



IPALMO

International Conference

***The OSCE and a New Context for Regional
Cooperation in the Mediterranean***

Rome, 28th May 2012

Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Final Document

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Ministero degli Affari Esteri



IPALMO



Istituto Affari Internazionali

International Conference

The OSCE and a New Context for Regional Cooperation in the Mediterranean

Rome, 28th May 2012
Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Sala Conferenze Internazionali
P.le della Farnesina, 1

- 9.30 am** **Registration**
- 10.00 am** **Welcome Remarks**
Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata, Minister of Foreign Affairs
- 10.15-11.30 am** **I PANEL**
The New Mediterranean Geo-Political Context: Present and Future
- Moderator**
Francesco De Leo, Director, "Oltre radio.it"
- Intervention**
Sandro De Bernardin, Director General, Directorate General for Political Affairs and Security, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Chekib Nouira, President, IACE (Institut Arabe des Chefs d'Entreprise), Tunis
Hassan Abouyoub, Ambassador, Kingdom of Morocco in Italy
Tommy Steiner, Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Policy and Strategy, IDC Herzliya
Jean-François Daguzan, Deputy Director, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Paris
- Debate**
- 11.30-11.45 am** **COFFEE BREAK**

11.45-1.30 pm

II PANEL

Multilateral Cooperation in the Mediterranean: the experience and the instruments of the OSCE

Speech

Gianni De Michelis, President, IPALMO

Mutatis Mutandis: the redefinition of OSCE's role in the Mediterranean region: issues and outlooks

Moderator

Ettore Greco, Director, IAI

Intervention

Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General, OSCE

Giulio Tonini, Permanent Representative of Italy to the OSCE

Ihor Prokopchuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the OSCE, Chair of the Contact Group for the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation

Martina Feeney, Vice Head of the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the OSCE

Riccardo Migliori, Vice President, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Matteo Mecacci, Chair, Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Samir Koubaa, Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the OSCE

Lukasz Kulesa, Head of the Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Project, Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw

Debate

1.30-2.30 pm

BUFFET LUNCH

2.30-4.00 pm

III PANEL

The Revival of Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation: a New Approach

Speech

Roberto Aliboni, IAI Scientific Counsellor

What regional relations in the Mediterranean after the Arab Spring ?

Moderator

Alberto Negri, Journalist, "Il Sole 24 ore"

Intervention

Maurizio Massari, Special Envoy for the Countries of the Mediterranean and the Arab Spring

Sabiha Senyuçel Gundogar, Director, Foreign Policy Program, Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation, Istanbul

Christian Berger, Director for North Africa, Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq, External Action Service (EEAS)

Brian Katulis, Senior Fellow, Center for American Progress, Washington

Rachid Tlemçani, Professor of International Politics and Security Studies, University of Algiers

Abdel Aziz Abu Hamad Aluwaisheg, Assistant Secretary General for Negotiations and Strategic Dialogue, Gulf Cooperation Council, Riyadh

Debate

4.00 p.m.

CONCLUSION

Gianni De Michelis, President, IPALMO

The new Mediterranean geo-political context: present and future

The entire Middle East region - from Morocco to Syria and Yemen - was hit by revolts in 2011 that profoundly altered not only the Mediterranean landscape but also the global one, in ways that cannot yet be fully understood and whose effects of short and long term are difficult to predict. The explosion of revolts was provoked by economic and social causes: the economic distress has triggered a democratic struggle for the recognition of equality between the citizens.

After the initial push for change, deep crisis and conservation factors are currently acting in these countries, especially in economic terms: for example the military's role in Egypt, *business communities*, the religious movements that are emerging in all electoral processes as a predominant force in the North African states who went to the polls and the worrying decline of economic growth in countries such as Tunisia.

The results of elections in countries such as Tunisia and Egypt necessary oblige us to deal with Islamic parties and accept the idea of not having a special and continuous relationship with the secular parties of the south Mediterranean land side. This requires a cultural revolution on our part, because Europe will be obliged to live with political Islam and must take into account the growth of Arab political opinion.

European countries, have sided with the change from the beginning, even if apparently Europe, in this decisive transitional phase for the Arab-Islamic world and the entire Mediterranean area, is fully absorbed, from an operational point of view, in trying to solve its domestic issues paying little attention and no economic resource to the southern shore, and creating a substantial void of political and strategic action.

It is however clear that, in the uncertain and complex phase transformation of the Mediterranean region, the close connection between rights and security and between freedom and stability, including the progressive integration and respect for diversity, must be the compass by which to direct the European support of the Mediterranean partners' transition processes. The economic crisis, which has also been an important driving force of the Arab Spring, is continuing and will continue to produce effects of the crisis in the Mediterranean in both sides. From an economic and social perspective, the North and South of the Mediterranean are now facing the same challenges, first of all economic growth and employment, which can only be achieved through effective integration of production, for which detailed actions must be prefigured such as creation of work's networks that may have added value and maximized production, training of top managers, sector industry funding for SMEs, creation of tools for regulation, insurance, legal and warrant. In this sense, Europe could take for example the "additional investment" of

Germany and other countries emerging from the collapse of the Soviet Union, for example by moving (transferring) the intermediate stages of production to support local development and to reduce migration .

It will be necessary, therefore, to lay down an effective integration of the region, by designing new tools and precise steps for real convergence and synergy, working for the creation of a truly integrated labor market that would allow the Mediterranean region to compete even with the big players in the new configuration of the multi-polar world. Since the time of the *Pax Romana*, the Mediterranean countries are no longer able to structure firm and lasting mechanisms of regional integration. The cumbersome process of Barcelona has never managed to make a difference. But there are now right in the post-Arab Spring, positive signals for the emergence of an area of prosperity and dialogue that allows the strengthening of relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean on the basis of authentic, peer and durable relationships. The political issue that Mediterranean area states should face is the creation of a simple structure that increases the principles of good neighborhood and provides the parties the opportunity to cooperate and to remain in contact building a common Euro-Mediterranean home. It will be necessary to launch again a multilateral approach and to create integrated spaces of prosperity and dialogue. In that sense, the government's action will be not enough, but should actively involve civil society, research institutions, NGOs and academia.

For this, the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Terzi, pointed out that a way to channel the energies of civil society could be the creation of a think tank center. The organization of a permanent diplomatic conference (in line with the model of the CSCE) has been proposed. It should lead to formal negotiations to which all states of the wider Mediterranean area will participate. From the methodological point of view this initiative should draw on the negotiations held between 1972 and 1975, which led to the Final Act of Helsinki, and were capable of governing a change in a converged and non- traumatic direction.

The dialogue was articulated in various conferences that allowed East and West to approach and to establish the principles for the development of peaceful coexistence and political cooperation, economic and social development. The contents of the Treaty of Helsinki in those years have accelerated, the awareness of need for change for Eastern Europe countries.

Today, OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), after the Arab Spring, can play an important role in the new Mediterranean framework in helping to implement a long term approach on equal basis. With the Helsinki Final Act, in fact, the founding fathers not only spotted the inseparable link between Euro-Atlantic and Mediterranean security, but also recognized the strong correlation between security and respect for human rights. To achieve the

goal of building a common Euro-Mediterranean home it will be necessary to involve more partner countries and OSCE will have to delve relationships with regional organizations, such as the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council. After almost forty years, that approach based on comprehensive security developed in Helsinki is still current and valid. This holistic model was the basis of long-term success of the transition processes in Eastern Europe and continues to lead the international community in the long-term strategy aimed at preventing conflicts in unstable areas, such as the Balkans, the Caucasus and central Asia.

Even though the challenges may seem enormous in front of the confusing and sometimes tumultuous events of this transitional phase, today the context is more favorable than the situation of eastern Europe in the 70s and 80s.

At the time, the ideological fractures and the two military blocs polarization hindered the dialogue between the West and the East. Now the fracture lines are less pronounced, as political Islam too recognized itself in most fundamental values. Over time, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) adopted an approach to security that could be defined "global". This approach establishes a direct and explicit link between the maintenance of security and respect for human rights, addressing security issues in an interdisciplinary way from the political-military, economic and human point of view.

Such values can be shared with the Mediterranean countries on the basis of equal partnership and concrete projects which take into account the respect for *rule of law* in all its forms, considering that corruption was a major cause of the revolution.

As it has occurred in the past to the Eastern European States, today the OSCE can play a fundamental role in the southern Mediterranean land side, making use of its experience and its many tools to implement a long-term approach.

Multilateral Cooperation in the Mediterranean: the experience and the instruments of the OSCE

The OSCE has paid increasing attention to the events that have crossed the Mediterranean region. The approach to security traditionally carried out by the organization appears to be a fundamental value for the contribution towards the stability and democratization of the area. This element provides a direct and explicit link between the maintenance of security and respect for human rights in an interdisciplinary way from the political-military, economic and human point of view. This aspect is crucial in the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue.

The OSCE has, in fact, assigned to the human dimension a special importance, considering it a key aspect of an effective conflict prevention and of a comprehensive and indivisible security

concept. This approach derives from the fact that, in most cases, crises or conflicts are due to phenomena of social unrest, as happened for the recent revolts in the Arab world. The "human dimension mechanism" is a value added to be taken into account in the relationship with the Mediterranean countries and can enable the OSCE to play an important role in the region. Pragmatism, flexibility and implementation of a protocol for rapid action are among the main advantages benefited by the OSCE missions in the different contexts in which they operate, because they can adapt to multiple applications and tasks with reduced resources. The international staff working in the missions, in cooperation with local staff can better understand the internal dynamics and build relationships and closed partnerships with the authorities and local actors. The OSCE's comprehensive approach, original and unique in its case, aims to deal with: physical security, economic opportunity, the value of human dignity as part of an integrated whole, is particularly important in building a true and lasting regional stability.

The political changes of the entire Mediterranean area should lead to the development of a long term strategy, the expertise of the OSCE can be decisive in this for the management of various issues. Experiences in Serbia-Montenegro (Kosovo Vojvodina and Sandjak) following the collapse of Yugoslavia can be underlined in a positive light; the aim of promoting dialogue between authorities and local communities and the creation of a climate of trust at the regional level, the work of election monitoring and stabilization of the Balkan context should be used again in operational term with a compelling strength. The dynamic role assumed by the figure of the Secretary-General, a direct consequence of the decisions of the Vilnius meeting has to be set within measures that can more effectively deploy the reactivity of the OSCE in a European and a Mediterranean viewpoint. The proposal emerged at the conference held in Rome, 28th May 2012 to establish a center for a standing interaction between the OSCE and the Italian think tank, could help generate and sustain the production of new ideas and approaches, providing a place for sharing experiences, raise the profile of the OSCE, the awareness of values and the work organization. It is necessary to supply the needs of Mediterranean partners for a greater involvement on equal basis of these countries for common important issues.

A wider inclusiveness of the OSCE in the expansion and deepening of partnerships and a greater sense of membership from the Mediterranean partners, may help to have a more open and operational relationship, based on greater mutual understanding and shared goals. A more active role of the Secretary-General could allow better structured relations with regional organizations, such as the Arab League, developing new mechanisms for sharing of experiences among the participating States and Mediterranean partners. Ideally, these mechanisms would allow a greater

interaction and concrete initiatives focused on issues of common interest, such as, for example, responses to transnational threats. This would help to improve the common security policy.

Existing mechanisms may be reinforced and also used for this purpose. The annual OSCE Mediterranean Conference and periodic meetings of the Mediterranean Contact Group would be useful occasions for the presentation and sharing of expertise and with the help of national experts to identify selected areas for a targeted cooperation. The involvement of many countries in the meetings is synonymous of the OSCE will to engage in the Mediterranean region, using its experience; however, the situation of the Mediterranean area is substantially different from the post-Soviet Eastern Europe. The Warsaw Pact countries, before the Soviet experience, shared values derived from the European millennial history.

The Southern Mediterranean countries, such as the Middle East, with the exception of Turkey, had a story which is expressed in a different culture from that of Europe, therefore, it is necessary to take into account this aspect. More than twenty years since the collapse of the Soviet empire, many Eastern European countries are still struggling to emerge from the difficult situation created by the Communist regimes as well as in the Mediterranean the failure of the peace process in the Middle East, continues to be an obstacle which substantially limits the establishment of a permanent cooperation with the these countries. In 1975 the former Secretary of DC Aldo Moro said: "There can be no peace in Europe if there is no peace in the Mediterranean region". The Mediterranean culture is different from that of the Arctic Circle countries. The *Mare Nostrum* has an inclusive culture which must not overlook important partners like Russia, a country whose major role in the Mediterranean area cannot be ignored. The situation in Syria, in fact, is highlighting all of the strategic importance that the giant Russia may exercise, regardless of particularistic economic interests. Engaging Russia in Mediterranean processes, supporting what has been historically the Russian need to create an access to the Mediterranean sea could establish the basis for a more moderate dialogue and with less frictions. The recent events in the Mediterranean region surprised Europe. Too often, the strong personalities who dominated the Southern Mediterranean countries have been taken for situations of stability, ignoring the social reality on which they were holding these regimes. After the collapse of these certainties, the framework built has collapsed like a paper's castle. All this may lead us to reconsider the scale of values necessary to the Mediterranean situation analysis. Recent events are a clear signal that shows how very trick and important is the current phase of transition. The *construens* phase will be very fundamental since it will form the future leaders with whom Europe will have to dialogue. For this issue, the experience of the OSCE can be valuable.

Its mechanisms of action are significant and should therefore be adapted to a Mediterranean viewpoint into a partnership with the states involved. The European culture must evolve into a Euro-Mediterranean culture and come out from the rigid and particularistic point of view which has characterized it the last twenty years.

The Revival of Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation: a new approach

The events of the "Arab Spring" require a redefinition of the traditional paradigms within which the Euro-Mediterranean relations have long been framed and interpreted. Certainly, we are witnessing an open-ended and a not defined situation whose effects are difficult to predict in the short term, however, the new circumstances delineated in the Mediterranean area must be faced very differently than before.

The bilateral approach long followed and still favored by European countries, culminating in the so-called European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) which was adopted by the EU since 2004 has proved ineffective. From this approach, first of all, emerged a fragmented and not cohesive EU, suffering from a strong particularism and intent on pursuing their own national interests. Furthermore, the relationships pattern has shown a continent that struggles to define itself and to forge a comprehensive, clear and consistent global policy in the Mediterranean framework.

The events that provoked the fall of the previous autocratic regimes in the region, understanding the specificities of each national context, have resulted in radical changes in the countries of the southern Mediterranean land side. Certainly, the future of the relationships with the Mediterranean partners must take into account some important factors such as the new geopolitical framework configuration, the cultural component especially the Islamic element, the economic and demographic dimension, human rights and the possible decay in authoritarian sense of these regimes. A vision based on a "sectorial approach", less attentive to the local context would prove inadequate and poorly suited to grasp the complexity of this new reality *in fieri*.

The limits, and in many cases the failure of the traditional bilateral approach followed by European countries, require to go beyond their differences to define new points of convergence that will allow them to deal more effectively with the problems that are emerging in the Mediterranean region. Despite many governments seem to favor the traditional bilateralism, European countries and the EU must necessary promote a new approach involving a real benefit for all parties on an equal basis and a long-term strategy that is not static but can be adapted gradually to different contexts. The future of the Euro-Mediterranean relationships requires a very strong commitment on the part of Europe in terms of political, economic cooperation and support of the transition

underway in this area. Of course, there are many issues on which it will be difficult to find shared solutions in the short and medium term, for example economy and migration flows.

Nevertheless, a point of convergence could be represented by the identification of common aims in the context of regional security policy. The regional dimension is crucial in order to better tackle the challenges that weigh on this framework. The context of security policy must expand its boundaries to include other partners, including Israel and Turkey, while the possibility of engaging Iran appears to remain, at present, a hypothesis which not taken into account by western chancelleries.

Beyond the relationships with the governments, therefore, it is necessary to focus on the role that national parliaments play in the consolidation of democratic processes, growth and involvement of civil society especially young people. In this sense, the need to activate a network of “scientific” collaboration which makes use of academic institutions cooperation and of the most renowned and qualified Think Tank’s research is important and crucial.

From this perspective, the OSCE could be a reference for its security concept and for the set of principles that characterize its experience in security and political cooperation field.

In conclusion, to respond to the new realities, EU must develop a coherent multilateral approach which overcomes the limits of bilateralism and provides the parties the possibility of confrontation on equal basis through some instruments such as specific diplomatic conferences in line with the CSCE model. The OSCE could be, therefore, the promoting body of these initiatives. An alternative could be the strengthening of the cooperation between the EU, the GCC and the Maghreb Union, with which it is necessary to find concrete points and shared goals. The solution to all these issues will depend heavily on the courage and commitment of the EU, in terms of resource allocation, investment in the Mediterranean area and support for the ongoing democratization processes.

Once confirmed that the multilateral dimension is crucial, in the current transition framework characterized by dwindling resources, is it possible to imagine a new cooperation scenario in the region and between the two shores of the Mediterranean sea?

According to the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs’s Special Envoy for the Mediterranean and the Middle East, Minister Massari, the current situation may foster an increasing cooperation since the democratization processes should be considered as a “game changer” compared to the past and because actually we are witnessing a new dynamism in the regional multilateral relationships as demonstrated by the activism of the GCG, the AMU, and the success of the 5+5 group.

In this sense, especially referring to the Mediterranean framework, two possible contexts of cooperation can be envisaged. The first one, more difficult to achieve both for economic reasons

and for the difficulty of collecting a sufficient number of countries willing to support it in a semi-integration scheme, consists in a quasi-membership (in line with the concept of “wider Europe” proposed by the former European Commission president, Prodi in 2002) that surpasses the concept of “anything but institutions” by establishing an open regional countries’ authority.

The second context would be that of a “strengthening cooperation” among the current Euro-Atlantic and regional institutions which are already operative in the MENA area as the European Union, the OSCE, the European Council, the NATO, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union. In the panoply of such a “spiderweb” that could be institutionalized by a diplomatic conference, the OSCE could be an important reference point for its multi-dimensional approach and for its “competence”. The main issue to be solved is to succeed in including also Israel in such a project; the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was definitely one of the main reasons for the failure of many previous experiments of cooperation.