and the sub-Saharan region by caravan and sea routes. These trade interactions entailed cultural exchanges and had a strong impact on politics and various areas of life such as foods, languages, rites, architecture, religions, symbols, techniques, and the arts. The entangled histories of the countries and civilizations in the Mediterranean region become apparent in several founding myths: Carthage was founded by a Phoenecian princess who fled her country to save her life; Europa, also a Phoenecian, was kidnapped by Zeus and gave her name to an entire continent. Rome, the capital of an empire, was founded by an asylum seeker (Aeneas) who originated from Troia after the city had been destroyed by the Greeks.

Over the last decades, significant changes have taken place in Europe and the Mediterranean countries. Nowadays, Northern European countries are facing an economic and identity crisis while many Southern Mediterranean countries are experiencing deep political changes due to what has been called "the third Arab revolt".

Far from discouraging us, this situation of instability, crisis and chaos impels us to take individual and collective action, from our different positions, but with the same goal – namely, that of shaping our common future together and facing the challenges ahead.

Against this backdrop, a perspective of the future requires new solutions and partnerships, and civil society has a decisive role to play in this context. In fact,

it emerges as a key agent in the field of international relations and development. The EU should take account of this development and its foreign policy should be one of societies rather than of states. A concerted effort is needed in order to overcome structural problems such as poverty and insecurity in the long-term, and to promote democracy and mobility. Common strategies need to be developed and a new political order is required, which is based on innovative societies and inclusive democracies. Most importantly, this requires a change of mind, and an openness towards new development frameworks in order to ensure equality and sustainability in the North-South relations.

The following presentation was given by *Dr. Hind Arroub* (Think Tank Hypatia Institute, Rabat, Morocco). She began by stating that the Mediterranean basin has been the cradle of major world civilizations, such as the Egyptian, Hellenistic, Roman, Islamic, and Ottoman civilizations. Etymologically, the Mediterranean has gone by many names which carried different shades of meaning: *Our Sea* (Latin: *Mare Nostrum*); *Great Sea for the Jews* (Hebrew: *Yam ha-Gadol*) or *Sea between the Lands* (English / Romance languages). Throughout history, this sea has been a vital communication link, yet it has also turned repeatedly into a site of conflict, division, and war.

What divided us? – *Arroub* asked. What separates the North from the South politically? The Mediterranean has witnessed a long history of invasions, imperialism and the shock of modernity, religious wars, new imperialism, colonialism and postcolonialism, as well as the exploitation of natural resources. Consequently, the Mediterranean has often been perceived as a site of conflict.

Accordingly, the emphasis has often been placed more on dividing factors rather than on the shared history and aspects of a common culture. *Arroub* argued that we need to rediscover and learn more about each other.

She then put forward several recommendations for future actions and defined certain goals. Thus, she called for the creation of cultural exchange programs where CSOs, the Media, Universities and think tanks collaborate in order to:

- turn the Mediterranean into a functional space rather than a site of conflict;
- build a common narrative;
- listen to each other in order to understand and respect our differences;
- deconstruct stereotypes (such as the link between Islam or Arabs and Terrorism) by building positive images;
- provide information about the history and customs of people from other cultural backgrounds, especially for the younger population. Examples of this are the (controversial) debates about the influence of the writings of Ibn Arabi on Dante's *Divine Comedy*; the fact that the medieval Muslim philosopher Averroes (Ibn Rushd) counts as the founding father of secularism and that his

> major works comprise commentaries on Aristotelian texts; and the crucial influence of Islam and the Islamic civilization on the European Renaissance.

As we keep on learning about each other, we will learn how to approach each other in more appropriate ways, and how to listen and talk to each other on equal terms. *Arroub* criticised that the current political partnership between the North and the South is not based on equality. In fact, the North seems to dictate to the South what needs to be done, for instance which model of democracy should be embraced. This patronising attitude replicates the mindset of the former colonizer and mentor.

The EU needs to learn how to listen to the people of the South and let those nations evolve at their own pace and following their own paths. Indeed, EU help and support is needed but it should refrain from interfering and imposing rules and models, especially when taking into account that EU democracy itself is in a state of crisis, and that many scholars and experts perceive a democratic deficit in Europe.

While *Dr. Rupert Graf Strachwitz* had asked whether the 21st century is still a century of democracy, *Arroub* called into question whether EU democracy is the only model of democracy available in the 21st century. She believed that the future decades will shape new models of democracy and is eager to inquire ways in which everyone can contribute to the development of these new models.

For the time being, it remains unclear what exactly this model will look like. *Arroub* argued that there are still further agents and stakeholders who intervene to shape the new political order according to their interests. By these interest groups, she referred to the military, energy, oil and natural resources industries, drawing attention to the fact that the Mediterranean Sea constitutes a major shipping route for the transportation of oil.

Following the Arab uprisings, there has been a sharp increase in the migratory flows from the South to the North, and scientific reports have shown that this trend is going to continue. The crisis of the Syrian refugees and sub-Saharan migration flows are major factors in this context.

Is the EU capable of dealing with these migratory waves? According to *Arroub*, it is not. She suggested that the EU should consider migration policies which have proven successful in other countries – such as in the US, Canada and Australia – and adjust its own policies accordingly.

*Prof. Dr. Yamina Bettahar* argued that there is a need to extend the dialogue and consultations to engage with actors from civil society. Civil society and the Media on both shores of the Mediterranean can play a major role in creating a new comprehensive strategy for cooperation between the North and the South

within the framework of an equal partnership. Further key agents in this context are universities, research centers, think tanks and artists.

*Prof. Dr. Udo Steinbach* was convinced that a possible collaboration will be approved by the EU and the Arab League. However, taking into account that people in the Arab world tend not to trust the Arab League, the inherent problematics of this constellation can already be discerned.

Finally, delegates called for the support of Southern countries and the systematic sharing of expertise by making good practice models widely accessible with the help of technologies.

The new model of a North-South cooperation should pursue the following goals and strategies:

- supporting democratic processes without imposing pre-established models;
- improving the mobility of people, especially in the South;
- promoting inclusive sustainable development and the creation of new jobs;
- promoting foreign trade and investment in order to strengthen the economy;
- reinforcing the rule of law and strengthening the judiciary system;
- promoting accountability and transparency;
- improving the educational system;
- reviewing legislation applicable to small and medium sized enterprises;
- empowering CSOs, the media, research institutions like universities, and artists

## Discussion

In the final round-up discussion, the participants reviewed the key issues of the conference and agreed on a number of recommendations for future actions.

**The Mediterranean Union.** Delegates from both the Northern and the Southern shore agreed on the importance of improving the institutional framework to advance the integration of the Mediterranean region as a whole. By launching the "Barcelona Process" in 1995, the EU, had made a fresh attempt at improving the quality of the relationship between the two shores on the grounds of shared political values and interests while promoting economic progress and the welfare of the people at the same time. However, a few years later, the EU's Mediterranean policy seems to have failed to achieve the aim of the initiative, namely to "turn the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity".

In contrast to the "Barcelona Process", arguably one of the biggest innovations in the institutional framework of the region has been the formation of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). The North and South Co-presidency system, the Secretariat, the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, the Euro-

Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly and the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures represent a set of institutions which were established in order to improve the political relations, promote co-ownership of the initiative among the EU and Mediterranean partner countries and enhance the visibility of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The participants underlined the necessity to increase the visibility of civil society and stressed its potential for taking the lead in this process. Civil society has the capacity to strengthen the social and cultural pillars of society, thereby fostering social cohesion. Thus, it can also contribute to overcoming the prevailing political paralysis which is due to the numerous ongoing tensions and conflicting interests between countries.

**Support of the Arab spring and other democratization processes.** Relations between the Northern and Southern shore have become more complex and difficult since the onset of the so-called "Arab spring" and the sharp increase of people desperately trying to reach the European mainland, be they refugees, asylum seekers or simply people looking for a better life elsewhere. While this observation may hardly be disputed, there is, however, another side of the coin: a new political order which will permit people to live in dignity has to take account of the Southern shore's demand directed for the Northern countries to enter into a comprehensive alliance in order to shape conditions for a common future and to make living together in peace possible. Participants agreed that *Our Sea* should become the new paradigm of an inclusive vision and of the awareness that the quality of the mutual relationships between Europe and its Mediterranean and Middle Eastern neighbours will determine their place in the global political order of the 21st century.

Despite the end of colonialism, relations between the EU and its Mediterranean partners have been shaped by economic interests, rather than by the political will to build a common partnership framework. For a long time, the EU has supported non-democratic regimes, which were ultimately overthrown by the population. Now seems to be the right time to support these democratization processes. Participants engaged in a heated debate on whether war interventions in Libya or Syria were justifiable and whether Europe should impose its democratic model onto others, especially now that it is facing a major crisis on its own. Critics called for the EU to exercise more self-criticism and to continue supporting these new democracies without imposing pre-established models. Some participants added that the major problem does not lie in the content of the directives, since many democratic values and human rights are largely agreed upon, but on the way these are conveyed, i.e. the way the EU exerts power over other countries.

**A new paradigm of partnership for a commonly shared region.** Participants agreed on the need to pursue a new paradigm of Mediterranean partnership that is built on people's interests and commonalities, while respecting their differences. In order to restore the relationships between Northern, Southern, Western and Eastern Mediterranean countries, a Mediterranean Cohesion Policy needs to be developed, with clearly defined structures and outcomes. Participants agreed on the importance of local development and observed that the role of civil society has increased notably over the past few years and so has the awareness of all major stakeholders of regional policies.

However, this new model has to replace the existing pre-dominant model, which is based on prejudices and stereotypes, and which continues to feed tensions and divide societies. Participants discerned a lack of interest to learn about neighbouring countries, particularly on the part of the Northern countries, which tend to display a patronising attitude and a great ignorance of the history and realities of the South.

Various, often neglected examples of progress initiated by the Arab world and Islam were provided and discussed, such as the influence of Islam on the European Renaissance, the intellectual achievements of Averroes, or the history of Al-Andalus. Education programmes, unbiased media content and cultural exchange could help to counteract this distorted picture of reality.

**Increased participation of civil society from the EU and its Mediterranean neighbours.** While recognising the necessity of institutions, participants agreed on the crucial importance of civil society in the construction of a new Mediterranean partnership. It was recommended to set up regular, structured policy dialogue forums for representatives from states and civil society (e.g. academia, think tanks, NGOs) in order to discuss and take joint actions in all areas concerning the Mediterranean Union. In addition, an increase of the funding of civil society was demanded for the purposes of future research, development projects, capacity building, cultural and social exchange and public outreach campaigns. Moreover, the visibility of the new actors which have recently emerged after the collective rallying in Tunisia and Greece should be enhanced. These may be efficient stakeholders capable of putting forward new social agendas.

**Mobility / Migration.** One of the major unresolved challenges is a comprehensive Mediterranean migration policy. Participants pointed to examples of successful policies such as the ones which are in place in Australia and the U.S. In order to address the challenges in the area of migration and mobility, an all-inclusive dialogue for migration, mobility and security between the EU and the Southern Mediterranean countries is needed. In the face of the

humanitarian crisis of refugees fleeing from Syria or Libya, and the continued flow of economic migrants, the EU needs to rethink its entire approach to mobility and migration.

While Europe's policies seem to be exhausted and outdated, there are a number of new, creative approaches towards mobility to be tested, which focus on individual rights and responsibilities (overcoming the El Dorado approach), co-development, Southern ownership, mutual respect and common goals.

Development aid to Mediterranean countries should be increased by adopting strategies appropriate to the specific political and social circumstances in each country. The European neighbourhood policy and the role of the Union for the Mediterranean need to be reconsidered. Increased EU political and development support towards democratic transitions in Arab countries and the further promotion of human rights and economic opportunities are needed. In addition, research, economic exchanges, multi-disciplinary projects and cultural actions should receive further support.

**Change of narrative in the media.** The media discourse should be critically analysed and internal EU public outreach campaigns should be rolled out, highlighting the common history of the Euro-Mediterranean region and the positive aspects and advantages of migration to Europe. Sustainable migration seems to be a good approach. The media should aim for objectivity and provide a comprehensive and balanced picture of the public debate. It should enhance the visibility of civil society actors and present their arguments and appeals to fight xenophobia. The media should take action with the decision-makers and the political parties; and counterbalance misconceptions about migratory invasions and inaccurate information disseminated by nationalist groups which hunt for more voters by creating a climate of fear.

The major concerns expressed by those opposed to immigration are its supposed effects: economic costs (job competition and burdens on the education system and social services); a negative environmental impact due to accelerated population growth; increased crime rates, decreased protection against infectious diseases and, in some cases, a threat to the national identity. There may also be a psychological component to prejudices against immigrants, with researchers showing that many people are biased against immigrants partly because they find their cultures and ways of life too difficult to grasp.

**New approaches to tackle integration challenges.** The integration of migrants from Mediterranean countries is one of the challenges which European member states find the most difficult to meet. There is a need for local solutions to a global challenge. Cities must be at the vanguard of integration processes in Europe. They are the initial point of arrival for most immigrants, and have to manage the cooperation between both local and national

institutions. Migrants should be enabled to take an active role in this process and should be encouraged to take on more responsibility for themselves. Their community associations or interest groups should play a greater role in creating a better understanding among migrants and host societies.

**Empowerment of youth and women.** Both target groups are instrumental in designing and implementing new partnership approaches. There is a crucial link between the empowerment of youth and women and increasing economic prosperity as well as improved public services. Therefore, specific measures should be taken in order to support these parts of society.

# EUROPA BOTTOM-UP

ARBEITSPAPIERE ZUR EUROPÄISCHEN ZIVILGESELLSCHAFT / EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY WORKING PAPERS