

The Euro-Mediterranean Security Partnership: Prospects for Arms Limitation and Confidence-Building

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In its short life to date, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), rather like a roller-coaster, has experienced a number of ups and downs. The 1995 Barcelona Declaration optimistically aspired to the creation of a 'zone of peace and stability' in the Mediterranean region, in direct support for the formation of a free-trade zone and inter-cultural *rapprochement*. However, the rapid and steady deterioration of the Middle Eastern Peace Process in the second half of the 1990s has put much of the progress on hold. Even though the Barak government came to power in Israel in June 1999 with the promise of revitalizing the process, there still appear to be significant difficulties.

This study explores, in light of the results of the ministerial meetings in Malta in 1997 and in Stuttgart in 1999, the extent to which the Barcelona partners will be able to proceed in the domains of conventional arms limitations and confidence-building. With the escalation of violence among Barcelona partners in the Middle East, the platform for security cooperation has become very narrow. But the study advances the claim that there are niches where the EMP can still develop a basis for a future co-operative security regime.

After assessing the impact of the ministerial meetings upon security cooperation, the study looks at the achievements and limits to conventional arms control and militarily significant confidence-building measures in the Mediterranean region. In this context, the study examines the applicability of arms control to regions in transition and it considers what kinds of global and regional arms control-related arrangements are relevant to Euro-Med security co-operation. In its concluding section, the study explores the various domains of 'soft security' in which the EMP could meanwhile prepare the groundwork for the time when the political climate would permit more

serious negotiations on arms control and confidence-and-security-building-measures (CSBMs) to resume.

Arms Control and Confidence-Building: Their Relevance to the Mediterranean

This section will look at how security co-operation in the area of arms control and confidence-building can be pursued within the Euro-Med Partnership in the aftermath of the EMP's Malta ministerial meeting in 1997. For this purpose, it is important to first briefly discuss the broader conceptual background of arms control in the period of the end of the cold war.

Current Thinking on Arms Control and Confidence-Building Measures

It is generally an accepted proposition that arms control represents a policy instrument through which states seek to improve their national security. Arms control in general terms has a structural impact on military holdings, an operational impact on military conduct, and a declaratory dimension in terms of transparency. In such a broad concept of arms control, the difference between armament control and confidence-building-measures (CBMs) is blurred. Constraining measures, for instance, can constitute either arms control or a CBM arrangement.

According to Hedley Bull, a classic analyst of arms control whose thinking is still relevant today, the objectives of arms control are to:

- reduce the likelihood of war;
- reduce the scope of violence of war if it occurs;
- reduce the political and economic costs; and
- uphold the moral obligation to combating the militarization of society.¹

There are two partially conflicting schools of thought about arms control. In the *neo-realist* perspective, the main function of arms control is to redress and stabilise an existing balance of power. Co-operation among states is confined to the improvement (and not the elimination) of a deterrent relationship. In this sense, the purpose of seeking a strong military capability is not only for the objective of winning wars, but also for deterring aggression.

With the end of the cold war, the arms control concept has evolved from the management of military balances to the management of conflict. Robert Jervis convincingly argued that any theory of arms control 'must rest on a theory of the causes of war'.² According to Jervis, arms control assumes a greater role in conflict prevention and crisis stability under the conditions of a post-cold war setting. Geoffrey Kemp, in turn, has framed the questions of post-cold war armament control as a relationship between military technology and conflict.³

The *neo-liberal* approach sees in arms control a norm-building effort to facilitate the development of a common security regime, which, in turn, may be the precursor to a pluralistic security community.⁴ Here, arms control is more a vehicle to shape perceptions of states and less an instrument to adjust their military capabilities. The neo-liberal thinking understands arms control as one avenue of co-operation among states that will lead to the removal of the security dilemma.

Thinking on arms control was substantially influenced by the emergence of regional arms control agreements and CBM-regimes. The bloc-to-bloc agreement on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE), negotiated during the cold war and implemented with much difficulty during the post-cold war period, is the only example today of *regional structural armament control*. It limits the parties to certain ceilings in their major weapon systems stationed in the European area – defined as from the Atlantic to the Urals. The security bonus of CFE rests on the increased transparency and accountability of the armed forces.

There are, in turn, a larger number of formal and informal *regional CBM regimes* in force today. Such confidence-building-measures may be defined as any step that decreases tensions, or increases cooperation between states. The notion of confidence-building has been used for a large variety of purposes and they can be military, political, cultural, or economic in nature.⁵ They all have in common the feature of being incremental, transparent and moderate in terms of their transaction costs.

Applicability Problems in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

How can security commitments take root in a region that is still characterized by a culture of adversarial politics and the spectre of domestic violence? Cooperative measures such as arms control or CSBMs have an applicability problem with regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, as the designation of existential threats in several partner states may very well first be domestic and only subsequently external. In this sense, security cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership can only progress to the extent that it does not compromise the internally propagated threat scenarios and enemy images of its partner states.

The internal/external security questions are rendered more complicated by geography and by rapid developments in the area of military technology. The short distances between respective borders and capitals, combined with the increasing range of power projection, tends to accentuate the effects of the security dilemma. Proximity tends to give offensive action the advantage over defence. For example, the lack of strategic depth and the vulnerable lines of communication, coupled with the fear of surprise attack require a number of military preparations, all of which are diametrically opposed to conflict

prevention and confidence-building measures considered in the Euro-Mediterranean forum. Such military responses include the maintaining of forward defence posture with counter-strike capabilities, the high state of readiness of the armed forces, rapid deployment capabilities and the continuous upgrading of operational capabilities of armed forces.

Progress in military technology allows power to be projected over longer distances with greater accuracy: missiles and military aircraft have ever-longer ranges and improved guidance systems. The extended range of power projection increasingly determines regional security understanding. Israel's worst-case planning and counterstrike contingencies, for instance, include distant countries such as Libya, Iran, or even Pakistan, to the extent that their power projection could reach Israeli soil. Moreover, the possibility that rivals could deploy weapons of mass destruction has frustrated all efforts to obtain some normative control over evolving force postures in the region. For example, some states in the Mediterranean region officially consider chemical or biological weapons as legitimate force equalisers to Israel's nuclear capability.

With such multi-level threats to security and the widespread sense of vulnerability in the Mediterranean region, armament continues to be considered an essential instrument of survival. Most importantly, in some sub-regional settings the threat or use of force is still considered a necessary means to solve disputes. This is an important explanation for the fact that the region continues to find itself in an environment defined by excessive and destabilising arms build-ups. Given the multi-level threat scenarios, combined with sub-regional military rivalries and the continuous militarization of border areas, the application of classic arms control and militarily significant CSBMs in the Euro-Mediterranean region appears extremely urgent, but it is also a highly unrealistic objective at this point.

The acceptance that the major sources of instability in the Mediterranean are of domestic or regime-specific nature would greatly reduce the validity of neo-realist prescriptions to security co-operation and arms control. Indeed, the region lends itself more to a long-term political process to overcome the security dilemma, rather than to hard security measures aimed at deterrence stability. The conclusions of the Malta and Stuttgart ministerial meetings have indirectly confirmed these findings, as they do not venture into the realm of conventional arms control or military CSBMs. However, the Mediterranean Charter guidelines, issued after the Stuttgart meeting indicate the preparedness of the EMP partners to work towards creating *favourable conditions* of future negotiations on arms control and disarmament. For a better assessment of how far security co-operation after the Malta meeting can go – given the evidence it provided of the profound suspicions amongst EMP partners because of the hiatus in the Middle East peace process – it is

important first to establish the existing *acquis* of arms control-related arrangements extending into part or all of the Mediterranean basin.

CSBM- and Arms Control Regimes in the Euro-Mediterranean Area

The Mediterranean region is not a vacuum with regard to multilateral or bilateral commitments in the fields of arms control and CSBMs. Security regimes, either in operation or as agreed blueprints, cover the various parts of the area. The EMP should not ignore these regimes for two important reasons. First, their existence will create appropriate conditions for a 'variable geometry' of security regimes, should the EMP arrangements take shape, since parties to the other regimes may have different agendas when it comes to security co-operation under the EMP framework. This will inevitably lead to potentially controversial debates about differentiated or graduated approaches to security co-operation in the region, such as voluntary sub-regional arrangements. Second, the existing regimes can serve the EMP as normative references, thereby helping to avoid protracted discussions or negotiations about the technical or definitional aspects of the commitments envisaged under an EMP-sponsored regime.

European CSBMs- and Arms Control Regimes

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) region extends deep into the Mediterranean. It includes the Northern Mediterranean states, the Balkans, Greece and Turkey as well as Malta and Cyprus. Activities and commitments under the OSCE's CSBM-regime include advanced notification of troop manoeuvres, observer participation, and restrictions in the number of military exercises. Other engagements under this CSBM-regime are the exchange of military data, the annual exchange of military budgets and verification and annual assessment procedures. The OSCE loosely cooperates with a number of Southern Mediterranean states through the contact group in Vienna and the holding of seminars on the OSCE experience in the field of confidence-building.⁶

The CFE Treaty, now under the auspices of the OSCE, commits 30 states to limit their heavy weapons on European territory in five categories.⁷ The major achievements of CFE has been the creation of military stability and predictability in Central Europe, but not necessarily in the South, as a considerable part of the surplus weapons from NATO states have been 'cascaded' to the Eastern Mediterranean. NATO members Greece and Turkey received a most generous allowance for their future military holdings during the CFE negotiations. At the OSCE Istanbul summit in December 1999, a revised CFE agreement was finally accepted. It adjusted weapons entitlements to the post-cold war realities by removing the alliance-wide holding rules.

The implementation of the CFE and the CSBM arrangements created a *differentiated security regime* in Europe, where 30 parties were bound to a structural arms agreement while the remaining 25 states were not. Efforts to harmonize the security commitments were not very successful. The 1996 Lisbon Document requires 'complementarily between OSCE-wide and regional approaches' to arms control with the purpose of creating a 'web of interlocking and mutually reinforcing arms control obligations and commitments'.

Middle East Multilateral Track

The Multilateral Track of the Madrid Peace Process promotes through its Arms Control and Regional Security working group (ACRS) a pan-regional approach to arms control and security co-operation. ACRS includes Israel and its neighbours, as well as the Arab states from the Gulf and North Africa, thereby adding a wider regional dimension to the peace process. Syria and Lebanon chose not to participate. The ACRS working group had been meeting every six months since 1992, but it came to a standstill in 1995. It may now be revived again during the year 2000.

The achievements of ACRS in the Multilateral Track have taken place in four areas. First and foremost, progress was made in the area of *information exchange*. A plenary meeting in December 1994 agreed to establish a Regional Communication Network in Cairo; a temporary communication network began operation in The Hague in March 1995 and an itemised list of information topics was distributed.⁸ Second, ACRS approved the creation of regional security centres in Amman, Tunis and Qatar. These centres would assume the function of conflict prevention centres in conjunction with the communication network. An expert meeting held in Amman in September 1995, agreed on a number of tasks for these centres.⁹ Third, the Israeli-Jordanian Peace Treaty validated the legitimacy of the ACRS approach. The treaty explicitly refers to ACRS, stressing the need for a multilateral dimension to regional security. It commits the parties 'to create, in the Middle East, ... a conference on security and co-operation in the Middle East (CSCME)'. It refers to ACRS as the forum through which a number of arms control-related objectives should be achieved.¹⁰ The fourth achievement of ACRS is in the area of maritime CBMs. ACRS generated two maritime framework arrangements. The first was a regional 'Prevention of Incidents at Sea Agreement' (INCSEAS) whilst the second dealt with regional search and rescue operations (SAR).

ACRS has been paralysed by the Israeli-Egyptian stand-off on nuclear weapons in 1995.¹¹ It did not hold a plenary meeting in 1995 and 1996. This stalemate has been formalized by the April 1997 decision of the Arab League to freeze participation in the Madrid Multilateral Track. The breakthrough in

Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the opening up of an Israeli-Syrian track in late 1999 may not necessarily revitalise ACRS, but the above-mentioned achievements cannot be undone, and their successful implementation only depends on political decision. This leads to the possibly subversive suggestion, in the context of the Middle East peace process, as to whether – in the light of the continuing sub-regional politico-military stalemate – the Barcelona Process may not represent a more propitious framework for soft security cooperation, thereby yielding to the temptation of a ‘friendly take-over’ of the ACRS’s own achievements.

Sub-Regional CBM-Regimes

There exist a small number of formal and informal sub-regional CBM-arrangements, both in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean. In the Middle East region, Israel and Syria worked out a number of ‘red-line’ arrangements in the late 1970s. These informal agreements, sponsored by Washington, were made up by agreed geographical constraints on force deployments, including surface-to-air missiles within Lebanon. Syria also accepted geographical limitations on its air and naval activities in Lebanese air space and territorial waters until the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Following the partial withdrawal of the IDF in 1985, the ‘red-line’ system was renewed with some modifications.¹²

In the Eastern Mediterranean, Greece and Turkey have established a CBM regime covering their maritime relations in the Aegean Sea. The 1988 Memorandum of Understanding on Confidence-Building Measures was designed to avoid tensions and escalation in an uneasy relationship over territorial disputes. They also negotiated guidelines for the prevention of incidents in 1988.¹³ In the aftermath of the cold war, Turkey worked out a bilateral CBM-system with Bulgaria, Macedonia and Albania. For example, the Sofia Document on Mutually Complementary Confidence-and-Security-Building Measures and Military Contacts refines commitments made under the 1990 Vienna Document. The complementarity is illustrated by the fact that certain measures taken under the Sofia Document are also reported under the OSCE Annual Exchange of Military Information Agreement.¹⁴

Middle Eastern Post-Conflict Arrangements

A number of states in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean have agreed to CBMs and other constraints in the framework of conflict termination agreements. In the aftermath of the October War of 1973, Egypt, Syria and Israel accepted a number of commitments on the grounds of the cease-fire agreements that included demilitarised zones, hot-lines, limitation of forces areas and inspections by the United Nations. The Camp David Agreement has extended the constraints and CBMs between Israel and Egypt.

They included early warning stations in designated areas, monitoring, surveillance and inspections of military formations and troop movements.

Scholars and practitioners have underrated the value of such CBM regimes for regional security cooperation for a long time. Indeed, little attention was paid to them until the ACRS negotiation process finally attempted to benefit from the lessons learned from the Sinai arrangements: In 1993, for instance, the ACRS Working Group visited the Sinai, 'where verification measures carried out pursuant to the 1979 Israel-Egypt peace agreement were observed'.¹⁵ Furthermore, during the Barcelona deliberations, a number of officials made repeated reference to the 'merits of the CSBMs incorporated into the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty of 1979 and the agreements of disengagement of forces that preceded it'.¹⁶

The Nuclear Weapons Conundrum as an Obstacle to EMP Security Co-operation

The regression of the Middle Eastern Peace Process in spring 1997 highlighted the clear limits of the EMP in the area of co-operative security. In more practical terms, the issue of weapons of mass destruction and the 'peace first' condition advanced by a number of states in the Near East before progress could be made in this direction has prevented any serious effort to engage the Partners in a process that could lead to CBMs and arms control. The 'peace first' condition may now be losing its relevance if there is progress in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the Israeli-Syrian track in the wider peace process really opens up.

Yet Israel's ambiguous nuclear policy continues to impose serious constraints to militarily significant security co-operation. The presence of operational nuclear warheads in Israel complicates the efforts to promote regional co-operative security measures. Israel argues that its 'ambiguous' nuclear policy is justified as a deterrence against both large-scale conventional and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) attacks.¹⁷ However, Israel's nuclear capabilities are taken as a pretext by Arab states and Iran to pursue their own programmes of weapons of mass destruction. Egypt refuses to sign the Chemical Weapons Convention as long as Israel stays away from the NPT. According to a Western European Union (WEU) report, an impressive number of Euro-Mediterranean states are involved actively in chemical weapons programmes, as well as in continuous efforts to increase the range of their delivery systems.¹⁸

The linkage between WMD and conventional armament has surfaced in several multilateral forums. The Arab-Israeli dispute over nuclear weapons has stalemated the ACRS process, the only regional effort to work out military CBMs and conflict prevention mechanisms. In addition, the linkage

dogma has stymied efforts to infuse more transparency into the armament control arena in the Mediterranean. Egypt, for instance, attempted to broaden the scope of the Register on Conventional Arms to include weapons of mass destruction, and deliberately withheld its data to force the issue.¹⁹ A similar fate overtook the UN Conference on Disarmament. This has failed, since 1997, to establish the *Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments*, due to disagreements over linkage questions. Even efforts to ban land mines risk becoming victim of the dispute over nuclear weapons.

Gateways to Arms Limitation and CSBMs

As the above discussion has shown, the crisis in the Middle East and the issue of weapons of mass destruction has caught up with the Barcelona Process. Given the number of obstacles to effective security co-operation, the Euro-Med Partnership needs to pursue its stated objective of peace and security by a gradualist approach. There are a number of steps, mostly drawn from the OSCE and ACRS experience, that could establish during the immediate future a more propitious basis for creating a common security regime based on notions such as defence sufficiency, minimal defence, and differentiation of circles of participation and sequencing. The foremost objective would be to foster a culture of dialogue and co-operation in the politico-military sector. This can be accompanied by transparency measures, low-cost military CBMs and region-specific refinements of existing global agreements, such as the Register on Conventional Arms and the Inhumane Weapons Convention.

Creating a Culture of Interaction and Dialogue

Given the diversity of the Mediterranean region, the Euro-Mediterranean process should make sure that participants acquire a common understanding about the key concepts of security co-operation, such as confidence-building, sufficiency, defence restructuring, conflict prevention and risk reduction. In this context, presentations of various perspectives on arms control, as prescribed by the Action Plan, would be a most useful exercise. Such activities would involve the identification of national points of contacts for CBM or arms control activities. Semi-formal military contacts are key to this for they can in future be extended to include *ad hoc* invitations to visit military bases or manoeuvres. These activities represent low-cost CBMs with a high potential of long-term payoffs, as they contribute to the deconstruction of stereotype images of 'the enemy' that still exist in the Mediterranean region.

The objective of creating a culture of cooperation should also target groups outside military establishments. It is important that the politico-military debate in the Mediterranean region is not confined to a handful of

officials in the relevant defence and foreign affairs ministries. Vital questions of security co-operation in the Euro-Mediterranean framework should stimulate research, curriculum development, and public debate in civil society and university circles. In this sense, the launching of the EuroMeSCo initiative in 1996 represented a necessary but still not sufficient initiative in broadening the arms control and security community in the Mediterranean region.²⁰

Towards a Common Transparency Policy

Transparency is a prerequisite for security building in the Euro-Mediterranean region, as past experience demonstrates. The arms control literature has clearly established a direct link between CBMs and threat perception, for more openness and less secrecy help to remove the cliché of enemy images and other misperceptions and thereby reduce the risk of surprise military attack and unintended conflict. In the Euro-Mediterranean context, in particular, it is important to remove the veil of secrecy that still surrounds military establishments. 'Seminar diplomacy' of the kind discussed above is a suitable instrument that should include non-intrusive items on its agenda, such as identifying national defence priorities, military doctrines, defence concepts, and possibly military budget priorities. Given the salience of internal security in many countries of the Mediterranean region, transparency could be increased by the exchange of information on paramilitary forces, border police and organizations designed and structured to perform security functions during peacetime.

Analysis and discussion of national threat perceptions of Mediterranean countries has been carried out in various forums outside the Barcelona Process.²¹ The Euro-Mediterranean setting would provide the advantage that the result of such exercises could feed directly into negotiations under the Politico-Security Chapter of the Process. The creation of a communication network represents a first institutional step in a common transparency policy. The Barcelona Process can draw from the achievements of the OSCE and ACRS. The Vienna Documents of the OSCE addressed the information costs of the parties with a number of measures.²² Furthermore, focal points of contact have already been established within the ministries of the partner-states in a communications network and the next step would be to agree on a common list of items to be communicated to each other. Drawing from ACRS experience, the Euro-Mediterranean communication network could be linked to a number of regional centres that represent sub-regional focal points.

Furthermore, to promote effective information flows, it would make sense to create a 'Euro-Med Defence Internet Forum', similarly to the Internet Forum for Euro-Med Diplomats that was officially launched at the Malta ministerial meeting in 1997.²³ A Defence Internet Forum should also be linked

to a future network of National Defence Academies. It could contain categories of information such as official national defence documents, unclassified military publications and training manuals, calendars and agendas for national defence-related meetings and activities, as well as links to security institutions, such as the United Nations Department of Peace-Keeping Operations (DPKO) or the OSCE.

Arms Register

The UN Register of Conventional Armaments is an instrument intended to promote transparency in the secretive arena of the arms trade. The idea of a Register took on new urgency in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War, when it became clear how much military technology and equipment Iraq had secretly procured for the purpose of creating weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. The objective of the Register is to provide an early warning mechanism by exposing excessive and potentially destabilising arms build-ups. It requires the states concerned to provide data on arms imports and exports for the preceding year in seven heavy weapons categories.²⁴ The Register is, however, not a binding instrument on the international community, which is why thus far only about half of the membership of the United Nations has provided the required data to the international body.

The compliance record of Mediterranean states is particularly weak. In 1995, for instance, according to the Arms Control Reporter, more than half of the states of the Mediterranean region did not return any information on their arms exports or imports. They included Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia.²⁵ The lack of compliance with the Register is particularly disturbing for those countries in the Middle East and North Africa that were listed as importers by arms exporting states. A number of Mediterranean states also abstained from the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 50/70D that called on states to 'provide data for the Register of Conventional Arms in their arms imports and exports and on their military holdings and procurements'. A major reason for such non-compliance with the Register Arab states is its insistence on extending the Register to include items related to weapons of mass destruction.

The promotion of transparency through the Register of Conventional Arms must be understood in the context of the *United Nations system of standardized reporting of military expenditures*. The First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly sponsored a text on 8 November 1995, encouraging all Mediterranean states to participate in both United Nations systems. The standardized reporting of military expenditures had originally been introduced by the United Nations in 1980 and has since been adopted as the official reference standard by the OSCE. The use of this standardized reporting scheme would allow the Euro-Mediterranean states to publish

military budget data annually, for instance. This would represent a more solid basis for military co-operation than the sporadic publications of military budgets by some countries and it could also provide an authoritative source of information on this topic, complementing the compilations made by non-governmental organisations such as SIPRI, the IISS, the Jaffee Center or the Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies.

Restraints on Inhumane Weapons

The Barcelona Declaration also called for participant states to adhere to the Inhumane Weapons Convention (CCW).²⁶ This Convention is an important instrument which implements the arms control objective of reducing the scope of violence and suffering after war breaks out, which was discussed earlier. The Convention restricts or prohibits the use of several conventional weapons whose efforts are excessively violent or which do not discriminate between legitimate and illegitimate – especially civilian – targets. It bans or restricts the use of items such as mines, boobytraps, incendiary weapons, and blinding laser weapons.

In recent years, there has been an international drive to reduce or eliminate the large land mine and anti-personnel mine inventories of many national armed forces and to clear the mines that infest large areas of war-torn countries. The Euro-Mediterranean process has, to a large extent, ignored the international activities and lobby initiatives targeting the possession of mines, their production and sale. This has not been so true of national initiatives, however. In the light of the 1995 Inhumane Weapons Review Conference focussing on the mines issue, a number of Mediterranean states have made unilateral statements pertaining to *land mines*.²⁷ With regard to *anti-personnel mines* (APMs), several Mediterranean states have joined the ranks of 33 states that formally call for a complete ban on APMs.²⁸

There have also been attempts to place the issue on the Barcelona agenda. During the Senior Official meetings before the Malta Ministerial Meeting, Egypt suggested that the clearing of land mines should be included in the Action Plan. This initiative that was tabled with the objective of gaining access to EU funds for mine clearing activities in the Egyptian desert, where deployed mines date back to the Second World War. The EU reaction to this initiative was, regrettably, lukewarm at best, as its mine clearing programme has regional priorities other than the Euro-Mediterranean area.

Global Arms Control Instruments

The Barcelona Declaration and the Action Plan refer to the importance of global arms control arrangements for the Mediterranean region. The Barcelona Declaration refers to 'arms control and disarmament agreements such as the NPT, CWC, BWC, CTBT, and/or regional arrangements, such as

weapons free zones ...'.²⁹ They represent an important aspect of regional security co-operation for the Barcelona Process, for they provide a means of exchange, in regional forums, of 'the presentation of various perspectives on arms control', as suggested by the Action Plan. Furthermore, the growing number of global instruments of disarmament increases the necessity for regional action by promoting regional arms workshops or training sessions. Malta, for instance, hosted a CWC training seminar in June 1996 with the objective of preparing national authorities for the technical side of the CWC implementation. Euro-Mediterranean countries, such as Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Malta, Morocco, Spain and Turkey attended the meeting.

Preparing the Toolbox

In light of the impossibility of penetrating into the realm of hard security co-operation through the Barcelona Process, the EMP partners are nevertheless able to prepare a number of tools that will be necessary for the construction of a future Euro-Mediterranean security regime. Such a Euro-Mediterranean 'toolbox' would contain agreed concepts and principles, negotiation mandates and codes of conduct. The Cairo Declaration of the ACRS conceptual basket could serve as a source of inspiration, together with the codes of conduct worked out within the framework of the OSCE. The preparing of such a toolbox would also represent, *ipso facto*, a confidence-building effort within the EMP. It is, however, evident that the political climate in the Middle East will have to change before these tools can be used effectively.

Conceptual Clarification

The 1995 Barcelona Declaration and the 1997 Malta Action Plan, together with the 1999 Stuttgart Draft Charter on Peace and Security, introduced a number of concepts and principles pertaining to confidence-building or arms control, without, however, elaborating further on the modalities involved. This needs to be rectified and exchanges of views on significance and content of concepts such as *national security*, *legitimate security concerns*, *defence sufficiency* and *military capacity beyond legitimate defence requirements* should be included in Euro-Mediterranean dialogue programmes.

Codes of Conduct

The development of such codes of conduct could be transformed into important *standard-setting instruments* of the Euro-Mediterranean toolbox, for they would provide previously agreed principles and commitments with an operational dimension. Moreover, they would reaffirm earlier

commitments and put them into an interactive operational relationship with each other. The advantage of such codes of conduct is twofold. First, their drafts could be confined to specific categories of security co-operation, thus providing a way around the linkage dilemma. Secondly, the drafts could serve as an important source of reference for future arrangements – for example, the language of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, worked out by the Forum for Security Co-operation, has been largely integrated into the 1996 Framework for Arms Control and similar action could be taken in the Euro-Mediterranean context. There are a number of codes of conducts that could be developed within the Euro-Mediterranean framework. They include:

- *Code of conduct in the politico-military field.* Such a code could develop the principles agreed upon in the Barcelona Declaration, the Action Plan or the Mediterranean Charter. The code would have to address the link between CBM and arms control regimes as well as the link between CBMs and conflict prevention. Such a code could also provide a basis for the common elaboration of stabilisation measures in sub-regions with latent or overt conflicts. Finally, this code could define ground rules for the institutional environment in the Mediterranean that will inevitably emerge if the Barcelona Process were to make progress in the security field.
- *Code of conduct or principles governing conventional arms transfers.* Such a code could draw from the United Nations resolutions surrounding the establishment of the Register on Transfer of Conventional Armaments and the OSCE 1993 Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers. It could focus on the restrictions of transfers that tend to: (1) prolong or aggravate existing armed conflicts; (2) destabilise a regional military balance, and (3) be used for the purpose of repression or support of terrorism. Furthermore, no transfers of arms should be endorsed to any countries that do not participate in the United Nations Register.
- *Code of conduct in military-civilian relations.* This code is, by and large, a neglected dimension of the EMP. The envisaged political liberalisation in Mediterranean countries and their transition towards democracy should be reflected in efforts to increase the *droit de regard* of governments and parliaments into the military domain. A number of measures were presented to Mediterranean states on the occasion of the Special Seminar on the OSCE Experience in the Field of Confidence-Building that was held in Cairo in September 1995. Democratic political control over the armed forces was portrayed at the meeting as an indispensable element of

security. Items that should be discussed in Euro-Mediterranean meetings could then include civilian control or oversight over military procurement policies and defence expenditures, legal and institutional instruments for democratic control over armed forces and political control over armed forces in times of crises.

Structural Arrangements

The toolbox approach for arms control and CSBMs would also require some structural steps. First, a focal point – an institution – is needed to administer and logistically support activities such as the following, which would be an intrinsic part of the toolbox:

- Information exchange;
- Verification activities; and
- Regular assessment meetings or implementation review meetings.

The locus of such a focal point institution could be either in the European Commission or in a new monitoring centre created specifically for the Barcelona Process security chapter. Such a centre could also coordinate future negotiations on arms control and CBMs. The centre could also assume other responsibilities within the Barcelona Process, including the following tasks:

- Setting the agenda for arms control-related negotiations or talks on mandates, codes of conduct and agreements;
- Updating a database on the status of adherence to various international disarmament instruments. This work is being currently carried out by the Council of the European Union, which has submitted questionnaires to the Senior Officials Committee of the Barcelona Process.
- Co-ordination with other regional centres dealing with CBMs and arms control. Liaison, coordination and exchange should be assured between the Barcelona Security and Political Committee, the Steering Committee of the Madrid Multilateral Peace Process and the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre in Vienna.
- The convening of regional experts meetings and training courses in the area of arms control and CSBMs.

In the longer term, the institutional structure of the EMP, which will have to be developed, will have to consolidate the various autonomous institutions and initiatives that emerge in the context of co-operative security. Ideally, the arms control and CSBM structure should eventually be linked to centres dealing with conflict prevention, risk reduction and crisis management.

Conclusions

The results of the various ministerial meetings within the Barcelona Process have shown that the Euro-Mediterranean region is not yet ready for full-scale arms control or military CSBMs. The escalation of violence among EMP partners in the Middle East and the conditionality of some Arab states, in demanding success in the Middle East peace process as a precondition of agreement, jeopardises even the development of very modest security schemes within the Barcelona Process. Furthermore, progress towards military security cooperation will be slow as long as Israel is not prepared to take some tangible steps towards joining the NPT and as long as Arab states see an intrinsic link between conventional armament and nuclear armament, both in terms of security and arms control.

The encouraging aspect of the Malta ministerial meeting, despite the generalised gloom over the Middle East peace process, was the determination of all parties to continue a regular dialogue in the field of security in parallel to economic and cultural co-operation. This study has attempted to show that the Barcelona Process can pursue – along the lines of the Malta and Stuttgart communiqués – security co-operation in select niches that, over the longer term, may lead to the creation of a Mediterranean-specific security regime. First, a culture of co-operation and dialogue needs to be established, followed by a common transparency policy that would reduce the current high level of information costs. Second, the EMP partners should capitalise on existing commitments in the field of arms control and disarmament and pursue low-cost CBMs, such as declaratory measures, non-intrusive military CBMs and region-specific refinements of existing global agreements.

The prospect of entering into an operational phase of Euro-Mediterranean security co-operation will require the general acceptance by the states involved that there already exists an important *acquis* of global and sub-regional commitments in the CBM, arms control and disarmament areas, on which they can build. From this point of view, the Euro-Mediterranean process can take an important step forward by providing these existing commitments with a Mediterranean-specific agenda and operational codes, while retaining the principles of *non-hierarchy*, *differentiation of circles of participation* and *sequencing*. Whilst waiting for the political landscape to become more harmonious in the region, the EMP partners can begin to prepare a 'toolbox' of instruments required for future arms control and military CSBM negotiations. Such initiatives are important, even if they do not promise to yield instant security payoffs. They will at least satisfy Hedley Bull's arms control objective of upholding the moral obligation to combat the

militarisation of society.

NOTES

1. Hedley Bull, 'Arms Control and World Order', *International Security*, 1/1, Summer 1976.
2. R. Jervis, 'Arms Control, Stability, and Causes of War', *Political Science Quarterly*, 108/2, 1993, p.239.
3. G. Kemp, 'Military Technology and Conflict', in C. Crocker and F.A. Hampson (eds.), *Managing Global Chaos*, Washington, DC: USIP, 1996, pp.129-40.
4. E. Adler, 'Arms Control, Disarmament, and National Security', in E. Adler (ed.), *The International Practice of Arms Control*, Baltimore, MD and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.
5. See, for instance, M. Krepon, D. McCoy and M. Rudolph (eds.), *A Handbook of Confidence-Building Measures for Regional Security*, Washington, DC: The Henry L. Stimson Center, Sept. 1993; or M.-F. Desjardins, *Rethinking Confidence-Building Measures*, Adelphi Paper, 307, London: IISS/Oxford University Press, 1996.
6. The first seminar was held in Cairo (1995), the second in Tel Aviv (1996). Recent OSCE initiatives also involved Mediterranean Partners in fact-finding missions in the OSCE area.
7. Tanks, artillery, armoured combat vehicles, combat helicopters and attack aircraft.
8. It includes administrative issues, calendars, working group papers, general information on CBMs and arms control.
9. They include: the organization of seminars on arms control and regional security; the encouragement of educating and training on issues related to the peace process and; the support of issues relating to arms control and regional security arrangements.
10. 'The creation in the Middle East of a region free from hostile alliances and coalitions'; and 'the creation of a Middle East free from weapons of mass destruction, both conventional and non-conventional, in the context of a comprehensive, lasting and stable peace, characterized by the renunciation of the use of force, and by reconciliation and good will'.
11. Peter Jones, 'Arms Control in the Middle East. Some Reflections on ACRS', *Security Dialogue*, 28/1, 1997, pp.57-70.
12. Y. Evron, 'Confidence and Security-Building Measures in the Arab-Israeli Context', in E. Inbar and S. Sandler (eds.), *Middle Eastern Security*, London: Frank Cass, 1995, pp.156f.
13. S. Miller, 'CBMs in the Maritime Area', in S. Feldman (ed.), *Confidence Building and Verification: Prospects in the Middle East*, Tel Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 1994, p. 79.
14. A visit by Bulgarian officers of a Turkish mechanized infantry regiment in Suloglu was also reported to the OSCE under 'Evaluation visits'.
15. S. Feldman, 'The Middle East Arms Control Agenda: 1994-1995', *International Spectator*, 29/3, July-Sept. 1994, p.71.
16. Paper of H.E. Mr. Mohamed Fathy El Shazli, Assistant Minister for European Affairs, presented at the Euro-Med Information and Training Session for Diplomats (II), Malta, 16 March 1997.
17. Statement of the Foreign Minister of Israel, Shimon Peres, at the Signing Ceremony of Chemical Weapons Convention, Paris, 13 Jan. 1993.
18. The Report mentions Israel possessing a nuclear force 'while others possess very significant chemical, biological and missile capabilities'. It specifically refers to the 'continuing chemical weapons programmes of Syria and Libya', Assembly of the Western European Union, *Parliamentary Co-operation in the Mediterranean*, Document 1485, 6 Nov. 1995, Appendix.
19. *Arms Control Reporter*, 11/96.
20. EuroMesco is an association of foreign policy institutes in the Euro-Mediterranean area. EuroMesco has been adopted as a CSBM under the Inventory of CSBMs of the Barcelona Process.
21. Threat perception exercises have been held in the informal framework of UNIDIR and the more official setting of the OSCE Contact Group during meetings about the Security Model

The Barcelona Process

- in Vienna. For the results of the UNIDIR meetings, see *National Threat Perceptions in the Middle East*, Research Papers, No.37, UNIDIR, United Nations, Geneva and New York, Sept. 1995.
22. Creation of a CSCE communication network; an annual exchange of military information on forces, equipment, and budgets; and evaluation visits allowing for the verification of the exchanged data.
 23. The Euro-Med Internet Forum grew out of the Euro-Med Information and Training Sessions organized by the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, Malta. The address of the Euro-Med Internet Forum is: <http://www.diplomacy.edu/euromed/euromed.htm>
 24. Battle tanks, combat helicopters, large-calibre artillery, combat aircraft, warships, and missiles and missile launchers.
 25. *Arms Control Reporter*, 2/97.
 26. CCW stands for the *Convention on prohibition or restriction on the use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects*. The Mediterranean adherence record to the CCW is marked by the absence of most Arab states: As of 31 December 1996, the following Euro-Med states were not party to the CCW: Algeria, Egypt (signed), Lebanon, Morocco (signed), Portugal (signed), Syria, Turkey (signed).
 27. Greece declared an indefinite export moratorium; Israel declared a two-year export moratorium; Italy declared an export moratorium, which would remain in effect until the international system devised a way to control the export of land mines; Jordan declared it did not produce or export land mines; Malta declared it did not produce or export land mines; Spain declared a one-year export moratorium; Turkey instituted a renewable three-year moratorium on the export and transfer of land mines.
 28. France – CCW Review Conference, 3 May 1996; Italy – Statement by Foreign Minister at 51st UN General Assembly, 26 Sept. 1966; Malta – CCW Review Conference, 2 May 1966; Portugal – CCW Review Conference, 3 May 1996.
 29. All Euro-Mediterranean states are parties to the NPT except: Israel, to the BWC except: Algeria, Egypt (signed), Israel, Morocco (signed), Syria (signed), Tunisia (signed), to the CWC: except Cyprus (signed) Egypt, Israel (signed), Jordan, Lebanon, Luxembourg (signed), Malta (signed), Syria, Tunisia (signed), Turkey (signed). Euro-Mediterranean states that have not yet signed the CTBT are Lebanon and Syria.