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**The Common Strategy on the
Mediterranean Region: Evidence
and Analysis**

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Abstract

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INTRODUCTION

On 19/20th June 2000, the Santa Maria da Feira European Council adopted the Common Strategy of the European Union on the Mediterranean region. It was the third Common Strategy adopted by the European Council, after the two previous Common Strategies on Russia and Ukraine. On the table there was the desire to articulate a comprehensive, cross-pillar instrument to deal with the Mediterranean countries, covering all the dimensions of the European Foreign Policy and putting together, under the same umbrella, the policies and the instruments of the European Union and of the Member States.

The present working paper aims at assessing the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean, taking into account its possible articulation as a coherent instrument of the European Foreign Policy. The study wants to answer some questions related to this instrument. The Common Strategy on the Mediterranean is an excellent case study and is a potential source of several questions about the external action of the European Union. Specifically, the present study has in mind two main questions to answer. Firstly, which are the main reasons behind the adoption of this instrument of the European Foreign Policy? In other words, which was/is the rationale for the existence of this Common Strategy? Secondly, which is the real impact of the Common Strategy? Which are its real achievements?

In order to make the conductor wire effective, useful and structured all over the study, all the ideas exposed aim at falsifying or verifying the starting points of the study, that is the hypothesis. The author has in mind one basic assumption referring the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean, assumption that the development of the study will state as wrong or as false. This hypothesis consists on the idea that the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean region was conceived as an instrument to articulate a coherent European Foreign Policy in an area where the European Union and its Member States have important interests in common.

I. THE COMMON STRATEGY ON THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

An accurate examination of the functioning of the European Union dual system of foreign affairs shows the extraordinary complexity of foreign policy making and policy implementation by the Union. The resulting institutional constraints become particularly tangible if a policy touches vital interests of the Union and its Member States, because then the internal struggle for securing priorities and defending particular interests of all the actors involved becomes all the more intense¹. The EU policy towards the Mediterranean definitely touches vital interests of Member States. As a result, this policy, if there is one policy, puts the entire foreign affairs system under considerable strain and the impact of the institutional constraints increases. The most important institutional effect in the Mediterranean policy is that the system makes of the EU a *clearing house of different interests rather than an unitary actor* with more or less clearly defined objectives and strategies. Is the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean (CSM) an effective tool to provide a general framework for the European Foreign Policy towards this region?

1. Common Strategies: a New Instrument for a Coherent Foreign Policy

Common Strategies are conceived as an instrument of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, but also cover other areas of the EU's external relations and are intended to be an improved mechanism for ensuring coherence across the range of external policies². A CS may cover issues across the three pillars rather than CFSP alone and, crucially for the coherence of the European Foreign Policy, may draw upon capabilities and instruments from the European Community, the European Union and the Member States. In fact, the importance of CS for the co-ordination, coherence and effectiveness of external action is crucial³. The Treaty of Amsterdam, mainly to reflect two major concerns that arose over EU external action during the IGC of 1996-7, introduced the mechanism of the CS. The first concern was to respond to the

increasing demands of the integration of internal—or "cross-pillar"—policy-making⁴, where it was felt that the existing instruments and agencies of the EU were insufficiently co-ordinated or even able in the first place, to make a strategic impact. In particular, it was thought necessary to link the economic, financial and trade instruments at the disposal of the EC more closely with the EU's political and diplomatic objectives. The second concern was the consideration that important strategies of this kind should be decided at the highest level, in the European Council, and only at that level. In other words, CS is a response of the insufficiencies of the single institutional framework and a reaction of the pillar structure of the dual system of foreign affairs⁵.

CS introduce an element of flexibility in CFSP, given that the decisions for its implementation are adopted by Qualified Majority Voting⁶. The amendments of the CFSP agreed in Amsterdam represent a compromise position with the requirements outlined above. The compromise restricted the broader extension of QMV through accepting a national veto on grounds of national interest and increased internal policy coherence (see Article 13.2 TEU). CS shall set out the objectives of the EU and MS in areas where the MS have important interests in common, the duration of the actions, and finally the means and resources available by the Union and the MS in order to achieve the objectives. Article 13 TEU states that CS is decided by the European Council on a proposal by the Council. The Council is in charge of the later implementation of the CS⁷. The decision of the Council to submit a CS to the European Council is taken by unanimity, and the actions for its implementation, that is Joint Actions and Common Positions, are taken by QMV. Unanimity applies in the case of decisions with military or defence implications and the Amsterdam Treaty expressly excludes them from QMV.

From the outset, however, it appeared that this approach was dictated more by institutional ambitions than by a clear necessity to formulate the "common strategies" in question. One of these institutional questions was the extension of the use of QMV to CFSP decision-making, in order to create more flexible conditions for the implementation of policy. Not all MS were in agreement over the extent to which an extension of QMV would enhance the EU's international effectiveness. France and Germany linked the debate on this subject to an Italian proposal to promote foreign policy positions from "common platforms", and a proposal on "enhanced co-operation" between smaller groups of MS across a number of EU policy spheres. In reality, France and Germany introduced the new instrument of CS at a late stage of the proceedings⁸. France desired to have an overall, strategic instrument adopted by unanimity and with an intergovernmental character, meanwhile Germany wanted to enhance EFP making and introduce QMV in the second pillar.

CS have been presented primarily as an instrument of the EU so as to improve its own working. At first sight, it seems hard to distinguish them from the principles and general guidelines for CFSP, set out by the European Council. Their purpose has been to create a new instrument providing more coherence and focus on areas of particular interest for the MS. In practice, CS contains more specific provisions, in lengthier texts, than the "common positions" hitherto adopted by the Council. In addition to MS, the Commission, in turn, may refer questions and submit proposals to the Council and is also fully associated in the representation of the EU in CFSP, and in the implementation of CS.

The main innovation of CS in general may thus be to have increased the opportunities for implementing decision taken by QMV on CFSP matters, where this possibility was limited before. But Article 23.2 TEU arguably provides a stronger safeguard than the national veto claimed under the Luxembourg compromise. For the most part, the European Council is the final arbitrary body in the adoption of JA or CP over issues deemed to run counter to the national interests of MS, although in the last resort it cannot overrule a national veto⁹. Article 23.3 TEU states that "If a member of the Council declares that, for important and stated reasons of national policy, it intends to oppose the adoption of a decision to be taken by QMV, a vote shall not be taken. The Council may, acting by QMV, request that the matter be referred to the European Council for decision by unanimity."

2. The interests of the European Union in the Region

After the end of the cold war the geopolitical landscape of Europe was completely altered. Instead of one dominating threat, several different conflicting situations challenged progressing Europe. That situation led the EU to deal more and more with the outside borders of Europe, even reaching the Mediterranean region. The special relationship between Europe and this region is characterised and stressed by a range of different factors, given the enormous importance of the Mediterranean region for the EU. This importance has different manifestations.

In strategic terms, the Mediterranean region is crucial for the EU, given the geographical proximity of both basins, and can be considered as the south gateway of the EU¹⁰, that is the Europe's "new abroad". Europe is furthermore heavily dependent on the Middle East oil production. The political stability of the Gulf States is therefore a high priority, as has been negatively experienced during the seventies oil crisis. A further element, which makes the Mediterranean region extremely important for the EU, is the security dimension. The consolidation of a stable and secure zone in the Mediterranean is a key priority of the EFP, and this purpose is expressed in terms of both hard security and soft security. The existence of common problems in the region, such as the migration flows, the environmental concerns, the nuclear safety or the organised crime makes the articulation of a coherent and effective EFP in the Mediterranean much more urgent for the EU. Europe's commitment to the democratisation of the southern Mediterranean region is primarily motivated by a security concern. The Barcelona Process has been fundamentally the pursuit of political and security objectives through economic and cultural means. The Mediterranean basin is the source of many intrastate and international conflicts, and while it would appear that the EU has little interest in intervening on the ground, few southern Mediterranean states can be regarded as stable. Above all, the situations in Algeria and the Middle East Peace Process are of continual concern to the Member States.

In economic terms, the relationship between the southern and northern Mediterranean countries is essential for the EU. The enormous disparities that exist between the two basins have led to a strong economic component in the policy established. The trade exchanges, the investments, the financial flows, the energy supplies, the agriculture, the manufactures and the tourism are the main sectors of the economic relationships, which try to promote the development of the southern countries and establish a free trade area. Economically, the EU and the Mediterranean partner countries are more interdependent than is often recognised in the northern parts of the EU: in particular, southern Europe is heavily reliant on the CSM countries for its energy needs. Economically, the Mediterranean partners all lag very far behind the EU, with the exception of Cyprus, Malta and Israel. Finally, several historical and cultural links exist between the two basins. The massive colonial presence of the European countries in the Mediterranean, and the fact that we are speaking of a region which constitutes a common space for Christianity, Islamism and Judaism, ask for a common framework of co-operation.

Is the EU facing the challenge? Taking into account the forthcoming enlargement, the increasing integration of all political areas as well as conflict situations in and around Europe, the question is to be put how the EU is to deal with these challenges. Is the EU prepared for these new dangers and will it be up to the outside expectations? Given the difference between the EC external relations and other areas of EFP, a coherent appearance in the Mediterranean is expected from the EU in foreign policy.

3. The common strategy. Evidence and Analysis

3.1. The road to the Common Strategy

The CSM, as an instrument of the EU, was not constructed in the vacuum. It had many important precedents, as far as the EFP regarding the Mediterranean region had been established over the nineties. We can consider that there are three main turmoils in the adoption of the CSM. The first important event was the Barcelona Conference, taken place on 27-28 November 1995 under the auspices of the Spanish Presidency. The Barcelona

Conference gave birth to the EMP, a process with the general objective of turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and co-operation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity¹¹. The EMP represents the general and well-structured framework for the Mediterranean policy of the EU, and is a crucial basis for the later adoption of the CSM. The scope of the EMP process has been extensive, covering three chapters of activities under the headings of political and security, economic and financial, human and cultural partnerships. Unfortunately, during its first five years, Barcelona has made only limited progress towards its objectives.

The second precedent was the Vienna European Council, held on December 1998. The Conclusions stressed the need of the EU to play a more active role in international affairs and to establish a kind of more general, strategic and long-term perspective in its foreign policy. The European Council "invited the Council, in accordance with the recommendations in its report to prepare CS on Russia, Ukraine, the Mediterranean region, taking specifically into account the Barcelona Process and the Middle East Peace Process, as well as on the Western Balkans, on the understanding that the first CS will be on Russia. When identifying further subjects for CS, thematic subjects should also be considered"¹². This meant that the EU had to elaborate a concrete policy towards its direct neighbourhood, namely the Newly Independent States¹³, the Balkan countries and the Mediterranean region, specially taking into account the MEPP and the EMP. The CEEC, given its perspective of accession and the good development of the enlargement process, were excluded of this general planning. The follow up of the Vienna European Council, once the Treaty of Amsterdam had come into force, was very fast and resulted crucial for the future of EFP. The mentioned objective to set up an overall instrument of EFP almost obliged the EU to make use of the just created instrument of the second pillar, the CS.

The European machinery soon started to work. The first CS was referred to Russia, and was adopted during the Cologne European Council, on 3-4 June 1999. In relation to the Southern Balkans, after the 11-week NATO's bombing campaign, the same European Council adopted the Stability Pact on the Balkans. The proposed second CS was substituted by another instrument, which implied a high involvement of third actors and a completely different approach of the EFP. Six months later, the crucial Helsinki European Council, held on 10-11 December 1999, adopted the CSU. The third precedent of the CSM was the Berlin European Council, on 23-24 March 1999. The Conclusions contained the basis for the later policy of the EU towards the Middle East region. The solemn declaration adopted repeated the most important guidelines of the EFP regarding this region, and it stressed that the European strategy in this policy area has some basic points¹⁴.

The preparation of the CSM started in July 1999 by discussion in COREPER and in Political Committee, where the general guidelines for the strategy were decided on¹⁵. The case for adopting a EU internal strategy towards the Mediterranean during the course of 1999-2000 was not entirely clear. An immediate danger existed that the CS would replicate or indeed confuse the priorities of the EU towards the Mediterranean unless it offered a clearer set of priorities and something substantially new to the existing process. A further problem consisted of explaining to Mediterranean partners what the purpose of this new "EU-only" instrument would be, where the EMP had been negotiated in conjunction with these partners.

Coming after the CS, the EU appears to have chosen the Mediterranean as the next in line for reasons of regional symmetry argued by southern EU members, rather than on its own merit. In drafting the first texts in the autumn of 1999, the Finnish EU Presidency encountered considerable difficulties in encapsulating the varied aims of different EU members. By common agreement, the text prepared by the end of the Finnish Presidency was dropped as being inadequate to the task of the proposed strategy. Under the Portuguese Presidency, MS spent the early months of 2000 attempting to agree the principles on which to base the next draft. Progress was also slow, not least because of continuing disagreements over the inclusion of the MEPP in the strategy. Existing CP already covers the political aspects of the conflict. The fear was that the extension of QMV under the CS could serve to weaken positions already agreed by unanimity under "common positions".

As a result of these and other disagreements, no new draft of the CSM had emerged before the spring of 2000. However, concerned that they had little to show for the Mediterranean, in May 2000, the Portuguese Presidency revived the discarded Finnish draft in order to amend it in time for the forthcoming Feira European Council. This revised "Finnish" draft was the text of the strategy adopted by the European Council. Rather, in some respects the resulting document reads less like a strategy than an inventory of existing policies and activities, adding to the EMP framework developments within the EU since 1995. These include the ESDP, co-operation in combating crime under the third pillar and in other areas, such as immigration and asylum, now brought under the first pillar.

The Santa Maria da Feira European Council, held on 19-20 June 2000, adopted the CSM¹⁶. One of the most striking aspects of the CSM is the history of its adoption. For a long time, it was assumed that the CSM would not be adopted at Feira. However, the CSM was agreed before parliamentary scrutiny could take place. It appears that the Portuguese Presidency were anxious to produce something to show at the end of their Presidency, and thus the CSM was moved from "pending" to "urgent" status. Portugal wanted to conclude the CSM because it had inherited a "mandate" to do so from the previous Finnish Presidency, and that it succeeded, not with any magic device, but because the work was quite well advanced by the Finnish and therefore with some more time the strategy for the Mediterranean was approved.

3.2. Main Reasons for the Adoption of the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean

The adoption of the CSM in Feira was not causal, as it was the case of the precedent CS. We can underline several reasons that led to the adoption of this instrument, reasons which reflected the goal of the EU to articulate a single EFP towards the Mediterranean. Firstly, we can speak about the special attention since the Barcelona Conference by three Mediterranean states, France, Spain and, in second term, Italy, in the Mediterranean policy of the EU. The German reunification, the accession in 1995 of three EFTA countries and the ongoing enlargement process reformulated the geopolitical direction of the EU, and the political and economic centre of gravity of the EU turned to the East. Five years after the Barcelona Declaration, the same actors, with high involvement of France and Spain, put on the table the need of a renewal of the EU Mediterranean policy. We must say that the fact of having three of the five largest MS highly involved in this policy is crucial if we want to understand the adoption and the articulation of the CSM.

Secondly, this general political impetus in the Mediterranean policy since 1995 was notably increased during 1999 and 2000. The stagnation of the EMP after the Stuttgart Ministerial Conference (April 1999) led to a general pessimism concerning the actions of the EU in the Mediterranean region. The elaboration of the *Charter for Peace and Stability for the Mediterranean* was a very important step, but the almost nonexistent hope for its adoption undermined its value. Furthermore, the MEPP did not register advances, and the involvement and effectiveness of the EU in this process were under constant discussion. That is, the optimism generated by the new Treaty had no synergy with a more efficient and visible EFP. The political importance of the difficult situations of both processes for the EU was high, and the credibility of the EFP in general, and of the EU as an actor in the Mediterranean, in particular, was at stake. The third reason of the adoption was the enormous importance of the Mediterranean region for the EU, as was stated and well explained before.

3.3 Purposes of the Common Strategy

All the above factors converged during the Portuguese Presidency of January-June 2000. In a difficult period for the EU Mediterranean policy, the pressures of the Spanish and French diplomatic services increased, and the desire of a renewal of the existing instruments was more and more present. With this mental and political framework, the Feira European Council adopted the CSM, in which we can identify three main purposes¹⁷.

The first one is to establish a more general framework for the EU Mediterranean policy, with clear "common interests" and with a genuine and coherent EFP. So, we can say that the initial purpose of the CSM was to apply a new CFSP instrument, created by the ToA, to the Europe's southern periphery. The CSM expresses the EU's determination to pursue a coherent policy

towards the region. The second general purpose was to develop and give an added value to the EMP and its subsequent *acquis* with a more long-term and strategic view. The CSM was adopted with the aim to “try to make the existing policy work”¹⁸, emphasising and building on the strengths of the EMP. That is, the CSM wanted to make the EMP more action-oriented and results-driven¹⁹. One of the underlying purposes in relation to the EMP was the attempt to overcome the divorce of the political and diplomatic dimensions between the EMP and the MEPP²⁰, established explicitly since 1995. Finally, the third purpose concerned specifically the MEPP. At that point, the CSM wanted to enhance and redefine, with a strategic planning, the Union’s position and role as a promoter of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace and of prosperity for the region, and as a key player in the political and economic process²¹. This redefinition was to be undertaken both in political terms vis-à-vis the contending parties and in terms of concrete actions²², by the articulation of new instruments, strategies and policies.

4. The CONTENTS of the Common Strategy

4. 1. The structure of the Common Strategy

In geographical scope, the CSM deals with the same 12 partners as the EMP, with the notable addition of Libya, which was excluded in 1995 pending progress in the Lockerbie affair. It does not deal with them all equally: bilateral relations between the EU and the three applicant countries (Turkey, Malta and Cyprus) are omitted and there are special provisions relating to Libya. It also does not deal with any Balkan country, as the intention, at least, was that they would be considered together separately using a fourth CS. So far, there is no evidence that such a CS will ever appear. In principle, the CSM is intended to complement, and not to compete with the EMP. The CSM contains thirty-seven statements and is divided into four main parts. Amid a lot of political, economic, judicial, ecological and social challenges facing the Mediterranean, the CSM invited the Mediterranean partners to work together with a vision of developing a prosperous, democratic, stable and secure region²³.

The Part I. Vision of the EU for the Mediterranean region contains the general guidelines of the EU in relation to the region and expresses the main assumptions in the articulation of the instruments. The second part of the CSM is dealing with the EU's objectives for the Mediterranean. It declares that the EU wants to make 'significant and measurable progress' in the EMP, 'establish a common area of peace and stability' and 'shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership', to establish a social, cultural and 'human affairs' partnership between 'cultures and civil society', to promote the 'core values embraced by the EU' (human rights, democracy, good governance, transparency and the rule of law, fight against intolerance, racism and xenophobia), encourage free trade, investment in the region, 'strengthen cooperation' in the area of JHA²⁴. The Part II. Objectives clearly shows the main goals of the CS, and presents a long list of EU initiatives in the areas of politics and security.

The Part III. Areas of Action and Specific Initiatives describes the different fields of the action of the CSM. Statement 11 establishes that the EU will undertake a comprehensive review of the EMP with the aim of reinvigorating it and making it more action-oriented and results-driven. Furthermore, statement 12 says that the EU will endeavour to pursue the following specific initiatives, without precluding possible new initiatives. In CFSP, the CSM covers political dialogue, security, democracy, and human rights. Its aim is to strengthen political dialogue at three levels, around an increasing number of objectives²⁵: bilaterally; in the framework of the EMP, including the Charter for Peace and stability after its entry into force; and multilaterally. The main characteristic of this part is that it only describes where the EU wants to be an actor and puts forward a long list of possible and already existing activities. However, it does not specify how the defined goals could be reached. Except for the more action-oriented title it is not really possible to see a difference with the objectives²⁶. This has also been criticised by the HR report on CS presented to the GAC in January 2001, which declared, “as far as substance was concerned, the CS did not cover new ground and instead tended to become inventories of existing policies”.

The Part IV. Instruments and Means contains the provisions concerning the institutions involved in the CSM and the means available to its implementation. This part expresses concern for

coordination among the Council, the Commission and MS to give effectiveness and coherence for EFP in the Mediterranean²⁷. The Part V establishes that the CSM shall apply from the date of its publication (22.07.2000) for an initial period of four years, and it shall be published in the OJEC.

4.2. The CSM and Horizontal Coherence of EFP: a Real Motivation?

The EFP system is characterised by its three-pillar structure, separating trade and economic affairs from foreign policy and internal affairs. One of the resulting problems is that the intergovernmental CFSP does not have many policy instruments at its disposal since these are mostly located in the communitarian first pillar. Ends and means are separated. Moreover, the various actors as well as inter-institutional struggles produce a slow decision-making process, which in turn is subject to lowest common denominator results.

How does the CSM deal with the horizontal coherence problems of EFP? The CSM could improve these problems since it reminds that the Council and the Commission shall, in accordance with Article 3 TEU, ensure the consistency, unity and effectiveness of the Union's action. The CSM gives a constitutional basis to such a cross-pillar approach and introduces a way to bridge those pillars. Even the very critical report produced by the HR notes that, despite of all their imperfections the CS has contributed to putting all EU objectives and means in the areas covered in a comprehensive, cross-pillar approach.

Regarding CFSP measures adopted under a CS, as Solana stated, since a CS provides automatically for adoption by QMV of any implementing act there is no need for the common strategy itself to provide for a legal base for implementation on CFSP. In this sense, the CSM could play a significant role. In practice, the CSM helps to make EFP look more coherent. The main consequence is that the Commission feels backed by the Council and especially the European Council in its implementation of EFP. In times of an institutional malaise, especially in the Commission, the support for the Commission's activities from the highest level is very welcome.

EU institutions and bodies, each one acting within the powers attributed to them by the Treaties, implement the CSM. In CFSP aspects, the High Representative, supported by the Special Envoy for the MEPP, shall assist the Council and the Presidency in its implementation. The Commission shall be fully associated in this task. This fact is highly doubtful, given that the Commission sometimes follows a logic based on the thought "I have my own instrument in the relations with the Mediterranean. Why should I contribute in the CSM?"²⁸. Furthermore, the Council and the Commission shall ensure the consistency, unity and effectiveness of the UE action. The effectiveness of the CSM will be optimised by ensuring the greatest possible coherence between the various instruments and areas of activity undertaken by the Union. MS shall contribute to the objectives of this CS by making appropriate and coordinated use of all relevant instruments and means available to them policies outside the Barcelona Declaration.

At the same time, this raises the question whether there is a risk of 'intergovernmental contamination' of the Commission's supranational activities. Even though the Commission has the right to make initiatives in the CFSP sphere, it has been reluctant to do so because of that risk. Moreover, the Commission is not eager to use communitarian instruments to implement CFSP decisions on which it has had little or no influence and to be reduced to a mere execution body. The CSM is an example to illustrate this risk since the Commission's positions were hardly respected during the drawing of the document.²⁹ Furthermore, even though the roles of the European Council and the Council have been strengthened with the CSM, the procedures outside the second pillar have not been changed (as confirmed in the declaration annexed to the CSM). Hence, the Commission remains in charge of implementing many decisions taken in the EMP context, continues to prepare and give follow up to the Euro-Med Committee's meetings³⁰ and negotiate association agreements (although under strict supervision of the MS).

The Council, the Commission and the MS shall review existing actions, programmes, and instruments, and shall ensure their consistency with this CSM. To ensure co-ordination, MS shall make additional efforts to co-ordinate their actions *vis-à-vis* the Mediterranean. In addition, those participating in other forums shall do it in a way consistent with the objectives of this CS.

The representatives of the MS and the Commission in the Mediterranean partners shall take into full account this CSM when co-ordinating their activities on the ground. The Council, the Commission and the MS shall work towards more effective co-operation with regional and international organisations. The European Council requests the Council the priorities for the implementation, the revision and evaluation, the analysis of the Mediterranean situation and the recommendations. The Commission shall contribute to the above within its competence. The EU and its MS shall work closely together with the Mediterranean partners when complementing this CSM, in particular through the Association Agreements and the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the EMP.

4.3 Main issues and Added Values of the Common Strategy

One area in which the CSM differs from the EMP is in that the former explicitly includes the MEPP, although it is only in the context of a comprehensive settlement that the strategy envisages any participation by MS in the implementation of security arrangements on the ground. What is new and unique however is the effort to combine, under one heading, the established EU policy towards the MEPP with its developmental partnership programme for the whole non-EU Mediterranean region. Prior to this these two EU strategies have been kept apart, maybe artificially, since naturally the one required the other in order to be successful. The issue of the linkage between the EMP and the MEPP caused considerable controversy during the negotiations on the CS because some MS had misgivings both about bringing the highly divisive Middle East problems into the context of the EMP and about potential QMV on implementing measures regarding the Middle East if the EU's role in the Peace Process would be part of the CSM.

Secondly, the CSM tries to cover the energy relations. No economic issue is as important to EU-Mediterranean relations as energy. The interdependence between the Mediterranean EU countries and the non-EU Mediterranean countries is overwhelming. The reliance of the EU on this trade appears to be a major factor in the EU's policies towards the Mediterranean countries. The development of international energy trade is of paramount importance in the Mediterranean region because of the need to guarantee energy supplies to the importing countries of the EU and to secure markets for the exporting countries of North Africa. This is half of what the EMP, and subsequently the CSM, is about.

Thirdly, while oil and gas account for a large proportion of many Mediterranean countries' income, they are still by and large agricultural economies. The EU is very keen to impress upon the Mediterranean countries the benefits of free trade, but there is a danger: free trade alone cannot lead to development or solve problems such as poverty, demographic growth or environmental degradation. On the contrary, it may exacerbate such problems. Unfortunately for the Mediterranean partners, who specialise in the production of fruit and vegetables, the EU does not appear to be too interested in liberalising trade in agriculture. Thus the CSM may be of limited value until progress is made on allowing the Mediterranean states access to the European market in agricultural products, particularly as the trade in agricultural goods is of greater importance to the Mediterranean partners than to the EU.

Then, JHA field is regarded by many as one of the most significant new aspects of the CSM. Naturally, there is a great incentive to view not just migration, but drug trafficking and organized crime, as matters regarding urgent action on an international scale. These are areas where joint action is imperative. Finally, only one sentence of the entire CSM is devoted to the environment. It reads "The EU will ensure that account is taken of the need to promote better integration of environmental concerns with a view to the sustainability of economic development." This seems strange. The Mediterranean Sea is in places badly polluted and the area in general is increasingly prone to environmental problems, including desertification. The environment is an issue that by its nature calls for international co-operation.

5. Analysis of the Contents

Having seen the precedents, the purposes and the structure of the CSM, it is now the moment to analyse its provisions. We can draw up some general remarks about this CS. Firstly, it was adopted at the highest political level, that of the European Council. In principle, this fact assures legitimacy of the strategy, the coherence of the instrument, its continuity, the articulation of a three-pillar policy, and the involvement of all EU institutions and the MS. Secondly, it is conceived as an overall instrument of the EFP which includes further areas, given its aim to establish a general and long-term policy. The most remarkable areas are the environmental concerns, the prospects of economic sustainability, and the field of JHA. But the CSM has also two main lacks, namely the agriculture and the free movement of people. That is, it puts together all EU objectives and areas covered in a comprehensive, cross-pillar approach.

Thirdly, we can observe that, despite the institutional configuration of the CSM, the main actors involved in its conception and implementation are the ongoing Presidencies³¹, France and Spain, and the Council. Maybe the two great questions about the actors of the CSM are to what extent the Commission works closely with the Presidency, on the one hand, and how the Mediterranean partners involvement in the implementation of the strategy is achieved, on the other. Another aspect related to the actors involved relates to the implementation of CFSP aspects. The strategy states that the Special Envoy for the MEPP, Miguel Angel Moratinos, will support the HR³². In a framework of a lack of clear and explicit mandate for the HR concerning the Mediterranean, and with no provisions concerning hierarchy between them, the questions about the added value of this interplay is important. The fact of having two great political personalities, with an enormous diplomatic profile and who were the main contributors of the EU to the EMP³³, puts on the table the possibility of overlapping competences, functions and, of course, contributions and ideas.

Fifthly, we can observe that the CSM provisions present the same problem than the whole EFP: the lack of coherence of this instrument is due to the weak articulation of common priorities and interests towards the region. Sixthly, the CSM reiterates the importance of the *Charter for Peace and Stability* but it gives no concrete and explicit mandate to its adoption. The Feira European Council did not establish a deadline for the Council or for the institutions of the EMP for its adoption.

Finally, we can observe a useful and positive contribution in the fact that the CSM links the successful development of the EMP to the conclusion and ratification of the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements. This strategy was used by the EU with regard to the CEEC, in the sense that the Europe Agreements are the basis for the enlargement negotiations.

6. The Barcelona Process and the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean

The first question to ask about the real effectiveness of the CSM and its added value is the relationship with the EMP. In this respect, there are several doubts about the contribution or the added value of the CS in relation to the EMP. The EMP dealt with the majority of the CSM issues. By the time the CSM was agreed in 2000, however, it was felt by some in the EU that the Process was in need, as the European Commission put it, of "reinvigorating". In September 2000, the Commission identified several areas of concern, which were serious obstacles for the success of the EFP in the Mediterranean³⁴, and which had to be addressed in the new instrument.

Five years after the start of the Barcelona process it has clearly lost a lot of its original impetus. There was thus the question of what to do next. After the Vienna European Council it was felt that a CSM would be a useful tool to reinvigorate Barcelona and to introduce areas, such as JHA and ESDP, that had either been left out or that were new. There was some support for this. It was argued that the mere existence of a CSM would help: the primary external purpose appears to be a general reaffirmation of the Union's major political and economic interests in the region and its commitment to further progress with the EMP model established by the Barcelona Declaration in 1995.

However, to some witnesses, there is a doubt as to whether there is any value added aspect to the CSM, or indeed to any other CS. The following question needed to be asked: the CSM was set out five years after the inception of the EMP. It is similar, both in wording and in contents, to the Barcelona Declaration. Given the difficulties and obstacles encountered by the EMP so far, what value can the CSM now add to it? The answer is that it adds to the EMP by putting the EU's input into relations with the Mediterranean into a coherent framework, thus speeding up internal EU decision-making on Mediterranean issues. But other witnesses have found it hard to define what this means.

A CS is no more than a formal framework. It spells out what the main EU interests in the region are and by what general means they might be pursued. Although it sets the stage upon which future actions can be taken, it is quite shallow on what specific action the EU will introduce over the next four years in order to further these goals. The CS thus consists of general options and guidelines and no more should be expected of such a document. Other existing instruments already covered the priorities identified in the strategies, namely the PCA with Russia and the Ukraine or the EMP. The CS has very little added value compared to these already agreed policies and the very good taken of that is that practically the CS of the Balkans was abandoned.

Even less supportively, it appears to be a cosmetic exercise, bland and meaningless, and written in terms so all encompassing as to be worthless. Javier Solana, in his report about the CS (see Annexes), says that the wide scope of the CS and the particular, sometimes detailed concerns of individual MS resulted in a "Christmas tree" approach based on the "lowest common denominator" where MS and the Commission insisted on covering all possible aspects of relations, including so many different issues in the CS that in the end it became difficult to distinguish priorities from questions of secondary importance. When applied to the Mediterranean, the perceived lack of added value of the CS compared with the already comprehensive Barcelona process and the difficulties in defining the relationship between the CS and the EU's role in the MEPP have put the consistency of the EU's approach towards the region into question.

III. CONCLUSIONS

There are some ambiguities implicit in the CSM, which need to be clarified. The main question is, of course, "who is in charge" of the CSM? A coherent instrument of EFP needs a coherent institutional configuration, and the clear and first answer is, of course, the Presidency³⁵. But, to what extent, for example, can the HR take initiatives on the basis of the CSM? Will the Commission, given its budgetary role and control over the MEDA funding line take a higher profile than the Council or MS in implementing the CSM? Is the strategy as "watertight" from subsidiary policy implementation under QMV? The risk of confusion might arise when the existing EC, EU and national instruments and means are coordinated. Maybe the Council should effectively coordinate these resources and ensure coherence with regard to the instruments for achieving such a synergy³⁶.

The second conclusion about the CSM is that it is still not evident what the added value of the CSM is over and above the EMP. The CSM has succeeded in the articulation of a single policy of the EU "in an area where the MS have important interests in common". Really, the CSM is a framework for the EFP in this area and provides a strategic vision for the EFP³⁷. We can say that the EU has a real policy towards the Mediterranean, a policy with its own objectives, means and instruments. But this fact does not imply that this policy is coherent, and this lack of coherence is clear in terms both of its internal articulation and the relationship with the other existing policies, namely the EMP. Seen in its worst light as a distraction from existing policy objectives, there is a danger that the CSM has diluted some of the achievable aspects of the EMP.

However, the launch of the CSM also coincided with the Commission reflections on the shortcomings of the Barcelona model. Addressing these should become the focus for future

action, rather than the CSM itself. The more fundamental question of whether the scale and scope of Barcelona is too broad to permit of substantive progress in the near future has not, however, yet been addressed. The "comprehensive review of the Barcelona Process" proposed under Article 11 CSM could, in full consultation with the EU's Mediterranean partners, examine ways in which smaller-scale, sub-regional objectives might be met. That is, the CSM should focus its targets. Given existing southern Mediterranean concerns over the CSM, the EU needs to establish the timeframe, content and participation in this review process with some urgency. It is clear that the lack of prior consultation with regional partners has constituted one of the problems with the CSM. Even though intended as an internal, EU-only exercise, the unclear message sent to the region about the real purposes of the CSM constitutes an obstacle to increasing the visibility of the EU's activities in the region.

The synergy between the CSM and the EMP is of crucial importance for the Mediterranean, for the CSM itself and for the EFP. Having the CSM as a real strategic and solemn document, the EMP should be the operational dimension of the CSM to be effectively implemented. The EMP has a well-structured organisation, and its involvement should be beneficial for the CSM. This engagement should profit from the knowledge, the resources and the instruments used within the EMP, imply a better management of the above mentioned, with a more long-term and general perspective, focusing on structures, articulate mechanism to ensure that the Commission should play a more dynamic and political role in this new framework and increase the instruments destined to soft security concerns and to the societies, that is should increase the real impact of the CSM in the people. A combination of the political aspects of the CSM with the well-established financial, human and cultural instruments of the EMP should have a really positive effect. At its best, the CSM might be perceived as an exercise in emphasising and building on the strengths of EMP, while highlighting areas where future actions might be concentrated, as well as incorporating new areas which did not exist at the time that Barcelona was launched³⁸.

The EU should define clear leadership roles in both the EMP and the CSM in order to articulate the stated priority it attaches to the Mediterranean. The EU should in its management procedures identify the actors and/or agencies who should be expected to champion the region in general and the different dimensions of policy in particular. There is a growing requirement for the EU's Mediterranean partners to find a specific point of contact within the EU not only to channel their concerns in more positive ways, but also to respond to their concrete requests. Moreover, as the Barcelona Process and the MEPP are two different processes which could not be separated, but which are complementary to each other, the different actors in chapter I of the EMP and the EU-actors being responsible for the MEPP (for instance Moratinos) should co-ordinate their work more effectively. Moratinos must have an official mandate to attend the meetings of the EMP and must be recognised as an expert in this field of work.

In addition, despite the CSM, the main contribution of the EU to the MEPP is based on the same instruments than always. That is, the articulation of the EU as an important actor in this process is still developed by the Special Envoy and the financial contribution to the Palestinian Authority. In addition, the CSM has not helped the EU to play a more active role in the MEPP³⁹, which is its main goal concerning the Middle East. *The contribution to the consolidation of peace in the Middle East once a comprehensive peace settlement has been achieved* seems a vague and limited objective for such an instrument, if a single, long-term and coherent policy towards the Mediterranean is to be articulated. This "exclusion" of the MEPP reduces considerably the added value of the CS⁴⁰. The lack of general or concrete provisions concerning proposals or contributions by the EU, and the clear reference to the post conflict resolution stage, are the most powerful signs of the almost nonexistent involvement of the CSM within the MEPP. And, furthermore, the lack of provisions about how this peace can be achieved is a tremendous weakness.

The first and most important conclusion about the CSM and the coherence of EFP is clear: the CSM provides a potential instrument of the articulation of a coherent EFP towards the Mediterranean, but the problem lies in the political will of the MS for its implementation. It puts together all EU objectives and means in the areas covered in a comprehensive, cross-pillar approach, and it sets the global vision of the Union in the Mediterranean. The provisions contained in the CSM are a general, strategic, long-term, coherent, integrated and cross-pillar

approach for the external action of the MS and the EU in the region, and they include statements concerning the flexibility of decision-making (QMV), the means available for the implementation (EU and MS instruments) and several dimensions and areas included. And it has two main added values: it gives visibility to the EFP, with a high political profile and clear political objectives, and it introduces fresh ideas and impulses to the EU's Mediterranean policy⁴¹. But, as in many spheres of the European integration, the willingness of MS to implement and put into practice the objectives contained is far from reality. That is the real problem not only of the CSM, but also of the CS as a CFSP instrument.

The CSM gives the incentive to *bridge* the pillars but it does not help to *overcome* the problems that stem from different decision-making procedures under the respective pillars. These procedures continue to follow different logics, especially since the QMV question has done little to align EC and CFSP practices⁴². Moreover, the institutions remain very cautious to protect their competences. A real improvement of the CSM is that the involvement of the Commission should be focused not only in the budgetary dimension of the act, but also in the strategic planning, the elaboration and of course the implementation. These decisions must use all the possibilities, resources and instruments of the EFP.

The real reason for the adoption of the CSM was twofold: first of all, the Portuguese Presidency wanted to have something important in June. And, secondly, some MS wanted to counterbalance the political focus of the EU towards the East during 1999, translated in the adoption of the two previous CS⁴³. The main weakness of the CSM is that (paradoxically) is not seen as a "strategy" at all⁴⁴. The CSM is very comprehensive, and includes a large number of points that still need to be clarified⁴⁵. Apart from stating that the Mediterranean is of strategic importance to the Union, the document does not establish a clear hierarchy of short, medium and long-term objectives towards achieving a "prosperous, democratic, stable and secure region". It follows a "Christmas tree approach", repeating all kind of activities already existent and adding new ones, but without clear priorities or focus on certain themes/regions.

CSM also suffers from a gap between its apparent potential to act and its actual performance. As is the case of most areas of EFP, there are contradictions between the particularly ambitious objectives of CFSP and the means available to the Union for achieving those objectives, which did not live up to expectations or provide adequately for the matters at stake. The objectives and the means are virtually indistinguishable, yet neither addresses the key issue of how current practice –if indeed deficient, or insufficiently visible- will be improved upon⁴⁶. The ToA and the instrument of CS try to overcome this problem of EFP. That is, they try to close the famous concept by Christopher Hill of "capabilities-expectations gap"⁴⁷. Furthermore, the practice of CFSP shows some examples of dubious decisions when the requirement of coherence with EC policies is taken into account. The case of the CSM is also clear in this respect, given that it reflects the difficulty in maintaining a watertight separation between the two pillars, in particular when policies *vis-à-vis* third countries are at stake.

The more distant objectives of the CSM—such as the promotion of democratic governments—might be built into smaller scale initiatives in conjunction with regional partners. The region will reject EU initiatives if they are not consulted, especially policies which appear to be conceived as directives on how to run their lives. It is also important that the CSM should not inadvertently distract attention from the value of the specific Association Agreements between the EU and many Mediterranean countries and from the need to complete them where they are not in force. MS have yet to articulate clear priorities towards the Mediterranean as perceived under the CSM. Most policy positions are articulated between MS, or in terms not easily translatable into concrete policy initiatives.

The CSM also shows that MS persist in maintaining national sovereignty in foreign policy, and they are prepared to accept only some intensification of institutional arrangements and decision-making rules for JA to contribute to a more coherent EFP. The implementation of the outputs is another reality. MS only accept the Union's interests only when they do not affect their national interests, and the CSM is a clear example: the aims declared in its text are by far the most ambitious and most comprehensive project in the region, but no JA or CP implementing it has been adopted. In fact, the implementation of the CS is reduced to the adoption by each

Presidency of a Implementation Plan, which only stress the priorities and objectives in the implementation, but with no concrete measures or policies⁴⁸.

The three implementation Plans until now have focused on: the reinvigoration of the EMP; the strengthening of the political and security-related dialogue; the establishment and development of a dynamic as well as human economic and financial partnership; the promotion of co-operation in the JHA area as well as in social, cultural and human affairs; and the insurance that the EU assumes its rightful role within the MEPP⁴⁹ (see Annexes). Even the greater coherence and continuity through enhanced co-ordination of the working plans drawn up by successive Presidencies⁵⁰ that is not enough. The European Council gave little by way of guidelines, so successive Presidencies have to develop their own approaches, subject to long and detailed negotiating processes and with no real implementation.⁵¹

Another conclusion relates to the absence of provisions concerning the co-operation with the United States, fact that increases the weakness of the EU as a global actor. On the one hand, the CSM is conceived as an overall instrument of EFP, which tries to establish a common political framework as general as possible, and which do not provide for a further involvement in specific policy areas, such as the MEPP or the agriculture issues. But, on the other hand, there are no provisions concerning the dialogue, co-ordination or interplay with the other major third actor involved in the Middle East, that is the United States. This fact expresses some of the miseries of the EFP

A final concern is the future of the CSM. Most evidence from MS seemed to suggest that while it may have added little to the EMP, it would also, as a result, do little harm. It is also clear that bilateral relations between MS and individual Mediterranean partners remain the essence and basis for relations in the region. Given the lack of enthusiasm for pursuing its more ambitious and over-generalised aims, the EU needs to resolve whether successive EU Presidencies will continue to be obliged to spend time assessing progress under the CSM and setting out future objectives as is required by a CS. The introduction by each Presidency of a new working plan with new priorities has so far failed to add to the objective of deploying a consistent and coherent EU approach and has strengthened the impression of stop and go policies. Alternatives might be either to reformulate the CSM to represent a genuine and progressively attainable set of priorities towards the region, or for the CSM to be quietly dropped. In the future, the CSM should focus the resources to be used and the items to be addressed.

Common Strategies so far has not yet contributed to a stronger and more effective EU in international affairs⁵². Three main questions have to be asked about the CSM. Firstly, whether CS is over-ambitious at this stage of the EU's institutional development, except as inventories of what is already being done. Secondly, whether the motivation of extending EU external action via QMV procedures is a sensible basis for strategy. Thirdly, whether the CS in practice is applied to the right targets. The reason why the Mediterranean was chosen as a focus for a CS appears to have prejudiced both its content and its utility in addition to the EMP. However, while some areas of the CSM are consonant with the aspirations of the EMP, there is a need for greater clarity and explanation in some of the newer areas

In respect of the CS as an instrument, we have to question about whether the Mediterranean is a coherent region with which the EU could deal as a single unit using a single policy instrument; and if so, whether the establishment of a CS could add to the mechanisms already in use through the EMP. The genesis of the CSM, and the degree of consultation undertaken before its implementation, are also topics of some interest. About the CSM per se, much evidence focused on the EU's limited role in the MEPP and its relevance to the EMP and the CSM, and on the disbursement of funds under the MEDA programme of aid to Mediterranean partner states. Other questions are the role of energy policy in EU-Mediterranean relations and on the JHA angle of the CSM, and on the rather limited environmental aspect of the CSM. CS are hampered by insufficient or non-existent inter pillar forward planning, this is not to say that there are no principles underlying EFP activities. To put arrangements about coherence in a solid basis, it might be advisable to formally agree between Presidency and Commission on a set of ground rules to be followed by those involved in ensuring day-to-day coherence between the external relations of the EC and the CFSP. Even if a CS is adopted, this does not guarantee a

smooth process of implementation. Each implementation decision can always be contested by a government, which considers that it does not fall within the framework of CS because it relates to another topic or because it does not respect the general objectives.

EFP, above all, is a careful balance of the interests between all MS. We must also consider that, in fact, the CSM was adopted in a time of transition of EFP: new provisions of ToA were being put into effect; the HR, the PPEWU, the new troika, the new instrument of CS, the inclusion of Petersberg Tasks, QMV, the mechanism of constructive abstention. In this respect, the CSM and CS in general have not acquired the level of maturity and implantation that the other innovations of the ToA have done.

In short, the CSM, and CS in general, are perceived as a tremendous failure of EFP. In the future, and waiting for the revision of the first CS, in 2003, we can say that they should be less declarative and less ambitious, and they should be more operational, more concrete, more focused in their objectives and maybe confidential.

We can extrapolate some conclusions of the CSM to the EFP. The absence of clear priorities in EU's Mediterranean policy and the lack of coherence between this policy and other European external policies are common observations. The case of the MEPP is notable. The credibility and success of important policies, such as the CSM, depend on the coherence of European policies and actions, as a whole. In addition, and maybe as a result of the first point, the EU's partners have to deal with different interlocutors on different subjects, some of which are subject to the six-monthly rotation of the Presidency, specifically in the implementation of the CSM. As a result, there are problems of continuity and coherence of the EFP, and both negotiations with the Mediterranean countries and the implementation of EU policies can be disrupted by internal problems of the Union system.

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NOTES

¹ Monar, 1998, *op.cit.*, pp 50

² White, Brian, "After Maastricht and Amsterdam: A Common EFP", in idem, *Understanding EFP*, Palgrave, New York, 2001, pp 162

³ Secretary General/High Representative, *Common Strategies Report*, 20.12.2000, presented to the GAC of 23.01.2001, Document 14871/00 CAB 21, pp 1

⁴ Spencer, Claire, "The EU and Common Strategies: The Revealing Case of the Mediterranean", in *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Volume 6, 2001, pp 36

⁵ Interview, DG Relex, European Commission

⁶ European Parliament, *Report on the progress achieved in the implementation of the common foreign and security policy*, 21.11.2000, Document A5-0340/2000, pp 7/34

⁷ Attinà, Fulvio, "Conclusions: Partnership-Building", in Attinà, Fulvio; Stavridis, Stelios, *The Barcelona Process and Euro-Mediterranean issues from Stuttgart to Marseille*, Università di Catania, 2001, pp 279

⁸ Nuttall, Simon, "The CFSP Provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty. An Exercise in Collusive Ambiguity", in *CFSP Forum*, 3/97, pp 1

⁹ House of Lords, Committee on EU, Ninth Report, *The Common Mediterranean Strategy*, 14.03.2001, pp 3

¹⁰ European Parliament, *European Parliament Resolution on the Common Strategy of the European Union on the Mediterranean region, as laid down by the Feira European Council of 19 June 2000*, 19.01.2001, Document A5-0008/2001, pp 36

¹¹ Preamble of the Barcelona Declaration

¹² *Presidency Conclusions*, Vienna European Council, 11/12.12.1998, Document 00300/1/98 REV

¹³ I understand by this name the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Caucasus

¹⁴ These were: the reaffirmation of the EU commitment to the basic principles established within the framework of Madrid, Oslo and subsequent agreements; the stress of the need of an early resumption of final status, with its main components, the problem of Jerusalem, the Israeli settlements, the refugees and water resources management; the continuing and unqualified Palestinian right to self-determination including the option of a State; the reiteration of the EU three basic conceptions: the support for a negotiated settlement in the Middle East, the principle of "land for peace", and the insurance of the security both collective and individual of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples

¹⁵ Council of the EU, *EU common strategy on the Mediterranean region / Justice and Home Affairs*, Brussels, 16.12.1999, Document 14130/99, pp 2

¹⁶ Document 2000/58/CFSP, JOEC L 183, 22.07.2000, pp 5-11

¹⁷ Council of the EU, "Common Strategy on the Mediterranean region", in *Annual report from the Council to the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of CFSP*, Brussels, 06.04.2001, Document 7853/01, pp 12

¹⁸ Spencer, *op.cit.*, pp 41

¹⁹ Attinà, *op.cit.*, pp 269

²⁰ Spencer, *op.cit.*, pp 43

²¹ Following the DG External Relations

²² European Parliament, *EP resolution on the Common Strategy of the EU on the Mediterranean region, as laid down by the Feira European Council of 19 June 2000*, A5-0008/2001, 01.02.2001, pp 38

²³ Attinà, *op.cit.*, pp 280

²⁴ Scheeck, Laurent, *The Common Strategy on the Mediterranean Region. Added Value for Consistent External Action or Useless Compromise?*, College of Europe, Bruges, Supervised by Wolfgang Wessels, Academic Year 2000-2001, pp 51

²⁵ Council of the European Union, "Common Strategy on the Mediterranean region", in *Annual report from the Council to the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of CFSP[...]*, Brussels, 06.04.2001, Document 7853/01, pp 12

²⁶ Scheeck, *op.cit.*, pp 53

²⁷ Attinà, *op.cit.*, pp 281

²⁸ Interview, DG Relex, European Commission

²⁹ Interview, Commission, March 2001.

³⁰ In these meetings representatives of the Troika (before the Malta conference all the MS were represented, the new system did not change a lot since the Presidency has 15 seats) and the 12 partner countries meet, together with observers of Mediterranean countries which do not participate in the Barcelona process (Libya, Mauritania).

³¹ In the framework of the Council of Ministers (GAC) and the European Council, the rotating Presidencies play an indispensable, crucial role as political actors providing political impetus, leadership and guidance, as well as global decision-makers within this policy area

³² Leonard, Sarah, "La stratégie commune de l'Union européenne à l'égard de la région méditerranéenne", in Dumoulin, Michel, *L'Europe et la Méditerranée. Actes de la VI Chaire Glaverbel d'études européens 2000-2001*, Université Catholique de Louvain, 2001, pp 297

³³ In November 1995, Solana was the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, so the President of the Council and the main promoter of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Meanwhile, Moratinos was the Spanish Ambassador to Israel, and six months later was appointed as the Special Envoy of the EU to the MEPP

³⁴ European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament to Prepare the Fourth Meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers. Reinvigorating the Barcelona Process*, COM(2000) 497 final

³⁵ Interview, DG Relex, European Commission

³⁶ European Parliament, Doc A5-0008, *op.cit.*, pp 41

³⁷ Interview, DG Relex, European Commission

³⁸ Spencer, *op.cit.*, pp 42

³⁹ Chris Patten, Common Strategy for the Mediterranean and reinvigorating the Barcelona process, Speech at the European Parliament, Brussels, 31.01.2002

⁴⁰ Scheek, *op.cit.*, pp 60

⁴¹ Interview, DG Relex, European Commission

⁴² Duke, *op.cit.*, pp 24.

⁴³ Interviews DG Relex, European Commission, and Council of the EU

⁴⁴ Interview, DG Relex, European Commission

⁴⁵ Peter Hanelt, Christian; Neugart, Felix; Peiz, Matthias, *Europe's Emerging Foreign Policy and the Middle East Challenge*, Berterlsmann Foundation, Munich, 2002, pp 3

⁴⁶ Spencer, *op.cit.*, pp 46

⁴⁷ Hill, Christopher, "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualising Europe's International Role", in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Volume.31, n°3, 1993, pp 305-328

⁴⁸ Interview, DG Relex, European Commission

⁴⁹ Council of the EU, *Relations with the Mediterranean countries. Report from the Council to the European Council on the implementation of the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean Region*, Brussels, 23.05.2001, Document 9124/01, pp 2

⁵⁰ Underlined by Sécrétaire Général/ Haut Réprésentant; Commission, *Rapport conjoint destiné au Conseil "Affaires Générales" sur l'efficacité des stratégies communes*, Bruxelles, 23.01.2002, Document 5607/02, pp 3, and the consequent GAC of 28.01.2002

⁵¹ General Secretary Report, *op.cit.*, pp 3

⁵² General Secretary Report, *op.cit.*, pp 1