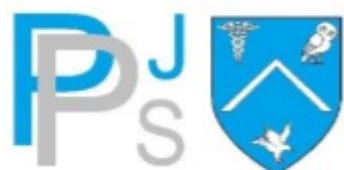


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From the Barcelona Process to Union for the Mediterranean:
the European Union's approach to co-operation with North African and Middle East
states prior to Arab Spring

Abstract

The Mediterranean region constitutes the closest neighbourhood of the European Union. The region needs support and assistance to equal differences between the North and South part of the Mediterranean. In order to achieve this ambitious aim it was decided to institutionalise co-operation between EU and other countries of the region under the auspices of the Barcelona Process. Although reasons of those differences were determined and identified and mechanisms that were supposed to abolish them were established, until today no significant success has been archived. The changes towards approach to the project of Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean which were dictated by the Arab Spring definitely give an opportunity to improve the situation. Nonetheless after more than two decades since establishment of the Process it may be stated that the Resolution of Euro-Parliamentary Assembly is still as valid now as it was on the day of its signing on 15th March 2005.

Keywords: *European Union, Arab Spring, North Africa, Middle East union of the Mediterranean*

Introduction

The end of November 2017 will have marked 22nd anniversary of establishing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership a project which was to have changed the Mediterranean basin into a stable and secured commonwealth of nations. Despite the fact that since starting this project, which may be called one of European Union's flagship projects, more than two decades passed and its various programmes cost billions of Euro it seems we still need to wait to see security, stability and prosperity in the region.

The purpose of this article is to present to the reader mechanisms of co-operation between the European Union (EU) and the countries located in the Mediterranean basin in the context of security, introduction of democratic standards in the public domain and promotion of good governance. In the first part of the article the author will outline the history of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and its evolution into the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). Subsequently the Mediterranean region and the UfM's role in the policy of selected EU countries – France and Germany – will be characterised. This part will also contain description of relations between EU and UfM. It will be followed by an analyse of selected project executed by the UfM in the recent years and how they influenced the political and economic situation of the region. The final part of this article will be summarise the hitherto achievements of the UfM and will present conclusions drawn from the analysis of its activities.

1. Issues

Countries such as Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Syria at beginning of the 21st century were still governed by regimes, which in some cases had been in power for more than 30 years. The regimes managed to withstand the turmoil created by the 9/11 terrorist attacks and they appeared not to be affected by the raising, starting from the 1990s, influence of political Islam in the Arab world. They managed to thrive weaving between the West and various movements influenced by political Islam, never however loosing from sight its prime objective which was keeping the power.

The dynamic changes in the socio-political situation that were witnessed at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, wiped out from the political stage the old regimes, showing at the same time how fragile was the social and political fabric of the abovementioned countries. More importantly it uncovered ineffectiveness and lack of a comprehensive vision of co-operation and consistency of EU's foreign policy pertaining to the Mediterranean countries. It seems that the notion of establishing in the Mediterranean region a prosperous and secured commonwealth by bringing into life the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, a project so much promoted by the European Union, failed to meet its aims and hopes. Worse even the programmes executed under the umbrella of the Partnership could lull and give a false sense that the actions taken by the EU foreign policy were going in the desired direction and that reaching the set objectives was just a matter of time.

How erroneous and wishful this thinking was showed to the world the occurrences of the Arab Spring, which despite its noble intentions of democratisation of public life and improving the life of people in the North Africa and Middle East led however to destabilisation of both the regions. Lack of one consistent European

approach to foreign policy and regional security indirectly contributed to creation of the image that we know from the media: wave of migration, bloody civil war in Syria, fallen Libya, disorganised and striving for survival on the political landscape Iraq, raising terrorist threat in Africa and the Middle East or bigger and bigger radicalisation of various Islamic movements.

Research on the Mediterranean security aspects and relations between the European Union and countries of the Mediterranean basin are conducted at numerous academic centres in the world. One of the leading researchers is prof. Paul Rogers from Bradford University.¹ In Poland the subject of Mediterranean security is researched by amongst others Justyna Zając a professor at Warsaw University.²

2. Barcelona Process and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

Taking into account close vicinity as well as historical relations with countries of Maghreb and Mashriq such EU member countries as France, Spain and Italy were particularly interested in developing ties and supporting processes of democratisation in countries of North Africa and Levant. Out of inspiration of those three European countries the European Union undertook efforts to create an effective platform for dialogue, which concurrently would serve intensification of trade relations as well as it would enable discussion on such ponderable problems as migration, environment or energy. The first attempt to establish such a platform was undertaken in 1995, when Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was brought to life. On the other hand, a project postulated by France in 2008 to create the Mediterranean Union consisting of countries located in the Mediterranean basin and loosely tied to the EU never materialised.³

The conference of foreign ministers of the EU and countries of the Mediterranean held in Barcelona 27th – 28th November 1995 initiated the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The Partnership was to be a platform for development of relation at political, economic and social levels between 15 member states of the EU and 12 countries of the Mediterranean: Algeria, Cyprus,⁴ Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestinian National Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.

¹ Prof. P. Brafort has published numerous books on security, terrorism and conflicts in the Middle East e.g. *Losing Control: Global Security in the Twenty-First Century*, Pluto Press, Londyn, 2010. He is an editor of e.g. *The Security Concept of the European Union for the Mediterranean. Conceptualising Security and Environmental Conflicts* (editor Prof dr Michael A. Köhler; co-editor – prof dr Hans Günter Brauch, prof dr Peter H. Liotta, prof dr Antonio Marquina, prof dr Mohammed El-Sayed Selim, Springel-Verlag, Berlin Heidelberg 2003 and author of numerous articles e.g. *Lost cause consequences and implications of the war on terror* Critical Studies on Terrorism vol 6, № 1 p. 1-16, April 2013.

² She is an author of numerous books e.g. *Role Unii Europejskiej w regionie Afryki Północnej i Bliskiego Wschodu*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2010, *Partnerstwo Eurośródziemnomorskie*, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, Warszawa 2005. She is also an editor of e.g. *Teorie i podejścia teoretyczne w nauce o stosunkach międzynarodowych* (co-editor – Ryszard Zięba, Stanisław Bieleń), Wydawnictwo WDiNP UW, Warszawa 2015, *Unia Europejska w regionie śródziemnomorskim: między polityką a interesami państw członkowskich*, (red.), Wydawnictwo WDiNP UW, Warszawa 2014.

³ A. Szymański, B. Wojna *Unia dla Morza Śródziemnego współpracy – nowe forum regionalnej* https://www.pism.pl/files/?id_plik=664 Access: 25.07.2017 r.

⁴ Cyprus together with Malta joined the EU in 2004.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership also called the Barcelona Process laid foundations for development of relations based on three main aims so-called baskets:

- Improvement of stability in the region by implementation of intensified dialogue on political and security issues;
- Establishing prosperous commonwealth by developing partnership in areas such as: economy, finance and gradual implementation of free trade concept;
- Society rapprochement by building relations in social, cultural and interpersonal dimensions in order to promote intercultural understanding as well as conducting cross-cultural and social exchange between countries of the region.

Apart from the abovementioned aims the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership put great emphasis on stimulation and development of bilateral and regional co-operation. As far as bilateral co-operation is concerned association agreements were signed with countries of the region. Those agreements related to basic rules regarding human civil right, political dialogue, free transfer of goods, economic co-operation, social, cultural and financial interaction as well as institutional issues. The first country of the Mediterranean region with which such an agreement was signed was Tunisia.

One of the most important initiatives introduced by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was a dialogue on a regional level. It allowed to conduct and develop regional co-operation simultaneously in political, economic and cultural dimensions. Regional co-operation facilitate efforts aimed at solving problems shared by many countries of the Mediterranean basin. Multilateral co-operation complemented the regional one as well as regional dialogue.

The main body regulating and managing the multilateral and regional co-operation in the Barcelona Process was the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for Barcelona Process. It consisted of representatives of EU member states, European Commission and 12 countries of the Mediterranean region participating in the Partnership.

During the fifth meeting of foreign ministers of [countries] of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, held 11th – 13th April 2002 in Valencia the so-called *Action Plan* was adopted. It encompassed the following assumption:

- in spheres of policy and security it was decided to strengthen the political dialogue as well as tightening co-operation regarding countering international terrorism;
- in fields of economy and finance it was agreed that it was vital to support actions directed on ensuring economic growth and diminishing unemployment in the region;
- as far as trade and industry were concerned the focus was laid on harmonisation and unification of regulation, regional integration, promotion of liberalisation of service market, implementation of reforms aimed at regulating trade and facilitating access to new technologies;

- in the socio-cultural sphere the importance of full engagement and commitment into the Barcelona Process of governments and societies was highlighted as a key element to achieve success. It was also decided to tighten regional co-operation in countering smuggling including drugs trafficking, countering organised crime. A mention was made on migration with particular emphasis put on integration of immigrants.

3. MEDA – financial instrument of the Barcelona Process

Initiated in 1996 MEDA programme was a main financial instrument for the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. The Programme had a budget of 3.435 million EURO. The MEDA programme enabled to render financial and technical support to conduct project in countries in the south part of Mediterranean that is: Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestinian National Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey. In the course of the programme certain adjustments and changes were introduced which were meant to improve the way the projects were financed in the framework of the Partnership. In order to improve financial mechanisms for the projects in 2000 a new MEAD II programme was established. The MEDA II programme was in place until 2006, the year when it was replaced by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)⁵ In the abovementioned period MEDA II had a budget of 5.350 million EURO.⁶

The main recipient of financial support from the MEDA programme was Morocco. Significant financial means were also spent on realisation of regional programmes. The amount and value of the financial assets used by each and every Mediterranean country participating in it depicts chart № 1.

Country	Amount spent in millions of EURO	Percentage of the entire MEDA II programme
Morocco	982	19%
Regional programmes	904	18%
Egypt	592	12%
Palestinian National Authority	522	10%
Tunisia	517	10%

⁵ ENPI in turn was superseded by European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). ENI for the years 2014-2020 has a budget of 14,4 billion EURO and it will be a basis for financing projects and initiatives resulting from co-operation between EU and its 16 partner countries (Algeria, Armenia, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, National Palestinian Authority, Ukraine) so countries participating in the: Eastern Partnership, Union for the Mediterranean and Black Sea Synergy. ENI will support actions directed at strengthening of relation between EU's neighbouring countries and at achieving tangible results from this co-operation.

⁶https://emwis.org/overview/fol101997/fol221357/doc988673/generate_pdf?url=overview/fol101997/fol221357/doc98886&lang=en Access: 14.09.2015 r.

Algeria	339	7%
Jordan	332	7%
Syria	180	4%
Lebanon	133	3%

Chart № 1 Amount of financial assets spent in the framework of the MEDA II countries participating in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.⁷

If we take into account the projects which were financed from MEDA II budget then the most significant sums were spent on supporting economic reforms including reforms of trade and private sector – 39 % of the budget for the years 2000-2006. The project linked to infrastructure received 21% of the budget and social projects were financed at the level of 19%. Compared to the mentioned areas it is quite astonishing that projects aimed at building civil society and development of political support had been given rather insignificant financial support 5% and 3% respectively.⁸

The allocated financial assets designated to support reforms and development of the Mediterranean countries participating in the Partnership, significant as they might seem, could not entirely abolish differences between each and every member country. Simultaneously, regional co-operation was hampered by animosities deriving from historic, political and economic feedback.

Analysing the percentage of financial expenditure for particular purposes the very low level of financial support for projects aimed at building civil society and political dialogue is conspicuous. This was most probably due to the fact that EU member countries did not want to be on a collision course with the regimes in power and rather opted for the policy of avoiding direct confrontation with them. Therefore it might be stated that democratic values and hopes of building civil society had been sacrificed at the altar of a more pragmatic approach where good relations with the regimes, trade and civil sector reforms turned out to be more important. On the other hand it must be noticed that significant support was directed to infrastructure and social affairs projects. However in this case apart from undoubtful improvement of living conditions of the population achieved by means of using MEDA II budget, it should be also noted that the regimes managed to use that situation in their favour and give more human face to their rules by showing how capable they were in obtaining and putting to good use foreign financial aid, so generously distributed by the EU, for the sake of their “subjects”.

4. The Mediterranean Union or the Union for the Mediterranean which way to go?

At the time of its establishing in 1995 the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership consisted of 27 participating nations – 15 EU member states and 12 countries of the Mediterranean. As a result of EU’s expansion the number of its member states grew to

⁷ *Evaluation of the Council Regulation № 2698/2000 (MEDA II) and its implementation Final report Volume Main report June 2009,*

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/reports/2009/1264_vol1_en.pdf

Access: 31.07.2017 r.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p.17

27, at the same time as it was already mentioned some of the non-EU countries participating in the Partnership became full-fledged members of the European Union (Cyprus, Malta).

As a result of the 2004 expansion of the European Union the countries of Central-Eastern Europe were given full membership in its structures. Those countries were: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia. Concurrently the countries of the “old” Western Europe realised that further expansion of the EU to east was just a matter of time. The EU’s enlargement by former Soviet bloc countries and the perspective of giving more attention to Eastern Europe’s affairs gave France and particularly a candidate to become the Republic’s President Mr Nicolas Sarkozy an impulse to undertake efforts to reform EU’s approach to issues pertaining to collaboration with the Mediterranean countries.⁹

During his presidential campaign Nicola Sarkozy proposed a creation of the Mediterranean Union, which would associate both EU and non-EU countries located in the Mediterranean basin. The intention of the French side that project was meant to promote and develop economic, social, cultural and political co-operation as well as building stability and security in the Mediterranean region. Simultaneously it was underlined that the Mediterranean Union would be loosely linked with the European Union albeit it would be created by using EU’s financial means.

N. Sarkozy’s project was supported by Italy, Spain and Greece and from outside the EU its warm advocate was Egypt. More cautious in its assessments of benefits deriving from the project was the European Commission. The Commission underscored that inasmuch as the issues of promotion and enhancement of collaboration in the Mediterranean were important those aims should be achieved by using the already existent structures and mechanisms, indicating in that sense at the Barcelona Process. Instantaneously, the project received a total disapproval from Germany, which criticised implementation of EU funds to establish a project of which benefits would be directed to a limited number of EU member states.. Chancellor Angela Merkel was concerned that the new project would lead to weakening the role of the Barcelona Process and that in turn would have negative repercussions on the effectiveness of the EU’s policy in the region.

As a consequence of the criticism of his project, at the beginning of 2008 N. Sarkozy commenced to modify its initial concept of the Union. Culmination of those works was a statement delivered by the French Minister for European Affairs Jean-Pierre Jouyet, who stated that the Mediterranean Union would be replaced by the Union for the Mediterranean.¹⁰

During discussions it was agreed that in the project of the Union for the Mediterranean alongside the non-EU countries of the Mediterranean would also participate all of the EU member states. At the summit held in Paris 13th July 2008

⁹N. Sarkozy intended to establish a Euro-Mediterranean project, which would be a response to the Eastern Partnership, a project which had been a joint Polish-Swedish initiative and had been inaugurated in 2009. The Eastern Partnership’s intend was to tighten interaction with non-EU countries such Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. The aim of the Eastern Partnership was to establish an area of free trade, creation of visa and support programmes and eventually preparation of the countries to EU membership. The Eastern Partnership initiative was adopted in June 2008 at a EU council summit.

¹⁰ <https://euobserver.com/political/25733> Access: 31.07.2017 r.

devoted to the issues of the Mediterranean 43 head of states and governments of the EU member states and the Mediterranean countries decided to establish the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.¹¹ The project was presented as a development and enhancement of the already existing Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The Union for the Mediterranean led to institutionalisation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership through e.g. implementation of changes in its organisational architecture.

5. Institutionalisation of the Union for the Mediterranean

The summit in Paris of 13th July 2008 apart from establishing the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) initiated also the process of its institutionalisation. The participant of the summit took a decision to create the UfM Secretariat, which was aimed to play a key role as far as achieving of the UfM's targets was concerned. Its role, tasks and composition as well as the method of financing of its activities were described in the document called Statutes of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean.¹² The tasks of the Secretariat consists of:

- Co-operation with all structures and organisational entities participating in the process, particularly with co-charing nations. The Secretariat prepares working-level documents for the management of the UfM and also for other decision-taking bodies (summits and conferences of ministers of foreign affairs as well as sector meetings of other ministers of the UfM member countries);
- Giving impulse to the process as far as new projects are concerned, seeking sources of their financing as well as partners for their execution;
- Being the leading project co-ordination centre;
- Briefing and preparing papers on the Secretariat's activities.¹³

The works of the Secretariat are managed by the Secretary General, to whom are directly subordinated 6 deputies.¹⁴ The Secretary General as well as his deputies are appointed for a 3-year incumbency with a possibility to prolong it by another 3 years. During their term in office both the Secretary and his deputies cannot execute other public functions in the countries of their origin nor can they be linked in any way to

¹¹ The Union for the Mediterranean currently consists of 27 EU member states and 16 countries of the Mediterranean basin.

¹² The costs of functioning of the Secretariat are covered by voluntarily payments of its member countries as well as from the EU's budget.

¹³ Statutes of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, <http://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Statutes-UfMS.pdf> Access: 31.07.2017 [r.](#)

¹⁴ 3 of them are elected amongst the EU member states. The remaining 3 are elected amongst the other UfM member countries, which do not belong to the EU. Moreover the Secretary General indicates one deputy from the ones elected from the EU and appoints him as the Senior Deputy Secretary General. For the first 3-year incumbency the following nationalities were chosen as deputies. From Italy – deputy responsible for co-ordination of project financing, Small and Medium Enterprises and business development; Turkey – responsible for transportation; Greece – energy including renewable sources; Palestinian National Authority – environment and water economy including water purification; Israel – higher education and research; Malta – social affairs including protection of civil society.

business activity nor to follow instructions regarding the functioning of the UfM issues by their national governments.

The Secretary General after consultations with his deputy responsible for a certain field of activity within the UfM appoints staff for that area, adhering to the rule of balanced representation from various nationals in the Secretariat. One slot of a senior official is reserved for a representative of the European Commission or the representative of the EU External Service, who works as a counsellor to the Secretary General.¹⁵

The duties of the Secretary General encompass amongst others:

- Preparation together with his deputies an annual action plan describing the activities of the Secretariat and execution of the annual budget;
- Ensuring the stability of Secretariat functioning taking into account its mandate and aims;
- Co-ordination of activities performed with other organisational entities of the UfM;
- Supervision of the UfM budget;
- Submission of reports of UfM activities and UfM financial reports to UfM senior officials.¹⁶

As far as the approval and execution of project are concerned the Secretariat is obliged to implement the rule of balanced development so that the execution would:

- Strive to improve stability and security in the entire Mediterranean;
- Do not jeopardise legally justified interests of the UfM member countries;
- Take into consideration decision of the member countries participating in the project concerning the project's future development.

Furthermore, the Secretariat is to gather initiatives pertaining future projects, their local presentation at a local, regional and international level. Its role is also to supervise realisation of the abovementioned initiatives.

6. Union for the Mediterranean and in the policy of France, Germany and the European Commission

Despite the fact that UfM consists of all EU member states and 12 countries of the Mediterranean it must be stated that biggest hopes with this project have European states situated in the Mediterranean basin that is: Spain, Italy and France. Recently Germany joined that group. All of the aforementioned countries create their policies directed at strengthening their positions and gaining influence in the countries of the Mediterranean.

¹⁵ Ibidem p. 2

¹⁶ Their capacity encompasses: the right to recall the Secretary General from their post as well as their deputies, approve or to disapprove the organizational structure of the Secretariat and its annual action budget, submitting of changes regarding future projects and ways of their financing as well as implementation of amendments into the Status of Secretariat.

Unfortunately, too frequently particular interest of a country are not matched with ideas, which led to creation of the UfM, albeit each of those countries would eagerly welcome enhancement and strengthening of the UfM in order to use it to improve their own position and guarantee their raise of influence in the region.

Taking into account the scope of relations between each of the EU member states and countries of the Mediterranean region and their different approach to UfM as well as limited volume of this article, the author took the liberty of presenting only guidelines for foreign policy of the French Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany as well as characterising stance and expectations of the European Commission regarding co-operation conducted in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean. The choice of France and Germany was made on the basis that initially and in some ways also currently they present opposing views regarding development of relations between EU and countries belonging to the UfM. France wants to be perceived as the “Mediterranean superpower” and wants to play a crucial role in the Mediterranean rejecting at the same time any possibility to hand over this position to any other EU member state. Germany on the other hand until relatively recently directed their attention only to Central and Eastern Europe and were little interested in the Mediterranean region, however this has changed lately.¹⁷

(a) The French Republic

The French stance determining foreign policy is very well illustrated by a speech of the French President François Hollande delivered at the 20th Conference of Ambassadors held 27th August 2012, where he stated that France constituted a bridge between developing and developed countries. It also connected North with South and East with West. France played very important role at the global scene and was a mediator in the process of dialogue between civilisations.¹⁸

The 2013 French White Book on Defence and Security stipulates that the role that France plays in the world is a response for the changes on that international scene, however when determining this role it must be taken into account aspects deriving from France’s geographical location, her history, language, economy, and important political role that France still wants to execute at the global level.¹⁹

Like every country in the world also France possesses her own priorities as far as foreign policy is concerned. Such a priority for France is undoubtedly the Mediterranean region and particularly its southern and eastern part: Maghreb and Mashrek, region which traditionally are in Frances sphere of interest. This opinion was confirmed by the French President F. Hollande during the aforementioned conference, during which he stated that France for a long time had shown ambitions regarding the Mediterranean so that it could become the area of co-operation and not conflicts. Resorting to economic issues he declared that economic exchange in the region should be increased and should

¹⁷ J. Zając (red) *Unia Europejska w regionie śródziemnomorskim między polityką wspólną a interesami państw członkowskich*. Wydział Dziennikarstwa i Nauk Politycznych Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego p.76.

¹⁸ *Discours du Président de la République à l’occasion de la XXème Conférence des Ambassadeur*. <https://bg.ambafrance.org/Discours-de-M-le-President-de-la> Access: 31.07.2017 r.

¹⁹ *Livre blanc. Défence et sécurité national 2013*. Direction de l’information légalet administrative, Paryż, 2013 p.13

be accompanied by increase in human and social exchange and ensure free exchange of ideas.²⁰

If the Mediterranean is a priority for France than its south-western coast is treated as a French exclusive sphere of interest. This way of thinking could not be changed either by decolonization or Cold War order that was imposed after II World War . Paradoxically, as a result of the abovementioned processes France even strengthen her position in the region and her former colonies even after gaining independence still had good relations with their former metropolis.²¹

It was for the need of maintaining and expanding influences in the Mediterranean region and in order to divert attention from promoted by Germany idea of tightening co-operation with Central and Eastern European countries that the conference in Barcelona in 1995 was organised, a conference during which the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was brought to life. That project was to give dynamism and formalise co-operation between countries of EU, Maghreb, Mashrek Turkey.

At this point it must be noted that the most important issue for France is to maintain good relations with her former colonies in North Africa. France is the most important trade partner for North African countries. It is worth mentioning that co-operation had been conducted and developed despite lack of respect for human rights and democratic values in countries such as: Algeria, Morocco or Tunisia and the regimes that governed in those countries did not show any willingness to implement any changes bringing them closer to democratic standards.

In her conduct towards the regimes ruling in North Africa France applied approach aimed at actions directed to support modernisation and reforms, which would help to improve living standards of population but would not create ground for conditions favouring democratisation of public life, which could threaten the ruling regimes.²² That sort of politics was quite convenient for France since on one hand France, in a way although not in full dimension, assisted modernisation processes but on the other hand ensured good relation with the regimes at helm of power. That situation was changed to a certain extend after the occurrences of the “Arab Spring”, when societies of first North Africa and subsequently the Middle East expressed their frustration regarding the situation prevailing in their countries both in political as well as economic sphere.

The Arab Spring for many countries also for France turned out to be a full surprise. In his statement delivered in the Arab World institute (*l'Institut du Monde Arabe*) in Paris, 16th April 2011, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alain Juppé stated that France for too long thought that authoritarian regimes in the Arab countries constituted the only protection against extremism. He also underlined that the notion became a convenient excuse to show indulgence towards those regimes, which in turn limited freedom and hampered development of their native countries.²³

Obvious as it is that France attaches much attention to the Mediterranean than it is not equally obvious what set of instruments France uses to enhance co-operation with

²⁰ *Discours du Président de la République... op. cit.*

²¹ J. Zając *Unia... op. cit.* p.47

²² J. Zając *Unia... op. cit.* p.58-64

²³ *Intervention d'Alain Juppé au colloque „Printemps arabe”*

<http://www.voltairenet.org/article169493.html> Access: 04.08.2017 r.

the Mediterranean countries. Until quite recently one could imagine that the Union for the Mediterranean would be France's instrument of choice to deepen relations at the economic, social and political levels with the countries of the region. However in his statement during the aforementioned 20th Conference of Ambassadors, the French President F. Holland said "My priority is to develop the initiative, which I called "the Mediterranean of projects" in order to do so I call the [French] Government to designate an inter-ministerial delegate for the Mediterranean. I expect that the competences of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean with [bigger] engagement of the European Union and particularly the European Commission will be better used. Applying regulations of the Deauville Partnership, which alone is a good initiative, we are able to help countries during the process of political transformation.²⁴ I wanted to draw your particular attention to co-operation with the Maghreb countries in the 5+5 Group framework, which will allow to strengthen the dialogue."²⁵ As it can be seen France intends to focus on realization of more concrete projects in a smaller group of countries gathered around the Group 5+5, this however does not mean that France wants to step down from the Union for the Mediterranean project.²⁶

²⁴ Deauville Partnership is a multilateral initiative initiated during G8 summit 27th May 2011 in Deauville.

The purpose of the initiative was to introduce a number of actions aimed at supporting North Africa and Middle East countries in their efforts to politically transform the Arab states. In the Partnership apart from G8 countries (Germany, Canada, the United States, France, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and Russia) participate also the European Union, 5 countries described as regional powers: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait Qatar and Turkey and 5 other partner countries: Tunisia, Egypt, the Kingdom of Morocco, the Kingdom of Jordan, and Libya. Additionally in the initiative participate international organization such as: UN, OCDE, the Arab League, Union for the Mediterranean, OIF, PNUD. The actions taken in the Deauville Partnership framework are focused on two main aims: supporting economic efforts directed on attaining sustainable economic growth and assisting the democratization process started in the North African and Middle Eastern countries

<https://www.oecd.org/fr/sites/mena/investissement/thedeauvillepartnership.htm>

<http://www.mmsp.gov.ma/fr/decline.aspx?m=5&r=254> Access: 30.11.2015 r.

²⁵ *Discours du Président de la République... op. cit.* If the interpreter of the quoted source text is not mentioned then the interpretation was done by the author of the article.

²⁶ The dialogue forum of the countries of the Western Mediterranean, known also as a Dialogue 5+5 is an informal platform for political dialogue between 10 countries situated at the Western Mediterranean 5 of which are EU member states – Spain, France, Italy, Malta and Portugal and 5 belong the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) – Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia. The initiative was inaugurated 10th December 1990 in Rome in order to strengthen and enrich political, economic and cultural dialogue between the member countries. The intention to create the Dialogue 5+5 was to complement the dialogue conducted by AMU and the European Union, a dialogue which later on was included into the Barcelona Process, which in turned evolved into the Union for the Mediterranean. At the beginning the 5+5 initiative was only a platform for political dialogue however with time it also included other important issues such as: internal affairs (added in 2002), inter-parliamentary relations (since 2003), defence (since 2004), tourism (since 2006), transportation (since 2007), education (since 2009), environment (since 2010). For more see: *5+5 Dialogue Chronology*

of the main meetings (2003-2013) http://westmediterraneanforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/131017_chronology5+51.pdf access: 04.08.2017 r. as well as Miguel Ángel Romeo Núñez, *Framework Document 5+5 Initiative Mediterranean Security: Shared Security*, access: 04.08.2017 r.

http://www.ieee.es/en/Galerias/fichero/docs_marco/2012/DIEEEM07-2012_5x5_SegMed_RomeoNunez_ENGLISH.pdf
 Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos, 2012

A separate issue, occupying an important place in the French foreign policy for the Mediterranean is the issue of peace process in the Middle East. Realising her policy in this field France faces a serious dilemma. It is difficult to reconcile pro-Arab picture of France worked out since the end of II World War and preference approach to collaboration with the Arab states with the necessity to co-operate with the United States supporting the State of Israel. Also Germany because of her history show more pro-Israel stance. It means that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict directly impinges upon the relation in the Union for the Mediterranean, even more so since both the State of Israel and the Palestinian National Authority are its members.²⁷ France's pro-Palestinian policy was confirmed 29th August 2014 by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development, Laurent Fabius during 22nd Conference of Ambassadors, when he stated "(...) the French foreign policy should be assertive and well thought. It should set itself ambitions to serve big aims which are consistent with our [French] interests and our [French] world vision. The first of these big aims is [assurance] peace and security. (...) Hence [derive] our consequent aspirations to advocate for permanent peace between Israel and the Palestinians, which materialize in the solution of creation of two countries [Israeli and Palestinian], to which France invariably shows her attachment, this means that at some point the Palestinian state must be recognized. Ladies and Gentlemen each and every time that the President of the Republic, or the Government or me myself is posed a question regarding the main aims of the [French] foreign policy, our reply relates to the same main goal namely: security and peace."²⁸

Taking into account the abovementioned statements that fact that for France the Mediterranean region plays a very important role should not come as a surprise and to describe it the term *strategic* is frequently applied. Simultaneously the author of the White Book separate from this strategic region Maghreb which is the one that "(...) for France and EU is of special importance, especially in the context of instable situation crated after the Arab revolutions."²⁹

(b) Federal Republic of Germany

The place of Germany at the international stage is determined by her interest as a strong country situated in the middle of Europe as well as a sense of responsibility for world's peace and freedom. Foundations of German foreign policy have not changed for years and they are gathered around European integration which leads to building of a strong European Union, supporting actions aimed at respecting human rights, using opportunities and minimising threats deriving from processes of globalisation, preventing crises and conflicts as well as diminishing economic inequality between different parts of the world.³⁰

Regarding the security policy Germany link their interests with her geographical location of a Central European country as well as international and economic links including active membership in international organisations such as United Nations,

²⁷ J. Zajac ... p. 46-47

²⁸ Conférence des Ambassadeur – Discour de clôture de Laurent Fabius (29 août 2014) <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/le-ministere-et-son-reseau/evenements-et-actualites-du-ministere/conference-des-ambassadeurs/precedentes-conferences/xxiie-conference-des-ambassadeurs-25-30-08-2014/article/conference-des-ambassadeurs-114958> Access: 04.08.2017 r.

²⁹ Ibidem, p. 54

³⁰ Verteidigungspolitischen Richtlinien, Bundersministerium der Verteidigung, Berlin 2011, p.4

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, G7 and G20. Aside of the abovementioned factors one of Germany's prime objective in the sphere of security policy is to ensure free and unlimited global trade which constitutes a basis of Germany's prosperity.

Germany together with France strongly advocate and support European integration processes and support EU's actions in every direction and in every geographical region that is in Germany's circle of interest. By supporting EU's diplomacy Germany share not only benefits but also threats and challenges that EU faces which are illegal migration, terrorism, Islamic extremism, organised crime and drug trafficking.³¹ This stance finds confirmation in German documents outlining guidelines for German security policy, which are White Book 2006 (*Weißbuch Deutschland 2006*) and guidelines for security policy (*Verteidigungspolitischen Richtlinien*). The documents state that Germany's security is inseparably linked with political development of Europe and the world and Germany consist a part of Europe which consistently tighten its internal relations.³² At the same it is stated that security cannot be only defined in geographical context and narrowed down to the European Union because situation on the peripheries of Europe may have a direct influence on European security and stability and therefore may affect also Germany.³³ In order to strengthen European security and stability it is necessary to support processes of European integration and elicitation of co-operation in the framework of EU's Neighbourhood Policy with East European, South Caucasian, Central Asian and Mediterranean countries.³⁴

Until the end of 20th century the Mediterranean region did not occupy a significant place in the German foreign policy, which resulted in lack of consistent and coherent strategy towards that region. Unlike France Germany never possessed colonies in that part of the world and hence never worked out strong historical, cultural or social relations with the Mediterranean countries.³⁵ The political changes that occurred in the 1990s in Central and Eastern Europe to a large extend absorbed Germany's attention. A key issue for Germany after the fall of communism in Europe was to stabilise the region, constituting her closest vicinity, which Germany wanted to achieve by promoting idea of expanding both the European Union and NATO to the east.³⁶ Therefore the issues relating to collaboration with the Mediterranean countries fell to second place. Having achieved the set goal – expansion of EU and NATO – Germany gradually change her stance towards the Mediterranean for a more active one, however Germany still treats her closes vicinity as a matter of priority.³⁷ A confirmation of this attitude is German veto for the French idea of establishing Mediterranean Union, which would associate countries situated only in the Mediterranean region.

An issue that occupies a significant place in the German policy is the Middle East peace process and relation with the State of Israel. Priority that is given to relations with

³¹ Ibidem, p.174

³² Weißbuch Deutschland 2006 zur Sicherheitspolitik und zur Zukunft der Bundeswehr, Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Berlin, 2006. p.17

³³ Verteidigungspolitischen op. cit., p.2

³⁴ Weißbuch... op. cit., p.23

³⁵ Except Turkey and Israel.

³⁶ J. Zajac ... op.cit. s.175-180

³⁷ Ibidem, s. 173

Israel, in comparison with other countries, derives from moral responsibility for crimes committed by the Third Reich. Taking this into consideration, Germany is sometimes accused of prejudice and favouritism of Israel in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.³⁸ Such an approach definitely complicates relations inside the UfM.

Germany perceives Africa as the continent of future, which offers chances for development but also creates numerous challenges and risks. Germans acknowledge the growing importance of the continent on the international stage both in political and economic spheres.³⁹ In relation to North African countries, which became members of the Union for the Mediterranean, Germany opts for providing assistance to implement changes in those countries and therefore to render them support to as far as political transformation is concerned. This could be achieved by creation of solid partnership based on co-operation in establishing stable and secured economic and political environment in the regions of North Africa and Middle East. Germany's actions should be firstly focused on improving situation of youths through creation of prospects for development and employment thanks to which the tense social situation would be mitigated. By using financial assets from special funds it is necessary to concurrently render support to processes of democratization, respecting of human rights, women's equality and introduction of good governances and rule of law. At the same time attention is given to development of education and society building, aspects which play a rudimentary role in the process of democratization.⁴⁰

(c) European Union

The basic assumptions of EU's foreign policy and therefore its guidelines to countries belonging to the Eastern Partnership, Union for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea Synergy⁴¹ were included in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). EU's efforts as far as relations with the countries participating in those projects are concerned are focused on tightening co-operation in political dimension as well as bringing those countries closer to European political, democratic, social standards and therefore to attain a certain level of economic integration of region to the east and south of the EU's borders with the Union itself. In order to achieve these goals it is necessary to take into account commonality of interest, building common security environment and improving living standards of those societies. Simultaneously fundamental values of the European Union such as democracy, rule of law, respect of human rights, equality and social solidarity are to be promoted. Thus as can be seen EU alongside broadly understood economic efforts also undertakes initiatives in the socio-political dimension.

EU conducts policy of engagement in all regions and maritime areas situated in its closest vicinity. Those regions constitute spheres of EU's direct interests, where EU

³⁸ Ibidem, s.194-195

³⁹ Afrikapolitische Leitlinien der Bundesregierung, die Bundesregierung <https://www.bmvg.de/resource/blob/12808/227e3ae06ed32cb4d81d61a1bbc8b206/afrikapolitische-leitlinien-der-bundesregierung-data.pdf> Dostępny: 04.08.2017 r.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, s. 8

⁴¹ The Black Sea Synergy is a project established 14.02.2018 in Kiev during a conference of foreign affairs ministers of EU member states and countries situated in the Black Sea region. Apart from EU member states to the project belong: Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. See *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament. Black Sea Synergy a new regional cooperation initiative. Brussels 11.04.2007*

itself as well as its individual member states possess significant interests. Both in the UfM, the Black Sea Synergy and other initiatives EU relies on development of regional and multilateral co-operation.⁴²

The Mediterranean policy constitutes one of priority for EU as far as its external relations are concerned. However it must be noted that EU's activities in that region were and to a certain extent still are incoherent and inconsequent. Despite promotion of slogans calling for democratization of public life and improvement of governing standards in the UfM member countries and earlier in members of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership for many years EU, like its individual member states in their bilateral relations, tolerated authoritarian regimes in the Arab states. Discrepancies between declarations made by EU representatives and their subsequent materialisation in many cases could be explained by differences in interests that individual EU member states had regarding the Mediterranean region. A thing that is of no insignificant importance is also the idealistic policy that EU applied, which is a derivative of its international identity. It is quite obvious that inasmuch as the member states are able to come to terms with one another and work out a general concept of conduct in international affairs then its execution causes no minor problems.⁴³ However even in formulation of those general concepts at the European level there are some inconsistencies even in the scope of one document. In the *Resolution of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly on the assessment of the Barcelona Process (...)*⁴⁴ it is stated “(...) whereas subregional North-South initiatives such as the ‘5+5 dialogue’ may help to better articulate Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in its entirety, as well as to reinforce South-South cooperation between the countries of western

and eastern Mediterranean, (...)”⁴⁵ However in another place of the quoted document it states that the centrality of the Barcelona process “*Considers it desirable to dispel the current confusion arising from the multiplicity of political initiatives involving the Mediterranean region, whether they are launched exclusively by the European Union or merely involve the participation of the Member States (...)*”⁴⁶

Despite significant engagement and commitment to Mediterranean affairs and development of relations between EU and individual countries of the region as well as bilateral relations between individual member states and the Mediterranean countries, the occurrences of the Arab Spring proved to surprise all the actors on the geopolitical scene. However as it has already been mentioned one of the prime objective for execution of which the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership/The Union for the Mediterranean was established, was promotion of democratic values and creation of

⁴² Black Sea Synergy MEMO/10/78, Brussels 15.03.2010 r. http://www.europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-10-78_en.htm?locale=en Dostępny: 04.08.2017r.

⁴³ J. Zajac... op.cit. p.212-213

⁴⁴ *Resolution of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly on the assessment of the Barcelona Process on the eve of its tenth anniversary adopted 15 March 2005 in Cairo on the basis of the resolution tabled by Mrs Tokia Saïfi, Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee on Political, Security and Human Rights Issues.*

http://www.paufm.org/assembly/Docs/recommendations/Cairo2005/final_resolution_EN.pdf Access: 05.08.2017

⁴⁵ Ibidem p.6

⁴⁶ Ibidem p.11

civil society then in reality the execution of those ideas always encountered some obstacles.

The Arab Spring introduced radical changes in North African and Middle East countries. Those changes in turned forced EU to change its stance and approach towards co-operation with those countries. In the *Joint Communication to the European Council, the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions*,⁴⁷ the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy confirmed that the essential interest for the European Union is to build a democratic, stable, developing and secured area in the southern part of the Mediterranean. Simultaneously it was emphasised that the European Union perceived problems impinging on execution of tasks linked with promotion and implementation of rules and values, on which EU was based, in the Mediterranean countries. It was stated that EU could not be a passive observer to occurrences and should adopt an active stance towards supporting efforts of the Arab societies in their struggle for freedom. Finally it was communicated that the time had come to implement a quality change in relations with North African countries. The European Union was ready to give support to efforts undertaken in those countries in order to implement democracy and freedom to make sure that rules regarding human rights, good governance and rule of law were respected provided that those rules and values were also shared by the side to whom that support would be given.

In order to implement the abovementioned ideas the Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean was established.⁴⁸ The Partnership introduces a new approach towards co-operation and relation building with Arab states where the Arab Spring occurred so those that belong to the Union for the Mediterranean. Changes were applied to the way in which co-operation was executed as well as to how projects were financed, projects which were linked to the goals set up by the EU in relation to the Mediterranean region. The European Union shifts from unilateral European commitment which manifested itself in running projects despite the other side's lack of engagement in execution of tasks – especially those linked to implementation of much needed political and economic reforms. The current incentive-based approach foresees increased support for countries, which really conduct and implement reforms and lowers or even freezes support for those which do not apply and fulfil their obligations. This is a significant change when compared to the way co-operation was conducted prior to the Arab Spring.

⁴⁷ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0200&from=EN>
Access: 05.08.2017

⁴⁸ By establishing the Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity for Southern Mediterranean the EU wants to achieve the following aims in the region of Southern Mediterranean:

- transform countries towards democratic standards with particular emphasis given to constitutional reforms, rebuild state institutions and legal system, ensuring civil freedoms and implementing anti-corruption measures;
- development of strong relations with societies of Southern Mediterranean which would lead to establishing prospering civil society, creation of opportunities to tighten interpersonal and intersociety exchange;
- ensuring sustainable economic growth and granting support to small and medium enterprises, organizing courses and workshops, improvement of educational system and healthcare in poorer regions.

In relation to the Union for the Mediterranean, the already mentioned Joint Communication, states that albeit the notion to establish the UfM was itself positive since it foresaw creation of partnership between two shores of the Mediterranean however that idea was not followed by actions which would lead to materialisation of its assumptions and goals. The UfM should be reformed so it would work as an institution gathering countries, international financial institutions and private sector around concrete projects, execution of which would create new jobs, increase innovation and ensure economic growth thus actually bring to the region what it really lacks. Simultaneously the reform must relate also to issues such as resolving regional conflicts, promotion of good governance, combating terrorism and preventing radicalisation as well as building civil society in those countries.⁴⁹

7. Projects executed in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Projects executed in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean are aimed to tighten regional co-operation, promotion of dialogue and therefore giving way to integration in the Mediterranean region. In fact this integrations poses biggest challenge. Existing problems and animosities between countries hamper economic growth and socio-economic development in countries of North Africa and Middle East and thus negatively influencing stability of the region. Low economic growth, compared to potential that the Mediterranean countries possess, translates itself into significant unemployment especially amongst young population and thus contributing to further destabilisation of the region.

In the period 2013-2014 15 new projects were introduced, which increased the total number of UfM financed projects to 29 although full financing received only chosen projects. It was also decided to expedite execution of already started projects. The most important aimed set up by the UfM Secretariat for the period 2013-2014 were:

- stimulation of employment and rendering support to small and medium enterprises;
- improving land and sea transport;
- promotion of balanced and innovative urban projects;
- development of renewable energy and effective energy use;
- issues related to climate change;
- promotion of projects aimed at improving access to water and protection of environment;
- improving students' mobility and increasing their chances for employment through improved education;
- supporting gender equality and ameliorating socio-economic situation of women.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Khadija Mohsen-Finan, Isabel Schäfer (red.) *L'Union européenne et l'espace méditerranéen. Perspectives allemande et française depuis les révolution arabe*. Geshangen Papiere №14, Stiftung Geshangen, Geshangen 2014, p.30

⁵⁰ *Union for the Mediterranean Activity Report 2014*.

As it may be observed the aims set up the Secretariat are directed at execution of concrete projects from areas of economy and protection of environment. These project should bring tangible benefits to societies and lead to improvement of infrastructure in Mediterranean countries as well as lower the rate of unemployment amongst young population, who is most prone to radicalisation. It difficult to contest legitimacy of this approach however it may come as a surprise a total lack of concrete proposals pertaining to supporting development of civil society or promotion of democratisation of public life. It is even more striking when one realises that these assumptions and aims were made in the period of 2013-2014 and related to post-Arab Spring reality so one could think that issue such as normalisation of civil relations and efforts to put the Arab countries on democratic tracks should have been set as priorities at the UfM's list goals. This situation is not much different to the already described French diplomacy approach towards co-operation with North African countries ruled by authoritarian regimes. As an excuse for this situation may come the fact that not all countries of the region in the course of the Arab Spring managed to tumble down the ruling regimes as examples may be taken People's Democratic Republic of Algeria ruled since 27th April 1999 by President Abd al-Azziz Butefik representing the National Liberation Front or Kingdom of Morocco ruled by the kind Muhammad VI (one could even venture to say that the Arab Spring in fact dodged these two countries).

8. Conclusions

Basing on the given arguments and facts the following conclusions may be drawn:

- creation of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership/Union for the Mediterranean was aimed at establishing a platform for dialogue between the European Union and countries of the East and South Mediterranean. The planned co-operation was supposed to increase economic development, stability and security in the region;
- incoherent and inconsequent European policy, which in large part might be attributed to conflicting interest of each member state, did not allow to work out one common approach to co-operation with countries belonging to the UfM;
- despite the fact that the Barcelona Process (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership/Union for the Mediterranean) was given a leading role in co-operation with countries of the Mediterranean basin and EU, simultaneously there are other initiatives performing similar and even the same tasks under the auspices of certain EU member states. This leads to chaos in competences and further hampers creation of one common stance towards role and real function of the UfM;
- having in mind combating terrorism the EU member states tolerated regimes that were in power in North African and Middle East countries. The EU member states limited co-operation in the UfM framework to projects pertaining to infrastructure and economy and avoiding issues related to

socio-political sphere. While executing projects from aforementioned areas EU did not expect regimes to introduce any socio-political reforms;

- the Arab Spring caused a major shift in the political landscape of Arab states, and came as a total surprise to the European Union and forced changes in EU's approach to co-operation with those countries;
- a definitively positive aspect of those changes is introduction of incentive based approached in co-operation with Arab states.