



The Barcelona Process Revisited and the SBH Presidency

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Abstract. Since the very start, European integration has borne the mark of imbalance in development, of inequality and diversity of interests.

The European Union is a multi-faceted entity, a conglomerate linking several regions, zones, systems and countries to the notion that is Europe. It is a politically and legally constructed macro-region with a specific *acquis communautaire* crisscrossed by major faultlines in politics, the economy, society, culture, language and traditions.

As a result of several subsequent enlargements, it is not only the territory and the borders of the EU that have changed but also its neighbours. The fifth enlargement of the EU meant the accession of ten countries from Eastern Central Europe which had undergone radical changes with respect to geographical borderlines and political systems. Among other factors, the efficient working of the European Union and its independent operation on an international scene will be facilitated by the introduction of the Team Presidency system and the widening of the Barcelona process (launched in November 1995) into the Union for the Mediterranean Programme under the European Neighbourhood Policy. This project, still in formation, is designed to provide new foundations for the Mediterranean policy of the EU, named the Barcelona process. The Union for the Mediterranean programme opens up the gates of the Barcelona process for all twenty-seven member states, thus forming a European Commonwealth of sorts.

Keywords: reform of EU, Union for the Mediterranean, European integration interests, Mediterranean Security and Cooperation, European Neighbourhood Policy

Since the very start, European integration has borne the mark of imbalance in development, of inequality and diversity of interests.

The European Union is a multifaceted entity, a conglomerate linking several regions, zones, systems and countries to the notion that is Europe. It is a politically and legally constructed macro-region with a specific *acquis communautaire* crisscrossed by major faultlines in politics, economy, society, culture, language and traditions. Distinctions may be made between the heartland composed of more affluent countries (Great Britain, France, Germany and the Benelux states); small and large states; developed, backward and ultra-peripheral regions. According to the terms of the Europe 2000+ Cooperation for European Territorial Development we may list North Sea regions, Centre Capitals, the Atlantic Arc, the Alpine Arc, the Continental Diagonal, New Länder, Mediterranean regions, Nordic countries, Central and Eastern Europe, South and East Mediterranean transnational regions, the group of the Cohesion countries, and states interested in strengthening ties with Eastern Central Europe or the Mediterranean.

As Attila Ágh has put it: “[...] The definition of the EU has been more a social construction that has changed radically after each wave of enlargement. After the Eastern enlargement from the EU15 to the EU27, however, this situation has changed beyond recognition. The subsequent redefinitions of the EU at the earlier enlargements were present-oriented as conceptual frameworks for the existing Union. With the Eastern enlargement of the EU seems to have reached its internal and external limits, neither widening nor deepening can continue as before. Nowadays the EU needs a new future oriented definition.” (Ágh 2008: 1) As a result of several subsequent enlargements, it is not only the territory and the borders of the EU that have changed but also its neighbours. The fifth enlargement of the EU meant the accession of ten countries from Eastern Central Europe which had undergone radical changes with respect to geographical borderlines and political systems. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the 1st May 2004 accession of the Ten as well as the new memberships of Bulgaria and Romania from 1st Jan 2007 has made the internal reform of the system a matter not to be deferred. Rethinking the terms of further enlargement – primarily the accession of Turkey and the states of the West Balkan region – has become inevitable; at the same time new considerations concerning widening and deepening links in addition to scenarios of future EU development have surfaced, alongside the necessity to reassess the role played by the integrative organisation in international relations. Questions regarding the operability and competitiveness of the EU have also been raised in the light of challenges posed by an increasingly globalised interna-

tional system in the 21st century. After the failure of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, the Lisbon Treaty (ratification outstanding) is meant to serve as the legal foundation for the functioning of the EU. Among other factors, the efficient working of the European Union and its independent operation on an international scene will be facilitated by the introduction of the Team Presidency system and the widening of the Barcelona process (launched in November 1995) into the Union for the Mediterranean Programme under the European Neighbourhood Policy. This project, still in formation, is designed to provide new foundations for the Mediterranean policy of the EU, named the Barcelona process. The Union for the Mediterranean programme opens up the gates of the Barcelona process for all twenty-seven member states, thus forming a European Commonwealth of sorts. (Palmer 2008) The 13-14 March 2008 European Council Brussels Summit Presidency Conclusion Annex I. *Statement on “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean”* contains the following: “The European Council approved the principle of a Union for the Mediterranean which will include the Member States of the EU and the non-EU Mediterranean coastal states. It invited the Commission to present to the Council the necessary proposals for defining the modalities of what will be called ‘Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean’ with a view to the Summit which will take place in Paris on 13 July 2008.”¹

1 The Barcelona Process

Apart from the role of France, the Mediterranean policy of the European Union has significantly been influenced by Spain, the larger country of the Iberian Peninsula acting as a medium-size regional power, and its strategic ally, Portugal. Certain groups of the social elites in these two states have long shared a historical perspective, engaging in a centuries-long struggle for the modernisation and Europeanisation of their homelands, which in broader terms means the joining of the Mediterranean region into the circulatory system of the Continent. Certain lines written by José Ortega y Gasset at the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century, attesting to an attitude of commitment to Europe, permeated by patriotic pride and a drive to promote the interests of the nation became proverbial in Spain at the turn of the millennium: “In struggling for the Europeanisation for Spain” – the text reads – “we want nothing else but to create a new form of culture, different from the French and German ones. [...] We want a Spanish interpretation of the world. We

¹*Presidency Conclusions*. Brussels European Council 13/14 March 2008, 19.

nevertheless lack the substance to create it, we lack the material we must prepare: the culture [...] We are only asking for Spain to be looked at from a European viewpoint. [...] A Europe fatigued in France, exhausted in Germany and weakened in England needs the fresh youth of our sunny land. Spain is a European possibility. Spain may exist only if looked at from Europe.” In the obituary written of Joaquín Costa, his spiritual precursor, in the 20th February 1911 issue of *El Imparcial* Ortega stresses the following: “[...] when we start talking about revival, we talk about *Europeanisation* [...] Revival is inseparable from *Europeanisation*; thus anyone who has the slightest feeling of rebirth: of anguish, shame and desire, will think as a Europeaniser. Rebirth is the object of desire; Europeanisation, an instrument to satisfy this desire. As a matter of fact, it was clear from the beginning: Spain was the problem and Europe, the solution.” (Ortega y Gasset 1983: 138)

The intellectual elite of Portugal, ‘preparing to join Europe’ and eventually acceding the European Community also casts its glance beyond the Pyrenees. Eduardo Lourenço searches for the historical and geopolitical characteristics, boundaries, values and roots of his homeland and Europe in the volume entitled: *We and Europe* (published in Hungarian). In fact, no one knows exactly what Europe means, says Lourenço. “This name no longer means the same in London, Moscow, Prague, Athens or Lisbon [...] The difficulty lies in the fact that this proper name is vested with a historical, cultural and political meaning which, beyond the geographical designation, also signifies the piece of reality we call Europe. [...] In the last few years a certain part of Europe has introduced specific structures and social behaviour patterns in the economic, political, legal and even cultural domains. At the same time, no one would dare to reduce the meaning of ‘Europe’ to the entity called the Europe of the Twelve.”² (Lourenço 1999: 56) Then he continues: “The order of accession to the European Community, the reluctance of a few to join and the resistance of others towards the new members roughly maps the imaginative space where the ‘distance’ separating each state from the ‘hard core’ of Europe becomes visible. When we hear that Turkey or Morocco also wish to join to the ‘European region’, at any rate in an economic or political sense, the feeling of ‘no fit’ allows us to apprehend the non-European quality that Europe would appropriate if extended to countries that the European reality was formed against. On these occasions we are made to feel that if, at least as far as traditions are concerned, Europe is not a historical and spiritual formation, an ever-working,

²In 1987, at the time the essay was written, the EU consisted of only 12 member states.

undeterminably rent and contradiction-ridden remembrance, then this name has no content at all.”

It is a well known fact that a strongly Mediterranean-focused yet far from unified group was formed in the European Community with the participation of the founding members Italy and France, complemented by Greece in 1981 and Portugal and Spain on their 1985 accession. Due to the complexity of the issue, further investigations in this paper will focus on the Mediterranean-related policy of Spain and the allied Portugal, which significantly affects EU external policy decision-making as a result of the 2010-2011 Spanish-Belgian-Hungarian team presidency. Portugal and Spain both have their separate interests in the European integration. These differences are partly connected to the foreign policy links and ties of the two countries. Portuguese foreign policy has had three priorities from the beginning of the sixties: the Atlantic alignment, the European option and the creation of the Lusitanian unity.

As a medium-size continental power, Spain focused on Latin America, Europe and the Maghreb grouping in the Mediterranean region. In the fifties, Atlantism for Spain primarily meant a treaty-based connections network with the United States. The country joined NATO as late as May 1982, in the final days of the Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo cabinet.³ As opposed to this, Felipe Gonzales’s socialist government, which came into power on 28 October 1982 included stepping out of the organisation in its programme. The March 1986 referendum, albeit on new terms, did eventually keep the country within the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.⁴

Spain has been striving to deepen and develop the system of connections linking the Mediterranean region and the European Community. At the beginning of the nineties, this led to the rise of the North-and-South opposite poles, and later, as the Eastern enlargement was put on the agenda, the East-South contrast became a manifest one. It was Spain that played the most important role in asserting and representing this line of policy. Spain was also far more efficient in influencing European Community policy than Portugal. Contemporary sources write of Felipe Gonzales as of the De Gaulle of Southern Europe, a clear reference to the Spanish Prime Minister’s unwavering conduct at negotiations concerning agricultural and fishing policies during the Northern

³For details see Szilágyi, István, *Demokratikus átmenet és konszolidáció Spanyolországban*. [*Democratic Transition and the Consolidation of Democracy in Spain*], Budapest: Napvilág Kiadó, 1996, 151-173.

⁴For details see Szilágyi, István, *Európa és a hispán világ*. [*Europe and the Hispanic World*] Veszprém: Veszprémi Egyetemi Kiadó, 1998, 85-103.

enlargement: the accession process of Austria, Finland, Sweden and Norway. (Barbé 1999)

With regard to its economic importance, the number of its population, foreign relations, and roles, Spain is a medium-size power among the larger countries in the EU. In addition to the previously mentioned issues, Great Britain viewed the voting weights system and the rise of the blocking minority ratio ushered in by the Northern enlargement as seriously damaging to its interests, and voiced disagreement in the Council of Ministers. The Spanish Prime Minister held out the prospect of the country's veto in case a solution based on agreement was rejected. The conflict eventually ended with the signing of the Ioannina Compromise in March 1994.

At the time the Northern enlargement appeared on the EU agenda, Spain and Portugal conducted a campaign of increasing intensity to direct the attention of the Community to the Mediterranean region. After the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the Spanish foreign policy made enormous efforts to deepen Euro-Mediterranean ties and integrate these into the system of the organisation. The Spanish presidencies of the first half of 1989 and the second half of 1995 provided excellent occasions for these activities. As a final event of the latter period, the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference convened in the Catalan capital, composing and issuing a joint declaration and launching the Barcelona Process, which puts Mediterranean links and ties to the forefront of the Union's policy. Nevertheless, the meeting organised between 27th and 28th November 1995 was in itself the peak of a years-long series of preliminary talks and negotiations. A line of conferences had previously been organised at the behest of the Spanish and partially the Portuguese as well as the Italians and with heavy French participation.

Foreign affairs ministers from EU and Maghreb states also held numerous meetings to help formulate close cooperation between the European Community and the countries of the Northern Mediterranean. As contemporary Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernández Ordoñez declared, in 1989 there were three factors making this region troublesome for the European Community and a potential threat to the old continent's security: the periodically recurrent social problems causing unemployment and unrest; Islamic fundamentalism triggering xenophobia in Europe; and finally, the wave of immigration targeting the European Community. The European integration organisation was thus urged by its political, economic, cultural and security interests to set up institutionalised, neighbourly and cooperative treaty-based relationships with the Northern Mediterranean region. The European integration, however, did not have a clearly formulated and common Mediterranean strategy. Spain's

initiatives launched within the Community and the designated area all served this aim.

1989 saw two bilateral summits (a Spanish-Italian and a Spanish-French one) on Spanish proposal. The participants passed decisions on the setup of a military and a political Mediterranean workgroup. Later that same year, Portugal was also included in the analysis process. At this stage the 5+5 process initiated by France and backed by Spain, Portugal and Italy did not leave the organisational framework or indeed the very walls of Quai d'Orsay. Negotiations between the five European states (France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Malta) and the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Lybia, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia) aimed at creating a regional dialogue that encompassed the fields of environmental protection, finance, scientific issues, technology and cooperation in security policy.

The foreign ministers of the above states first met on 21 March 1990 in Rome and last, on 26 October the same year in Algiers. It soon became evident that (as the then Foreign Minister of France, Dumas put it) France had no Mediterranean policy, only Mediterranean interests. As a result of this, initiative and control over the process were increasingly transferred to the Spanish. The Madrid (and Lisbon) governments realised as early as 1990 that although bilateral relationships may have high importance, they cannot resolve the problems of political stability in the region. From this time on the Spanish foreign policy strove to create the institutional framework of an all-encompassing agreement which would globally integrate the interests of the Western and Eastern Mediterranean as well as those of the European Community. As a result, Foreign Minister Francisco Fernández Ordoñez raised the idea of a Mediterranean Security and Cooperation Meeting (one similar to the European Security Meeting) at the "Open Sky" conference in Ottawa at the beginning of 1990.

The idea of the CSCM (*Conferencia para la Seguridad y Cooperación en el Mediterraneo*), nevertheless, did not acquire significant support there and then. The Spanish envisaged three main aims for the Mediterranean Security and Cooperation Meeting: strengthening economic cooperation, putting the human dimension in focus and creating stability in the region beyond military security. France however was less than enthusiastic about the Spanish initiative and the Kuwait war also broke out in the meantime. Regardless of these, the Madrid government continued to carry out its policy to strengthen cooperation between the European Community and the Mediterranean zone. At the Palma de Mallorca meeting in September 1990 the Italian and Spanish foreign ministers officially advanced their ideas concerning the Mediterranean Secu-

rity and Cooperation Meeting and reached their aim of including a paragraph on the Mediterranean in the European Security and Cooperation Conference document.

The June 1992 Lisbon Summit brought yet another step forward, with participants acknowledging that the Mediterranean and the Middle East were indeed important zones for the interests of the European Union. The meeting gave green lights to a new Euro-Maghreb joint agreement. The June 1994 Corfu Summit accepted the idea of the convention of the Euro-Mediterranean conference. Later that year, in December Spain was commissioned by the Essen Session of the European Council to summon the Euro-Mediterranean meeting due in the second half of 1995. Germany, wishing to avert allegations by its Southern European allies about the Berlin government exclusively focusing its attention on Eastern Europe, gave full support to the Spanish proposals, thus playing a major role in passing these decisions.

The Cannes Summit in June 1995, nevertheless, did not lack in dramatic events. Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzales entered into a hefty argument with Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Minister Theo Weigel on the issue of financial support for the Mediterranean. The head of the Madrid government managed to double the financial resources allocated to the region in the 1996-1999 time period, which thus reached 4.6 billion ECUs in sharp contrast to the previous term. This meant a significant improvement between the ratios of the 10ECUs/person subvention directed to Eastern Central Europe and the 2ECUs/person sum that had been channelled to the Mediterranean region. (Baixeras 1996: 159) The Spanish-Portuguese efforts finally yielded results on 27-28 November 1995. The Euro-Mediterranean Declaration was issued and a work programme was also accepted.⁵ The Declaration contained plans for wide-ranging political, economic, security and cultural cooperation spanning out until 2010 and supported by fourteen EU member states⁶ and eleven countries from Africa and the Mediterranean (Israel, Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey). The document published in the Catalan capital became the fundament of the Barcelona process pressed ahead by the two states of the Iberian Peninsula.

The Declaration consists of four major parts. The first chapter (*Political and security partnership: Establishing a common area of peace and stability*) discusses issues of political and security cooperation as well as the mapping

⁵Conferencia Euromediterranea. *Revista de las Instituciones Europeas*. 1995, no 3, 1039-1062; Barcelona declaration. Adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference- 27-28/11/95, http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/bd.htm (accessed November 10, 2010).

⁶Denmark did not partake in the conference.

out of a common space for peace and stability. The declaration establishes the principles for dialogue between the signing parties, promises respect for human rights; rule of law; political democracy and fundamental rights for freedom; exchange of information; tolerance; measures against xenophobia and racism; the acknowledgement of equality and sovereignty; respect for the autonomy of nations; non-interference; upholding the norms of international law; respect for territorial integrity; peaceful settlement of debates; common action against terrorism and crime; the preservation of regional security and the maintenance of the nuclear-weapons-free zone. The second part setting the rules for economic and financial cooperation (*Economic and financial partnership: Creating an area of shared prosperity*) shows commitment for sustainable balanced economic growth at the same time as declaring the dedication to largely increase the EU financial presence in the region. It also states the undertaking to create a free-trade zone until 2010. The third section (*Partnership in social, cultural and Human affairs: Developing human resources, promoting understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies*) details issues of cooperation between the social, cultural and human spheres and civil societies.⁷ The fourth chapter contains the follow-up measures to the conference (*Follow-up to the conference*). The *Work Programme* appended records the practical measures to be carried out in connection with the principles and fields described in the Declaration. In summary, it may be stated that the Barcelona Process spearheaded by Spain works toward the institutionalisation of the complex system of ties linking the European Union and the Southern Mediterranean, and gives a new meaning to the notion of security. The principle of the free-trade zone creates the opportunity for the partner countries to acquire a partnership status similar to the position of East-Central European countries in 1995.

The Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, held in Barcelona marked the starting point of the European Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process), a wide framework of political, economic and social relations between the Member States of the European Union and Partners of the Southern Mediterranean. The latest EU enlargement, on 1 May 2004 and 1 January 2007, brought two Mediterranean Partners (Cyprus and Malta) into the European Union, while adding a total of 10 to the number of Mem-

⁷Parallel to the foreign ministers' meeting, Barcelona provided the venue for several other conferences convened by other Mediterranean organisations. The local council deputies were also in session at this time (the so-called Conference of Cities). The regional meeting for the NGOs also took place at this time as well as the Euro-Mediterranean Civil Forum backed by the Catalan and Spanish governments and the European Commission.

ber States. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership thus comprises 37 members, 27 EU Member States and 10 Mediterranean Partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestine Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey). Libya has observer status. The Euro-Mediterranean partners – as already emphasised – established the three main objectives of the Partnership:

- The definition of a common area of peace and stability through the reinforcement of political and security dialogue;
- The construction of a zone of shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free-trade area;
- The rapprochement between peoples through a social, cultural and human partnership aimed at encouraging understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership comprises two complementary dimensions: *The Bilateral and the Regional dimensions*. In the frame of the *bilateral dimension* the EU carries out a number of activities bilaterally with each country. The most important are the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements that the Union negotiates with the Mediterranean Partners individually. They reflect the general principles governing the new Euro-Mediterranean relationship, although they each contain characteristics specific of the relations between the EU and each Mediterranean Partner.

The regional dimension represents one of the most innovative aspects of the Partnership, covering at the same time the political, economic and cultural fields and has a considerable strategic impact as it deals with problems that are common to many Mediterranean Partners while it emphasises the national complementarities. The multilateral dimension supports and complements the bilateral actions and dialogue taking place under the Association Agreements.

The Barcelona Process, launched in 1995, has created a tradition and has become institutionalised during the past thirteen years. The series of Euro-Mediterranean Conferences have been carried on. Foreign ministers of partner states met on Malta in 1997, in Stuttgart in 1999, Marseilles in 2000, Valencia in 2002, Naples in 2003, and in Luxembourg in 2005. The bilateral Association Agreements between EU and Mediterranean Partner States were signed in 2003; and on 3 December 2003 in Naples by decision of the Ministerial Conference of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership the parties agreed to set up the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA), which held its first session in Cairo, 12-15 May 2005. The EMPA Final Declaration “emphasizes

the centrality of the Barcelona Process as the main instrument for partnership and dialogue between the Euro-Mediterranean Partners.”⁸

The European Union’s European Neighbourhood Policy launched in 2003 was also welcome: “Welcome the progress made in developing the European Neighbourhood Policy” – the text reads – “as a policy to enhance the Barcelona Process, provided it does not eclipse either the principles – equality, co-responsibility, mutual respect, solidarity and cooperation – or the multilateral framework of Barcelona.”⁹ The members of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly “[u]nderline the principle of co-ownership of the Barcelona Process and the often-repeated request of Mediterranean partners to participate fully in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes within the framework of the Barcelona Process.”¹⁰ Attention was called to the importance of financial resources allocated to Mediterranean partner countries in the financial term 2007-2013 and emphasis was given to “[...] the necessity for financial and technical assistance, easier access of Mediterranean agricultural and industrial exports to EU markets, and practical translation of facilitating benefit from the four freedoms by Mediterranean Partners into actions, in accordance with the Commission’s communication of 11 March 2003, and in the run-up to the completion of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by 2010.”¹¹

The EMPA plays a consultative role. It provides parliamentary impetus, input and support for the consolidation and development of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It expresses its views on all issues relating to the Partnership, including the implementation of the association agreements. It adopts resolutions or recommendations, which are not legally binding, addressed to the Euro-Mediterranean Conference. The EMPA consists of parliamentarians appointed by the national parliaments of EU Member States, the national parliaments of the ten Mediterranean Partners (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey) and the representatives of the European Parliament. The EMPA consists of a maximum of 240 members, of which 120 are Europeans (75 from the EU national parliaments and 45 from the EP) and 120 are from the national parliaments of the EU’s Mediterranean Partner countries, so as to guarantee North-South parity.

⁸ *Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly. First Session.* (Cairo, Egypt, 12-15 March 2005) Final Declaration, p. 2.

⁹ *Ibidem.* p. 3.

¹⁰ *Ibidem.* p. 4.

¹¹ *Ibidem.* p. 5.

The Fourth Plenary Session of the Euro-Mediterranean Assembly convened in Athens on 28 March, 2008. The Final Declaration of the Presidency declared “[...] strong commitment to strengthening the parliamentary dimension of the Barcelona Process [...] that will contribute to the establishment of operational ties between the EMPA and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Acknowledging the fact that the Mediterranean was and remains a meeting point between East and West, North and South, a melting pot of world traditions and cultures [...] the EMPA notes the statement made by the European Council on ‘Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean’ and expresses its support towards developing initiatives to further promote the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and calls on the European Commission to enhance EMPA’s role, including a reinforced legal basis, as the legitimised parliamentary dimension of the revised process.”¹²

The EMPA Presidency Final Declaration was issued after the Union for the Mediterranean concept first announced by Nicolas Sarkozy, as well as the European Council Brussels Declaration on 13 March, 2008, and the ENP launched in 2003. Detailed discussion of these issues follows in the next section of this paper. The fact to be emphasized with view to team presidency is EMPA’s support for the political, social-economic, cultural, migration and human rights-related aims, etc., i.e. the continuity of its aims and instruments contained in the 28 March Athens Declaration. Embracing the Slovenian presidential initiative to establish a Euro-Mediterranean University is also a novelty. “Recognizing the Slovenian initiative to create a Euro-Mediterranean University as an important step forward through a cooperation network of existing universities [...] [c]alls on the European Council” – the passage reads – “and the Mediterranean Countries to undertake actions to create a budget line enabling the further development of the Euro-Mediterranean University.”¹³

The EMPA Presidency Declaration reflects the spirit of the Chairman’s Statement at the Council of the European Union, 10th Anniversary Euro-Mediterranean Summit, held in Barcelona on 27-28 November 2005, which received press publicity three years ago: “[t]hey reaffirm their commitment to the principles and objectives of the Barcelona Declaration” – the statement reads – and at the same time it calls attention to the changes that have occurred in the meantime in EU external policy and its position: “[t]hey recognise that major changes have occurred in the European Union and internationally since the Barcelona Declaration was signed in 1995. The EU has launched the

¹²*Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly. Fourth Plenary Session.* Athens, 28 March 2008. Final Declaration of the Presidency, p. 2.

¹³*Ibidem*, p. 4.

European Neighbourhood Policy to reinforce and complement the Barcelona Process. The EU has also developed the European Security and Defence Policy on which a dialogue has been initiated with Mediterranean partners. They also recall Turkey's special situation as a candidate country and a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership."¹⁴

The Mediterranean Partners included in the Barcelona Process gained access to EU subvention funds through the MEDA programme. The MEDA programme is the principal financial instrument of the European Union for the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The programme offers technical and financial support measures to accompany the reform of economic and social structures in the Mediterranean Partners. The aims and targets receiving funding are and have been in harmony with the principles contained in the Barcelona Declaration. During the 1995-1999 period the 3,435 million Euro funding provided by the MEDA I programme was supplemented by the European Investment Bank (EIB) to reach 4,808 million Euros. Between 2000 and 2006 the Mediterranean Partners received a further 5,350 million Euros under the MEDA II programme as well as 6,400 million Euros from the EIB; between 2000 and 2007 the European Investment Bank put another 1 billion Euros at their disposal for transnational projects. The MEDA programme was replaced by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) in 2007. The Commission has proposed a budget of 14.93 billion Euros to cover the period 2007-2013. Funds allocated to individual country programmes will depend on their needs and absorption capacity as well their implementation of agreed reforms. Part of the funds will go to promote cross-border co-operation.

During the period 1995-1999, some 86% of the resources allocated to MEDA were channelled bilaterally to the partners (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority). The other 12% of the resources were devoted to regional activities: all Mediterranean Partners and the EU Member States are eligible to benefit from these activities. Two percent were set aside for technical assistance officers. For Turkey, the Enlargement Directorate-General both plans and implements the co-operation activities, which since 2002, come from a separate financial envelope and not MEDA.¹⁵

¹⁴ *Council of the European Union. 10th Anniversary Euro-Mediterranean Summit. Barcelona, 27 and 28 November 2005. Chairman's Statement, p. 2.*

¹⁵ For more details see: *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The MEDA Programme and the Financial Cooperation/MEDA Programme.* http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/meda/meda2_obj.htm (accessed November 10, 2010).

2 The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)

The European Neighbourhood Policy is one of the European Union's newest external relations policies, aiming to bring Europe and its neighbours closer, to their mutual benefit and interest. It was conceived after the 2004 enlargement of the EU with 10 new member countries, in order to avoid creating new borders in Europe. "The European Neighbourhood Policy" – emphasizes communication from the Commission entitled *A Strong European Neighbourhood Policy* – "is substantially deepening the EU's relations with its neighbours, and has become the established vehicle for cooperation with these countries across a wide policy spectrum. The premise of the ENP is that the EU has a vital interest in seeing greater economic development, stability and better governance in its neighbourhood."¹⁶

The ENP works to widen the Barcelona Process. Apart from the nine states of the Mediterranean Partnership it integrates the former Soviet states, now independent countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and the Ukraine. Along with the Mediterranean aspect, the EU's connections network is further extended to include Eastern European and Asian aspects. This modification in the gravitational centre of the community's external policy also affects the strategy, functioning and set of priorities of the team presidency.

The ENP is not, however, about enlargement, nor does it offer participating countries the possibility of accession. It aims to promote good governance and social development in Europe's neighbours through:

- closer political links
- partial economic integration
- support to meet EU standards
- assistance with economic and social reforms.

The EU sees the ENP as a way to built upon a mutual commitment to common values - democracy and human rights, rule of law, good governance, market economy principles and sustainable development. The level of development depends on the extent to which these values are effectively shared.

Negotiations cover the four ENP action areas in order to:

- strengthen the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights
- promote the market-oriented economic reforms

¹⁶ *Communication from the Commission. A Strong European Neighbourhood Policy*. Brussels, 05/12/2007. COM (2007) 774 final, p. 2.

- promote employment and social cohesion
- co-operate on key foreign policy objectives such as countering terrorism and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The ENP also forms part of the EU's strategy to reinforce security in neighbouring countries. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the European Commissioner for External Relations explained in a speech in March 2006 that the ENP is designed to offer "our eastern and southern neighbours many of the benefits previously associated only with membership, such as a stake in our internal market, involvement in EU programmes, and cooperation in transport and energy network. It is designed to offer a privileged partnership now, irrespective of the exact nature of the future relationship with the EU."¹⁷

3 The Union for the Mediterranean

As already discussed in the present paper, the Union for the Mediterranean (as part of the ENP) works to provide new foundations for the Mediterranean policy carried out within the framework of the European Union Barcelona Process. The opportunity to join is opened up to all 27 members of the European integration system. The initiative will be put forward by the President of France during the French-Czech-Swedish presidency term at the Paris Summit on 13 July 2008. The concept of the Union for the Mediterranean was first phrased as such by Nicolas Sarkozy during his election campaign in May 2007. Initially, it came to be commonly referred to as Mediterranean Union in EU community circles. Several analysts have stated that the plan serves to strengthen France's position within the Union and provides an alternative to the accession of Turkey. Turkey has consequently opposed the backing of the Sarkozy plan by EU forums. Turkey accepted the invitation to participate when was offered a guarantee, in March 2008, that it would not be an alternative to the EU. The project is supported by Spain, Italy, and Greece. However the EU itself and Germany have been more cautious about the idea. The European Commission has stated that such initiatives promoting regional co-operation are good, however they say the project should build on existing structures. The Commission declared the Barcelona Process effective and successful and called attention to the danger of creating parallel structures. Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Jansa also warned about this. When Slovenia took the EU presidency in 2008, Jansa said the following: "We do not need

¹⁷See <http://www.euromedinfo.eu/site.153.content.en.html> (accessed November 10, 2010).

a duplication of institutions, or institutions that would compete with EU, institutions that would cover part of the neighbourhood.”¹⁸

Germany has also turned down the original version of the Sarkozy plan. As a result of this, France’s Minister for European Affairs, Jean-Pierre Jouyet stated early February 2008 that there was no Mediterranean Union but rather a *Union for the Mediterranean*, which would only be completing and enriching the existing EU structures and policy in the region. This was followed by the 3 March 2008 Hannover meeting of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy. Angela Merkel, backed by José Manuel Barroso, the President of the European Commission managed to persuade the French President to accept a solution based on compromise. The main point is that the project would include all member states, not just those bordering the Mediterranean, and build upon the existing Barcelona process. The idea is to form a ‘bridge’ between Europe (including the Eastern members of the EU), North Africa and the Middle East.

4 Conclusion – the Barcelona Process revisited; possible priorities of the Spanish Team Presidency

The fusion of the Barcelona Process and the Union for the Mediterranean initiative may be realised after 13-14 July 2008. Harmony between the external policy interests of EU member states and a transformed set of geopolitical conditions may eventually be created. Under the new organisational and institutional system - which includes the EU ratification of the Lisbon Treaty – an enlargement strategy compatible with the new neighbourhood policy may be formed during the 2010-2011 Spanish-Belgian-Hungarian Team Presidency. Apart from issues concerning enlargement, answers may be provided to questions regarding widening and deepening, and possible future scenarios may be predicted and properly shaped.

All these issues are inseparable from Spanish interests, experience gained during Spanish presidencies to date,¹⁹ and the effect the Madrid government

¹⁸See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean_Union (accessed November 10, 2010).

¹⁹For more detailed discussions see Esther Barbé, *The Spanish Presidency: Catalising a New Axis in the EU?* *Journal of Common Market Studies, Annual Review of the European Union*, 2003, vol. 41, 45-48; Francesc Morata and Ana-Mar Fernandez, *The Spanish Presidencies of 1989, 1995 and 2002: From commitment to reluctance towards European Integration*. In: Ole Elgström, *European Union Council Presidencies*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003; Carlos Closa and Paul Heywood, *Spain and the European Union*. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004.

has on EU foreign policy decision-making. Spain has acted three times as EU rotary president: in the first half of 1989, in the second half of 1995 and between January-June 2002. History created the opportunity for the country to forward the cause of continental integration by acting in a series of strategic undertakings in 1995 and 2002, above all. In accordance with traditions developed during Spain's presidencies and based on previous experience,²⁰ attention will be directed to the task of institutionalisation outlined in the Lisbon Treaty. The Spanish are also expected to continue the legacy of former presidencies by supporting action to eliminate democratic deficit; opening up to the citizens of the EU is also likely to be entered into the official programme.

Expected developments seem to make tackling the issue of a further enlargement a point of priority within the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Barcelona Process inevitable. Analysts continue to consider economic and social convergence as an issue of primary importance: this entails the practice of economic and social cohesion and the creation of opportunities for backward regions to fall in line with more developed ones. All these attitudes are deeply embedded in the budget reform and review programme, which is fully backed by Hungary, along with several other member states.

It is considered an important task of the future Spanish-Belgian-Hungarian presidency to provide the institutional framework of sustainable growth with respect to the economy, society and environmental protection.

More Europe means more common foreign and security policy for Spain. In this connection, attention must be called to the person and role of High Representative for Common Foreign Policy, Javier Solana, who gave a detailed analysis of his country's and the EU's common foreign and security policy in the 2003 issues of the Madrid journal *Foreign Policy*.²¹ Spain is set on supporting the 1992 St. Petersburg decision of EU defence ministers to set up a European military service and the resolutions to create rapid reaction forces passed at the June 1999 Cologne and the December 1999 Helsinki summits. By 2003, the 60,000-strong military unit should have been ready to engage in land combat within sixty days in case Europe's peace and security came under threat. The Madrid government agreed to supply 10% of the Rapid Reaction Force, i.e. six thousand soldiers. It was not the responsibility of Moncloa Palace that

²⁰For more details see Szilágyi, István, *Az Európai Unió spanyol elnökségeinek tapasztalatai és a várható prioritások* [Experience Gained from Spanish Presidencies of the EU and Expected Priorities], *Comitatus*, 2007, no 4, 3-23.

²¹Javier Solana, *Tres años como alto representante*. *Política Exterior* 2003, no 91, 59-67; Javier Solana, *Multilateralismo eficaz: una estrategia para la UE*. *Política Exterior* 2003, no 95, 37-47.

the deadline was deferred. Similar determination characterises Spanish actions concerning the strengthening of the special institutional framework of EU foreign and security policy. Rafael Lorenzo (2002), Luis Feliú (2002) and José María Beneyto (2002) have written analyses concerning both the previously mentioned issue and matters on contributions to European defence industry development.

Questions regarding the strengthening of common foreign and security policy in the EU and on the European continent will certainly be points highlighted on the agenda of the Spanish-Belgian-Hungarian Team Presidency.

The same may be said of the issues of countering international terrorism, of coordinated action against drug trafficking and organised crime, of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, of common action undertaken to resolve regional conflicts, of securing human rights and of common contributions to abrogate the consequences of failed state scenarios.

A further strengthening of ties between Spain, the EU and Latin American states, peoples and integrative organisations is one of the main areas of action for the Spanish rota presidency and the Team Presidency. This does not only and primarily mean a succession of summits for the European and Latin American interregional strategic area. It also involves running and expanding targeted projects to reinforce economic, political and cultural links, the creation of a common integration organisation based on fourth-generation treaties, and an institutional joining of political and decision-making centres in the form of a Transatlantic Parliament, a Council of Ministers, specialist committees and a Common Secretariat.²²

Spain's role as a bridge will also become stronger in the period of the Spanish-Belgian-Hungarian Team Presidency. A further cementing of institutional, cultural and political ties between Spain and the Iberoamerican Community of Nations will reinforce Spain's international and EU roles and positions. (Szilágyi 2006)

Last but not least, the Spanish-Belgian-Hungarian Team Presidency puts great emphasis on the development and strengthening of institutionalised ties *with the Mediterranean area* as discussed in detail in the present paper.

²²For more details see Christian Freres and José Antonio Sanahuja (eds.), *América Latina y la Unión Europea. Estrategías para una asociación necesaria*. Barcelona: Icaria & Antrazyt, 2006; Juan José Martín Arribas (ed.), *La asociación estratégica entre la Unión Europea y América Latina*. Madrid: Editorial Catarata, 2006. Alvaro Iranzo, La política mediterránea de España. *Política Exterior* 2007, no 116, 137-162.

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