

Synthesis of the Intervention of

Dr. Saad Eddin Ibrahim

For the Mediterranean, the Middle East and Eastern Europe

The EU and Nato's wider new neighbourhood

Lisbon 13-14, 2004

Security is of utmost importance for individual and collective well-being, and therefore must take precedence. However, collective security, i.e. of states and societies could not be sustained without justice. This is nowhere more true than in the Arab Middle East, a region that has less than 7% of world population but has appropriated more than 35% of the world's armed conflicts in the last 50 years. Western powers have triggered or been dragged into ten of these armed conflicts, i.e. an average of one conflict every 5 years. Each of these successive conflicts is more lethal and more costly in human and material terms than the one before. My intervention argues that the frequency of such armed conflicts is due to the neglect of justice. To settle and preempt further conflicts, the missing component of justice must be forcefully attended to by the richer and stronger actors of the community of world democracies. Modalities for just or equitable settlements abound. So far, what is badly lacking is the will to implement them.