



CFSP Forum

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Note from the Editor

Karen E. Smith, London School of Economics, Editor

This issue of *CFSP Forum* considers the relations between the European Union and its Mediterranean neighbours to the south – a topic of critical importance now, as recent events in Palestine illustrate quite dramatically.

Eduard Soler i Lecha opens the issue with an article discussing the outcome and shortcomings of the recent Euro-Mediterranean partnership summit meeting in November 2005. Michelle Pace uses the concept of normative power to examine critically the EU's role in border conflicts in Cyprus and the Middle East, and between Greece and Turkey. The EU's policy of promoting democracy in Palestine and its response to Hamas' recent election victory are then analysed by Nathalie Tocci. The last article, by Federica Bicchì, illustrates the extent to which Euro-Med funding programmes exclude certain actors in recipient countries, namely Islamic-leaning NGOs.

Barcelona + 10: Cleavages and Alliances

summit could turn into a renewed energy for the future.

The months preceding the summit were particularly favourable for evaluating the results of the EMP and for making proposals for the future. Civil society and particularly institutionalised networks, such as the Euromed Civil Platform, EuroMeSCo or FEMISE, issued reports with concrete measures to be carried out. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the recently created Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly also contributed to this general 'brainstorming'. In addition, a noticeable number of member states issued *non-papers*

underlying the need to keep stability as a policy goal and that every country has to find its way to democracy. The other EU members, including the new members from central and eastern Europe, were inclined to follow a stricter line in this area.

The financial aspects continue to divide the EU members as well. Countries such as France and Spain would like to see larger sums allocated to the Mediterranean countries and even to the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Development Bank. Even though the Bank issue was not included on the summit agenda, these two countries as well as some Mediterranean Partners made statements recalling this project. One might note that the idea of creating a bank is not only a matter of raising funds but is also a step forward towards a more structured institutionalisation of the EMP. In this respect, before the summit, several EMP members came up with the idea of launching a permanent secretariat or even creating the figure of a Mr./Ms. Med. However, most northern and eastern EU countries question the efficacy and cost of this move, and, consequently, there is no concrete prospect of going further in this direction, at least for the moment.

Among the Arab group there are two kinds of

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everything, the EMP will also need political will, leadership and increased financial capacities to carry out successfully this project.

Finally, it is necessary to contextualise and compare the outcomes of the Barcelona Summit with other summits that have taken place over the last few years. Criticisms can be levelled against the results and development of the Barcelona summit. It is true that the 5-year action programme or the code of conduct to counteract terrorism are rather vague. However, could one expect such texts to arise from an EU-Africa summit or an EU-Latin America summit? Certainly expectations are higher regarding the Barcelona Process, and this explains the frustration of most observers after the summit. Instead of contributing to this mood of frustration, one could also see in these high expectations the potential for strengthening the EMP in the mid term and long run.

¹ See Alvaro de Vasconcelos and Richard Gillespie's articles in the *EuroMeSCo e-news*, no. 2 (www.euromesco.net) and Muriel Asseburg, 'Barcelona + 10, No Breakthrough in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership', SWP Comments, 55, 2005.

EU Normative Power in Relation to Border Conflicts*

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The projection of the EU as a relatively benign actor has been commonplace among academic debates since Duchêne's piece on the then EC's civilian form of influence and action.¹ Although Johan Galtung suggested that the international profile of the EC should be one of 'a nonmilitary superpower',² his main assertion contrasted sharply to that of Duchêne, in that he commented on the European Community as a superpower in the making.³ The early 1970s debate, articulated in the Cold War context, allowed for a definite conception of the 'West' determined by the US as one of the superpowers – and was key in terms of the projection of the EC as a civilian power. The debate was followed by Bull's criticism and Hill's questioning of whether the EC is a civilian or a political power. The timing of Bull's critique, at the height of the Cold War, may explain why he inferred that European actorness was only possible once Europe managed to acquire military capabilities:⁴ up until 1989, the EC was very much an enclave.

era, new diverging arguments about the EU and liberal democracy have developed a distinctive construction of the EU's normative power which it seeks to export through integration or association in order to create a wider zone of liberal democracy.

What is striking about this debate is that the concept of civilian/normative power has not been problematised or clearly defined, allowing for the impression that this form of EC/EU power is necessarily a good thing. Smith's advocacy of moving beyond the civilian power EU debate may be the only exception.¹¹ This brief article argues that the normative power EU (NPEU) debate is up for some serious challenge in that it has failed to note, so far, the *construction* of NPEU and how this construction has empowered/disempowered the EU's political role as a global actor.

A good testing ground for this investigation is the EU's policy on border conflicts. The article draws upon three border conflict cases: the Cyprus problem, the Greek-Turkish disputes and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Following the abysmal results in Cyprus of the 24 April 2004 referenda on the Annan Plan, the expected 'catalytic' effect (on the Cyprus problem) of the EU's membership promise failed miserably while it (ironically) worked very well in the Greek-Turkish rapprochement and for Turkey's start of accession negotiations. In the Israeli-Palestinian context, the EU has been left struggling with the dilemma posed by the electoral success of the Palestinian group *Hamas* in the elections of 25 January 2006. It has attracted widespread criticism from within Palestine but also the wider Muslim world for advocating democracy and then refusing to accept the results of the democratic process by rejecting contact with elected representatives. These cases show that the construction of EU normative power requires some serious reflection and soul-searching in the EU. The contention in this article is that understanding how EU normative power is constructed may help us acknowledge the limits of the EU's global reach based on such a construction.

First, substance. Constructions of NPEU translate into an ethos of impartiality, a common reference point for conflict parties which creates obligations on the part of the EU as well as conflict parties. EU Special Representative for the Middle East, Marc Otte, has opted for behind-the-scene efforts through regular meetings with Israeli officials, middle-rank leadership actors (academics, think tank representatives, etc) and civil society

groups to enhance the EU's image in Israel, making the EU an acceptable broker to both parties to the conflict and establishing a relationship of trust. In this case, the EU's impartiality is particularly important in achieving a favourable outcome for both sides, given the importance of a continuing relationship with the EU in other areas, especially Israel's (as well as Palestine's) economic relations with the EU. What is questionable is the extent of the relationship between impartiality and the liberal values that underpin the EU's approach. If the approach is one of common security (with preferred departures, values to be pushed for and not settled on beforehand, etc) then perhaps one could speak of impartiality. However, the liberal narrative in NPEU projections locks in advance what it implies to be a force for good – and the approach is in this sense far from impartial.¹²

Second, environment. Representations of NPEU are

This does not mean that there are no critical voices urging more EU action when violence escalates in conflict areas. However, a more military EU will mean redefining constructions of NPEU to include military action.¹⁶ Yet, the Strategic Doctrine of 2003¹⁷ reveals that even in the military/security sphere, there are traces of the EU aspiring to project its image as a force for

independence of the judiciary, an effective separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary has not been achieved, and EU actors have largely neglected pending deficiencies in this sector since 2002. In the fiscal domain, despite greater transparency, little has been done to influence fiscal policy. Moreover, despite the World Bank's wage-bill containment plan (endorsed by the EU in its conditionalities), the PA nonetheless engaged in uncontrolled public sector hiring and rising salaries. In late 2005, this triggered the EU's withholding of €35m euros to the PA, as part of the World Bank's Trust Fund.⁴

The EU's record between 1999 and 2005, while mixed, has nonetheless been positive in important respects. Far more debatable has been its position prior to and following the Palestinian parliamentary elections on the 25 January 2006. In December 2005, as the secular camp (Fatah) degenerated into chaos and violence, CFSP High Representative Javier Solana threatened to withhold EU aid to the PA in the event of a Hamas victory.⁵ The High Representative's threat was intended to weaken Hamas' popularity, given the Palestinian economic dependence on EU funds. Yet it largely backfired, empowering Hamas further in its stance against the status quo.

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2006. However, it should be noted that especially pro-American states in the Gulf would be hard-fetched to finance a Hamas government if strongly opposed by the US.

⁸ Stephen John Stedman, 'Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes', *International Security*, Vol.22, No. 2, 1997,

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Country Strategy Papers (valid per 4 years), National Indicative Programmes (valid per 2 years) and Annual Financial Plans. In the drafting process, Mediterranean partners are consulted, though their opinions are not binding. The power of member states too, with the MEDA II regulation, has been curtailed once the Annual Financial Plan has been prepared by the Commission. These documents thus reflect very much the approach of the Commission and are implemented mostly by the Commission's Delegations in Mediterranean partner countries.

MEDA is heavily biased in favour of public actors and most notably of governments of Mediterranean partners, in spite of attempts to broaden the range of actors involved.⁴ The legislative basis for bilateral funds, which make up 90 per cent of the overall MEDA amount, consists of a Financing Framework Convention signed between the Commission (EuropeAid) and the relevant Ministry/ies in Mediterranean partners. Therefore, the inclusion of NGOs within the scope of EU aid is filtered through the preferences of national governments of Mediterranean non-members, thus leaving to them the choice between inclusion and exclusion of Islam-leaning organisations.

For instance, in the case of Morocco, the National

NGOs, thus excluding external actors that would generally be favoured in the allocation of

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