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**The EU as a security provider in its neighbourhood:
the case of non-proliferation of WMD in the Mediterranean area**

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As a consequence of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the US-led war against Iraq, WMD and their proliferation have become a central element of the EU security agenda. In December 2003, the European Council adopted even a EU Strategy against Proliferation of WMD. The approach adopted in this Strategy can be largely described as a 'cooperative security provider' approach and is based on effective multilateralism, the promotion of a stable international and regional environment and the cooperation with key partners. The principal objective of this paper is to examine in how far the EU has actually implemented the 'cooperative security provider' approach in the area which the Non-proliferation Strategy identifies as one of its priorities – the Mediterranean. Focusing on the concept of security interdependence, the paper analyses first the various WMD dangers with which the EU is confronted in the Mediterranean area. Afterwards, it examines how the EU has responded to these hazards in the framework of the Barcelona process and, in particular, the new European Neighbourhood Policy. It is argued that despite its relatively powerful rhetoric, the EU has largely failed, for a wide range of reasons, to apply effectively its non-proliferation approach in the Mediterranean area and, thus, to become a successful security provider.

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Introduction*

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the dangers resulting from Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and their proliferation have attracted renewed attention among policy makers, not only in the United States but also in Europe. In fact, WMD non-proliferation has become a top priority on the European security agenda. The European Security Strategy (2003: 3) even claims that the “[p]roliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction is potentially the greatest threat to our security.” It comes, thus, as no surprise that the European Union (EU) has begun to develop an own non-proliferation policy culminating in December 2003 in a fully-fledged EU Strategy against Proliferation of WMD (European Council 2003d). The approach adopted in this Strategy reflects largely the comprehensive and cooperative nature of EU foreign and security policy in general (Biscop 2003) and is based on the familiar concepts of effective multilateralism, the promotion of a stable international and regional environment and the cooperation with key partners such as the United Nations. In this regard, the Strategy resembles, on a theoretical level, the ‘cooperative security provider’ concept as outlined by earlier works on European security policy (Ehrhart 2002, Churruca 2005, Barbé 2005a). The implementation of this security provider model follows concrete proposals made in the Strategy’s last chapter and in six-monthly review reports, which analyse the progress made and identify necessary fields of future action. In principle, the implementation is geographically unlimited, i.e. the Strategy is global in scope. However, even in the case of a global threat such as WMD proliferation, geographical proximity still matters and the Strategy (European Council 2003d: 7) actually argues that due to the security interdependence in the case of WMD proliferation between the Southern and Northern rims of the Mediterranean, the EU should focus its non-proliferation efforts on the Mediterranean.

The European policy towards the Mediterranean, for its part, is firmly embedded in the so-called Barcelona process, which has tried since the 1995 Barcelona Declaration to establish a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) between Southern Mediterranean countries and the EU and its member states. The principal objective has been to establish a common area of peace, stability, shared prosperity and cultural dialogue. Progress, however, has been rather slow, if not non-existent, in particular in the field of security. On the eve of the 2004 EU enlargement, the Barcelona process received new energy from what is known today as the new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which has become indeed the major focus of EU activities in the Mediterranean in recent years.¹ In 2002, the Copenhagen European Council initiated this new policy with the double objective of (a) avoiding new dividing lines between the EU and new and old neighbouring states and (b) establishing a zone of stability and prosperity in its neighbourhood (European Commission 2003).² In the words of the then European Commission President Romano Prodi (2002), the aim is to create a “ring of friends” ranging from Morocco to the Caucasus.

The European non-proliferation Strategy with its comprehensive and cooperative security perspective and its special preoccupation with the Mediterranean has the potential to contribute substantially to the EU’s objectives in the Mediterranean area. At the same time, the Barcelona process in general and the ENP in particular can be important instruments for the implementation of the European non-proliferation policy in its geographical priority area. Consequently, both policies are – in an ideal case – mutually reinforcing. However, experience with the application of EU security policies in the Mediterranean during the last 15 years shows

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¹ For a more detailed analysis of the complex relationship between the EMP and the new ENP, see Del Sarto and Schumacher (2005) and Johansson-Nogués (2004). For an overview of the different aspects of the ENP in general, see Barbé (2005b) and Smith, K. (2005).

² For the purpose of this paper, I will refer to Mediterranean countries as those included in the ENP: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya (with observer status in the Barcelona process), Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. Apart from these countries, the ENP six includes the Eastern European and Caucasian countries: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

that a reality check may reveal much more modest outcomes. The overarching objective of the present paper is, therefore, to examine in how far the EU has actually implemented its non-proliferation approach in the framework of the Barcelona process and, above all, the ENP. In other words, has the EU become an effective security provider in non-proliferation affairs in the Mediterranean?

The structure of the paper is threefold: First, I will outline the development of the European non-proliferation policy in general. The focus will be especially on the EU Strategy against Proliferation of WMD and its application of the cooperative security provider model, thus establishing the conceptual framework for the following chapters. Secondly, I will examine the dangers and hazards with which the EU is confronted in the Mediterranean. This part will be divided into two different types of risk analysis: On the one hand, I shall carry out a classical military threat assessment that takes into consideration the WMD capacities of Mediterranean third countries as well as their actual intentions to use these capacities against EU countries. On the other hand, I shall analyse the proliferation risks in the Mediterranean from a broader, more comprehensive security perspective. In both cases, special attention will be given to the level of security interdependence between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean in the field of WMD proliferation and its potential influence on EU policies. Thirdly, based on the analysis of a wide range of EU non-proliferation, EMP and ENP documents, I will scrutinize how the EU has actually responded to the proliferation risks posed by third countries in the Mediterranean, in other words, how the EU has implemented its non-proliferation concept. In this respect, I will pay special attention to the examination of the major factors that have determined its policies. Although it is still too early to reach final conclusions on this matter, it will be argued that despite its strong rhetoric the EU has failed to apply effectively its non-proliferation approach in the Mediterranean.

The EU and the fight against the proliferation of WMD

The most astonishing fact about the European non-proliferation policy is that it exists at all. Although since the Treaties of Rome (1958) one of the European Communities, the European Atomic Energy Community, has been dedicated to nuclear energy issues, nuclear weapons, and in fact all types of WMD, have always formed part of the carefully protected nucleus of national security policies. Furthermore, the differences between these national policies could not have been more diverse, although the differences are significantly larger in the case of nuclear weapons than in the case of biological and chemical weapons. The most illustrative example, in this regard, can be found on the British isles, where the United Kingdom is a nuclear power firmly embedded in the military structures of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), while the Republic of Ireland, as a non-NATO member, has a strong track record as a vigorous defender of nuclear disarmament. The positions of the other EU member states can be found somewhere on the continuum between these two opposed positions of Britain and Ireland. In short, historically the WMD policies of the EU member states have been extremely varied. Nevertheless, the origins of an embryonic European non-proliferation policy can be traced back already to 1981, when the first working group on nuclear non-proliferation was created in the framework of the European Political Cooperation (EPC). This was the starting point for a growing institutionalisation of WMD issues in the framework of the EPC and, after the Maastricht Treaty (1993), the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which led with the time to a gradual convergence of national positions on WMD matters (Smith, M. E. 2004: 120-122). Most notably, France – historically a strong opponent of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the key agreement of today's international non-proliferation regime – began to revise its position and joined finally the NPT in 1992. According to Grand (2000: 11), "...the late adhesion of France to the NPT removed the last political obstacle to the establishment of a more active European policy." The post-Cold War world of the 1990s saw, therefore, a significant intensification of EU non-proliferation policies:³ The major successes include the regulation of dual-use items export controls within the EU,⁴ the implementation of

³ For a comprehensive overview of European non-proliferation activities from its early days until the 1990s, see Grand 2000 and Portela undated.

⁴ According to the European Commission, "dual use items' are goods and technology developed for civilian use, but which can be used for military applications or to produce weapons of mass destruction" (http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/sectoral/industry/dualuse/index_en.htm).

non-proliferation and disarmament assistance measures in the former Soviet Union⁵ and the coordination of the positions of the EU member states during the 1995 and 2000 NPT review conferences and other multilateral conferences on WMD issues.

However, it was only after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 that the EU non-proliferation took a more coherent form. Although these attacks were not carried out with WMD, they demonstrated to the world that terrorist networks existed that were prepared to carry out mass impact attacks, which in future may include WMD. The first two strategic EU documents on non-proliferation were, therefore, directly linked to the perceived threat of terrorist networks.⁶ The next major event that pushed forward the EU non-proliferation policy was the US-led war against Iraq, which was – at least originally – a drastic non-proliferation measure, i.e. a measure to stop and dismantle the alleged Iraqi WMD programme. This war deeply divided not only the United States and certain European countries but also the EU member states themselves. Amid this confrontation, the Swedish government proposed to review the common European non-proliferation policy and slowly the EU WMD Strategy took form. After all, the transatlantic and intra-European disagreement was not so much about objectives and goals – all agreed that Iraq must not develop WMD – but about means: Whereas the United States and its European supporters saw in the case of Iraq the necessity of a preventive military attack, the European opponents of that attack preferred to grant more time to international inspections. There existed also strong political will to forge a common European position on such a worrying matter as WMD proliferation and to fill the transatlantic gap in an issue that forms a central element of US national security concerns (Meier and Quille 2005, Sauer 2004, Spear 2003, Tertrais 2005). The first result was the adoption at the Thessaloniki European Council in June 2003 of a Declaration on the Proliferation of WMD (European Council 2003c), the Basic Principles for an EU Strategy against Proliferation of WMD and an Action Plan for its implementation (European Council 2003b). In October 2003, the EU underpinned institutionally these documents and appointed Annalisa Giannella as Personal Representative on non-proliferation of WMD. Eventually, the EU crossed the Rubicon in non-proliferation affairs during the December 2003 Brussels European Council, when it adopted the EU Strategy against Proliferation of WMD. In the words of Pullinger and Quille (2003), “The decision of Member States to use the EU as a framework for tackling their common concerns across a range of issues on the proliferation of weapons and materials of mass destruction is viewed as something of a historical breakthrough.” It has been even interpreted as a clear sign of an “emerging European strategic personality” (Spear 2003).

But which concept does the EU finally follow in its non-proliferation policy? An analysis of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of WMD suggests that it is closest to the so-called cooperative security provider model. Ehrhart (2002) has developed this model in order to examine the EU's role in international affairs from a structural-functional perspective. It takes into consideration earlier concepts of the EU as a civilian power (Duchêne 1972), a military power and a normative power (Manners 2002). However, in contrast to these earlier concepts, the cooperative security provider model adopts a more comprehensive approach that incorporates the full range of EU instruments – including civil and military means – to confront the multi-layered security challenges of the post-Cold War world. By and large, it is based on the following five principles (Ehrhart 2002: 18-20):

- a) *Appropriateness*: Security policy deals with today's real world problems, including global and transnational threats.
- b) *Inclusiveness*: Security policy embraces not only the full range of civilian instruments available but applies also military means.
- c) *Normativism*: International norms and public law delimit the use of military means.
- d) *Multi-level orientation*: Both states and sub-state actors are taken into consideration.
- e) *Multilateralism*: Cooperating with other international actors as well as strengthening multilateral regimes and organisations are essential for coping with new security risks.

⁵ The principal objectives of these measures are either to support disarmament efforts or to help to control existing arsenals of WMD. For more detail, see Anthony 2004 and Höhl 2003.

⁶ The Council conclusions on implications of the terrorist threat on the non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control policy of the EU (General Affairs Council 2001) and the Council conclusions on a list of concrete measures with regard to the implications of the terrorist threat on the non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control policy of the EU (General Affairs Council 2001).

The WMD Strategy clearly embraces these different principles: First, it identifies the proliferation of WMD as a real-world problem that threatens not only the EU, its member states and peoples but also international peace and security in general (European Council 2003d: 2-5). Secondly, the EU is prepared to use "...all instruments and policies at its disposal" (European Council 2003d: 2), including – as a last resort – military measures. The emphasis is, however, on the EU's civil capabilities: "Political and diplomatic preventive measures (multilateral treaties and export control regimes) and resort to the competent international organisations form the first line of defence against proliferation" (European Council 2003d: 5). The EU goes even further in its comprehensive approach and stresses that it "...will continue to address the root causes of instability including through pursuing and enhancing its efforts in the areas of political conflicts, development assistance, reduction of poverty and promotion of human rights" (European Council 2003d: 5). Thirdly, though many authors correctly point out that the use of force as a last resort measure in the fight against WMD proliferation forms a revolutionary new element in the WMD Strategy, it must be emphasised that the Strategy subordinates explicitly the use of force under Chapter VII of the United Nations (UN) Charter and international law. Moreover, it gives in this regard a central role to the UN Security Council (European Council 2003d: 5). At the same time, it is important to stress that the use of force is to a large extent a theoretical measure, since the EU and basically all its member states lack the military capacities and know-how to carry out a major military counter-proliferation operation (Pullinger and Quille 2003, Sauer 2004: 126-128). The Strategy's 'use of force provision' must be rather seen as a European answer to the US National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, which "...reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force – including through resort to all of our options – to the use of WMD against the United States, our forces abroad, and friends and allies" (2002: 3): On the one hand, the Europeans concede that force may be necessary as a last resort, but on the other hand, they want to see the use of force firmly embedded in international law. Although it is not possible to compare here in detail European and US non-proliferation policies, this shows that the alleged "Americanisation" (Sauer 2004) of the European non-proliferation policy is – as in many other aspects – more superficial than substantial. Fourthly, in contrast to traditional state-centric non-proliferation strategies, the EU Strategy takes into consideration the risks resulting from the use of WMD by sub-state actors such as terrorist networks. The European Security Strategy even claims that "[t]he most frightening scenario is one in which terrorist groups acquire weapons of mass destruction" (2003: 4). Fifthly, multilateralism forms the backbone of the EU's WMD Strategy, both in the sense of strengthening international regimes and organisations and in the sense of cooperating with other international actors. In the former sense, the WMD Strategy outlines a full range of key measure including the universalisation of non-proliferation agreements and regimes⁷, the improvement of their effectiveness by reinforcing compliance and the strengthening of export control policies and practices (European Council 2003d: 6). Moreover, it proposes measures to stabilise the international and regional environment, since "[t]he best solution to the problem of proliferation of WMD is that countries should no longer feel they need them" (European Council 2003d: 7). In the latter sense, the Strategy foresees close cooperation with international organisations such the UN or NATO, partner countries such as the US, Russia, Japan or Canada and, in fact, with any country that is in need of EU assistance in the fight against the proliferation of WMD (European Council 2003d: 8).

In sum, the EU's WMD Strategy encompasses all the principles of Ehrhart's cooperative security provider model and, thus, qualifies fully as a security provider. Churruga (2005), in a recent article on the EU as a security provider, further adds to Ehrhart's model the regional dimension, which has gained during the last 15 years significant ground as an independent security referent. In the case of the EU's WMD Strategy, this regional dimension finds its expression, in particular, in the special focus on the Mediterranean area (European Council 2003d: 7).

⁷ The EU puts emphasis on those listed in Table 2 (Council of the European Union 2003a).

The hazards of WMD proliferation in the Mediterranean: a European perspective

The WMD Strategy avoids to identify clear proliferation risks in the Mediterranean and so far the EU has not been able to produce a comprehensive threat assessment of WMD in the Mediterranean. As a consequence, an examination of the hazards of WMD proliferation in the Mediterranean has to rely completely on other open sources. Before, however, it is necessary to define what is actually meant with WMD proliferation. First of all, the concept of WMD encompasses a wide range of weapon types, all of which have in common that they cause – if used – indiscriminate mass casualties. Typically, they include different variations of nuclear arms (A-bombs, H-bombs⁸), chemical weapons such as mustard gas or sarin and biological weapons, e.g. certain types of viruses or bacteria. The effectiveness of these weapons is, however, limited without the adequate means of delivery. The EU's WMD Strategy stresses, therefore, that the fight against the proliferation of these means of delivery, in particular ballistic missiles, is as important as the fight against the proliferation of WMD itself and that, in practice, they cannot be separated.

Traditionally, most attention has been paid to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, since they are by far the most deadly and powerful type of WMD. In general, nuclear proliferation is divided into vertical and horizontal proliferation, whereby the former refers to the build-up and improvement of an existing nuclear weapons arsenal in a certain country and the latter refers to the spread of states and non-state actors such as terrorist networks with nuclear weapon capabilities (Sauer 2004: 115-116). As Sauer (2004: 116-118) points out, during the last 60 years vertical proliferation has been decreasing while horizontal proliferation has been increasing. Nevertheless, acquiring a nuclear weapon, even a basic A-bomb of the type used by the United States in Hiroshima, is a very complex and, above all, very costly process.⁹ For non-state actors such as terrorist groups it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to obtain a nuclear weapon without at least the tacit support of a state actor (Koldobskij 2003).¹⁰ Apart from the necessary technical know-how, the major obstacle in the construction of a nuclear weapon is the difficulty to acquire the necessary large amounts of weapon-grade (fissile) material, in particular enriched uranium and plutonium (Koldobskij 2003, Tertrais 2003: 37-40). Nevertheless, numerous countries in the Mediterranean area are or have been on the way to build up arsenals of nuclear weapons and, in fact, of any kind of WMD. But how does the proliferation of WMD in the Mediterranean affect European security?

As Buzan and Waever (2003: 45) point out, "...many threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones." To a large extent, this is also true for WMD.¹¹ In this sense, the EU's neighbourhood is, at first sight, its natural priority area of concern regarding the proliferation of WMD, in particular the volatile Mediterranean area with its high levels of regional instability. It has been suggested that the EU and the Southern Mediterranean area form even a kind of 'security complex,' defined by Buzan et al. (1998: 201) "...as a set of units whose major processes of securitization, desecuritization, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analysed or resolved from one another" (original emphasis). If this were true in the case of WMD and the EU and the Southern Mediterranean were actually so strongly interlinked that they form a security complex, this would suggest that the EU would try to implement forcefully its security provider approach in the Mediterranean. In contrast, however, if the security interdependence in the case of WMD between the Northern and Southern rims of the Mediterranean were not so strong that it creates a common security complex, one would expect the EU to implement its non-proliferation policy much less vigorously. The question of security interdependence is, thus, the central underlying theme of the threat assessments carried out in the following two sections.

⁸ Sometimes radiological weapons ('dirty bombs') are included as a separate category.

⁹ It comes, therefore, as no surprise that in 1988 the former speaker of Iran's parliament, Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, referred to the much cheaper chemical weapons as the 'poor man's atomic bomb.'

¹⁰ It is, however, questionable if any nuclear power is prepared to provide a terrorist network, or in fact any other state, with ready-to-use nuclear weapons (Müller 2003).

¹¹ Of the actual and potential WMD powers only three (the United States, Russia and China) have the potential to attack with their ballistic missiles any place in the world, thus blurring the distinction between the global and the regional level.

A classical threat assessment

Classical military threat assessments from a European perspective take into consideration both the WMD capabilities of certain actors as well as the actual intentions to use them against Europe (Boniface 2000, Dokos 2000, Ferreira Pinto 2001, Müller 2003, Tertrais 2003). Although in some cases concrete capabilities and the intentions linked with them are far from clear-cut, open sources allow none the less to draw a relatively accurate picture of capabilities and intentions in the Mediterranean area. In general, as Ferreira Pinto (2000: 21) makes clear, “[t]he Mediterranean is one of the most heavily armed regions in the world.” Therefore, it is not surprising that also substantial WMD capabilities and WMD programmes exist in the region (see Table 1). Israel is certainly by far the most capable of all Mediterranean countries, in particular due its nuclear arsenal, which is usually believed to include between 100 and 200 nuclear warheads (Boniface 2000: 173). The other regional actors with significant WMD programmes are two of Israel’s direct neighbours, Syria and Egypt.¹² These two countries are particular strong in the area of chemical weapons. In the Maghreb countries, in contrast, WMD play a much smaller role: Whereas Tunisia and Morocco are not knowingly engaged in any kind of WMD programmes whatsoever, Algeria is only engaged in research that can contribute to a WMD programme but is not directly related to the development of such weapons. Libya, traditionally a major concern due to its substantial WMD programmes, has finally bowed to international pressure and sanctions and is now dismantling all its WMD capabilities (Werenfels 2004). In short, WMD capabilities are strongest in the heartland of the Arab-Israeli conflict and lowest in the Maghreb.

Although the 2004 enlargement has brought the EU much closer to those Mediterranean states with WMD capabilities, the risk of the EU to be attacked with WMD is still very low, since only the fringes of the EU (Cyprus, Crete, Malta and the Liparian islands) are potentially vulnerable to a WMD attack with ballistic missiles from the Mediterranean (though Israel is an exception).

The least worrying aspects of WMD in the Mediterranean are, however, the intentions of the states possessing these weapons. In the words of Tertrais (2003: 49), “When it comes to intentions, no country in the region is known to want to attack Europe as such.” Israel, the only Mediterranean country with a clear capacity to launch a massive WMD attack against Europe, is arguably the country with least intentions to actually do it. Israel has good and in some cases even excellent relations with all member states of the EU. Their WMD must be exclusively seen in the context of the regional Arab-Israeli conflict: For Israel, WMD form the last line of defence if confronted with a massive attack by neighbouring Arab states (Boniface 2000: 173-176, Heller 2000: 162-163). Equally, in the case of Syria and Egypt their WMD capabilities and programmes are much more a legacy of the Arab-Israeli conflict and, to a lower extent, of inter-Arab rivalry than of some kind of anti-European strategy or as a deterrent against the nuclear weapons of France and the United Kingdom. In military terms, it can be said that neither Israel nor those Arab countries with WMD capabilities have securitized the EU or its member states that possess nuclear weapons. Rather, the proliferation of WMD in the Mediterranean has been the result of regional securitization processes within the Middle East (Baumgart and Müller 2004-5: 48-49). As a consequence, the security interdependence between the EU and the Southern Mediterranean in the case of WMD is very low. Although it may be argued that the Union’s WMD Strategy shows that the EU has securitized the issue of WMD proliferation in the Mediterranean, the actual security interlinks are still quite weak. Thus, in the case of WMD, the EU and the Mediterranean do not form a regional security complex. In short, an analysis of capabilities and intentions rather confirms the assessment of Buzan and Waever (2003: 187-218 and 369) that the Middle East forms an independent security complex, though possibly with the Maghreb as a sub-complex.

Finally, it must be pointed out, however, that this security situation may easily change in future. In this regard, three different scenarios are plausible: First, if Turkey joins one day the Union, its Eastern borders will bring the EU much closer to nuclear hotspots such as Iran, thus creating a “new ‘nuclear frontier’ for Europe” (Tertrais 2003: 50) and altering substantially the security calculations in the EU. Secondly, the development by, for example, Syria of new, more far-

¹² For a detailed analysis of WMD capacities in the Mediterranean, see Cordesman 2005, Dokos 2000, Ferreira Pinto 2000 and Müller 2003.

reaching ballistic missiles, which have the capacity to attack the European heartland, could radically change the European threat assessment of WMD in the Mediterranean. Thirdly, revolutionary regime changes in Syria or Egypt, bringing to power Hamas-style organisations, may turn former pro-Western or at least largely neutral countries into fiercely anti-Western and even anti-European bulwarks which could reorientate their WMD capabilities against European countries. But still today these possibilities are quite remote and direct WMD threats from the Mediterranean will remain for the time being rather indirect.

Table 1: Summary of WMD capabilities in the Mediterranean

| | WMD Capabilities | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| | Nuclear | Chemical | Biological |
| <i>Morocco</i> | | | |
| <i>Algeria</i> | Research | Development? | Research |
| <i>Tunisia</i> | | | |
| <i>Libya</i> | Dismantling [previously: Research] | Dismantling [previously: Deployed; used in 1987] | Dismantling [previously: Development?] |
| <i>Egypt</i> | Research | Stockpiled [used in 1963-67] | Development? |
| <i>Israel</i> | Deployed | Production Capability | Production Capability |
| <i>Lebanon</i> | | | |
| <i>Syria</i> | Research | Deployed | Development? |
| <i>Jordan</i> | | | |

Deployed = Nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) weapons integrated in military forces and ready for use in the event of conflict.

Stockpiled = Produced significant quantity of NBC weapons, but these are not stored in close proximity to military units that would employ them.

Production capability = Able to produce significant quantity of fissile nuclear material or CB agents, but not known to have done so.

Development = Engaged in laboratory- or pilot-scale activities to develop production capability for fissile material or CB agents.

Research = Engaged in dual-use research with peaceful civilian applications, but that can also be used to build technical capacity and/or infrastructure necessary for NBC development and production.

Dismantling = Removing NBC weapons from deployment to storage areas and destroying agents and munitions.

? = Published assessments are uncertain or conflicting reports raise questions about a state's capabilities.

Note: The Palestinian Authority is not included in the Table.

Sources: Cordesman. Anthony H. (2005): *Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East: The Impact on The Regional Military Balance*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, p. 5, <<http://www.csis.org>>; and Center for Nonproliferation Studies: *Weapons of Mass Destruction Capabilities in the Middle East*, <<http://cns.miis.edu/>>.

WMD dangers revisited

The focus on direct physical threats to the EU, its member states and its peoples in classical state- and nuclear-weapons-centric threat assessments simplifies drastically the EU's comprehensive and holistic perspective of the WMD proliferation problem: Rather, "...the WMD Strategy and the statements and declarations which precede it suggest that the NBCR [nuclear, biological, chemical and radiological] proliferation threat to the EU is regarded as complex and multi-faceted, with different aspects of the threat requiring different levels and styles of response" (Cornish and Anthony 2005: 6-7). Apart from the direct/physical threat Cornish and Anthony (2005: 7) suggest that there are at least seven more elements of the WMD threat to the EU. Grouped into three major categories, they can be summarised as (a) structural threats, (b) indirect threats and (c) threats by accident.

First, proliferation of WMD is believed to cause structural instability at the global level, which is why the EU interprets WMD proliferation, first of all, as a "...growing threat to international peace and security" in general (European Council 2003d: 2). Equally, proliferation at a regional level, e.g. in the Mediterranean area, causes high levels of regional instability, which, in turn,

may affect European security interests. In this regard, the threats to the international non-proliferation regimes by non-adherence or non-compliance are particularly problematic, as these regimes are designed to establish the international order which prevents the proliferation of WMD both at the global and at the regional level. Moreover, non-adherence or non-compliance may damage the EU's reputation as an effective defender of international non-proliferation regimes. As Table 2 shows, adherence to the major non-proliferation agreements and conventions by Mediterranean countries is very asymmetrical: Maghreb countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) have, in general, ratified most agreements and conventions, whereas the Eastern Mediterranean countries, in particular Egypt, Israel, Syria and Lebanon, clearly lag behind. Jordan is the major exception as it is – despite its geographical location – the country that has ratified all major non-proliferation agreements and conventions. It is even the only Mediterranean country that has actually ratified the crucial Additional Safeguard Protocols with the International Atomic Energy Agency, which grants this Agency more extensive access rights to nuclear installations and requires states to provide more detailed information about their nuclear programmes. Overall, these results reflect the regional patterns in the case of WMD capabilities, i.e. adherence to international non-proliferation agreements and conventions is lowest where the Arab-Israeli rivalry and, arguably, also inter-Arab competition is fiercest, while it is more widespread in the Maghreb.

Secondly, remote and indirect threats from WMD in the Mediterranean can take basically two forms: Either expatriate communities, diplomatic personnel or stationed and deployed military forces are directly attacked or strategic and economic interests of the EU are negatively affected by the use of WMD in the region. In the latter case, the most obvious examples would be the interruption of oil and gas flows to the EU or the disruption of European export markets in the Mediterranean.

Finally, accidents at storage facilities of chemical or biological weapons, for example as a result of an attempted terrorist assault, may cause considerable harm to EU citizens. In the case of the Mediterranean, this threat only affects, however, EU citizens who are for some reason near such facilities abroad.

Table 2: The ratification of international non-proliferation agreements by Mediterranean third countries

| | Nuclear Weapons Agreements | | Chemical Weapons Agreements | | Biological Weapons Agreements | | Delivery systems Agreements | |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|-----|-------------------------------|------|-----------------------------|-----|
| | NPT | NPT AP | NPT SA | CWC | GP | BTWC | CTBT** | HCC |
| <i>Morocco</i> | • | (•) | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| <i>Algeria</i> | • | | • | • | •* | • | • n | |
| <i>Tunisia</i> | • | (•) | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| <i>Libya</i> | • | (•) | • | • | •* | • | • | • |
| <i>Egypt</i> | • | | • | | • | (•) | (•) n | |
| <i>Israel</i> | | | •*** | (•) | •* | | (•) n | |
| <i>Lebanon</i> | • | | • | | • | • | (•) | |
| <i>Syria</i> | • | | • | | • | (•) | | |
| <i>Jordan</i> | • | • | • | • | •* | • | • | • |

- Party to an Agreement (i.e. ratified, acceded or succeeded to an Agreement).
- (•) Signed but not ratified.
- * Ratified with some kind of reservation and/or declaration.
- ** Agreement not in force.
- *** Special Safeguard Agreement for states not party to the NPT.
- n Ratification necessary for Agreement to enter into force.

Note: The Palestinian Authority is not included in the Table.

Abbreviations:

| | |
|-------------|---|
| BTWC | Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention) |
| CTBT | Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty |
| CWC | Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention) |
| GP | Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (1925 Geneva Protocol) |
| HCC | Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation |
| NPT | Non-Proliferation Treaty |
| NPT | Additional Safeguard Protocols with the International Atomic Energy Agency |
| AP | |
| NPT | Safeguard Agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency |
| SA | |

Sources: Center for Nonproliferation Studies (Monterey, CA), International Atomic Energy Agency, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation, SIPRI and United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs.

Although this more holistic threat assessment demonstrates the EU is more seriously affected by the risk of WMD proliferation in Mediterranean than the classical threat assessment suggests, the security interdependence between the Union and the Southern Mediterranean is still too indirect and remote to establish a regional Euro-Mediterranean security complex. In fact, none of the WMD hazards mentioned above is currently an imminent threat to European security. WMD proliferation remains even from a more comprehensive security perspective an issue within the Middle East regional security complex, though the patterns of adherence to international regimes show again that the Maghreb may qualify as a sub-complex.

In conclusion, the relatively low level of security interdependence between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean in WMD issues suggests that the EU has few incentives to act vigorously and decisively as a security provider in the Mediterranean.

The EU response to WMD proliferation in the Mediterranean

A first approximation to EU non-proliferation policies in the Mediterranean through an analysis of the major strategic documents – the Barcelona Declaration (1995), the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean (European Council 2000) and the EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East (European Council 2004) – reveals that, surprisingly, right from the beginning of the Barcelona process non-proliferation has been a significant issue in Euro-Mediterranean relations. The 1995 Barcelona Declaration already establishes within its so-called political and security partnership the overall objective that “[t]he parties shall pursue a mutually and effectively verifiable Middle East Zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems.” Furthermore, it urges the adherence to and compliance with international and regional non-proliferation regimes and lists practical steps to prevent WMD proliferation. The 2000 Common Strategy and the 2004 Security Partnership document reiterate basically these major themes established by the Barcelona Declaration. In fact, the establishment of a WMD-free Zone in the Middle East and the adherence of all Mediterranean partner countries to the existing non-proliferation instruments can be seen as the two overarching objectives of the EU’s non-proliferation policy in the Mediterranean area.

The implementation of the EU non-proliferation policy in the Mediterranean

Despite the strong rhetoric commitment to WMD issues in the strategic documents of its Mediterranean policy, the EU has largely failed to establish these issues within the Barcelona process, at least until after the adoption of the WMD Strategy in late 2003. In fact, WMD and non-proliferation aspects are conspicuously absent from any major policy document of the Barcelona process such as the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements between the EU and Mediterranean third countries (with the exception of Syria, see below), the Regional

Strategy Paper (2002-2006), the Regional Indicative Programmes (2002-2004/2005-2006) and the Commission's Country Strategy Papers (2002-2006). Furthermore, during the regularly held Euro-Mediterranean Conferences non-proliferation and WMD matters have virtually not played any role. Even the Valencia Action Plan, which was adopted by Euro-Mediterranean foreign ministers in 2002 in order to revive the Barcelona process, does not contain any concrete proposals in relation with WMD and non-proliferation.¹³

The development of the ENP from 2002 on has not radically changed this overall picture: Political proposals related to the Wider Europe initiative (Patten and Solana 2002, Prodi 2002), which later became the ENP, and early strategy documents such as the Commission's Wider Europe Communication (European Commission 2003) do not mention the issue of WMD proliferation at all. It was only after the development of the fully-fledged EU Strategy against the Proliferation of WMD at the end of 2003 that non-proliferation issues have been included in the ENP agenda. They play, however, largely a minor role and are only mentioned in the context of political dialogue between the EU and partner countries, for example in the Commission's ENP Strategy Paper (European Commission 2004a). The individual Country Reports, which were drawn up by the Commission as a first step of the ENP process, hardly mention non-proliferation. On the contrary, they lack any kind of comprehensive and coherent review of WMD and non-proliferation issues such as an overview of countries' adherence to relevant non-proliferation regimes, an analysis of national export controls mechanisms or a list of possible fields of cooperation. The first five Country Reports, which were published by the Commission in May 2004 for those Mediterranean third countries that had by the time a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement in force (Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan and Morocco and Tunisia), include hardly, if at all, the issue of non-proliferation. Generally, it takes the form of a vague statement about a country's adherence to one or two non-proliferation regimes within the chapter on regional and global stability. Likewise, the Country Reports for Egypt and Lebanon, which were published one year later, scarcely comment on non-proliferation issues, although the statements are this time slightly more detailed. Yet, comprehensiveness and coherence are still absent.

The first Mediterranean policy document that contains at least some concrete proposals is the already mentioned Strategic Partnership document: Basically, the proposals can be summed up as, on the one hand, proposals for intensified dialogue on WMD issues and, on the other hand, the inclusion of a 'non-proliferation clause' in agreements with partner countries in the Mediterranean. The lack of ambition, which these proposals demonstrate, is to a large extent a reflection of the missing concrete ideas about what the EU could actually do to contribute to non-proliferation in its priority area within the general framework of the EU's non-proliferation policy. Both the Basic Principles and the WMD Strategy itself do not propose any type of concrete action. Only the Progress Report of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Basic Principles and the updated lists of priorities for a coherent implementation of the WMD Strategy, which are occasionally published with the six-monthly WMD Strategy Progress Reports, contain a few action proposals. Principally, these coincide with the ones mentioned in the Strategic Partnership document. However, more important than making proposals is to actually implement them. So in how far has the EU implemented its rather modest action proposals?

In the case of intensified political dialogue, it is necessary to distinguish between one-way communications of the EU to Mediterranean third countries, bilateral dialogue between the EU and a single Mediterranean third country and Euro-Mediterranean multilateral dialogue. One-way communication, which takes usually the form of a Demarche or a Declaration by the EU Presidency, has been very rare. Although a relevant Declaration (on the accession of Algeria to the NPT) can be found already in 1995, the EU has constricted the use of Demarches and Declarations to urge or support respectively the accession of certain Mediterranean third countries to non-proliferation regimes, in particular the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Hague Code of Conduct and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. In the case of bilateral dialogue, non-proliferation issues have been actually discussed in the framework of the Association Committees, however, mainly with the more advanced Mediterranean partner countries, Morocco, Tunisia, Israel and Jordan. Moreover, no concrete results have been

¹³ It must be pointed out, however, that the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability, which has never been adopted due to the Middle East conflict, actually includes a chapter on non-proliferation of WMD.

reached. Multilateral dialogue on non-proliferation issues, for its part, has been held mainly in the framework of regular meetings of senior officials of the Barcelona process. Moreover, the EU has planned to organise regular meetings and seminars specifically on disarmament and non-proliferation of WMD in the Middle East and the Mediterranean as confidence building measures, for which it has foreseen €100.000 from the CFSP budget between 2005 and 2008. It has even endorsed the idea of establishing a cooperative mechanism in the form of a network of points of contact on non-proliferation issues. However, an ad-hoc meeting of senior governmental and non-governmental experts on non-proliferation, which has been seen as a starting point and which has been formalised during the Euro-Mediterranean foreign minister meetings in Dublin (May 2004), the Hague (November 2004) and Luxembourg (May 2005), has not materialised so far despite promotion visits to Mediterranean third countries by Annalisa Giannella, the Personal Representative on Non-proliferation of WMD, in July 2004. It has only been possible to organise a workshop with Mediterranean and Middle East countries on the Chemical Weapons Convention in Cyprus in 2005. The workshop, which was funded by the EU with €62.000 in the framework of a joint action in support of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, was in so far a success as all Mediterranean states not party to the Convention attended (Egypt, Israel and Syria). The EU has decided to hold a similar workshop in 2006.

Table 3: The application of the EU ‘non-proliferation clause’ in the Mediterranean area

| | EU ‘non-proliferation clause’* included in agreements with third countries |
|----------------|---|
| <i>Morocco</i> | Action Plan adopted with references to non-proliferation measures |
| <i>Algeria</i> | No agreement has been signed which could potentially include the November 2003 non-proliferation clause |
| <i>Tunisia</i> | Action Plan adopted with references to non-proliferation measures |
| <i>Libya</i> | No agreement has been signed which could potentially include the November 2003 non-proliferation clause |
| <i>Egypt</i> | No agreement has been signed which could potentially include the November 2003 non-proliferation clause |
| <i>Israel</i> | Action Plan adopted with references to non-proliferation measures |
| <i>Lebanon</i> | Action Plan adopted with references to non-proliferation measures |
| <i>Syria</i> | Agreement concluded with the non-proliferation clause** |
| <i>Jordan</i> | Action Plan adopted with references to non-proliferation measures |

* As adopted by the Council on 17 November 2003 (Council of the European Union 2003b).

** Agreement neither signed nor ratified.

Note: The Palestinian Authority is not included in the Table.

Source: European Commission.

The major success of the EU’s non-proliferation efforts in the Mediterranean has been, however, the inclusion of a ‘non-proliferation clause’ in agreements with Mediterranean third countries (see Table 3). In this regard, the most important step forward has been the EU-Syria Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement, for which negotiations were concluded in 2004 after negotiators had removed the final stumbling block – the inclusion of a non-proliferation clause (Council of the European Union 2005: 66). Although the Agreement has not been signed nor ratified so far – according to Annalisa Giannella, for reasons not related to the non-proliferation clause (Meier 2005b) – it is important to point out that its provisions in the field of non-proliferation are path-breaking. Most notably, political conditionality is introduced. This concept, originally related to human rights and democracy issues (Smith, K. 1998), foresees that in case Syria does not fulfil its obligations in relation with the non-proliferation provisions, the EU can, as a last resort, suspend the Agreement. Conditionality in the Agreement with Syria applies, however, principally to Syria’s “...existing obligations under international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements” (my emphasis) (European Commission 2004b: 15). Since Syria has not ratified many fundamental non-proliferation agreements (see Table 2),

it is questionable if conditionality is in this case really an effective non-proliferation tool. In fact, the more ambitious elements of the non-proliferation clause, the ratification of non-proliferation treaties to which Syria is not party and the setting up of sophisticated export and transit regulations, do not form 'essential elements' of the Agreement. Likewise, political dialogue on non-proliferation issues will only "accompany and consolidate" the other elements of the clause (European Commission 2004b: 15). Nevertheless, the inclusion of a non-proliferation clause in a major agreement with one of the most problematic states worldwide in the field of non-proliferation, constitutes a major leap forward.

Apart from the EU-Syria Association Agreement, the ENP Action Plans, which are signed with individual partner countries and form the backbone of the EU's Neighbourhood Policy, include also substantial provisions on non-proliferation that resemble to a certain extent the 'non-proliferation clause.' Up to the present day, the EU has signed such Action Plans with Morocco, Tunisia, Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan. Generally, the Plans include commitments to comply with existing international agreements and treaties and to accede to those to which a country is not party; to cooperate in the area of export control and security border management; and to promote the non-proliferation provisions established in the Barcelona Declaration. The major difference of these provisions in comparison with the 'non-proliferation clause' as applied in the EU-Syria Association Agreement is the absence of political conditionality. The provisions take rather the form of imprecise commitments to 'promote' a certain issue or to 'cooperate' on others. Above all, clear benchmarks, which could help to assess progress in future, are missing. Moreover, the non-proliferation provisions are – except for very minor differences – literally the same in virtually all Action Plans. In principle, a major advantage of the national Action Plans and, indeed of the ENP in general, is, however, that the EU is able to focus its cooperation on individual partner countries and their specific conditions and needs in a flexible way (Johansson-Nogués 2004: 243-244, Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005: 28-29). This is especially true in the case of non-proliferation, since the Mediterranean partner countries show major differences in relation with their WMD capabilities (see Table 1), their adherence to and implementation of international non-proliferation instruments (see Table 2) and their effectiveness in applying export, transit and border controls. Thus, virtually identical non-proliferation chapters in the Action Plans undermine the advantages a flexible and individualised approach could offer. Only the Action Plan with Israel can be clearly distinguished from the others, although not to the advantage of the European non-proliferation efforts: In particular, Israel will only 'consider the promotion' and not directly 'promote' the accession to non-proliferation agreements and treaties to which it is not a party. Furthermore, there is no reference to the examination of WMD threats that may undermine regional security nor to a Middle East zone free of WMD. Obviously, the EU has made in this case major concessions to Israeli interests and sensibilities. In this regard, it must be pointed out that the non-proliferation provisions were a major obstacle for the conclusion of the ENP Action Plan with Israel (Diab 2004-5).

Despite of all these shortcomings, the Action Plans address none the less major non-proliferation problems that exist in all Mediterranean partner countries, especially regarding export, transit and border control in order to prevent the illicit trafficking and/or trade with WMD-related material (including dual-use items). Yet, when it comes to implementing the provisions, EU-third country cooperation has been rather limited, if not non-existent: In the first major survey on export control cooperation between the EU and third countries, Bauer (2005: 15) concludes that "[t]here is no threat-based nor security-driven approach, and there is no overarching strategy for export control outreach and assistance with countries that do not have candidate status (except in the case of the Russian Federation)." At the same time, border security management support projects, for example through MEDA, the financial arm of the European Mediterranean policy, do not take directly into consideration WMD aspects and are often related to issues such as migration or transnational crime (Anthony et al. 2005: 9-11). Furthermore, the national reports which have been submitted by UN member states according to UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on the fight against the proliferation of WMD and which list individually all the non-proliferation efforts made so far, do not show any sign of cooperation between the EU and the Mediterranean third countries. Yet, the Mediterranean partner countries could easily profit from the rich experience of the EU and its member states in regulating and implementing export, border and transit controls. Recently, the Swedish arms control think tank SIPRI has published an interim report of a pilot project on European

Community instruments in the area of WMD non-proliferation and disarmament (SIPRI 2005), which contains many useful recommendations for future action, in particular in relation with Mediterranean countries. The Commission, which initiated the pilot project at the petition of the European Parliament, has, thus, at hand a convenient tool to promote its non-proliferation efforts in the framework of the ENP. After all, the EU has not only a strong interest in effective export, border and transit controls in Mediterranean third countries in order to increase its security but also to facilitate legitimate trade.

The determining factors of the EU non-proliferation policy in the Mediterranean

As the low security interdependence between the EU and the Southern Mediterranean in matters of WMD proliferation suggested, the implementation of the EU's non-proliferation policy in the Mediterranean has generally been very slow and has lacked ambition and vigour. Apart from the underlying factor of security interdependence, however, a whole range of other factors have influenced the EU non-proliferation policy in the Mediterranean. Closely related with the question of security interdependence is the 'Middle East conflict factor.' Whereas the Euro-Mediterranean security interdependence is rather low, the security interdependence within the Mediterranean area itself is very high, even though it takes the form of a classical conflict formation (Buzan and Waever 2003: 187). Due to this strong security interdependence between the Mediterranean third countries in the form of the Middle East conflict, outside interference in issues closely linked to the conflict, for instance WMD proliferation, is extremely difficult. In fact, the question of 'What comes first, 'peace or WMD disarmament?' has been one of the principle Gordian knots of the Middle East conflict, which has been virtually impossible to solve from outside, especially after the failure of the Middle East peace process launched at Madrid in 1991. In general, the relationship between WMD proliferation and the Middle East conflict is a highly complex matter and includes countless unsolved issues such as Israel as the only regional nuclear power, the refusal by some of Israel's neighbours to recognise its right to exist, the question of Egyptian and Syrian chemical weapons arsenals or the low levels of mutual trust and transparency, which would be necessary to implement some kind of disarmament verification system in order to begin with WMD disarmament at all (Baumgart and Müller 2004-5, El-Sayed Selim 2000). As a consequence, solving the problem of WMD proliferation in the Euro-Mediterranean framework has been almost impossible for the EU without finding at the same time a solution for the Middle East conflict in general.

This argument reflects broader arguments which link the rather mixed results of the security partnership within the Barcelona process in general to the failure of the Middle East peace process (Biscop 2005, Ortega 2003). In fact, Biscop (2005) claims that "[t]he eternal conflict between Israel and Palestine is the main stumbling-block for an enhanced security partnership between both shores of the Mediterranean." Furthermore, due to their general distrust, Southern Mediterranean countries demonstrate a certain degree of reluctance, if not unwillingness, to cooperate with the EU on 'hard' security issues such as WMD proliferation (Biscop 2005). It might be even questioned if the EU's Mediterranean policy is the right framework to address non-proliferation matters. First of all, the United States as the sole global superpower is almost naturally a crucial actor in matters of WMD proliferation in the Mediterranean/Middle East. In other words, a policy of non-proliferation of WMD in the Mediterranean/Middle East is not feasible without the active support of the US. Obviously, the United States is neither included in the EMP nor in the ENP.¹⁴ Thus, it might be necessary to create a new framework with the United States to address jointly the problem of non-proliferation in the Mediterranean/Middle East.¹⁵ Secondly, the Mediterranean policy, in particular the ENP, separates artificially countries that at least in the field of WMD proliferation cannot be separated from each other, e.g. Iran and Iraq, on the one side, and Israel and Egypt, on the other (Boniface 2000: 167-168, Heller 2000).¹⁶

¹⁴ So far, EU-US declarations on non-proliferation or the EU-US joint work programme do not even deal with the problem of WMD proliferation in the Mediterranean area/Middle East.

¹⁵ For more detail on the debate about the role of the United States in the Euro-Mediterranean process, see Barbé 1996. Due to its problems to establish an own non-proliferation policy, NATO may not be either the appropriate framework to deal with WMD proliferation in the Mediterranean area. See Terzuolo 2005.

¹⁶ On opening up the European Mediterranean policy to the broader Middle East, see Aliboni 2005: 10-12.

The explanation for the EU's low profile in non-proliferation matters in the Mediterranean is, however, not only the result of external factors. Internal factors play also a major role. First, numerous fault-lines between EU member states in non-proliferation matters exist. In this respect, the principal problem is the question of disarmament. Historically, the issues of WMD non-proliferation and WMD disarmament, in particular in relation with nuclear weapons, have been inseparable. In fact, the NPT, the major non-proliferation agreement in force, is both a nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament treaty. The 'realist' balance of power logic behind this arrangement is that non-nuclear-weapon states, especially those which are potentially capable to develop nuclear weapons, would usually not agree voluntarily to abstain from developing such weapons, if the states that already possess them did not commit themselves at the same time to dismantle their arsenals. That this logic is still valid today shows the fact that a major problem behind the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference to produce a final document was the division between the disarmament oriented EU member states and the European nuclear powers, which were much less eager to progress in the field of disarmament (Müller 2005: 35; see also Sur 2005). As Meier and Quille (2005) put it, "...there is a real danger that the EU will devolve from being a constructive force in the NPT to being simply a microcosm of global divisions on non-proliferation and disarmament between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states." In this regard, recent developments such as the reinforcement of the French nuclear strategy (Chirac 2006) or news of the UK developing a new generation of nuclear weapons (Smith, M. 2006) are rather problematic signs. Moreover, many other fault-lines exist, for example between those member states that are sheltered under NATO's nuclear umbrella and those, which have decided not to become a member of the North Atlantic Alliance. After the 2004 EU enlargement these problems have certainly not become less (Meier 2005a). The overall result of these divisions is that the EU has not only problems to find a common line on non-proliferation policy implementation in general but also on its non-proliferation activities in the Mediterranean.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that the EU non-proliferation policy in general is still a very immature policy. The WMD Strategy is only two years old and it would be certainly imprudent to expect already major concrete outputs and outcomes, especially in such problematic geographical areas as the Mediterranean or the Middle East. Furthermore, as a cross-pillar policy it suffers, as so often in such a case, from a lack of cohesion and competence problems between the Commission, the Council and the member states.¹⁷ An additional problem is the absence of a clear EU budget line for non-proliferation, both in the Community and in the CFSP budget. It is actually very difficult to calculate how much money the EU spends on non-proliferation (Quille 2005, Tertrais 2005, SIPRI 2005). It is estimated that "[w]ithin the external action part of the Community budget the average annual commitment of funds to finance future projects that can be considered to be relevant to non-proliferation and disarmament was €31 million over the period 1994-2006" (SIPRI 2005: 5). In the case of the CFSP budget, it is only possible to fix the allocations for non-proliferation activities in 2004 and 2005: It were only €14.845 million and €7.2 million respectively (SIPRI 2005: 6). In other words, financial resources for non-proliferation activities have been rather limited. Due to these limitations, the EU has largely concentrated its efforts in areas which have been perceived as more urgent and which have promised, at least in the short term, more concrete results than the Mediterranean area: in particular, the dismantling or the protection of the WMD arsenal of the former Soviet Union and the highly publicised so-called EU3 negotiations by France, Germany and the UK with Iran.

Conclusion

In conclusion, despite its strong rhetoric in favour of non-proliferation of WMD in the Mediterranean, particularly in its strategic documents, the EU has largely failed to implement substantially its non-proliferation approach in the Mediterranean area and has not become a successful security provider. With the exception of low-profile dialogue with partner countries and the inclusion of 'non-proliferation clauses' in an Association Agreement with Syria and in several ENP Action Plans, the EU has even failed to act at all in the field of non-proliferation.

¹⁷ Interestingly, the European Parliament has maintained a very low profile in WMD matters and has only recently published its first report on non-proliferation (European Parliament 2005).

This reflects by and large the difficulty to establish in general a meaningful political and security partnership between the EU and Southern Mediterranean countries beyond the realm of pure rhetoric. At the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona process, the European Commission (2005: 19) dispelled any doubts left:

“Political and security cooperation has grown although the pace has been slower than hoped for. A number of partnership building measures are in place (...) or in prospect, and a more flexible approach (bilateral or sub-regional) appears promising, although it remains to be seen whether this will facilitate cooperation on counter-terrorism or non-proliferation of WMD, where progress has so far been particularly slow”.

These poor results in the framework of the EU's Mediterranean policy contrast starkly with the EU's fully-fledged WMD Strategy. Potentially, the Strategy would allow the EU to become a significant actor in non-proliferation affairs. However, at least in the Mediterranean area, the Strategy's sophisticated cooperative security provider approach with its focus on real-world problems, the use of both civil and military means, the control of military operations by international norms, the multi-level orientation and the application of effective multilateralism has not seen the light of the day. The danger in this respect is that the EU will suffer from a classical “capability-expectations gap” (Hill 1993), i.e. both EU citizens and third countries expect the EU to do more than it actually can or is willing to do.

The reasons behind the EU's low profile in non-proliferation affairs in the Mediterranean are to a considerable degree structural and, therefore, difficult to change. The two major factors are the low security interdependence between the EU and the Southern Mediterranean in the field of WMD and the unresolved Middle East conflict, though the EU's internal problems to actually implement a coherent non-proliferation policy may not be neglected either. Due to these factors, it is rather unlikely that the EU will pursue its non-proliferation policy with more vigour in the Mediterranean area in future. Probably, it will limit its activity to Demarches, Declarations, low profile dialogue, workshops on international regimes and the inclusion of ‘non-proliferation clauses’ in third country agreements in the framework of CFSP and to specific assistance programmes, e.g. in the field of border security management or export controls, in the framework of Community instruments. In this regard, it is more likely that the EU's actions will concentrate on the less problematic Maghreb countries, especially Morocco and Tunisia, than on the more difficult cases in the Eastern Mediterranean, in particular Israel, Syria or Egypt. In the long term, however, the EU will also have to tackle seriously these difficult cases if it wants to become a significant and respected actor in international security affairs.

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