

The Mediterranean forms a border between the wealthy, developed and stable Europe, on one side, and the fragmented North Africa and the Middle East, on the other side. The Barcelona Declaration has come to represent an exception to traditional mainstream trends in Euro-Mediterranean relations in that, while these relations were confined to financial and commercial aspects for more than 30 years, the declaration covers new aspects that are no less important, such as political, cultural, social and security aspects.

Despite the fact that considerable success has been achieved with respect to the Barcelona Process in its widest sense—represented primarily by the bilateral Association Agreements and the preparations for the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by 2010—achievements in the political and security spheres have not met expectations because of the problems associated with the Middle East peace process. Those who worked on the Barcelona Declaration adopted ambitious goals for the partnership process, among the most important of which was probably “to establish a shared zone of security and stability in the Mediterranean basin”. Nevertheless, as of today a huge gap still exists between these goals and what has so far been achieved.⁸

In the region there is not a major military threat similar to that which existed in Europe during the Cold War. However, the region is characterised by a number of inter-state and intra-state conflicts, as well as wide socio-economic disparities, the majority of which are located along the southern shore, and, at the subregional level, by territorial and border disputes, ethno-cultural rivalry and the low-intensity violence of terrorism.⁹

Instability also stems from underlying soft-security factors such as economic and social underdevelopment, inadequate political institutions in the southern and eastern rims, widespread cultural and ethnic differences, and sharp South–South and North–South cleavages, which represent diffuse and interdependent factors of risk throughout the region. Furthermore, the importance of future potential conflicts over water supplies should not be overlooked, particularly in cases where the situation is complicated by the connections between the territorial and ethno-cultural sources of conflicts—so-called intractable conflicts.¹⁰

This structural instability of Mediterranean security is aggravated by more proximate causes such as the link between conflict, demography and migration; the vulnerability of strategic lines of communication; the diffusion of non-conventional weapons; and the trans-regional impact of long-standing internal and external conflicts (such as the confrontation between regimes and Islamic oppositions or the Arab-Israeli conflict).

This interdependence and the transnational nature of risk factors in the Mediterranean region are not matched by a coherent set of national and multilateral security policies. On the contrary, the security perceptions and needs of regional states differ widely and cooperative security schemes are either absent or weak. EU member states feel threatened by instability and conflict in the Mediterranean region and would like the countries affected by such conflicts to cooperate on conflict prevention by applying EU-style recipes to address the structural and local sources of instability in the region. Governments of non-EU member states in the Mediterranean region reject the aspects of conflict prevention policies that they perceive as Western intervention in their internal affairs but, confronted as they are by multi-directional threats, need Western help to increase their security.¹¹

Conflict prevention was first proposed in the EMP by the 1996 Action Plan. Subsequently, conflict prevention has been mentioned constantly in the context of the Euro-Med Charter for Peace and Stability. According to these proposals, the EMP institutions would agree a set of specific instruments—that is, “procedures of clarification, mediation and conciliation”, “judicial settlement of differences and disputes” and “adherence to appropriate international conventions”—which, depending on the case, could be operated by the institutions themselves by means of “Euro-Mediterranean mechanisms” (e.g., a conflict prevention centre or centres) or deferred to incumbent international courts. These proposals, however, were not accepted by the partners and therefore not implemented.

Since 1993, the EU has progressively developed its own policy of and doctrine on conflict prevention, adapting its external action to a changing international environment. It has developed mechanisms for civilian and military crisis management that could be extended to Mediterranean security issues. The EU has been engaged in the Mediterranean using its full range of capabilities: association and free trade area agreements; cooperation; development assistance; social and environmental policies; humanitarian assistance;

2. The Conflict Prevention Component of the EMP: Southern Security Perceptions

1. Introduction

2. Conflict prevention and the EMP

8 Mohamed Salman Tayie (1998), ‘The Mediterranean Circle in the Egyptian Foreign Policy’, M.A. Thesis, Cairo University: Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences, pp. 235–239.

9 Abdelwahad Biad (1997), *A Strategy for Conflict Prevention and Management in the Mediterranean*, Faculté de droit, Université de Rouen, p. 53, www.cidob.org/ingles/Publicaciones/Afers/37biad.cfm.

10 Ibid. (1997), p. 53.

11 Ibid. (1997), pp. 55–58.

civilian and military crisis management; political dialogue; and cooperation in the areas of Justice and Home Affairs.

Today, while waiting for the political conditions for cooperative security to develop, conflict prevention in the Mediterranean area remains the task of the individual countries and of the EU.

The EU has included conflict prevention among the objectives of its external relations since 1995 and has subsequently delineated the main features of an emerging conflict prevention system. Consequently, the need arose for a conflict prevention component to be included in the EMP.

Within the EMP, an assessment of potential conflict situations is made in all the Country Strategy Papers with the support of appropriate potential conflict indicators such as the balance of political and economic power, the level of control over the security forces, the ethnic composition of the government in ethnically divided countries, the potential degradation of environmental resources, and so on. For those countries where such analysis has highlighted conflict risk factors (“countries with conflict potential”), conflict prevention measures are taken to target conflict prevention in various sectoral programmes in fields such as transport, rural development, energy, the environment, health, and research or education, as well as a systemic analysis of the security sector.¹²

The civilian and military crisis management tools currently being developed in the context of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) could be used to deal with the earliest stages of incipient conflict. Although initially designed for crisis management, they could be just as effective in a preventive ‘pre-crisis’ role.¹³ Yet, when it comes to the EMP, it is obvious that these instruments would represent a source of mistrust and insecurity in the southern Mediterranean countries. That is why the fundamental premise that stands out in terms of the EU’s integrated approach to conflict prevention is that “cooperation programmes are increasingly based on the countries’ own strategies since it is now well recognised that ownership is a condition for success allowing for consideration of countries’ own situations, histories and cultures”.¹⁴ This notion has had the concrete result that the countries that are the focus of the EU’s preventive efforts are fully involved in the EU’s conflict prevention planning.¹⁵

3. Southern security perceptions

The basis for conceptualisations of security

A country’s security culture is shaped by its recent experience as well as its beliefs, traditions, attitudes and symbols, which are intimately related and self-reinforcing. Fulvio Attina points out that this security culture shapes the preferences of national governments for certain security instruments, or combinations of instruments, but also that learning from recent experience—and interaction with the security cultures of other states and regions, as well as the influence of new ideas, practices and experiences—can lead to culture change.¹⁶

Thus, the character of conflict in the Mediterranean area after the Cold War, and the fragmentation and heterogeneity of strategic and security relations in the area concerned, form the basis on which the political context of a conflict prevention mechanism can be assessed.

There is no doubt that in the past ten years the southern Mediterranean region has been characterised by a relative increase in intra-state conflict. This is because of what has been dubbed *protracted social conflict*, which is essentially multidimensional—where internal, religious, cultural and socio-economic factors become inextricable from interstate conflicts. The result is interconnectedness and overlapping of—rather than a separation between—internal and international politics. Moreover, traditional conflicts still plague the Mediterranean in addition to the new ones that have emerged since the end of the Cold War.

Another essential factor is the internal and external fragility of the Arab state. While a vulnerability to external pressures and dependence on the outside is typical of Third World regions and small countries, the extent and nature of the external vulnerability in the Mediterranean Middle East are specific to that region. On the one hand, because of its unique endowment of strategic resources of global importance, most notably energy, no other region in the contemporary world has experienced the same degree of foreign intervention and competition. On the other hand, the reactions of Middle Eastern and North

¹² European Commission, Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention, Brussels, European Commission (2001), 11.04.2001, COM 211 final, p. 11.

¹³ *Ibid.* (2001), p. 24.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* (2001), p. 10.

¹⁵ Esther Barbe and Elisabeth Johansson (2003), *EU and Conflict Prevention*, Working Paper no. 8, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, p. 3.

¹⁶ Fulvio Attina (2004), *The Euro-Mediterranean Project of Security Partnership in Comparative Perspective*, Jean Monnet Working Papers, University of Catania, Italy, no. 52, p. 12.

African countries to external penetration have been particularly intense. The conclusions reached by structural analysis of regional patterns of conflict are therefore that state fragility and external vulnerability specifically combine in the Middle East and North Africa to produce a high incidence of persistent interstate conflicts.¹⁷

In addition, globalisation has recently influenced the conceptualisations of security in the northern and southern Mediterranean countries, albeit in different ways. As is noted by Marquina and Selim: “In the North, the change has been in the direction of moving away from the concept of national security, where the reference object is the territorial state, to the concept of international security, emphasizing interdependence to the concept of world security, fundamental security and global security, emphasizing global risks. In the South, there has been an increasing emphasis on the expansion of the concept of security to incorporate developmental dimensions and linkages with regional and global processes.”¹⁸

Thus, in the post-Cold War period patterns of conflict in the Near East and North African regions are similar to those observed globally, as far as the incidence and causes of domestic “intra-state” conflict are concerned, but differ from global patterns as far as interstate international conflict is concerned, because of the higher than average propensity to and persistence of international conflict.

The obstacles to agreement on conceptions

A major handicap in any discussion about security issues in the Mediterranean is the lack of any common definition of security. According to Biad: “Response to a security threat should not be based on an imposed formula that carries with it the risk of being perceived as intrusive in the eyes of the southern countries. Rather, such a response should be based on a cooperative approach that parts from a common definition of risks and responses. In the first place there are needed mechanisms for political consultation on security issues so that partners might exchange views about the conflicts which take place in the region.”¹⁹

Asymmetry in military organisations on the two rims of the Mediterranean basin is another important obstacle. On the northern rim, national armies are linked to a single alliance—NATO. The development of the EU’s common ESDP increases further the coordination of the national defence systems of the European members of NATO. On the southern rim, however, national military power and, in a few cases, loose bilateral defence agreements are the only means available for a single state to overcome any security dilemma involving potential or real enemies. Arab countries are deeply concerned about any infringement of the norm of territorial sovereignty, and about the practice of foreign inspection on national territory.²⁰

The differences between perceptions in the North and the South

The EMP in itself, it is argued by Roberto Aliboni, can be thought of as “systemic (pluralism, market economy, good governance, etc.) and structural (regional integration, shared institutions, etc.) conflict prevention”. Besides its structural and systemic ability to prevent conflict in the medium- and long-term, the EMP is supposed to develop an ability to prevent conflicts from being settled violently in the short- and medium-term. In this sense, the EMP is expected to develop preventive diplomacy and its attendant intra-state- and inter-state-related instruments.²¹ However, security cooperation is almost excluded from the EMP not only by the encroachment of the as yet unresolved Arab-Israeli disputes, but also by the strong perception by the South of interference from the North (political, military, cultural); this hardly allows for the use of military instruments in the EMP for the purposes of cooperative and collective security.

There are two main schools of thought in the Mediterranean on how to deal with conflicts that concern *the scope of the agenda*. The first school is advocated by the EU and focuses almost exclusively on the task of conflict prevention. The second school argues that conflict resolution must precede conflict prevention. This latter school is mainly articulated by Arab actors in the Mediterranean.

The Arab countries question the EU’s approach to conflict prevention for several reasons. The emphasis on conflict prevention focuses on the future and ignores current security issues, thereby making the EU less relevant to actors that are currently in conflict. Antonio Marquina and Mohamed Selim demonstrate that states pay more attention to their present conflicts than to those which could emerge in the future, and tend to focus on the frameworks that could provide a mechanism for conflict resolution rather than on those

17 Laura Guazzone (December 2001), ‘Part II: Tools for a conflict prevention system for the Euro-Mediterranean area: The Euro-Med conflict prevention chain and the Med country conflict profile’ in Roberto Aliboni, Laura Guazzone and Daniela Pippi (eds) *Early Warning and Conflict Prevention in the Euro-Med Area*. A Research Report by the Istituto Affari Internazionali, Qaderni IAI, 2, English Series, <http://www.iai.it/dbase/5%20part%20II%5B1%D.%20Guazzone.asp>, online 2006-09-25, p. 7.

18 Antonio Marquina and Mohamed Selim (2003), *Security Concepts, Institutions and Strategies for Cooperation, Partnership and Conflict Prevention in the Mediterranean*, UNSC Discussions Papers, p. 2. See also Gamal Abdel Gawad (1997), ‘Possible elements of collective security structures and confidence building measures: an Egyptian viewpoint’ in Thomas Scheben (ed.), *Security Structures in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and the Near East*, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Cairo, pp. 94–96.

19 Abdelwahad Biad (1997), *op. cit.*, p. 57.
20 Fulvio Attina (2000), *Partnership and Security: Some Theoretical and Empirical Reasons for Positive Developments in the Euro-Mediterranean Area*, Jean Monnet Working Papers, University of Catania, Italy, no. 27, pp. 15–16.

21 Roberto Aliboni (1997-98), ‘Confidence-Building, Conflict Prevention and Arms Control in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership’ *Perceptions, Journal for International Affairs*, Vol. II, No. 4, p. 3.

which offer the promise of a new world, not least because engagement in a conflict entails a pattern of resource mobilisation that can only be changed after the conflict is resolved—something which is at odds with the nature of preventive policies. They also argue that international relations cannot be compartmentalised: ‘Current conflicts are likely to have a negative influence on the possibilities of establishing a future-oriented cooperative model of trans-Mediterranean relations because current conflicts will necessarily affect future relations’.²²

The North and the South also disagree about *threat perceptions* and *the origins of problems*. Threat perceptions in the North often consist of what Biad calls “multidimensional” and “multi-directional” phenomena, which include the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and ballistic weapons, migration pressures, terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism. In the South, the North is seen as responsible for the instability of the price of energy and raw materials, debt pressures, cultural intrusion, racism and xenophobia. The positions and perceptions of each side can be distorted, not least because of a lack of information about each other’s intentions.²³

All this may explain the perception of the North’s unilateralism and intrusion that strongly prevails throughout the southern shore of the Mediterranean. Thus, the most important concern for the majority of southern EMP Partners is to avoid interference from the EU. The EU’s Mediterranean initiatives have caused suspicion and resentment among policy makers and the wider public in the Arab countries. They are seen as intelligence and monitoring operations rather than confidence-building measures.²⁴ Hence, consensus in the EMP framework is difficult to achieve. Relations are based on a genuine wish to cooperate with the EU but, for the time being, on a low common denominator and weak political context. The southern Mediterranean countries are much less well equipped institutionally than the EU and its member states. Furthermore, the latter are definitely preponderant in the EMP institutional set-up. If this asymmetrical character of the EMP is combined with the weakness of its political context and the limits this places on actual action, it is clear that the EMP suffers important limitations in its interactions with the EU. EMP joint action, entailing the use of military instruments for whichever kind of peace support operation, is highly unlikely at present, and this trend would tend to make unlikely any EMP joint military action in the future.²⁵

A further point of difference concerns the *crucial elements of security culture*. The security cultures of contemporary Arab countries contain various distinct views. One of these is the Arab nation view, which advocates an Arab trans-state community as the building block for peace and security in the area. Another sees Arab states as having friendly relations with each other, and providing mutual protection against external influence. In the 1990s two contrasting views came to the fore. One of them was a reformist view, developed especially in North Africa, which emphasised security in civil society, achieving better living conditions and the need for economic reforms that are in agreement with the traditions of Arab culture and the Islamic religion. Another radical conception strongly emphasised religion, the Arab security identity and the threat posed by the non-Islamic world.

Security cooperation at the region level is unfamiliar to Arab security culture. Building regional security through cooperative means creates strong suspicion in governments that are attached to national military power and the traditional view of strategic secrecy. Comprehensive security is also a suspicious concept for the Arab political elite and for Arab policy makers.²⁶ For these reasons, the Mediterranean lacks a single unifying security concept around which security arrangements could be developed.²⁷

On the other hand, the current security culture of the European countries is linked to three recent experiences that entailed regional cooperation: (a) the arms control negotiations of the Cold War and détente eras; (b) the Helsinki Process, with the three-decade long elaboration of new ideas and the formation of the mechanisms for comprehensive and cooperative security; and (c) the formulation of new defence policies in the 1990s to react to unexpected crises and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to countries and non-state actors insensitive to the conventional logic of military strategy.²⁸

The connections between perceptions in the South and EU policies

The eternal conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians is the main stumbling block to an enhanced security partnership between both shores of the Mediterranean. Since EU enlargement on 1 May 2004, the importance of the Middle East conflict to the EMP has become even more pronounced because—with the accession of Cyprus and Malta, and with Turkey’s special status as a candidate country and a NATO member—the EMP is now

22 Antonio Marquina and Mohamed Selim (2003), *op. cit.*, p. 12.

23 Abdelwahad Biad (1997), *op. cit.*, p. 57

24 Fulvio Attina (2000), *op. cit.*, p. 14 .

25 Roberto Aliboni (December 2001), ‘Early Warning and Conflict Prevention in the Euro-Med Context’, in Roberto Aliboni, Laura Guazzone and Daniella Pioppi (eds), *Early Warning and Conflict Prevention in the Euro-Med Area*, Istituto Affari International, Quaderno IAI 2, English Series, p. 6, <http://www.iai.it/dbase/4%20part%201%20aliboni.asp?back=2%20index%20completo.asp&book=Part%201>.

26 Fulvio Attina (2000), *op. cit.*, pp. 13–14.

27 Antonio Marquina and Mohamed Selim (2003), *op. cit.*, p. 1.

28 Fulvio Attina (2000), *op. cit.*, p.13

only made up of the Mediterranean Arab countries and Israel. Attempts by the EMP to add substance to the security dimension, and to conflict prevention in particular, have failed, in large part because a lack of political will in the southern Mediterranean partner countries. According to Sven Biscop, authoritarian regimes abuse the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in order to increase their legitimacy. Proposals for a security partnership that ignore the resolution of ongoing conflicts are not taken seriously in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.²⁹

There is also dissatisfaction with the EU's limited investment in the financial and economic chapter. It is often felt that the EU puts undue emphasis on the security aspects of the EMP, to the detriment of the Barcelona economic package which is considered by the southern Mediterranean partners to be the field that requires priority action.

Moreover, there is a certain mistrust with regard to the ESDP itself. The debate on 'pre-emption' fuels this mistrust and, since the 1990 Gulf War and the intervention in Kosovo, there is a fear of becoming the object of 'Western interventionism'. Research, however, demonstrates that a generalised lack of information about the ESDP is more important than actual mistrust—and this can easily be abused in order to increase levels of mistrust.³⁰

On a more general level, Biscop argues that there is limited interest in the southern EMP countries, both among policy makers and academics, in the Mediterranean as an organising concept for policy. The EMP is regarded as a mechanism for bilateral relations with the EU. Regional dynamics and South–South regional integration between the Mediterranean partners receive little attention. The Mediterranean partners are less familiar with notions of comprehensive and cooperative security, or with confidence- and security-building measures. Furthermore, large sections of public opinion often oppose security cooperation with 'the West', which again would have negative consequences for regimes' internal power bases.³¹

From another perspective, it is also important to note that the framing of the Barcelona Declaration, in its political and security aspects, was vague and indeterminate, and allowed for the possibility that any one party might reject it. Such framing does not assist with making a judgment on whether there are shared concepts and security priorities for both parties. Consequently, it does not help to evaluate the extent to which the partnership between the two parties might succeed in achieving its targets. Hence, there is a need to adopt a more widely acceptable security concept. In addition, transparency, justice and clarity are needed in order to sustain shared security—and these are currently absent. For instance, in spite of the fact that Israel is the only country that has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), when the European partners discuss this issue it is the Arab countries that are the main focus of their attention.³²

Another crucial drawback in the conflict prevention mechanism of the EMP is the unclear distinction between short- and long-term conflict prevention policies. In the Communication on Conflict Prevention presented in April 2001, the Commission distinguishes between conflict prevention as projecting stability (long term) and conflict prevention as reacting quickly to nascent conflicts (short term, i.e., crisis management). In the Communication, long-term conflict prevention appears to imply actions supporting regional integration, building trade links, supporting democracy, encouraging the rule of law, supporting civil society, and promoting gender equality in development policy, and so on, while the short-term actions encompass early-warning systems, rapid reaction mechanisms and the appointment of special representatives.³³ These two policies look very different from one another.

In addition to the lack of a consistent definition, it is necessary to make a point about the often fairly minor differentiation in EU discourse between conflict prevention and the general external policy aims of the EU (humanitarian assistance, development aid, supporting democracy, promoting human rights, etc.). The confusion is compounded by the integrated approach adopted by the EU in matters related to treating the root causes of conflict. In this context, the Commission states that "development policy and other cooperation programmes provide the most powerful instruments at the Community's disposal for treating the root causes of conflict".³⁴ These root causes are often the result of a lack of government legitimacy, the repression of minorities, the proliferation of arms, economic scarcity, migration, a lack of a vibrant society and regional instability.³⁵ This has caused many analysts to question whether the EU has conceptually fused normal peaceful relations between countries into a broad umbrella concept of conflict prevention. The danger implied by the confusion between the EU's general external policy aims and a conflict prevention programme is that it leads to a securitisation of normal, peaceful international relations.³⁶

29 Sven Biscop (31 March–2 April 2005), *The European Security Strategy and the Neighbourhood Policy: A New Starting Point for a Euro-Mediterranean Security Partnership?*, paper presented at EUSA 9th Biennial International Conference, Austin, Texas, Royal Institute of International Relations, Brussels, p. 10.

30 Sven Biscop (31 March–2 April 2005), *ibid.*, p. 11. Biscop refers to Alvaro de Vasconcelos (2004), *Launching the Euro-Mediterranean Security and Defence Dialogue*, EuroMeSCo Brief, Instituto de Estudos Estratégicos e Internacionais, Lisbon; and Annette Jünemann (2003), 'Repercussions of the Emerging European Security and Defence Policy on the Civil Character of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership', *Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 8, no. 2/3, pp. 37–38.

31 Sven Biscop (31 March–2 April 2005), *ibid.*, p. 11.

32 Mohamed Salman Tayie (1998), *op. cit.*, pp. 223–227.

33 Esther Barbe and Elisabeth Johansson (2001), *op. cit.*, pp. 5–6.

34 European Commission (2001), *op. cit.*, p. 4.

35 Eide Barth and Karen Smith (1999), *Mapping Out the Knowledge Accumulated with CPN's Products: a Lessons Learned Survey*, SWP-CPN Selected Contributions, no. 9, p. 16.

36 Eide Barth and Karen Smith (1999), *ibid.*

Inter-Arab differences

There is little trust and a lack of solidarity at the inter-Arab level, as is highlighted above. Arab states tend to have fairly good relations at the bilateral level but fail to cooperate at a collective level. In contrast, collective groups such as the Arab Maghreb Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are reportedly more active at the local level. Broadly speaking, it should be clearly understood that many countries only cooperate when it is made a condition by the EU.³⁷ This is something that makes dialogue in general, and on security-related issues in particular, a less genuine process, and something that increases the importance of cultural confidence building for the benefit of all member countries in the partnership.³⁸

The interests and objectives of the countries in the southern region usually conflict, and the scope for ethical, regional and international alliances between these countries is widening and extending the ramifications of these conflicts on a larger scale. This, in turn, results in increased antagonism and competition.³⁹

4. Conclusions

While the Barcelona Process has achieved some real success, it has also suffered from a gap between expectations and its achievements. As is described in this chapter, some problems are related to the multifaceted security problems and the basic instability of the region. Ownership is now acknowledged to be a precondition for progress in conflict prevention but hurdles still remain.

This chapter, focusing on southern perceptions, has identified problems that go back to the different bases for conceptualisations of security, which relate to factors such as protracted social conflict, the internal and external fragility of states and the effects of globalisation. Some problems concern the lack of a common definition of security and the asymmetry that exists in military capability, while others concern the agenda itself. One of the main reasons for the lack of progress is the fact that reaching an agreement on the peaceful settlement of the Middle East Conflict is considered, from the Arab perspective at least, to be a precondition for initiating a genuine process of confidence building in the EMP framework, and, in turn, represents a precondition for the process of conflict prevention within the partnership. Other major obstacles concern differences in threat perceptions and in perceptions of the origins of the problems as well as the differences in the geographical and political units to which the South and the North relate.

Perceptions in the South in many cases do not fit well with EU policies. This is linked to such factors as a lack of common well-understood terminology and results in a mistrust of the ESDP. To this can be added inter-Arab differences and dissatisfaction with the EU's limited investment in the financial and economic chapter.

In order to ameliorate these problems and make progress with conflict prevention strategies, it is important that EU strategies are adaptive and not rolled out in the fashion of a 'one size fits all approach'; and that they are tailored to the unique characteristics of the case in hand and to the overall political contingency in which it takes place, structured according to a coherent methodology and customised to the aims and means of the specific institution building them. By doing this the hope is that confidence between states on the southern shore of the Mediterranean as well as between North and South can be increased and that a step-by-step approach towards constructive cooperation can be initiated among all the countries.

³⁷ Ali Eddin Hilal Dessouki (1995), 'The political situation in the region after the end of the cold war' in Thomas Scheben (ed.), *Security and Peace: Towards a Partnership between Europe and the Mediterranean Region*, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Cairo, p. 18.

³⁸ Fathi El Shazli (1995), 'Opening remarks' in Thomas Scheben (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 13.

³⁹ Ali Sadek (1995), 'The political dialogue on security and conflict prevention structures: forms and conditions, an Egyptian viewpoint' in Thomas Scheben (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 133.