

Volker Perthes (ed.)

**GERMANY AND THE MIDDLE EAST
INTERESTS AND OPTIONS**

**Published by the Heinrich Böll Foundation
in co-operation with
Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik**

Volker Perthes (ed.), *Germany and the Middle East. Interests and Options*, published by the Heinrich Böll Foundation in co-operation with Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik

First edition, Berlin 2002

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Design: push, Berlin

Printing: Druckhaus Köthen

ISBN 3-927760-42-0

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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

North Africa and the Middle East, our neighbours across the Mediterranean, are linked to the EU and thus to Germany as well. Their history, culture and politics have emerged from common roots. Against that background, German politics is faced with the challenge of contributing to the political, economic and social stability of the region. This involves both establishing an independent position and also making constructive contributions for inclusion within the framework of an overall European policy.

In dealing with the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, which has meanwhile become extremely violent, but is being carried out in a manner that lacks political perspectives, German foreign policy has earned recognition and trust from both sides. Although its intervention has resulted only in isolated successes that are in no way sustainable, that foundation should be continually fostered and expanded in order to make a contribution toward a resolution of the Middle East conflict and toward peaceful cooperation and development in the region.

This publication is an attempt to sketch the outlines and positions of a German policy on the Middle East. Given the consequences of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, a threatening war against Iraq, and the extremely unstable situation and critical developments throughout the region, it is urgently necessary to promote a political dialogue and a peaceful solution, which would prevent further escalation and a potential breakup of the region.

The Green Party-affiliated Heinrich Böll Foundation, as an organization that works to promote societal democratization and participation of civil society in political and economic processes, and is actively committed to the promotion of human rights, dialogue and equal coexistence, regards the situation as a particular challenge. Due to its social policy activities and its work with partners in the region, the Foundation perceives quite differentiated interests in terms of visions of German policy on the Middle East.

The Foundation is thus striving to serve the interests expressed by representatives of politics, industry and civil society in dialogue and exchange, as well as in support for democratic, social and ecological policies.

Against this background, concrete plans were made to revise and update the German version of the book and publish it in English during a workshop discussion, which took place in February 2000 in Berlin and was attended by the editor and authors, as well as scholars and politicians from Germany and the region (Egypt, Israel and the Palestinian Autonomous areas). With the publication and distribution of the English version, the Foundation hopes to serve the widespread interest in the perspectives and strategies of German Middle East policy, and above all to provide an impetus for a sustainable dialogue between Germany and the region. In this, the focus is on spurring on a common debate and productive discussion with political and societal forces in the region, rather than on the “correctness” of the theses and statements included in the publication.

We would like to expressly point out that the statements made in the articles reflect the personal opinions of the respective authors. They are not necessarily consistent with the views of the Foundation regarding German policy on the Middle East.

We would like to express special thanks to Volker Perthes for the productive and successful co-operation.

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

Is it possible to identify German interests in the Middle East? And what foreign policy options does Germany have in its dealing with the region?

The authors of this book give a generally positive answer to both questions, both in a common introductory paper that sketches possible “guidelines” for German Middle East policies, and in a couple of individual chapters. All articles have been discussed within the group. The responsibility for each individually signed chapter, however, rests solely with its respective author.

This book contains the results of the work of a study group established at *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik* (SWP), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, in Berlin. The group members – members of the German parliament representing different parties, diplomats, and academics – started to work on the project in spring 2000. A first German version of the book was published in summer 2001. Its content was discussed both in Germany and with colleagues from the region and other countries. On the basis of these discussions and in the light of unfolding events – not least the attacks of 11 September 2001 and escalating violence in the Middle East – we decided to re-write and update the book in English. The aim of this undertaking is to trigger and enrich the debate in Germany, and between Germans and their international partners, about Germany and the Middle East and about what contribution, if any, can and should be expected from Germany in the region.

This book would not have been possible without the support of a number of persons. Bernd Asbach and Kirsten Maas from the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation encouraged us to proceed with this update and made its publication possible. André Bank co-ordinated the editing process during his internship at SWP. Michael Jones helped to make our English less “Germanic”. Ziad Abu Amr, Mark Heller and Nassif Hitti should be men-

tioned in an exemplary function as colleagues from the region 10
who through their critical comments helped us to develop, re-
consider or strengthen our ideas and argument.

Berlin, August 2002

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1. Hermann Gröhe, Christoph Moosbauer, Volker Perthes,
Christian Sterzing

EVENHANDED, NOT NEUTRAL: POINTS OF REFERENCE FOR A GERMAN MIDDLE EAST POLICY

All too often it has been claimed that German Middle East policy is non-existent and even impossible. It is maintained that at best there can be a German policy towards Israel, maybe a German policy towards Iran, and even possibly a German cultural policy towards the Arab world, Israel or Iran. It is true that Germany in the past has had no *declared* policy towards the so-called MENA region (i.e. the Middle East and North Africa). It is also true that, in the wake of the increasing harmonisation of European foreign policy, the scope for Germany and other EU countries to have their own, *independent* policies with respect to this region is limited.

It is also true, however, that Germany does have economic, political and limited security interests of its own in and with respect to the region. These do not conflict with overall European interests. However they may differ in some respects from the interests of other EU member states, at least as far as the setting of priorities is concerned. In addition of course, Germany is decisively influential in shaping European policy. It should be easier to use this influence more constructively, if it is clear where one's own interests lie.

Our book is intended to help clarify what a German Middle East policy could be. In the past the Arab-Israeli conflict and Germany's special relationship with Israel have made any discussion, let alone argument, on this subject difficult. Here we describe what we regard to be the key objectives of German and European policy with regard to the region as a whole (hereafter referred to as the Middle East) and with a series of proposals for action, seek to illustrate, how German policy could and should further these objectives. We hope that the book will spark a broader political debate, out of which the goals of German policy and the German

perspective on European policy in the Middle East will crystallise. 12
In this sense our book will remain a *work in progress*. However it is an unambiguous plea for German and European policy on the Middle East to play a conscious and active role.

Germany's role in helping to shape an effective European Middle East policy

German policy towards the Middle East should be regarded as an integral part of European policy. Germany has an interest in increasing harmonisation of European foreign and security policy and, for this reason alone, should advocate a strengthening of the role and profile of the EU in the Middle East peace process, in the Mediterranean and in the Gulf.

- Germany should actively promote a common EU policy with respect to the region and its conflicts. European countries already extensively co-ordinate their positions towards the Middle East and Mediterranean, as they also do regarding relations with the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and Iran. It is a different story with Iraq: the United Kingdom and France, as permanent members of the UN Security Council, have not been prepared so far to table questions on policies towards Iraq within the framework of the EU's common foreign and security policy (CFSP). Germany could be instrumental here in advancing the development of a European standpoint. At the same time, Germany should also lobby for a unified voting behaviour by the Europeans within the UN when it comes to votes on issues relating to the Middle East, and it should help to argue common European standpoints: in the end, for Germany, as for France, the United Kingdom and other EU states, the cohesion of the EU should be more important than bilateral relations with individual Middle Eastern partners.
- European policy towards the Mediterranean region has been harmonised through the "Common Strategy on the Mediterranean Region", which includes Israel and its neighbours and was adopted in summer 2000 to the extent that majority decisions

are now permitted on common EU standpoints and actions. However this will not apply to contributions to the Arab-Israeli peace process until comprehensive peace has been reached. In order to strengthen European Middle East policy, Germany should take the initiative here to have this restriction lifted: there is no reason to let the further development of a common foreign and security policy worthy of the name depend on the willingness of players in the Middle East to establish peace.

Germany and the Middle East peace process

Germany has a clear interest of its own in peace in the Middle East. For this reason alone German policy with respect to the entire region has always given particular weight to the Mashreq states – Israel and its neighbours. Germany’s interest in a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is nurtured by more than humanitarian concerns and Europe’s general interest in regional stability. It also reflects the special German-Israeli relationship which is shaped on the one hand, by the persecution and murder of the European Jews, and on the other increasingly by the intensity and depth of relations between German and Israeli societies. For Germany in particular peace between Arabs and Israelis would also end fears of a conflict between its special relations with Israel and its interest in pursuing strong and good relations with the Arab states. Consciously or unconsciously, European societies also have a special interest in developments and in peace in the region because of the cultural heritage and the civilisation they share with the peoples of the Middle East. After all, Christianity, which has defined Europe, its history and culture, originated in the “Holy Land”.

- German policy towards the countries of the Middle East can be neither exclusively “pro-Israeli” nor “pro-Arab”. Yet the desire to be even-handed and to further the peace process cannot mean adopting a posture of indifference or refraining from taking clear positions on substantive issues: German policy must unambiguously promote the right of all the countries in the Mid-

dle East to live in security and peace. This particularly includes Israel's right to secure and recognised borders and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and a viable state as called for in the UN Security Council resolution 1397 of 12 March 2002. Even-handedness must be maintained in relation to the conflicting *parties*, not in relation to their policies or to specific disputes: German and European policy cannot be neutral where individual states endanger regional or international peace, violate the basic norms of international law or simply pursue policies that threaten to spark a regional escalation.

- Germany must make a greater effort than it has done so far to ensure that the EU plays an active role in the region: in view of the asymmetric nature of power in the Middle East and the deep mistrust that exists between the conflicting parties, no settlement will be forthcoming without diplomatic assistance from the international community. Nevertheless, a lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be imposed from outside; it will depend on the readiness of all those directly involved to reach a settlement.
- The fact that European and US policies in the region complement each other is not in question; but the potential here needs to be actively exploited. The USA will remain the key *power broker*; European players will concentrate primarily on less spectacular, more political contributions to the peace process and the establishment of stability and peace in the region. Deliberate use should be made of the special ties and relations between individual EU countries and Middle Eastern states and players in order to support efforts to establish a comprehensive regional peace. In Germany's case this refers to the special relations it has with Israel for example, or the trust enjoyed by German policy in Iran. It is important not to underestimate the contribution that the EU can make to crisis prevention in the region on the diplomatic front. Whatever the case, the mantra that there is no diplomatic role for Germany or Europe to play in the Middle East peace process has long since ceased to be valid.
- The need for a European role has been underscored by the establishment in spring 2002 of the "quartet" – a conscious

effort to co-ordinate US, EU, UN and Russian contributions towards the Middle East. From a German and European perspective there should be no doubt that a strong US engagement in the Middle East is needed; the “quartet” is a format which both integrates the United States into a multilateral framework *and* allows Washington to lead. Once a serious peace process resumes, it will be essential to associate Arab states, particularly Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, into some kind of steering group that oversees this process and the implementation of agreements.

- German and European policy has a particular role to play in reducing regional asymmetries and strengthening the economic, administrative and diplomatic capacities of the weaker participants in the peace process. No party in the region will be prepared to sign up to a fully developed peace if it fears that this would only strengthen the dominance of the other side.
- One priority issue is support for Palestinian state-building. The financial assistance that the Palestinians receive directly or indirectly from Germany exceeds that of any other country. This support is the result of a conscious and correct decision on the part of German policy-makers, and Germany should not hold back from acting as midwife and godparent to the future Palestinian state. But German policy must leave no doubt that this also imposes obligations on the Palestinian side. The establishment of a Palestinian state regardless of its nature is not in Germany’s interest. It must be a democratic state that respects human rights and is prepared to co-operate peacefully with its neighbours.
- Certain sections within societies in the region still have to be convinced of the importance and value of peace, and the states themselves must enhance their capability for co-operation. Success in the former as in the latter, depends to a considerable extent on the development of the political institutions in these countries and on the ability of these institutions to hold their own in a new division of labour in the Middle East that will be characterised by greater competition. There are tasks

and possibilities here for a more active German and European development policy.

- Nobody should expect Germany or the EU to devise a perfect peace plan for the Middle East. But especially at times when negotiations have ceased, there is scope and a need for constructive contributions to help de-escalate the conflict. Concrete starting points here are situations in which Palestinians and Israelis take action using measures and means that, depending on their orientation and form, have the potential either to further the peace process or to intensify the conflict. Possible examples include unilateral security measures and equally, Palestinian steps to prepare for an independent state.
- German and European policy should not be afraid to deliver clear statements on the principles of a peace settlement and on the necessary elements for a lasting peace. In its “Berlin Declaration”¹ of 1999, for example, the EU emphasised the right of the Palestinian people to establish their own state, noting at the same time that a viable Palestinian state represents Israel’s best security guarantee. This provoked objections. But precisely because the EU was some way ahead of the political discussion in Israel and the United States, the declaration has helped to set the peace agenda. It can do the same with respect to other end-status issues. For example, the Europeans could make it clear that a lasting peace must permit the Palestinians to make Arab Jerusalem (East Jerusalem) their capital. They could also emphasise that the Israeli and Palestinian states will be equal partners under international law peace cannot mean that one state unilaterally exerts control over the other. They should also leave no doubt that a comprehensive peace between Israel and its neighbours cannot be established without a settlement of the refugee question. This means recognising as a matter of principle Palestinian refugees’ and exiles’ right of return; at the same time the concrete implementation of this right, in so far as it involves refugees returning to within Israel’s borders, will also have to be acceptable to Israel.

¹ See Appendix

Because of Germany's responsibility for the persecution and murder of the European Jews and the strong social ties that have grown up between the two countries since the state of Israel was established, the German-Israeli relationship is and will remain a special one. In Germany, as in no other European country is there so deep an understanding of the primeval fears of the Israeli population.

- Israel's security will therefore remain a priority in German foreign policy. But this cannot mean that Germany adopts Israeli definitions and notions of security or accepts them uncritically. This particularly holds true as long as segments of the political spectrum in Israel seek to assert the security of their state at the expense of that of their neighbours or to the detriment of their right to self-determination.
- From a German and European point of view, peace and a viable Palestinian state are the preconditions for Israeli security. German policy should support Israel in its search for a comprehensive peace and, where this is possible and requested, offer its good services. Particularly in talks with its Arab partners, Germany should leave no doubt that a lasting peace and regional stability require their acceptance of Israel's right to exist and – after the conclusion of corresponding peace treaties – Israel's complete integration within the region.
- The special relationship of trust between Germany and Israel makes it possible to address thorny issues and problematic developments, particularly in the context of bilateral dialogue. There should be no doubt that, politically, Germany has the same demands and expectations with respect to Israel as the rest of the European Union does. In particular this includes Israel abiding by the agreements it signs, the rejection of political and territorial changes resulting from war and conquest, and the clear renunciation of the settlement policy that Israel has adopted in the Occupied Territories.
- The wounds of history may have healed over, but they can break open again at any time. Only if the younger generations in both

countries develop an interest in each other that goes beyond the continuing engagement with the past to focus on issues of current importance will it be possible to maintain the exceptional intensity of German-Israeli relations.

Germany and the Arab world

Relations with the Arab states should be embedded in the framework of Mediterranean and Middle East policy. Here Germany should make it clear that it recognises the predominantly Arab character of the Middle East and that its relations with the Arab world do not depend on the success of the peace process.

- Germany and Europe should underscore in their policies that they understand the cultural and political ties that exist among the Arab countries and that they support Arab policymakers in their efforts to forge closer co-operation among the Arab states, not least as regards the establishment of an Arab free-trade zone.
- German policy and German institutions can help to promote the exchange between Arab states and societies. Sub-regional initiatives in the Maghreb or the Gulf are underdeveloped and in need of encouragement and support; the same applies to efforts to build confidence in difficult bilateral relations between individual Arab countries.
- Bilateral policy dialogues between Germany and individual Arab states which include the key political and social players on both sides can help dispel mistrust and ignorance. It should be actively promoted. The possibilities of cultural co-operation with the Arab countries have also by no means been fully exploited. Germany should make particular efforts to expand student exchange and offer internships to young Arab workers in German institutions.
- After the events of 11 September 2001, civil society exchange and the co-operation of civil society actors have been critically questioned from various quarters. There is a risk that European states limit circulation between the two shores of the

Mediterranean even more. European governments and societies have become more sceptical, even at times decidedly inimical, towards Arab societies and Islam. There is also a real risk that southern governments insist that opposition figures from their countries who have taken refuge in Europe be summarily treated as terrorists. The challenge is not to bury tolerance and inter-societal exchanges under the umbrella of fighting terrorism. Civil society co-operation remains an important instrument to establish the dialogue between citizens and societies, as has often been called for in recent policy documents and speeches.

- It is essential to make it clear that Germany will continue to invite and welcome students from Arab countries to study at German universities, not least in the fields of science and engineering.
- The German Government should create the position of a co-ordinator for German-Arab co-operation. The duties of this co-ordinator – possibly an academic or entrepreneur – would lie primarily in the trans-social and cultural spheres; primarily an appointment of this nature would be a sign of good will as well as demonstrating Germany’s readiness to establish closer relations and engage in serious dialogue with the Arab world.

Germany as a Mediterranean state

European political integration and the abolition of its internal borders turns Germany into a de facto Mediterranean state, at least in important policy fields. This has increased Germany’s interest in the EU’s Mediterranean policy and the “Barcelona process”. All in all Germany has a good opportunity to contribute to a rational debate on common European interests and strategies with regard to the Mediterranean region.

- Germany should help to substantiate the planned “enhanced political dialogue” between the EU and partner states and thus prevent it from turning into a sterile, formal exchange between officials. An example of this could be promoting discussion

on stability to emphasise that stable development and regional stability always imply change. There is no reason why the EU should accept authoritarian regimes' position of refusing to tolerate any discussion of their human rights record and government practice on the grounds that this would pose a threat to stability. There is equally little reason for Europe, out of consideration for its southern Mediterranean partner states, to abandon an asylum practice that also grants protection to persecuted Islamist dissidents.

- German policy can and should launch initiatives of its own in individual areas of Mediterranean co-operation and show in this way that it is not just one of the motors of a common European foreign and security policy but also a credible partner of the states of North Africa and the Middle East. This could include ideas and projects for a liberal visa policy with respect to partner countries.
- Particularly in the area of economic relations, German policy should give support to rational approaches in relation to internal European decision-making processes. It could, for example, make clear to the southern EU countries that the legitimate interests of Mediterranean partner countries must not be sacrificed to short-term group interests. The aim of the Barcelona process, after all, is not to improve export opportunities and certainly not to shield European producers from Mediterranean competition but, specifically to enhance the economic opportunities of Europe's Mediterranean partners.

German policy with respect to the Gulf region

From a European perspective the Gulf region is geographically part of its neighbourhood. Since the states in the region control over 65 per cent of the world's oil reserves, Europe's relations with them are also based on clear economic and security interests. Germany and Europe must have an interest in the region's stability. Conflicts in the region have a world-wide economic impact and are therefore never local. If there were to be renewed

21 military conflicts leading to the intervention of the international community, Germany would find it very difficult not to become actively involved. For this reason alone Germany has an interest in ensuring that conflicts over resources and territory in the Gulf are dealt with peacefully and the potential for containing conflict by establishing regional structures.

- Germany should therefore canvass support within the EU for greater involvement in the Gulf region, with the focus being less on containing possible threats and more on promoting regional processes of co-operation and deepening existing patterns of co-operation with the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council. Germany should play a part in driving forward the negotiations for a free-trade agreement between the EU and GCC.
- Beyond economic co-operation, a broader dialogue, which could in part be guided by the Barcelona process, needs to be initiated with the Gulf States. High-level talks should not be restricted to trade matters but should also address issues of human rights and democracy as well as political and cultural values in general. The EU's Gulf policy should, insofar as this is possible, be transformed into a "Common Strategy for the Gulf region" within the framework of the CFSP. Within the EU Germany could also raise the question as to whether partnership with the Gulf States could be linked with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.
- Germany should also strive for deeper bilateral co-operation with the Gulf States. The high standing of German technology should be exploited as an incentive for economic co-operation. One possibility would be projects in the field of sustainable energy supplies which, by combining German know-how with capital from the oil-producing states as well as involving scientists and practitioners from both sides, could lead to the joint development of pioneering technologies for the future.
- Germany will have to work in co-operation with other European countries for an internationally co-ordinated policy towards Iraq that overcomes the logic of isolation and escalation. In humanitarian terms, general economic sanctions are no longer

justifiable; politically they are at best counter-productive. They must be lifted and replaced by as effective an arms embargo as possible. Iraq must allow the return of UN arms inspectors (UNMOVIC) and the long-term monitoring of its production and research facilities. UNMOVIC needs a credible mandate. A credible military threat will have to be maintained to ensure Iraqi co-operation. But it is essential not to allow Iraqi society to remain isolated any longer; aid for civil reconstruction must be made available. Europe should also support a constructive solution to Iraq's debt problem, as well as international efforts to establish regional security structures in the Gulf, in which Iraq will also have a place.

Economic interests and economic co-operation

Germany is one of the main trading partners of most of the countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Yet the member states of the Arab League, Iran and Israel account for less than three per cent of Germany's foreign trade, and German investments in the region have to date been insignificant. For a few branches of the economy, however, the region represents an important export market, where the main export commodities – oil and gas – are indeed strategic goods. Middle Eastern and North African states have considerable potential for growth. This is due to demographic growth and also of the structural changes that could be expected in the wake of intensified European and Mediterranean co-operation as well as structural reforms being undertaken by most of these states. Germany has an economic and a political interest in growth and development in these countries' economic liberalisation, in expanded co-operation between Europe and the MENA states and in increasing intra-regional co-operation.

- In the past German policy has shown little interest in political contact and dialogue with major Arab economic partners. It should not, however, shirk this task, nor should it be worried about underpinning economic relations in the region with a corresponding political element. Germany should also encour-

age economic exchange by taking seriously and, where appropriate, supporting the interests of the partner countries. By advocating genuine, bilateral free trade in the Mediterranean region and countering attempts by other EU states to engage in agricultural protectionism German policy can demonstrate its interest in economic partnership with the states of the southern Mediterranean. Germany should make it clear to the oil-producing states that it supports their interest in maintaining stable oil prices: after all most of the regional oil exporters import more from Germany than they export meaning that lower oil prices harm German export interests.

- German policies towards the region cannot be simply a matter of economic promotion even though economic relations can help establish regional co-operative structures, an important concern of German and European policies. Even if for this reason alone, Germany should ensure that efforts to create more free trade are developed not only in a north-south but also in a south-south direction. This means that the medium-term aim should be to link the planned Euro-Mediterranean free-trade area with the EU-GCC free-trade area and, in the long term, to encourage the inclusion of Yemen, Iran and Iraq in this arrangement.
- Germany should acknowledge that foreign cultural policy and the provision of study or scholarship opportunities for students from the region, alongside the cultural, humanitarian and political functions also have a direct role to play in furthering economic relations. Cuts in funding of cultural activities thus damage Germany's economic interests.
- Development co-operation with the countries of the region has a humanitarian function (combating poverty), but it should also support key German policy aims: specifically promoting intra-regional co-operation and the Arab-Israeli peace process. Although it is essential to ensure the viability of the Palestinian state; Syria and other Arab states also need help in order to prepare for the challenges resulting from a new division of labour in the region.

- Financial assistance and one-sided export of technology should increasingly be replaced by efforts to increase co-operation in research and development, particularly with respect to appropriate technologies.
- Regional co-operation must be promoted with regard to all states in the region; Germany must not give the impression of being interested only in furthering Israel's interest in a normalisation of Arab-Israeli relations. As a matter of principle, only those co-operation projects should be promoted in which local players are also prepared to invest. The selection of partner and priority countries in the region should also depend on the areas in which Germany and Europe can exert effective influence.

Security policy and security interests

The proximity of the MENA region to the EU is reason enough for Germany and Europe to accord it more weight in their security policies than any other region outside its borders. The immediate security interests of the EU's southern member states are increasingly being transformed into the security interests of the entire Union, including Germany, by the on-going process of harmonising Europe's foreign, security and defence policies. There is no direct military threat to Germany or Europe emanating from the region. However, there is cause of concern for a number of reasons. Europe's security is negatively affected by terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts and arms races, as well as socio-economic disparities that breed conflict and political quarrels within and among the countries of the region.

- In previous decades outside forces only had a limited influence on regional conflicts. In spite of that, Europe's interests in the stability of this neighbouring region demand a European contribution to conflict prevention and resolution. However, such an engagement can lead to dangerous military entanglements. In many conflicts, there is scope and often demand for mediation, but such activities frequently over-stretch European

capabilities. In any case, if solutions are to last they must be supported by the international community and accepted within the region. Even if chances for success appear slim at the present time, Germany and Europe should launch new long-term initiatives in order to develop regional security co-operation, which has so far been widely neglected. The project of a “Charter of Peace and Stability” which has been proposed within the framework of the Barcelona process appears to be a promising step in the right direction.

- For the foreseeable future, Europe’s relative lack of military muscle coupled with its relative strength as an economic and civil power will force the Union to contribute mainly to the area of “soft” security policy. This has to start with an enhanced political and security dialogue, which is especially needed in relation to those states whose foreign and security policies give cause for concern. MENA partners will continue to turn primarily to the USA in questions of “hard” military security co-operation or for security guarantees.
- The attacks of 11 September 2001, the escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the possible emergence of another war in the Gulf have increasingly made it clear to Germans and Europeans that their security interests in the neighbouring Middle Eastern and North African region are more important than those it has with any other region outside Europe. In spite of its limited military capacities European allies’ contributions to “Enduring Freedom” have shown that a deployment of European troops and vessels can play an important military and political role in the MENA region. Regarding the possibility of future transatlantic or international engagements in major conflicts, a strong and unified European voice is needed, not least to discuss the practical dimensions of strategy and burden-sharing that will arise with the United States. This voice can only be strong and united if Germany puts its weight behind it. At the same time, Germany should leave no doubt that crisis management will have to rely primarily on political and diplomatic means.

- Intensified political and security policy dialogues with the region would bring sharper contrast to the picture that the government, parliament, and media have of regional conflicts, risks, and threats. The German government is already engaged in such dialogues with some of the large states in the region, but important countries are missing from this particular map. Talks with the smaller countries could well also prove useful. A classic diplomatic initiative, which would have to pursue a long-term perspective, could thus serve German and European security interests in the Middle East and at the same time strengthen Germany's profile in the fields of global disarmament and multilateralism.
- It is necessary to distinguish, for analytical and practical purposes, between a transnational, *jihadist* form of terrorism such as that which al-Qa'ida represents, and the activities of national liberation groups which employ illegitimate, terrorist means. In contrast to the utopian terrorism of al-Qa'ida which tries to ignite a world-wide struggle between civilisations, national movements try to achieve territorial or political goals in conflicts which in principle could be settled by negotiations. German policy makers should make it clear, however, that legitimate goals (such as ridding occupied territories from foreign occupation) do not legitimise terrorist means. Whenever states employ violence it should be made clear that Germany and the EU do not condone breaches of international law or infringements on humanitarian standards guaranteed by international legal instruments.
- Europe and individual European states can contribute militarily to peace-keeping. This will be mainly in co-operation with the UN or the USA. This is already happening to a limited extent in Sinai, Lebanon and on the Golan Heights where national contingents from individual EU states are deployed. It is conceivable that in the future, units of EU armed forces, deployed under the common European foreign and security policy, will have a role to play here. Such units, in which German soldiers would also serve, could play a key role in multilateral peace

troops, which might be deployed on the Israeli-Syrian border and on the borders of the future state of Palestine, on the basis of agreements to this effect.

- Preceding that, the idea of a multinational peace-keeping force which was introduced by UN general secretary Kofi Annan in April 2002 needs to be developed further.
- The most important approach for German and European policy in the MENA region must be the non-proliferation policy. Membership of the non-proliferation regimes must be the first priority. German policy will have to be vigilant at home to ensure that export controls prohibiting the transfer of technologies that can be used in the production of weapons of mass destruction are enforced.
- Germany should exercise restraint in arms supplies to the region. In particular, there must be no arms exports that add new categories of weapons to regional arsenals and raise the stakes in regional arms races.

European Middle East policy must also be human rights policy

A defining characteristic of German and European foreign policy is its commitment to human rights and democracy. It must retain this orientation particularly with respect to the MENA region: although there are important differences between individual states, all states in this region violate human rights. There are, moreover, a number of voices in the Islamic world that question international standards of human rights as an expression of western hegemony. This misconception can be overcome, at least in part, by an intensive and open exchange of views, in which European discussion partners should not hold back from clearly representing the values they uphold.

- Seen in this light, human rights issues must be central in the policy dialogue with the MENA region. In relation to partner states in the Mediterranean, the Barcelona process offers an appropriate political framework for this dialogue.

- There is a need to extend the dialogue on human rights issues beyond intergovernmental relations to the societies in the MENA region in order to anchor human rights norms within those societies. This would provide the substance for a dialogue on cultures and religions in which universities, religious communities, training and development institutions and political foundations, as well as youth organisations, professional associations and others could and should participate.
- Numerous human rights violations in the countries of the region occur as a result of confrontations between the state apparatus and opposition groups which themselves have partial recourse to terrorist methods. In its security co-operation, German policy should give particular weight to respect for the principles of a state based on the rule of law – not least in relation to police training.
- The issue of human rights is particularly important in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which is central to the region. The Israeli occupation and the illegal settlement of Palestinian areas are leading to persistent and gross human rights violations. For its part, the Palestinian Authority has so far failed, in the area it governs, to set any real example of constitutional principles, good governance and respect of human rights. Both sides have repeatedly sought to justify their breaches of human rights and the precepts of international law on the grounds of overriding security imperatives or the difficulties of the peace process. Setting priorities in such a way that territorial conflicts have to be settled or security problems resolved first before attention can be turned to the respect for human and civil rights is however not acceptable from the European viewpoint and must under no circumstances be supported.

GERMAN AND EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE PROCESS

Almost two years into the so called Al-Aqsa Intifada, the Israeli-Palestinian scene offers a contradictory picture. On one hand, the conditions for dealing with it are better than ever before. The USA have understood that ignoring the conflict contradicts their regional interests but that they will not be able to deal with this conflict alone and have agreed to work in the framework of the “quartet”, i.e. the USA, the EU, Russia and the UN. The parameters for dealing with most of the issues of the conflict, including the very sensitive ones are there, with the Clinton plan in December 2000¹ and the Taba talks in January 2001.² Also, the security council of the UN, with resolution 1397, finally came around to the idea of two states, Israel and Palestine, existing next to each other. Finally, there is the Saudi peace initiative offering normal relations between the Arab states and Israel once Israel ends its occupation of the areas conquered 35 years ago during the Six-Day War in 1967, which was unanimously adopted at the last Arab summit in Beirut in March 2002.

On the other hand the situation on the ground, in Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip could hardly be much further away from a peaceful solution than it is today. The distrust and violence fuelling each other constantly have reached levels that even the sceptics of the Oslo process probably did not envision. Large parts of the Israeli public are convinced that their former prime minister Ehud Barak made a generous offer to the Palestinians in Camp David, which they rejected. They believe that the Palestinians started the violence not just to improve what they could get but to get what they always wanted: everything, i.e. a state of

1 Clinton Minutes, in: Ha'aretz, 31 December 2000.

2 Akiva Eldar: The peace that nearly was at Taba, in: Ha'aretz, 14 February 2002.

Palestine instead of and not next to the state of Israel. A campaign of demonisation has given special responsibility for this to Palestinian President Arafat. After a wave of suicide bombings Israelis live in permanent fear of being in the wrong spot at the wrong time and either feel that their state is in danger, or ask themselves if it is worth living in this state. They feel left alone, especially by Europe with its criticism of the Israeli government and the right wing and anti-Semitic developments in EU member countries.

Large parts of the Palestinian public are experiencing a continuous worsening of the already bad living conditions. They do not think that any Israeli government has ever made a generous offer willing to really lift control over the occupied territories and enable the Palestinians to build up their own state. They feel potentially or actually threatened by the Israeli war machine including the helicopters, tanks and war planes currently used in the escalation. At the same time they experience growing anarchy in their own society and they have an ambivalent relationship to the Palestinian authority where too many people have gained personally during the Oslo years by ways of corruption. The Palestinian population feels abandoned by the international community, with the Arab states unable or unwilling to do anything, the European Union paralysed and the USA fully behind Israel.

In Israel, the government which has been in power since February 2001 under the leadership of Ariel Sharon, is unwilling and unable to open any political horizon, any offer of political negotiations with the Palestinian side. People who are sympathetic to this position tend to point to the fact that even Ariel Sharon has advocated a Palestinian state. That does not mean anything however as long as the government agrees to enlarge existing settlements and build new ones even in places like Hebron. Also Sharon has emphasised time and again that he is not willing to give up even one settlement and that he would be willing to concede only about 42 per cent of the West Bank to the Palestinians.³ He won the elections by promising the reestablishment of security for the citizens of Israel. The reality developed in the opposite direction however and

3 Ari Shavit: Sharon is Sharon is Sharon, in: Ha'aretz, 13 April 2001.

31 very often the Israeli government and the Israeli military have no other answer than military intervention, which has so far proved ineffective at stopping the suicide attacks inside of Israel proper.

In the international arena a number of opportunities seem to have emerged during the past year. The US-administration under president Bush came around to understanding that it could not leave the conflict parties in the Middle East alone for them to “bleed out”. It has not yet developed a consistent policy with the White House and the defence department leaning strongly towards the Israeli side, while the state department is promoting a more balanced approach to the conflict. But the administration has seen that the Israeli-Palestinian crisis might endanger the anti-terror coalition, especially the support of the Arab states. These US activities might collide with other plans and strategic interests, namely a possible military intervention in Iraq to change the regime of Saddam Hussein which the US-administration fears might give weapons of mass destruction to terrorists. The administration is also almost constantly confronted with the concerns of the EU about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as the region is getting closer to the EU which, in the near future, will include Cyprus as well as many Eastern European countries.

The EU has been playing a more active role. Even though in a lot of ways it does not have a consistent policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict due to different opinions within its member states it now has in Javier Solana, a highly skilled diplomat, representing the EU in the international arena as well as vis-à-vis the conflicting parties in the region. Germany, long considered a country which could not play an important role concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, got involved recently in a way that differed from anything in the past. That is partly due to the fact that its foreign minister Joschka Fischer has a profound and long standing knowledge of the conflict as well as the fact that his own personal politicisation came about whilst dealing with the background and the consequences of the murder and expulsion of the European Jews during the Nazi period. The background for his

concrete involvement was the fact that he had just started a visit to the region when on 1 June 2001 a young suicide bomber blew himself up in front of a Tel Aviv discotheque, close to the hotel where Fischer and his delegation were staying. After a short discussion they decided to remain and carry on with their meetings. Fischer took on the role of a direct mediator between the Israeli prime minister Sharon and the Palestinian president Arafat, forcing Arafat to give a strong public condemnation in English and Arabic of the terror-attack and preventing Sharon from a massive military incursion to destroy the Palestinian Authority. Even though Fischer is widely considered a good friend of Israel, he has gained recognition as an important partner for the Palestinian side. Since the visit of June 2001 he has been in the region five times without being able however to change the course of events. In April 2002, Fischer presented ideas to both the EU and the “quartet” on how to draw conclusions from the collapse of the Oslo process as well as ways to move forward.⁴

The potential for German contributions to an Israeli-Palestinian peace process and the barriers to its participation, on the bilateral level as well as in the context of the EU, can be addressed adequately only in the historical context of the development of German-Israeli relations.

Determinants of German Middle East policy

Even against the background of changing constellations, the question of a German and European Middle East policy can only be answered in the historical context. In the policy of the Federal Republic toward the states of the region, relations with the state of Israel have always played a central role. There are historical, cultural and religious reasons for this. But German-Israeli relations have also been one of the most delicate areas of German post-war policy, right from the beginning. They have been and continue to be burdened with a number of encumbrances, due to factors including:

4 See Appendix.

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- the relationships between Germans and Jews, National Socialism and the expulsion and murder of the European Jews;
 - the connection between the debate within German society over the “Third Reich” and the posture towards Israel;
 - the Cold War, in which the so-called “Hallstein Doctrine” long prevented the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, since the Arab states had threatened in this case to establish diplomatic relations with the GDR, which in turn – in accordance with the doctrine – would inevitably have resulted in the Federal Republic breaking off relations with those states;
 - the contradictions in German arms export policy to the Middle East, which included secret deliveries of weapons to and co-operation in arms policy – even before entering into diplomatic relations – with both Israel and Arab states;
 - the resulting complexity in determining a German position on the Middle East conflict;
 - the policy of the GDR with respect to the states of the Middle East, which while it did not de facto call into question the existence of the state of Israel, was – like the policy of the other Warsaw Pact states – anti-Zionist in its ideological orientation, with many and varied shadings toward anti-Semitism.

Terms such as “normalcy,” “special relations” and “instrumentalising” have always played a central role in defining the relationship of the Federal Republic of Germany with the state of Israel. The argument continues even today over whether the so-called “Reparations Agreement”, which could not have been ratified in 1952 by the Bundestag without the approval of the Social Democratic opposition, was negotiated by then Federal Chancellor Adenauer out of a sense of political-moral responsibility for the German crimes against the Jewish people, or whether it represented to him primarily the necessary precondition for the desired western integration of Germany.

On the one hand, German-Israeli relations were similar in many aspects to “normal” relations between friendly states. On the other hand, there existed within the Bundestag and the Federal

Government a consensus among a majority of the actors that German-Israeli relations bear a special stamp of history. On the occasion of the first visit by a German Chancellor, in 1973, Willy Brandt coined the phrase “normal relations with special character”.

But there were attempts again and again to postulate a “normalcy” in the relations. In most cases, they led to strains on the relationship. For example, the two Federal Chancellors who followed Willy Brandt each had their own experiences with the special nature of the relationship. Both in the verbal attack against Helmut Schmidt by then Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin in 1981 and in the criticism of the trip to Israel by Helmut Kohl in 1984, questions surrounding arms exports to Saudi Arabia and the legacy of German history played a decisive role. Even today, in the perception of many people the relationship with Israel also reflects their specific relationship with Germany’s National Socialist past.

Nevertheless, there have been debates – sometimes self-critical – about German-Israeli relations within the Federal Republic of Germany, less on an official governmental level than principally on a societal level. An example of the difficult relationship with Israel, which is often characterised by instrumentalisation, is the shift in the attitudes toward the state of Israel within the so-called New Left. It has ranged – put very simply – from idealisation of the state of Israel as a socialist experiment (kibbutzes) to its condemnation as the “imperialist water boy of US capitalism in the Middle East”, from anti-Zionist damnation to a debate over its policy toward the Palestinians which expressed critical solidarity.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict had been on the back-burner in the public discussion in Germany for most of the 1990s due to the Oslo peace process, which made many people believe that this conflict was about to be solved and due to the wars in former Yugoslavia and the intense discussions about the participation of the German army in peace-keeping or even peace enforcement there. In 2002, however, after the escalation in the Middle East reached new heights, and in the middle of the German election campaign, a fierce debate broke out about whether and if so Germans could criticise the Israeli government as well as about what kinds of statements should

35 be considered anti-Israeli or anti-Semitic. The cause for this public discussion which left many Jews in Germany with a sense of unease, was mainly party politics during an election campaign but it showed how touchy the issue of German-Israeli relations still is.

A specific German contribution?

To date, the public discussion comes time and again down to the question of whether there can, may or should be a specific German contribution to the peace process in the Middle East in light of these historical burdens. On the one hand the crimes against humanity of the Shoah (i.e., the Nazi genocide against the European Jews) are pointed out and used as the basis for demanding that German policy should stay out of the attempt to settle the Israeli-Palestinian-Arab conflict. That is usually followed by the observation that the EU states are already increasingly attempting to establish a common foreign policy in regard to the Middle East. It is argued that Germany has the duty to champion the interests of the Israelis in formulating and shaping this policy, for historical reasons and because of the critical attitudes of other EU states toward Israeli policies. In contrast, others demand a German policy at both bilateral and European levels which takes an explicitly critical position toward Israeli policies and which may favour political and even economic pressure on Israel. The asymmetric relationship between Israel and the Palestinians is pointed out, as is the American support for Israel. According to this argument, the experience of history specifically obligates the Germans to support the cause of the underdogs and the promote human rights.

German-Israeli relations

But beyond the dispute over the character of the German-Israeli relationship, relations have always been very intense.⁵ This applies equally to political visits and trade relations, economic aid, tourism

5 Roger Cohen: Israel Accepts Germany as its Friend and Ally, *International Herald Tribune*, 5 March 2001.

6 See also Chapter 4.

and youth exchanges.⁶ On the part of the Federal Government, intensity and continuity of relations are emphasised again and again. The Israeli government, conversely, has a clear concept of a role for Germany within the EU in support of Israel.

In the bilateral co-operation between Germany and Israel there have been certain decisions in recent years – some of them controversial in German society – which are indicators of the intensity of the relations. For example, in 1999 and 2000 three Dolphin-class submarines were supplied to Israel at a price of about 340 million Euro each. The costs of two of the subs were assumed by Germany, the costs of the third were divided by Israel and the Federal Republic.⁷ In June 2000 the Federal Government complied with a wish of the Israeli government and admitted a total of 33 former fighters from the Southern Lebanese Army (SLA) – supported by Israel – to Germany together with their families, 400 persons in all. These were part of a group of around 6000 persons who had initially fled to Israel in conjunction with the hasty withdrawal of the Israeli military from southern Lebanon in May 2000. Several times the Federal Government played an important part in the negotiations between the Israeli government and the Lebanese Hizbullah and Iran with the goal of exchanging prisoners.

German-Israeli relations have been marked by a great intensity for decades at the societal level as well. The high participation in youth exchanges, the contacts among many groups in society and an active tourist trade are evidence of this. The German media provide relatively constant and intensive reporting about Israel and the Middle East conflict. On the other hand, at the beginning of the 1990s a poll showed that the prevalent attitude among a majority of the German citizens is a quite unsettling degree of indifference and rejection toward Israel and it is not clear whether this has changed for the better since then.

Conversely, the Israeli media do not report on developments in Germany with the same intensity. Germany is mentioned in the reporting by the Israeli media primarily in conjunction with sports, the spread of anti-Semitic attitudes and neo-Nazi attacks.

7 Yossi Melman: Swimming with the Dolphins, in: Ha'aretz, 9 June 1998.

Relations with the Palestinian authority have been developed with great fervour in recent years. Germany, which has maintained a permanent mission in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories since 1994 (first in Jericho, and then, since 1999, in Ramallah), with its bilateral contributions and those made in conjunction with the EU, is the largest donor country to support building up of an infrastructure in the Palestinian Territories. The political contacts have also become significantly more intense since the beginning of the Oslo process. Furthermore, Germany played a decisive diplomatic role during its EU presidency in the first half of 1999. The leadership of the PLO was dissuaded from its intention of proclaiming a Palestinian state on 4 May 1999 – shortly before the elections in Israel. At the same time, the Council of Europe at its summit meeting in March 1999 passed the so-called “Berlin Declaration”,⁸ in which the right of the Palestinians to a viable state was expressly supported by the EU for the first time.

German interests in the peace process

This brief sketch shows that Germany is already involved in the region on a variety of levels. So the question for German Middle East policy is not “Get involved or keep out?”, but how and when to get involved and with what objective. That raises the question of Germany’s interests in the Middle East.

With all the vagaries of German-Israeli relations, every German Federal Government has spoken of the special responsibility toward the state of Israel. At the same time, the question as to whether the state of Israel came into being only as a result of the Holocaust is a senseless historical speculation which leads nowhere politically. It must be emphasised that many survivors of the Holocaust have found a new homeland in Israel, and that the state of Israel with its Jewish majority population is also of central importance to Jews who do not live there, specifically because of the Holocaust. For historical reasons, Germany has thus a permanent responsibility for the state

8 See Appendix.

of Israel, its existence within secure boundaries and the development of peaceful relations with its neighbours. This responsibility holds true regardless of the particular government in power in Israel (and naturally even if the prime minister is Ariel Sharon).

Germany has an interest in peace between Israel and its neighbours and in stability in the region:

- because of its responsibility for the state of Israel and its residents and therefore also towards the residents of the Palestinian territories;
- because of the intensive exchange especially between Germany and Israel;
- because of the risk that the conflict could overflow to Germany and Europe;
- because of the risk of an increase in refugees from the region;
- to provide security for regional sales markets;
- and to ensure access to the region's energy resources.

The role of the EU

Ever since the European Community (EC) first delivered a joint statement on the situation in the Middle East at the 1980 summit meeting in Venice, many attempts have been made to co-ordinate policy toward the states of the Middle East jointly within the EC, later the EU.

The upheavals of 1989/90 brought significant changes to the Mediterranean region and the Middle East as well. Against the background of this changed political landscape, the European Union, at the beginning of the last decade, began to ponder how it should reorganise its policy toward this region as a whole in order to cope with these changes, as well as the various power relationships and the political and economic interdependencies. It chose a regional approach, with the goal of a Euro-Mediterranean partnership (EMP), known by the key word "Barcelona process".⁹

The initial euphoria over this multidimensional approach of comprehensive economic and political co-operation has since

⁹ See also Chapter 5.

39 given way to sober reality. The asymmetry has become all too clear: Europe – more precisely, the EU – conceives, finances and co-ordinates all the activities. All too uncertain are the effects of opening the market of the partner states for European products while at the same time upholding trade restrictions for exports to the EU from the countries bordering on the Mediterranean. All too unresolved is the dilemma between interests in stability and ambitions of democratisation, when the two aspects come into conflict with each other. Nevertheless, despite all the difficulties the EMP created a forum – an overarching context, so to speak – which enables the states of the entire Mediterranean region – including in particular the participants in the Middle East conflict – to sit down at the same table in difficult times. Granted, that also had the effect that this conflict in turn acted as a disruptive factor on the EMP, that co-operative efforts were cancelled or delayed and conferences were boycotted by one government or another. But through the years the EMP was also a common point of reference. It thus also represented an attempt at integration and co-operation outside the current conflicts.

Understanding of the European role vis-à-vis the USA

The US so far has played the role of a mediator in the Middle East peace process, and will undoubtedly also continue to do so. The EU did not wish to enter into competition with the US, but to support and augment this mediation process. This understanding of their role by the Europeans was expressed in three elements: first in the structural political approach sketched out earlier. The EMP has also always been understood as a political strategy in support of the Middle East peace process. The second element has been the European Union's financial support for the peace process, especially for strengthening the Palestinian infrastructure. This context is the source of the expression describing the EU as the "payer" and the United States as the "player" in this region. However, the catchy comparison hides the fact that this financial support is of course also eminently political support. It has always been understood as a

political act of support for this peace process and has been perceived as such by the European, the Palestinian-Arab, and even the Israeli sides. Because of the refusal of the Israeli government to transfer revenues from taxation in the Palestinian territories to the Palestinian Authority since 2001, the EU gives a monthly budgetary aid of 10 million Euro to prevent the Palestinian administration from breaking down completely. Though Israel has generally approved this financial help, the Sharon government is now accusing the EU-Commission of inadequately controlling the use of the money flow which enabled Arafat to finance terrorist activities. Despite clarifications from the EU side underlining the lack of substance in his accusations,¹⁰ the dispute is still going on. It has to be seen in the context of continuing attempts of the Sharon government to delegitimise the Palestinian President and the refusal of the EU – and the USA – to exclude him from the peace process.

The third element of this complementary understanding of roles is the fact that Europe has involved itself again and again in diplomatic crisis management, in order to help in situations where the peace process was stuck and had come to a dead end. One example of this is the “Berlin Declaration” of March 1999, which was mentioned earlier. A second example: early in the summer of 2000, as Israel was withdrawing its military from South Lebanon, the only thing that made it possible for this process to move so smoothly was that the European Union, especially France, had appropriately prepared this withdrawal diplomatically with Lebanon and Syria behind the scenes. Most recently, in May of 2002, the EU played a decisive role in ending the stand off at the church of the nativity in Bethlehem, where almost 200 Palestinians, many of them armed fighters and clergy were besieged by the Israeli army, by taking in 13 of the fighters which Israel considered terrorists.

Because of the reluctance of the American administration to play an active part in re-launching negotiations and the lack of acceptance of the USA as the sole mediator, it is widely understood that breaking the diplomatic impasse needs a joint effort of the so

¹⁰ See e.g. Chris Patten's speech in the EU parliament on 9 April 2002, http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/patten/spo2_143.htm.

- 41 called “quartet”, i.e. the close co-operation between the USA, EU, Russia and the UN. After presenting the joint statements of the “quartet” in Madrid (April 2002)¹¹ and New York (July 2002)¹² and intensive consultations it seems that the American government and the EU are ready to co-operate very closely. Only a joint initiative will have the credibility and political weight to open a political perspective negotiating possibilities for the conflicting parties in the region.

A “Common Strategy” for the Mediterranean region

Apparently the member states are afraid that the “Common Strategy” could mean that decisions concerning the Middle East in the future could be made, which could not be prevented by one member state with its veto. In order to prevent this in light of the different opinions among the EU-states, decisions concerning the peace process in the Middle East has also repeatedly divided the EU, to the extent that political differences have prevented a strict mutual approach to the parties in the conflict. This came to light clearly in the debate over the “Common Strategy for the Mediterranean Region”. Since the Treaty of Amsterdam, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) has provided an instrument with which all of the EU states unanimously define a common foreign policy strategy toward a country or a particular region. This so-called “Common Strategy” must be passed unanimously, and then operational decisions on implementation can be made on this basis by majority approval. At the European summit meeting in June 2000 the “Common Strategy for the Mediterranean Region” was passed. This closely followed the 1995 Barcelona statement of principles. Visions and goals are stated, the areas of security, stability and prosperity are discussed, and individual fields of action are named, from dialogue in civil society to co-operation on the environment. However, Section 6 of this resolution on the Common

11 Cf. <http://www.un.org/News/dh/mideast/joint-statement.htm>.

12 Cf. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2002/11882.htm>.

Strategy states that the actions which pertain to the Middle East peace process are initially excluded from the “Common Strategy”. In this field the strategy is to apply only from the moment, “when a comprehensive peace solution is reached”.

Apparently the member states are afraid that the “Common Strategy” could mean that decisions concerning the Middle East in the future could be made, which could not be prevented by one member state with its veto. In order to prevent this in light of the different opinions among the EU states, decisions concerning the peace process in the Middle East continue to have to be unanimous. Apparently, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict bears potential for conflict within the EU as well.

The EU member states agree that for the foreseeable future the Middle East region needs a great deal of attention and the investment of a lot of time and money. This means a definite burden, because this time and this money cannot be spent at the expense of other central tasks of the EU, namely the European process of enlargement and unity and the stabilisation of the Southeast of Europe. If it is not possible to resolve the conflicts in the Middle East – and that means above all the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Syrian conflict – this will mean continual financial losses for the EU, continual blockades to the development of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, possible movements of refugees from the region and potential conflicts with the USA. Furthermore, not only Germany but other EU states as well, especially Great Britain and France, have a historical responsibility to contribute to peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict: character and illusions¹³

Political assessments of the conflict since the beginning of the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991, and especially since the conclusion of the Oslo Declaration of Principles in 1993 and the associated processes of normalisation between Israel and the PLO, have

¹³ See also Christian Sterzing: Current developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, January 2001: http://www.diak.org/current_developments.htm.

43 been shaped by illusions. One illusion was that after the breakthrough in achieving mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO and a joint commitment to a negotiation process, the process would take place practically automatically. A comprehensive peace seemed to be only a question of time. Another illusion was the assumption that the apparent balance between the two parties in the conflict would lead to a just resolution, which could satisfy both sides and thus end the conflict.

The importance of human rights in the course of the conflict was also underestimated. A serious error was made by all of the involved governments by largely ignoring the question of human rights, especially those of the Palestinians in the occupied and autonomous territories. Not only was there widespread confiscation of land, expansion of the settlements and of the Israeli road system, but restrictions on freedom of movement for the Palestinians also increased. In addition, the Palestinian populace was subjected again and again to the arbitrariness of Israeli and Palestinian “security forces”. Respect for the human rights of the Palestinian people remains a fundamental structural problem of the Israeli occupation and of a non-democratically organised Palestinian society. Respect for human rights must be made an integral part of the peace process, and must not be put off until after the peace treaty is concluded.

Furthermore, European and German policy will have to pay greater attention to the following aspects:

- The cause of the conflict is the claim of two peoples to the same territory. Although this conflict is religiously charged, it can only be resolved by means of a territorial compromise. Because of the fundamental difference in the historically and religiously justified legitimacy of the claims of both sides, it appears illusory to speak of a “solution” or of an “end” to the conflict. Seen realistically, the only possibility appears to be a “resolution” which prevents the dominance in the two societies of those forces which rule out a common future for the two peoples in the region on the basis of their religious and/or nationalistic convictions and ambitions.

- The Jerusalem question is the strongest symbolically charged issue of contention in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But apparently more difficult are the conflicts over refugees and settlements. Any solution must be founded on UN Resolutions 242 and 194, which are based on the universality of the international legal principles of the illegitimacy of land acquisition through military occupation and of the right of refugees to return. Courageous Israeli writers, journalists and peace groups have named the Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories as a central cause of the conflicts since the beginning of the most recent escalation, and have raised the question of whether Israeli society is really still willing to pay the political price for maintaining the settlements. The fate of the region must not be made to depend on the continued existence of settlements in the occupied territories which were erected contrary to international law.
- The demand for absolute relinquishment by the Palestinians of the right of refugees to return – documented in international law – is too much to expect, especially since it is clear to many leading personalities on both sides that this right will actually be realised for only a limited number of refugees. A distinction must be made between the fundamental right on the one hand and actual realisation on the other. But equally it would be wrong to insist that Israel accept an interpretation of the right of return which describes Israel as an illegitimate state because of the streams of refugees associated with its founding.
- The relationship between the Israeli and Palestinian sides is characterised by asymmetry. An economically strong and militarily superior society, inherently democratic despite all of its problems, which enjoys the support of the USA and other parts of the western community of nations, faces a Palestinian society which is insignificant as an economic factor, has no substantial military power, and in which a civil society has only been able to develop marginally so far. This asymmetry is often overlooked or even denied by the Israeli side, because the

Palestinian side is not seen as an autonomous factor but as part of the numerically superior Arab world. To this is added the feeling of being under threat which has grown stronger again since the escalation of the conflict.

- The actual difficulties in the peace process, especially for the Palestinian people – unfulfilled promises, deterioration of the economic and human rights situation – have obviously not been recognised in sufficient measure outside the region. The deep-reaching loss of trust between the conflicting parties is not a result of the current violent clashes, but rather the violence is an expression of the long erosion of trust and frustration with the stagnating peace process.
- A foreign policy oriented toward human rights must base its actions on standards of international law. Given the asymmetry of forces in the Middle East, and given a mediator whose proximity to Israeli negotiating positions is undisputed, resolution of the conflict cannot be left to the free play of forces, because the present constellation by no means guarantees a solution to the conflict which will be acceptable under international law and which would therefore create a lasting peace. Especially if the escalation of the conflict continues, the question of international observers will have to be taken up in this context. Both Israeli and Palestinian as well as international human rights organisations agree in the demand for international observers, but they must have more rights than the observers in Hebron. Also the idea of a multinational peace-keeping force which was introduced by UN general secretary Kofi Annan in April 2002 needs to be developed further.

The EU level

In light of the local constellation described earlier, there is a need for greater exchange and for the development of a common stance within the EU. France and Germany will have a crucial function here, because France is perceived in the region as tending to be pro-Arab and Germany as tending to be pro-Israeli.

The non-uniform voting performance of the EU states in the UN General Assembly in October 2000 again made the problems of a common foreign policy toward the Middle East clear. As long as individual EU countries see themselves as champions of the specific interests of one or the other of the parties to the conflict, the EU will not be able to realise its potential for crisis prevention. If the repeatedly stated “vital interest” of the EU in peace and stability in the region is to be taken seriously, then for example both France and Germany, which are categorised as pro-Arab and pro-Israeli EU member states respectively, will have to increase their readiness to come to common EU decisions, and will have to analyse the credibility of their appeals to the conflicting parties to be willing to compromise, when a common stance cannot even be developed in the EU. The continuing violence in the Palestinian territories requires more from the EU than appeals for peacefulness and unimaginative warnings.

The US will undoubtedly continue to play the leading role in mediation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The EU cannot replace the United States in the region. In view of the escalation since October 2000 and the unsuccessful American efforts at mediation to date, the political absence of the EU in the region is nevertheless disturbing. The additional opportunities for the EU to influence both parties and other participants such as the Arab and Islamic states in the direction of easing tensions and de-escalation, above and beyond purely material support, are not being exercised sufficiently, although the EU is playing an important role in the regional co-operation within the framework of the Barcelona process. The EU maintains intensive relations with the region – indeed, with all of the parties involved in the conflict – and has the capability to exert influence. The participation of Javier Solana in the summit meeting at Sharm El-Sheikh in October 2000 awakened expectations of the EU. This potential could be used more forcefully, for example through

- a flanking action to prepare rules to follow the conflict, which would be fairly certain to lead to a Palestinian refugee fund, through the declared willingness of the EU to support such

a fund, and through diplomatic efforts to gain the support of other Arab states;

- the preparation of the Arab states for the need for better integration of the Palestinian refugees into their own countries;
- political safeguarding of the sacred sites in Jerusalem through consultation with the states of the Islamic world;
- an intensification of political dialogue within the framework of the Barcelona process;
- active support for the efforts to ease tension on the Israeli-Lebanese border by utilising contacts, especially with Lebanon and Syria;
- the provision of additional resources for diplomatic activities at the EU level, and greater networking of such efforts.

Within the framework of the peace negotiations of Madrid, a number of multilateral working groups were set up after 1991 which are devoted to dealing with the regional problems of the environment and water supply, refugees, arms control and regional security. Because of the past failures in Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, the activities at this level have been largely dormant since 1997. Without positive impulses in reference to the conflicts in the region, there can be little hope of these negotiations getting under way again with any prospect of success. But the USA, Russia, Japan and above all the EU should be called upon to maintain and strengthen the corresponding infrastructures sufficiently so that the working groups for the respective themes can resume their work immediately when the conditions are right.

The aim of these efforts must be to create a kind of working atmosphere at those meetings – when they take place again – so that the governments of the region experience a possible refusal to participate, due to unresolved conflicts, as a missed opportunity. This can only succeed, however, if the states, which organise the working groups, are willing to critically reflect and possibly redefine their own interests in the region. Effective armament control and disarmament in the region will only start for example if the

players outside the region which deliver the “goods”, no longer refuse to enter a critical and public discussion of their economic and political interests in weapons exports. 48

The bilateral level

At various phases in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict there have been so-called “second track” negotiations. This refers to negotiations which are conducted aside from public negotiations, usually in secret. The best-known example from the past decade are the Oslo negotiations, where a key role in bringing them about and guiding their course was played by Norwegian non-governmental organisations and the Norwegian government. Without being pushy at this level, it is entirely possible to imagine offers from Germany to facilitate the conducting of discussions – without assuming the role of a mediator.

Particularly against the background of the escalation of the conflict in the second half of 2000, it could become more important again in the future to offer meeting forums for informal talks between Israelis and Palestinians outside the region. Already before the beginning of the *Al-Aqsa Intifada* there was reluctance or refusal on the side of representatives of Palestinian organisations to participate in public appearances together with representatives of Israeli organisations. They were afraid that this would promote illusions concerning the peace process as well as a kind of symmetry between the conflict parties which did not exist in reality. This problem grew due to the escalation of the conflict. Therefore it could be worthwhile to create non-public opportunities for communication, which would offer possibilities for mutual information and a common search for ways out of the crisis away from the general public.

The necessity of intensifying existing contacts in Israel and seeking new ones will present itself, and especially so in light of the Sharon government. It is important here to encourage and support the forces which are working for a fair agreement with the Palestinian side; they have been more vocal since the begin-

- 49 ning of 2002 after many months of almost complete silence. But at the same time these points must be made unambiguously and publicly clear:
- Criticism of Israeli government policy does not mean that the right of Israel to exist is questioned.
 - Criticism of the representatives of the two parties in the conflict must not be seen as being biased or be open to the accusation that it is based on double standards.

For the evolution of state-building to continue, support is still needed for the expansion of the infrastructure in the Palestinian territories. This specifically includes the areas of education, economic expansion and local self-rule. At the same time, it must be made clear that because the development will be difficult support for it must be established with a view to the long term, and that it is nevertheless not without criteria or conditions. Germany as a donor country must intervene critically and must follow developments within the society closely, for example the human rights situation, the use of force by armed militias, the establishment of the rule of law, the dissemination of anti-Israeli or even anti-Jewish stereotypes in the Palestinian media.

In both societies there are significant ecological problems in conjunction with the existing structural problems, which either are not or cannot be addressed because of the conflict or are in fact caused by it. These range from a lack of sewage systems, to the question of distribution and use of water, to problems posed by traffic, waste disposal and tourism. Work on these issues must be continued and intensified. In dealing with these problems, which often extend across borders, special attention must be paid locally to whether it is possible to create or support co-operative structures.

Criticism of decisions of the Israeli government or the Palestinian authorities which intensify the conflict can be made concrete and credible through intensified support for projects promoting law and order as well as human rights. These include among other things the question of how a state based on law and order can deal with terrorist threats.

The dramatic escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the wake of the unsuccessful Camp David negotiations has put the challenge for a peaceful solution of the conflict on the agenda again. The situation on the ground in the Middle East demands the intensified involvement of Germany and the EU to help secure peace and stability in the region and to finally open up a peaceful prospect for the future of the people in this region.

What is needed is neither a complete redefinition of German and European Middle East policy nor a take-over of the role of the US as mediator in the Middle East by the EU. There is a need for the EU to take a more active and public role to promote a resolution of the conflict based on international law and human rights. With a more active role in dealing with the present crisis, the EU would not only be fulfilling its responsibility but could also make a constructive contribution toward strengthening the peace process by bringing movement to the hardened negotiation fronts. The EU should not be called upon to deliver the ultimate peace plan, but to make constructive contributions toward de-escalation in a period when no negotiations are underway.

The second *intifada* has finally led to an internationalisation of the conflict. It is one of the lessons that have to be drawn from the Oslo process: The conflicting parties in the region are unable to pave the way to a durable peace agreement on their own, they need help from outside. But third party intervention does not mean revitalising the role of the United States as a mediator. The “quartet” seems to be the only way to get things moving again. Without the joint effort of the “quartet” it is impossible to put political pressure on the Israeli and the Palestinian side. Regarding the hesitation of the US-administration, European efforts should primarily aim at persuading the United States to be more active. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not just another variation on the theme of fighting terrorism. Coming to an Israeli-Palestinian agreement will not end terrorism, but peace in this region would be an important contribution to dry out the breeding ground for

51 terrorism. It is a genuine conflict that specifically needs international intervention.

German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer argued that the Oslo process should be turned on its head.¹⁴ The dissolving of settlements and the withdrawal of the Israeli army from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip need to be at the beginning and not the end of a new peace process. Also, the preliminary proclamation of a Palestinian state together with new elections and a structural reform of the Palestinian Authority could promote the process. However, the demand for reform must not serve the same function as earlier demands for “seven days of quiet” – namely to justify an escape from the necessity to open up a political horizon for negotiations. A key element of Fischer’s “set of ideas” presented to the EU-council on Foreign Affairs in April 2002 is the close co-operation of the “quartet” as the primary mover of the negotiating process and its readiness to give international guarantees for the implementation of agreement.

One has to keep in mind the contradictory situation described at the beginning of this chapter. Neither the Palestinian Authority nor the Palestinian society so far has been able to stop the forces which make use of young people who are ready to blow themselves up in order to kill as many Israelis (Jewish and Arab as a matter of fact) as possible. The discourse – even where it is critical of these terrible crimes – points to the Israeli responsibility for creating the context for them. In the Israeli society, there is a constant majority in the polls for dissolving settlements and for a “two-state-solution”. This does not transfer into political action however. The discourse – even where it is critical of the politics of the government – points to the horrific terror acts in the middle of Israeli cities, where people are randomly killed. This is the situation on the one hand. On the other hand, there are the parameters which many people inside and outside the conflict area are convinced need to

¹⁴ Jackson Janes (American Institute for Contemporary German Studies): Fischer’s “Idea Paper” for the Middle East, <http://www.aicgs.org/at-issue/ai-fischeridea.shtml>. See also Fischer’s interview with the German weekly *Die Zeit* on 11 April 2002, http://www.germany-info.org/relaunch/politics/new/pol_fischer_ME_2002_3.htm.

be followed if there is to be an improvement of the situation. In between these positions there are a lot of plans, a lack of consistency in the policy of the US and the EU and also a lack of pressure on the Israeli government to open up a political horizon. In short: there are many more questions than there are answers to explain how to get from here to there. So there must be no illusions, a great deal of patience and constructive pessimism if one wants to deal with this conflict successfully.

The EU recently experienced how elements within the Israeli government tried very hard to get the EU out of the picture by claiming that money provided to the PA by the EU went towards financing terrorist acts against Israelis. If this is to say that the only EU-involvement the Israeli government accepts is one that supports the attempt of this government to deal with the conflict in primarily military terms while refusing to help create the conditions for a renewal of political negotiations, then conflict between the EU and the Israeli government is inevitable. For the German government that means finding a balance between dealing with old and new anti-Semitic tendencies in its own society, while at the same time not equating the principle of unconditional support of the state of Israel with an unconditional support of the Israeli government, truly not an easy task.

The conflict is characterised to a degree by history and also by the collective memory of the parties in the conflict. For that reason the negotiations – once they are resumed – must “do justice” to the fears and discourses on both sides. The resolutions to the conflict must be designed so that they can in time be accepted by a majority in both societies, even though this will not be a “just solution”. However, a more or less “fair resolution” is conceivable, one which will be preferred by a majority in both societies as the lesser evil when compared to a future marked by continuing violence.

THE ADVANTAGES OF COMPLEMENTARITY: US AND EUROPEAN POLICIES TOWARDS THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

The Middle East and the Arab-Israeli peace process always feature high on the agenda of American-European or G-8 consultations and summits. This is hardly surprising: US policymakers have often defined the security and wellbeing of Israel, the EU considers “peace in the Middle East” a “vital interest”.¹ The United States played a lead role as mediator or facilitator between Arabs and Israelis. For Europe the region is seen as being part of its geographical neighbourhood. Given the dense net of historical, cultural, social and economic links between the EU states and the states of the Middle East and North Africa, European policy makers also believe that Europe can and ought to contribute to a solution of the region’s most protracted conflict, i.e. the Israeli-Palestinian and the wider Arab-Israeli conflict. Since 1996, the EU and its member states have defined the role they intended to play in the peace process as complementary to the American role. This concept, now is frequently used, has a dual function: On the one hand, it underlines the claim for a political role, stressing that Europe can be “a player as well as a payer”²; on the other, it is meant to defuse American suspicions that Europe might actually want to compete with the US or counterbalance US policies in the region.³

There is little doubt that there has often been divergent opinions on both sides of the Atlantic about the proper way to reach a settlement in the Middle East. European policy makers, officials and observers have not always been convinced of the wisdom of

1 This was first declared in 1996. Cf. “Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the Middle East Peace Process”, 1 October 1996.

2 Miguel A. Moratinos, “Give peace a hand”, *The Financial Times*, 3 June 1999.

3 See Malcolm Rifkind, “Blueprint for a region at peace”, *The Times*, 5 November 1996; Commission of the European Communities, *The role of the European Union in the Middle East*.

US policies or positions towards the region and towards its main actors. The strong pro-Israel bias of US policies in particular, as expressed among other things, in repeated US vetoes against Security Council decisions that reprimand Israel for settlement building or other violations of international law, has not been seen as helpful. Europeans have been disturbed by the strong linkage of US Middle East policies to domestic issues, particularly election campaigns. There have been fears, on the European side, that the US would disregard the legitimate interests of core Arab players, such as the Palestinians or Syria, and eventually try to sponsor a form of settlement that would be neither just nor comprehensive. More recently, Europeans have been troubled by the apparently strong influence the American religious right exerts on the Bush administration's Middle East policy as well as the open and, in European eyes unfounded, charges of anti-Semitic tendencies in European approaches to the region.⁴

Americans do not deny that Europe has a stake in the region, but there exist serious doubts that Europe would actually be capable of fulfilling a political or diplomatic function. In the eyes of many US policy makers and advisors, Europe has neither the instruments for such a role, nor does it have the necessary constructive approach: it has been argued that the EU will never find a common position except in their criticism of US policies;⁵ most of its members are accused of being unbalanced (i.e., pro-Arab or pro-Palestinian), or they focus too much on specific outcomes of a settlement (such as demanding Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories). Under the Clinton administration, US pundits

4 See with somewhat different accents, e.g., Dominique Moïsi, "Europe's backyard: The EU should be more active in Middle East peace talks", *The Financial Times*, 13 October 1997; Volker Perthes, "Points of Difference, Cases for Co-operation. European Critiques of US Middle East Policy", *Middle East Report*, vol. 28, no. 3/1998, pp. 30–32; Udo Steinbach and Christian Hacke, "Auf ewig der Juniorpartner Amerikas?", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15 May 1999; Chris Patten, "An appeal for reasoned debate," *International Herald Tribune*, 8 May 2002.

5 See Simon Serfaty, "Bridging the Gulf Across the Atlantic: Europe and the United States in the Persian Gulf", *Middle East Journal*, vol. 52, 2, 1998, pp. 337–350.

55 and policy makers often argued that a European involvement in the actual negotiation process would complicate matters rather than being helpful. European governments and the EU should therefore “forswear independent diplomatic initiatives unless asked by all the local parties directly involved”, and stick to what they can usefully do: commit aid, participate in the multilateral talks, and develop their own Mediterranean co-operation schemes.⁶ In a sense George W. Bush and his administration have been less possessive in regard to the peace process. For the new president and his team, Europe was welcome to try to find a peaceful solution in the Middle East, and contribute to it with its own diplomacy. At the same time, however, the Bush administration made it clear that it would reduce the active US involvement that had characterised the last two years of the Clinton term.

US-European differences on the Middle East, and on Middle East policies, are largely linked to developments in the region. The policies of the Netanyahu government (1996–99) effectively blocked the peace process. For the first two years of that period, the stalemate in the Middle East also caused some discord between the US and the EU. Similarly, considerable policy differences arose in view of the hard-line approach of the Sharon government and the unprecedented escalation of violence that unfolded between Israel and the Palestinians in 2001 and 2002. Generally, as both cases show, European criticism of US policies was not so much about what the Americans did in the Middle East, as rather about what they failed to do – i.e., it focussed on an apparent lack of resolve in regard to the peace process and a lack of willingness to use their leverage with Israel in order to stop or at least control the violence.⁷

6 See, e.g., Richard N. Haas, “The United States, Europe, and the Middle East Peace Process” in *Allies Divided. Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East*, eds. R. D. Blackwill and M. Stürmer (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), pp. 61–77; see also Robert Satloff, “America, Europe, and the Middle East in the 1990s: Interests and Policies”, *ibid.* pp. 7–39

7 French officials were particularly articulate on this point. See, e.g., Hubert Védrine (interview), “L’attentisme des États-Unis les fait ressembler à des Ponce Pilate”, *Le Figaro*, 30 August 2001.

At the same time, the EU and its member states have generally lent their support to any attempt by a US administration to become more actively engaged in the search for peace in the Middle East. This was particularly apparent in the autumn of 1998, when President Clinton summoned Israeli and Palestinian leaders to Wye Plantation. The failure of the Israeli government to implement more than a fraction of the Wye agreements paved the way for a new and positive bilateral relationship between the United States and the Palestinian Authority.⁸ As the US administration became more responsive to Palestinian grievances and demands, it also began to take positions that were closer to those of the Europeans. US and European officials agreed, silently, in their wish for a change of government in Israel. They were also concerned about the possibility of a Palestinian declaration of statehood on 4 May 1999 – the theoretical end of the Interim period defined by the Oslo-II-agreement – which they thought ran the risk of having undesired consequences both in terms of a possible outbreak of violence and of enhancing Netanyahu's electoral chances. US and European officials effectively co-ordinated their positions on the issue, with both sides working on Arafat to dissuade him from a state proclamation before the Israeli elections.

US and European leaders unanimously welcomed the victory of Ehud Barak in Israel's elections of May 1999, and there were similar expressions of hope, on both sides of the Atlantic, that with a new Israeli government the peace process would come back on track. The EU appreciated the Clinton administration's stepping up of its efforts to move the Syrian and the Palestinian tracks forward; and individual EU states offered their good offices on occasion. France, for instance, played a significant role in having Syria accept the Israeli withdrawal from Southern Lebanon. European leaders and commentators also appreciated President Clinton's effort to convene the US-Israeli-Palestinian conclave at Camp David in July 2000. The EU and its member states, initially at least, con-

⁸ See Aaron D. Miller, "There's no Turning Back", *Middle East Insight*, July 1999 (www.mideastinsight.org). Miller is the deputy US Special Envoy to the peace process.

57 sidered the Camp-David meeting an important step forward, not a failure,⁹ and they joined the US, as well as Russia and others, in encouraging Yasir Arafat to once more postpone the declaration of statehood so as to give more time for further American mediation. Europeans and Americans were similarly surprised by and unprepared for the Israeli-Palestinian crisis – the new *intifada* – that began in September 2000. Behind closed doors, Europeans discussed whether the Clinton administration had actually contributed to the crisis by trying to rush Israelis and Palestinians into a final-status agreement which they were not actually prepared for. EU declarations were more critical of Israel than those of the US government: Rather than only condemning the “violence”, the EU also pointed to the root causes of the events, namely Palestinian frustration with the lack of progress in the peace process and “the settlement issue”.¹⁰ It is noticeable, however, that there was little if any public criticism of the US and its role on the part of EU policymakers and institutions. Rather, the Europeans urged the Clinton administration to continue in its efforts to reach a solution up to the last possible moment. Again, the main European fear was not that certain moves of the US president might not help the cause of peace as, rather, that the US administration might fall back into a hands-off approach.

This was exactly what appeared to happen after the almost parallel change of leadership in the United States and Israel. While Europe continued to demand that Israelis and Palestinians return to their final-status negotiations on the basis of what had been reached in their bilateral talks in Taba, in January 2001, the Bush government seemed to openly embrace the hard-line approach of Israel’s new prime minister Ariel Sharon. The White House made declarations to the effect that the so-called *Clinton Minutes* – President Clinton’s December 2000 proposals for a mutually acceptable

9 See: “Déclaration de la présidence du Conseil sur la situation au Proche-Orient”, Intervention de M. Pierre Moscovici, ministre délégué des Affaires européennes, devant le Parlement européen réuni en session plénière (Strasbourg, le 5 septembre 2000) (www.presidente-europe.fr.st).

10 See, e.g., “Situation in the Middle East. Declaration of the European Union”, *Euromed Report*, 21 November 2000.

settlement of the final-status issues – were no longer considered an official US position.¹¹ President Bush’s refusal to meet with Palestinian Authority President Yasir Arafat also caused some alarm in Europe. Additionally, many Europeans were of the opinion that the US was not giving sufficient backing to the so-called Mitchell Report. In order to pave the way for a resumption of final-status negotiations, the report called for an unconditional cessation of violence and a host of measures to rebuild confidence, including, among other things, a redeployment of the Israeli army to their positions prior to the outbreak of the *intifada* in September 2000 and an end to settlement building.¹² The US administration, such at least was the wide-spread European impression, allowed Ariel Sharon to get away with his demand that any resumption of negotiations would have to be preceded by “seven days of absolute quiet” – a virtually impossible condition for the Palestinian Authority to fulfil, as both Palestinian extremists or the Israeli army would be able to trigger new violence whenever a few quieter days had passed. The United States, as administration officials frequently pointed out, was not “absent” from the scene in the Middle East. It had released the Mitchell Report (which had, been commissioned by the Clinton administration); Bush had sent CIA-chief General Tenet to the region, and General Anthony Zinni had been appointed the special Middle East envoy of the secretary of state. But in contrast to the Clinton administration, the new administration’s Middle East engagement was highly “selective”,¹³ tending to focus rather narrowly on procedural security issues. Consider the so-called Tenet plan of June 2001 which basically tried to re-establish Israeli-Palestinian security co-operation. This was in line with Sharon’s demand for “quiet” and a long, indefinite interim status

11 See *International Herald Tribune*, 10/11 February 2001.

12 Report of The Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, April 30, 2001. Aside from its chairman, former US Senator George Mitchell, the commission consisted of former US Senator Warren Rudman, former Turkish president Suleyman Demirel, Norway’s foreign minister Thorbjørn Jagland and EU High Representative Javier Solana.

13 See Kenneth W. Stein, “The Bush Doctrine: Selective Engagement in the Middle East”, *MERIA*, Vol. 6, 2, June 2002 (www.meria.biu.ac.il).

59 that would not demand any (further) territorial concessions from Israel. The EU and its members, in contrast, insisted that sustainable progress could only be made if the Palestinians were given a clear political perspective – and if there was sustainable US *and* European engagement.

Calls on the Bush administration to develop, either jointly with their allies or by themselves, this type of political perspective and resume their role as the prime facilitator and mediator in the peace process mounted over the summer of 2001 and beyond – from America’s Arab friends, from Europe, from within the US itself and from Israel¹⁴ –, and a major policy speech on the Middle East by Secretary of State Colin Powell was apparently being prepared for the UN General Assembly of 2001. The terrorist attacks on New York and Washington of 11 September changed the entire framework of US international policies. The focus of US interest quickly shifted to Afghanistan and to other locations that would figure in the “war on terrorism”. The Middle East issue, however, could not be left aside as Arab states that were needed to build a broad international coalition demanded that the United States commit itself to a serious engagement in resolving the conflict. President Bush’s UN speech in November 2001, in which he spoke of his vision of the two states of Israel and Palestine living side by side, partially fulfilled these expectations. Europeans also were quick to welcome Bush’s “vision” which clearly went along with their own repeated expressions of support for the eventual establishment of a Palestinian state.

At the same time, the EU and its member states clearly wished for a more active involvement by the United States, particularly to stop the ever-escalating Israeli-Palestinian confrontation. European policy makers agreed with their US colleagues that Arafat and his Palestinian Authority ought to do more to stop suicide bombers and other terrorist attacks in Israel, but they also insisted

14 See, e.g., Martin Indyk, “U.S. Has a Crucial Part to Play in the Middle East”, *International Herald Tribune*, 9 August 2001; Gideon Samet; “A Bush initiative at last? Help Israelis and Palestinians help themselves”, *International Herald Tribune*, 7 June 2002.

that Sharon would have to be constrained, and that Israel should not be allowed to destroy the Palestinian Authority or do away with the elected Palestinian leader. By spring 2002, US-European differences over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could no longer be hidden. In Europe, calls for sanctions against Israel increased, the European parliament adopted such demands, the Council of Foreign Ministers, however, and the European Commission decided against them; in the United States, a number of opinion makers pictured Europe's stance on the Middle East as basically anti-Semitic.

In a way, the crisis of March and April 2002 – Israel's re-occupation of most of the autonomous Palestinian areas in the West Bank – narrowed transatlantic gaps. Security Council resolutions 1397 and 1402, the former "affirming a vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognised borders", the latter demanding, among other things, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the newly occupied Palestinian cities, expressed the minimal international consensus which Washington as well as the Europeans shared. US and European officials co-operated on the ground to find a solution for the stand-off at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the lifting of Israel's siege on Arafat's Ramallah headquarters. More importantly, perhaps, the emergence of the so-called "quartet" – the US, the EU, the UN, and Russia – indicated to Israelis, Palestinians, the Arab states and the rest of the world that a more credible, concerted effort was under way to get the Middle East peace process back on track.¹⁵ US and European diplomats began to plan for an international Middle East conference; the CIA laid out the rules for a reform of the Palestinian security services; Europeans committed themselves to supporting and overseeing Palestinian institutional reform and elections. Europeans were rather unhappy with President Bush's Middle East policy speech of June 2002 in which he conditioned US support for the establishment of a Palestinian

15 Cf. "Joint Statement by UN, Russian Federation, European Union and United States", Madrid, 10 April 2002, <http://www.un.org/News/dh/mideast/joint-statement.htm>.

61 state on the election of a new Palestinian leadership without Yasir Arafat.¹⁶ European leaders, as well as UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, made clear that the Palestinians themselves would have to decide who their leader is, and that the outcome of presidential elections in the Palestinian territories could not be a condition for the implementation of Palestinian statehood. Europeans were also concerned that the US president had silently given up the plan for an international conference which the “quartet” had promoted just a couple of weeks before. The establishment of the “quartet”, after all, reflected the shared view of American, European and UN leaders that Israelis and Palestinians alone would not be able to settle or even control their conflict, and that it was dangerous, or risky at least, to leave them alone. The “quartet” – which realistically speaking was not a grouping of equal players but a US-EU Middle East policy co-ordination group that also consulted with the UN and Russia – could also be seen as a European attempt to support those parts of the US administration, namely the State Department, which favoured a heightened diplomatic role in the Middle East and were convinced, along with their European colleagues, that crisis containment or conflict management was not enough. European Middle East policy, thus, became to a large extent transatlantic policy – aimed at getting the United States involved in a “Contact Group” that would eventually direct the local parties towards a political solution.

US and European priorities

Europe and the US have different approaches to the Middle East and to the peace process. This is not so much a result of different, let alone contradictory interests as rather of different priorities, and it is also a matter of geography and interdependencies as well as polity structures and respective capabilities.

Both Americans and Europeans define their interests in the region with respect to a wider Middle Eastern or Middle Eastern-

¹⁶ “President Bush Calls for New Palestinian Leadership”, (www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/print/20020624-3.html).

Mediterranean area rather than just to Israel and its neighbours. For the United States, this geopolitical area includes the Levante as well as the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula; the Europeans focus more on the Mediterranean. The key US interests in the region at large have clearly and repeatedly been defined: they basically comprise the security and wellbeing of Israel, the free flow of oil, the security of friendly Arab states and regimes, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and, especially evident since the autumn of 2001, the fight against terrorism and its possible support bases. Europeans do not deny the importance of any of those US interests. Their main concern, however, is regional stability – a central concept to European thinking in regard to the region which is conspicuously absent from the US list of priorities. Also, “peace in the Middle East” has been defined as a “vital” interest of the EU. While oil security and the limitation of weapons proliferation are matters of interest, European policy makers are less concerned about these issues than their American counterparts. Given the strong economic interdependence between Europe and the states of the Middle East and North Africa, there is little fear that regional oil producers would try to withhold their product from European markets. There is also a European consensus of sorts that there is no military threat from the region, while there are risks that emanate from local and regional instabilities which have to be taken seriously: from inter-state conflict (Arab-Israeli or other), from social crises and political turbulence in individual countries of the region as well as from economic imbalances between Europe and its Mediterranean neighbours. Uncontrolled migration, the spread of religious or nationalistic extremisms, and the export to Europe of regional conflicts, via migrant communities or terrorist groups, are of particular concern.¹⁷ Worries about terrorist threats and the breeding of violence if regional

¹⁷ See, among others, Roberto Aliboni, “Re-Setting the Euro-Mediterranean Security Agenda”, *The International Spectator*, vol. 33, 4, 1998, pp. 11–15; Eberhard Rhein, “Europe and the Greater Middle East” in *Allies Divided*, pp. 41–59 (49 f.).

63 conflicts remain unresolved have been even more accentuated after the attacks of 11 September. Little wonder therefore that the EU, in its common strategy on the Mediterranean region, emphasises Europe's interest in the development of a "prosperous, democratic, stable and secure region, with an open perspective towards Europe."¹⁸

As concerns the Arab-Israeli conflict and peace process per se, Europe and the US are in agreement both on the need to reach a peaceful settlement and on the legal principles on which such a settlement should be based, namely UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, i.e., the land-for-peace principle. A remarkable difference remains, however, between the American and the European positions: In the US list of priorities, the security and well-being of Israel feature as a prime interest, separate from but consistent with the interest in Arab-Israeli peace. European policy statements, in contrast, rather than focusing on the concerns of Israel, emphasise the need for comprehensive peace and security, including the legitimate rights of the Palestinians,¹⁹ they regularly underline the "need to respect international law".²⁰ Such differences are more than linguistic. They reflect different leanings in respect to the regional parties which are due to geography and economic interest as well as domestic policy equations.

Geographic proximity and interdependence are a major determinant of Europe's relation to Israel and the Arab states. Europe cannot ignore the fact that all southern and eastern Mediterranean states are its neighbours. It can have special relations with Israel,

18 "Common Strategy of the European Union on the Mediterranean Region", adopted at the European Council at Santa Maria da Feira, 19–20 June 2000.

19 In this sense, the "European Union Call for Peace in the Middle East" (European Council Amsterdam, 1997) stresses "the right of all States and peoples in the region to live in peace within safe, recognised borders." In the special part dealing with Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, both Israeli and Palestinian concerns are addressed: The EU calls on "the people of Israel to recognise the right of the Palestinians to exercise self-determination, without excluding the option of a State," and its calls "upon the Palestinian people to reaffirm their commitment to the legitimate right of Israel to live within safe, recognised borders."

20 See, e.g., the above-quoted "Déclaration de la présidence du Conseil sur la situation au Proche-Orient" of 5 September 2000.

and probably always will, but in contrast to the US, it could never afford to base its policies on “strategic relationships” with just one or two regional partner states. Any regional destabilisation is seen as a risk, even if it does not affect the security of Israel or the free flow of oil. There are strong social and economic relations between Europe and the entire Middle East, with European commercial interests being much stronger, and also more diversified than those of the United States: Israel and its neighbours conduct more than 36 per cent, the Maghreb states more than 66 per cent, and the Gulf states around 18 per cent of their foreign trade with EU states, compared to only 20, 6, and 11 per cent respectively with the US.²¹ As a result, Europe is generally more open to Arab demands and positions than the US – even though the EU and basically all its member states still have stronger and normally also better relations to Israel than to any Arab state.²²

Generally, both European and US policies towards the region, as well as their different leanings or biases, are based on national or, respectively, European interests – not on the interests of particular groups or lobbies. This is not to deny that pro-Israeli groups have considerable clout in the US, certainly more than they have in European states. US support for Israel has often been in conflict with other US interests in the region, particularly with respect to the Gulf-Arab oil-producing states, and it is safe to say, as Michael Hudson has put it, that America’s Israel lobby has been more powerful than the oil lobby.²³ Even the Bush administration is influenced by the former rather than by the latter – and this despite the connections of some of its key members with the

21 Figures are for 2000: International Monetary Fund (IMF) *Directions of Trade Statistics Yearbook* (Washington D.C.: IMF, 2001). Data for the Mashreq states refers to Israel and its neighbours Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt; the Maghreb includes Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. The Gulf states are the permanent GCC members Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Oman as well as Yemen.

22 Note that Israel alone among Europe’s Mediterranean partners has become a member to the EU’s Research and Technology Framework Programme, the EU’s main institutional instrument to sponsor R&D.

23 Michael Hudson, “To Play the Hegemon: Fifty Years of U.S. Policy Towards the Middle East”, *Middle East Journal*, vol. 50, 3, 1996, pp. 329–343.

65 oil business.²⁴ All EU countries consider Israel a friend, some, particularly Germany and the Netherlands, also have strong emotional ties to Israel. In none of these states, however, is Israel, or support for Israel, as much an issue of domestic politics as in the US. Questions such as to where one's embassy should be located in Israel (or whether, for that matter, one should give diplomatic recognition to the Palestinian entity) are very unlikely to be debated in an election campaign, be that in any national election or in the elections for the European parliament.

The structural backgrounds of different approaches

Different leanings do not necessarily form an obstacle to transatlantic consultation or even co-operation on Middle Eastern issues. They can be translated into comparative advantages, especially if seen in the context of different structures and capabilities.

To start with, the United States is one single state, and it is uniquely capable of projecting military power into the region and threaten the use of force if deemed necessary. The EU, in contrast, is still a union of sovereign states that all have their own respective interests and biases and do not always act coherently. Common EU foreign policy approaches and actions – the Barcelona process being a good example – themselves contribute to the integration of Europe.²⁵ As yet, however, only Europe's commercial and economic policies towards the region have been effectively "communautised" under the auspices of the European Commission. The EU's com-

24 Michael Lind, "Die Israel-Lobby in den Vereinigten Staaten", *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, 47 (Juni 2002), pp. 685–697. On developments within pro-Israeli lobbies in the United States see also Phyllis Bennis and K. Mansour, "'Praise God and Pass the Ammunition!': The Changing Nature of Israel's US Backers", *Middle East Report*, vol. 28, 3, 1998, pp. 16–18/43. While these lobbies try their best to exert influence, their impact should not be overestimated. In the Arab world in particular, US strategic interests in the region and their overlap with Israeli interests are often underestimated while the influence of the pro-Israel lobby on US foreign-policy making is exaggerated.

25 See G. E. and E. Philippart, "The EU Mediterranean Policy: Virtue unrewarded or ...?", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. XI, 1, 1997, pp. 185–207.

mon foreign and security policy (CFSP) is still in its infancy; any meaningful common action needs inter-governmental consensus.

Some of Europe's regional partners have also been frustrated by the institutional complexity of Europe, by the constant change of interlocutors, or by the comparatively weak mandate of the EU presidency which has to seek consensus among 15 member states for any foreign policy position or action.²⁶ With the installation of a High Representative for the CFSP, Europe's foreign policy will at least get a "face" – initially Javier Solana. Solana's membership in the Mitchell committee established by the US president in the autumn of 2000 to find and evaluate the facts that led to the outbreak of protracted Israeli-Palestinian violence consequently gave a slightly higher profile to the EU in the actual peace process and efforts at crisis management. The EU consensus problem, however, remains. Also, Europe's ability as well as its willingness to project military power is limited and is likely remain so despite the declared intention to develop a European defence and security identity.

Other structural features which have a bearing on US and European capabilities and their respective ability to influence the course of events in the Middle East may favour the European side. Among them is the dependence of US foreign policy on electoral cycles and the four-year presidential term. US policies towards the Middle East in the run-up to presidential elections are often perceived as being paralysed, a perception which can eventually have exactly that effect. Accordingly, US leaders tend to link the calendar of events in the Middle East to election dates in the United States.²⁷ President Bush clearly did so in his Middle

²⁶ See Jörg Monar, "Institutional Constraints of the European Union's Mediterranean Policy", *Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 3, 2, 1998, pp. 39–60.

²⁷ This is not to say that they should not do so. The difference of perspective and perception, however, between US and European leaders is sometimes striking: While President Clinton, in his speech to the United Nations Millennium Summit (i.e., two months before the US presidential elections), told the world that time was running out for Israelis and Palestinians to reach an accord (see: *International Herald Tribune*, 7 September 2000), Europeans, around the same time, were more relaxed: The EU appreciated that after Camp David, and given President Clinton's being "more determined than ever to use his ... influence to promote, before the end of his presidency, a positive

67 East policy speech of June 2002 – setting the date for the eventual establishment of a Palestinian state at some point after the next US presidential elections. Also, presidential idiosyncrasies play an important role in the approach each administration takes towards different problems and actors in the region.²⁸ Moreover, inter-agency differences tend to have a negative effect on the ability of the administration to follow through on its agenda. Congress, in particular, likes to interfere with Middle East policies, including the introduction of special legislation that may complicate or even obstruct US diplomatic efforts in the region: Consider the “Jerusalem Embassy Law” of 1995; the so-called “Peace through Negotiations Act” of September 2000 which threatened to cut any US aid to the Palestinians in case of a unilateral Palestinian declaration of independence, or House and Senate resolutions in May 2002 that expressed far-reaching support for Israel in its war on the Palestinian Authority. Under the Bush administration, inter-agency differences over the Middle East – between a pragmatic State Department on one side, and neo-conservative ideologists as well as proponents of the religious right in the Pentagon and in Congress on the other – seem wider (from a European perspective at least) than differences that different European governments have over the EU’s Middle East policies.

Also, changes of government in EU states, the six monthly rotation of the EU presidency or even the appointment of a new EU Commission are hardly noticeable in terms of Europe’s policies towards the region. Individual leaders such as Tony Blair or Jacques Chirac have at times given particular colouring to their countries’ Middle East policies. But generally, European Middle East policies are very much the brainchild of, and are implemented by, the bureaucracies in Brussels as well as in the national capitals – which tend to remain even when governments change and com-

outcome to the negotiations”, there was an “exceptional window of opportunity” which might not be open too long (“Déclaration de la présidence du Conseil sur la situation au Proche-Orient” of 5 September 2000). But the Europeans did not subscribe to the notion of a last chance which Clinton’s speech implied.

28 See William B. Quandt, *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, revised edition 2001) p. 8–11.

missioners go. The European parliament and national parliaments in EU countries tend to accentuate these policies, with a particular concern for human rights issues, rather than counterbalance or obstruct it. As a result, European policies towards the Middle East mostly have a long-term perspective, rather than being connected to electoral cycles. The Barcelona process, with a 15 to 20 years time frame, is a telling example.

Reflecting the institutional architecture of Europe, the EU, with all its complexities, also has a built-in tendency towards multilateralism. While individual European leaders do engage in high-level bilateral diplomacy with their regional counterparts, the EU approach is largely characterised by the establishment of multilateral or pluri-bilateral²⁹ dialogues on various levels, economic incentives, a focus on regional political institutions and infrastructure, and a considerable interest in the involvement of civil-society actors from partner countries. Europe also tries to play international politics to the rules, with a stronger emphasis on international legality and a certain disdain for US-style power politics.

Compared to Europe, US foreign policy-making is highly personalised, with the US president being the prime mover and decision-maker. This also reflects on the way the United States and Europe conduct their policies towards the region. It is noticeable that US Middle East policies tend to focus on regional leaders, and work on them much more, and much more effectively, than the European Union and any single EU state. Presidential phone calls as well as invitations to White House summits are important instruments of US diplomacy. Meetings with an American president are highly valued among regional leaders. There is little doubt that Arafat's being snubbed by President Bush has been a major political setback. Even heads of states that are not on excellent terms with the US administration, Syria's Bashar al-Assad for example,

29 The concept is borrowed from Roberto Aliboni, "The Charter for Peace and Stability in the Mediterranean", *EuroMeSCo News*, no. 5, 1999, pp 4–6. It refers to relations between the European Union on one hand and individual partner countries on the other. See also Roberto Aliboni, "Enhanced Political Dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership," October 1999 (Euro-MeSCo Working Group on the Euro-Med Charter for Peace and Security).

69 give high value to a presidential phone call from Washington. Such calls are taken seriously, and they generally also make headlines in the local state-controlled media. A phone call by the EU presidency, let alone the president of the European Commission, is unlikely to have a similar effect – indeed it is possible that the regional leaders would not even know who is calling.

Given these differences of polity structure and comparative capabilities, Europe would never be able to force anything like the Madrid peace conference on the regional parties – an undertaking that would need intensive high-level diplomatic engagement of the US and a certain degree of pressure on regional leaders. It would also be unthinkable for the EU presidency, the president of the European Commission, or for any national leader in the EU to succeed in summoning Israel's prime minister and the president of the Palestinian Authority to a Camp-David type of summit, let alone keeping them there for a fortnight. A new international Middle East conference will not take place without the active prodding of the United States. At the same time it would be unthinkable for any US administration to establish, support and maintain such a complex multilateral, multidimensional and multi-level process as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). And the Palestinian quasi-state that has emerged from the Oslo agreements would probably not have survived at all without European financial and technical aid.

Comparative advantages: Prescriptions for a division of labour

The above record shows that US and European efforts in the Middle East can indeed complement each other. In comparison, Europe and the United States have certain advantages and weaknesses (that is, each side is better equipped for some activities than for others) which can and should be translated into a rather informal division of labour and responsibilities. Complementarity implies that US capabilities cannot be the benchmark or standard against which the value or the political importance of European contributions are measured, and vice versa. There is no reason to assume

that power projection is more important, or more conducive to promoting peace and stability in the region, than the projection of multilateralism. The former may have more short-term, the latter more long-term effects. Nor does complementarity or a division of responsibilities mean that one party follow the other blindly, or that Americans and Europeans have to see eye-to-eye on every question that concerns their policies in the region. What is needed, though, is a form of semi-permanent policy co-ordination.

- The United States will have to remain the main regional power broker. US efforts should therefore concentrate on high-level diplomacy, especially in facilitating and mediating bilateral negotiations as well as giving regional leaders the final push they may need to make a deal. It is obvious that US security assistance and guarantees to individual countries, particularly but not only to Israel, can reassure these countries' publics and compensate for certain territorial or political concessions they will have to make for an agreement with their neighbours. Europeans should not be deceived by Arab calls for a greater European role, or even for Europe as a counterweight to the United States: When it comes to forging a final deal, Israel as well as Syria, Lebanon or the Palestinian leadership will want to have the Americans at the table. The Arab states may have limited trust in the impartiality of the United States, but they certainly want its weight and power to be behind any agreement which they might come to with Washington's main ally in the region.³⁰ Europe can and should make an effort to influence US-thinking and US-policy making in the Middle East. The "quartet" may be a proper way to allow US diplomatic leadership within a multilateral framework – and to synergise US, European, UN and Russian efforts to reach a settlement in the Middle East.

³⁰ Contrary to conventional wisdom, this is not the result of the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the Soviet Union. Even at earlier stages, the Arab states wanted the United States to be the main mediator of deals with Israel. Remember Egypt's embrace of the Rogers Plan (1969), its insistence of having the US mediate in what became the Camp David accord, or Syria's acceptance (in the absence of US-Syrian diplomatic relations) to have US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger negotiate a disengagement agreement with Israel after the October war of 1973.

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- Europe will generally have to concentrate on less visible, but no less politically important contributions to achieving and stabilising peace in the Middle East. At some point the EU is likely to have to lead efforts to revive the multilateral peace talks or even to take the lead in launching a “Conference for Security and Co-operation in the Middle East”. The EU should of course continue to sponsor and support other – regional or sub-regional – multilateral activities, particularly in the fields of economic and security co-operation that are not necessarily linked to the peace process but have a positive bearing on it. Apart from being an inherently Western model for regional co-operation and integration, Europe can provide practical experience and get regional actors used to working in multilateral frameworks through its Mediterranean policy.
 - Regarding the bilateral Arab-Israeli tracks, US leadership is not in question, and it will not be questioned by Europe provided that Washington does not abandon its responsibilities. European contributions will generally take place on the somewhat lesser diplomatic levels, often with lower profile, or in joint frameworks with the US and others. The European role includes traditional diplomatic functions such as conveying messages between and developing ideas with regional leaders. It also includes more practical activities related to security and confidence-building and to the implementation of existing agreements. In the Israeli-Palestinian context, this would reach from police training to the establishment of technical bodies and institutions dealing with, to give but a few examples, municipal co-operation, export procedures and airport operability.
 - In the context of peace negotiations or crisis containment, there will be a recurrent need to employ the special relations that Brussels, Paris, Berlin or others maintain with individual states in the Middle East, particularly with Syria and Lebanon or Iran, and to do so on different levels of diplomacy. France’s efforts to make Teheran a silent partner in the so-called “April understanding” – the cease-fire agreement that ended Israel’s 1996 “Operation Grapes of Wrath” and led to the establishment

of the Israel-Lebanon Monitoring Group (ILMG) – was not at that time well received by the United States; it did, however, contribute to finding a format which, in the judgement of US, French, Syrian, Israeli and Lebanese observers, has worked considerably well. In May 2000 France again was central in conveying to Syria that it better accept Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon. British security officials and Greek politicians micro-managed the resolution of the April 2002 stand-off over the Church of Nativity; and the services of German intelligence have been used repeatedly by Israel and Hizbullah to agree upon and implement prisoner- or body-exchanges.

- Europe and European institutions should remain active organisers of second tracks, not only those between Israelis and Palestinians. The Oslo process and the invaluable diplomatic contribution to it of a non-EU member state, Norway is certainly a case in point. This remains so in spite of the now prevalent disappointment with “Oslo”. Given Europe's strong interdependence and more diversified relations with the region as well as the predilection of European policies for the creation of multilateral networks and their focus on societal actors, Europe will, in general, be the better interlocutor for such low-level diplomatic or semi-diplomatic activities.
- European organisations will have a special role in rebuilding and furthering the development of Palestinian institutions. Laying, or helping to lay, the groundwork for a viable and reliable Palestinian state reflects a common interest of Palestinians and Israelis as well as of Europe and the US. While Europe is likely to be better equipped than others to play a leading role in this field, the issue is not only a European concern. Neither should it exclude US involvement, nor Euro-American or Euro-American-Middle Eastern co-operation.³¹

³¹ See Muriel Asseburg and Volker Perthes, *Surviving the Stalemate: Approaches to Strengthening the Palestinian Entity* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Publishers, 1998); *Strengthening Palestinian Public Institutions. Report of an Independent Task Force Sponsored by the Council of Foreign Relations* (Michel Rocard, Chairman, Henry Siegman, Project Director), Executive Summary (New York, N.Y.: The Council, 1999). Both studies reflect strong concern with

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- Europe also has an important role, and a comparative advantage based on its own experience in regional institution building. At some point, the multilateral peace talks will have to be resumed; and regional institutions and organisations in such different fields as economic co-operation, research networks, water management, diplomatic training, preservation of cultural heritage or statistics will be needed.
 - EU states, Germany included, should prepare for a limited European military peace-keeping role, if and where the regional parties so wish. This will most likely apply to Israel and Syria once a peace agreement has been reached. Israel will not agree to UN peace-keepers on the Golan Heights, but an international military presence modelled on the Multinational Forces and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai could be acceptable to both countries. We should therefore envisage the establishment of a joint peace-keeping force of US, French and other European units. A multinational peace-keeping force may also become an important ingredient of a Palestinian-Israeli agreement; an observation or separation force might even be formed and deployed before such an agreement exists. In both cases, US troops would form an essential part of this force, but individual European states will be asked to participate.
 - European involvement in the Middle East is likely to gain in importance after the conclusion of a bilateral peace process, i.e., in a post-conflict peace-building and stabilisation phase. This has been clearly expressed in the EU “Common Strategy for the Mediterranean” of June 2000; many regional observers and actors would share this view. Peace agreements between Israel and its neighbours would remove one major obstacle for regional economic, political and security co-operation in the Euro-Mediterranean context; and they would allow new forms of sub-regional co-operation, including direct or indirect EU participation. Also, the EU itself would

Palestinian institution building, the first was originally a report to the European Commission, the second is a co-operative European-American exercise that was funded by the European Commission and by the government of Norway.

become more of a common actor in the Middle East in a post-conflict situation: Europe's Middle East policy will then (and only then) fall under the "Common Strategy for the Mediterranean" which (as any "common strategy") allows for majority decisions in the EU Council. An official "end of conflict" in the Middle East would of course also remove some inner-EU differences about how to deal with the local parties. To give but one example, it will be easier to enforce strict conditionality on the local parties in post-conflict aid programmes than to decide about sanctions against one or more of them as long as the conflict continues.

- Given the specific structure and capacities of US foreign policy, we can expect the United States to concentrate on the actual negotiations that will eventually lead to bilateral peace treaties between Israel and Palestine as well as Israel and Syria. Europeans should be aware that such treaties will not suffice to build a sustainable, peaceful regional order. Parts of the societies have yet to be convinced that regional peace, and the compromises that peace implies, are in their own best interest. And regional states will have to enhance their abilities to co-operate. The former as much as the latter will largely depend on the development of the political structures of these states, and on their ability to cope with a new and more competitive division of labour in the Middle East. Given the communautisation of development assistance (re-organised under the Europe Aid Co-operation Office in 2001), the EU has excellent instruments to support regional states in these spheres. Europe's contribution to building Palestinian pre-state institutions or organise fair elections in the Palestinian territories remain important examples. European policy instruments are often too cautiously used, however; and EU decision-making is often slow. Programmes for democracy-building or for supporting local civil society are cases in point:³² They are often well-studied, and sensitive to

32 For a critique of these programmes, see Ulrike J. Reinhardt, "Civil Society Co-operation in the EMP: from Declarations to Practice", Report by the Working Group on Good Governance, EuroMeSCo Paper, No. 15 (Lisbon, May 2002).

local demands and concerns. But European institutions working in these policy fields are also often overtaken by the Americans who act more quickly and boldly.

Generally, rather than only demanding a political role in the peace process, Europe will have to perform, and earn it. European policy-makers will have to accept, with a bit more self-confidence perhaps, that most of Europe's less highly visible contributions to the process are nevertheless highly political. This includes, but it is not restricted to, mid- to long-term financial commitments. Above that, the EU will have to give a convincing answer as to whether it really has a common foreign and security policy (CFSP) with regard to the Middle East. It has not been lost on the regional actors that European states have not always spoken with one voice, and that it is often difficult for the EU Special Envoy or the EU presidency to generate consensus on important policy matters.

US policy-makers will have to acknowledge that the European contribution is essential enough to necessitate regular consultations and co-ordination – rather than only information or briefing sessions by the Americans for their European colleagues. Under the New Transatlantic Agenda, the EU and the US have endorsed continued co-operation of the Special Envoys to the peace process.³³ In some cases, joint US-European approaches and actions will be needed. This applies, for instance, to peace-keeping operations or to an extension of the ILMG. In many other cases, such as organising material support for Palestinian state-building, consultation and co-ordination is sufficient.

Both Europeans and Americans have to be aware that their influence on events in the Middle East is limited. Ultimately it is the regional actors who are in charge. External actors can assist in peace efforts, they can help stabilise the region and grant political and economic support, but they cannot make peace on behalf of Israelis and Arabs.

33 See "New Transatlantic Agenda Senior Level Group Report (Released at the U.S.-EU Summit, 5 December 1997)", *U.S. Information and Texts*, 12 December 1997.

GERMAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS

Since the early years of the Federal Republic of Germany, German-Israeli relations have formed one of the central cornerstones of German foreign policy. Today, the relationship between Germany and Israel is surprisingly good. However, relations between the two countries and their inhabitants continue to be highly complex and are influenced primarily by a multiplicity of emotional factors, to a degree hardly found in other bilateral relationships. This emotional background is also experienced differently by various generations. I will analyse the German-Israeli relationship here primarily from the perspective of the Federal Republic of Germany, as relations between the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Israel were quite different in nature. Following this, I will then present the Israeli perspective.

The Holocaust

The most influential and distinctive emotional factor in bilateral relations is the Holocaust. During initial bilateral contact, the question of how these two young nations should deal with the murder of six million Jews was situated within the framework of reparation negotiations at the beginning of the 1950s. It was only with the Luxembourg Treaties in 1952 and the beginning of reparation payments by the Federal Republic of Germany that a cautious approach became possible. The first contact occurred through the Israeli Procurement Commission in Cologne, which was set up to acquire German goods valued at 200 million DM annually, as stipulated in the Luxembourg Agreement. However, the Commission, headed by the Israeli diplomat Felix Shinnar, soon assumed diplomatic responsibilities as well.²

¹ This article contains the author's personal views and does not represent an official position on the subject.

² For more on the history of German-Israeli relations, see Markus A. Weingardt, *Deutsch-Israelische Beziehungen. Zur Genese bilateraler Verträge 1949–1996*, Konstanz, 1997.

In the Federal Republic, interest in Israel increased as the nation began to confront the crimes of the Third Reich, in particular through the Auschwitz trial. Since the 1950s, young Germans had travelled to Israel in order to become acquainted firsthand with the newly established Jewish state and its inhabitants. Frequently their experiences there were quite positive. One repeatedly heard stories that it was precisely those Israelis with German origins who received representatives of the “new” Germany in a surprisingly friendly manner.

The establishment of diplomatic relations in 1965 was predictably quite controversial in Israel. Hence, the German Embassy in Tel Aviv was virtually hidden in a residential district on Soutine Street. The first German Ambassador Rolf Pauls was received for the most part with reserve, at times even with hostility. Witnesses report that the first public appearances and receptions at his residence met with great reservation and that most invited guests did not appear. This, however, changed within a relatively short period of time. When Ambassador Pauls left the country three years later, relations between the two countries had already eased to an astounding degree.

In Germany as well, the establishment of diplomatic relations was not a matter of course. In particular, the “Hallstein Doctrine” – through which the Federal Republic sought to assert its claim to be the sole legitimate representative of Germany – played the decisive role here. The Arab nations threatened to recognise the GDR if the Federal Republic established diplomatic relations with Israel. Only after heated political discussion did the Federal Republic decide to exchange ambassadors with Israel. Diplomatic reactions by Arab nations ensued.³

Even today, the Holocaust remains a heavy burden on German-Israeli relations. However, we can observe a clear distinction here among different generations. For the first and second post-war generations in Germany – generations that have a direct connection to the Nazi era – discussions about the Third Reich and the

3 See chapter 7 for more on this subject.

generation of perpetrators play a much more important role than they do for the generation growing up today. Accordingly, interest in Israel is greatly influenced by these different experiential backgrounds. This statement is, of course, a generalisation. The volunteers of “Action Reconciliation” come to Israel even today primarily out of a feeling of historical responsibility for the Holocaust. At the same time, authorities in charge of the German-Israeli youth exchange program have noted for some time now that young Germans visiting Israel regard the Holocaust more as an issue of history and have a greater concern for contemporary issues such as peace, human rights and the environment. We can also detect a change resulting from recent immigration to Germany. New citizens coming from non-European nations often have little or no understanding for the fact that with their new citizenship, they “acquire” not only rights and duties, but a historical burden as well. This is not an unusual phenomenon, and can also be observed in typical immigration nations such as the United States. These nations, however, do not as a rule have as problematic a history as Germany. However, even if the memory of the Holocaust perhaps no longer plays the dominant role in daily politics that it certainly did over the past decades and will continue to significantly influence German-Israeli relations for a long time to come.

The Middle East Conflict

Understandably, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict arouses strong emotions. During the Six-Day War in 1967, admiration for the small nation of Israel and the battle against its apparently overpowering neighbouring nations was predominant in German public opinion. The frequent and horrific attacks of Palestinian extremists on international targets – for example at the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972 and the hijacking of Lufthansa aeroplanes, as well as later attacks on the Israeli civilian population – have also caused deep concern in Germany. Over the following thirty years, however, public awareness in Germany has focussed increasingly on Israeli policies in the occupied Palestinian ter-

79 ritories, in particular on the systematic establishment of Jewish settlements and the discriminatory treatment of the Palestinian population. Images of the *intifada* (from 1987 to 1993), during which Israeli soldiers moved against stone-throwing children, have had a strong influence on public opinion in Germany and throughout the world. This awareness will certainly continue to increase as a result of the most recent conflicts of the so-called *Al-Aqsa Intifada* that began in the autumn of 2000. Both in media reports and in private conversations, one finds that understanding for Israel's security requirements decreases as the Israeli Army reacts to Palestinian youths and demonstrators not with political means, but almost exclusively with tanks, other heavy weaponry and curfews. In addition to this, increasingly few observers are able to understand the establishment of Israeli settlements in the West Bank as a necessary security requirement, as Israel claims – the Israeli presence in Hebron is a particularly striking example of this. It is unfortunate that Israel's justified security concerns lose credibility in this way.

At the same time, one finds rather contradictory views on the Middle East conflict in Germany, a fact that is influenced by the generation gap as well as different individual experiences. Many Germans understand Israeli fears – influenced by the Holocaust – about the destruction of the state of Israel. The Holocaust is often cited as the reason why we Germans cannot be critical of Israel. Many Germans of older generations hold this view, although numerous younger Germans also take this position, primarily out of feelings of responsibility for the Holocaust. Contrary to this it is mainly, though not exclusively, younger Germans who demand that human rights violations be called what they are, regardless of who commits them. For this reason, they argue, we cannot judge Israel's actions differently than those of other nations. It would certainly be wrong to accuse adherents of this view of being less of aware of historical responsibility. Rather, historical responsibility is interpreted here in a different way. At the same time, we must also concede that people with anti-Semitic views do occasionally seek to legitimate their opinions by using such arguments.

A further emotional factor that influenced bilateral relations particularly during the 1960s and 1970s was the socialist-influenced model of society in Israel, which the German Left found particularly attractive. In Germany, the Kibbutz movement became the symbol of a new form of society. Even today, many young people spend several months in a kibbutz in Israel in order to become acquainted with this way of living. With the decline of the kibbutz movement in Israel through the decrease of Israelis living in kibbutz, the increasing privatisation of the kibbutzim as well as the failure of socialism in the Communist nations, this dimension has lost much of its significance for bilateral relations. However, the memory of it remains strong. Many of the German youths who lived and worked with great idealism in the kibbutzim in the 1960s and 1970s today occupy leading positions in German political life.

During the same time period, however, another emotional phenomenon arose that is frequently designated as anti-Semitism of the Left. Following the Six-Day War, part of the German Left argued that Israel – which only shortly before had been admired as model of a socialist order – had suddenly revealed itself as an imperialist power that oppressed its Arab neighbours. An anti-Zionist debate developed out of these discussions on Israel and anti-imperialism. Many viewed this discussion, insofar as it was directed against Israeli imperialism, as completely legitimate. In any case, the boundaries of anti-Semitism are fluid, even if we always take care to identify all of its adherents as anti-Semites. Nevertheless, many regarded the “selection” of Jewish or Israeli passengers by German terrorists on board the hijacked Lufthansa aeroplane “Landshut” in 1977 as an extreme example of this development. This event dramatically intensified the problematic nature of the discussion. The intellectual debate at the time was, of course, much subtler than this; and it was, for many on the Left who felt a great attachment to Israel, very painful as well. In its extreme form, the debate centred around the question: “Am I, as a German, permitted to criticise Israel?” Perhaps because of this debate, the youth organisation of Social

- 81 Democratic Party in Germany significantly reduced their contacts with the youth organisations of the Israeli Labour Party, so that by the 1970s the youth organisation of the German Unions Association (DGB) had taken over this cultural contact. Similar discussions also occurred within the “German-Israeli Society”, ultimately leading to the splitting off of the “German-Israeli Study Group for Peace in the Middle East” (DIAK). It was only in the last months of 2001 that the young socialists increased their contacts again with Young Labour.

Religious and cultural ties

One emotional factor that should not to be underestimated in the bilateral relations is the fact that the origins of Christianity are located in Israel. Places such as Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee have retained their fascination for the Christian influenced Occident. A significant portion of the Germans visiting Israel – over the years an average of approximately 200,000 annually – travel through Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories following the traces of the Bible. Several medium-sized travel agents have specialised in organising trips for this target group. The German Christian presence here is by no means apolitical. It arose at the end of the 19th century, in particular through Kaiser Wilhelm II, who during his visit to the Holy Land in 1898 founded a Lutheran church in Jerusalem, the Church of the Redeemer located in the Old City of Jerusalem. The Augusta Victoria Hospital, located on the Mount of Olives with grounds of about 20 hectares, was named after his wife. The Church of the Redeemer, which has a German pastor with the status similar to that of a bishop, and the Augusta Victoria Hospital both still belong to the Lutheran Church, the latter indirectly through the Lutheran World Federation. The Lutheran “Berlin Mission Society” sponsors the Talita Kumi School in Beit Jala near Bethlehem. The German-speaking Dormitio Abbey, which is located on the edge of the Old City of Jerusalem, belongs to the Catholic Church. In addition to this, the Catholic Church also owns further estates in Israel, for example, the Tabka Monastery on the Sea of Galilee, which is run by the “Association for the Holy Land” with its residence in Cologne.

The many cultural and intellectual interests shared by Germans and Israelis form a further emotional connection. Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta, Ephraim Kishon, Amos Oz and Ester Ofarim are all well respected names in the German cultural landscape. There are also numerous connections between the universities and research facilities of both nations, which, of course, often result in close personal ties and an intimate knowledge of the other culture. We should not underestimate the role that this plays in the bilateral relationship. Many German visitors experience Israel – in comparison with neighbouring Arab nations – as a quasi-European country. At least for most Germans, Israel is more familiar than the rather foreign Arab world. The same is true of conversational interaction as well. Many Israelis love to speak clearly and openly and do not shy away from verbal confrontation. This is a characteristic that many Germans also possess. As a result, mutual understanding is often easier here than, for example, between German and Arab intellectuals.

Anti-Semitism

Unfortunately, we must also consider the anti-Semitism that continues to exist in Germany. According to opinion polls, anti-Semitic views can be found in fifteen to twenty percent of the entire German population.⁴ As a rule, anti-Semitism is not expressed openly, but rather is hidden behind specific formulations. For example, if we examine the numerous letters sent to the German foreign ministry, we can almost always recognise a letter writer's basic anti-Semitic attitude through the argumentation or formulation of the questions contained in the letter. We typically find, for example, questions that implicitly relativise the Holocaust, questions such as how can "the Jews" treat Palestinians the way they do when they themselves were also victims of terrible injustice. In a survey in 1998, twenty percent of those questioned agreed with the statement that the Holocaust is comparable with Israeli policy

⁴ See the Forsa survey from December 1998 commissioned by the newspaper *Die Woche* as well as the Emnid investigation from 1994.

83 towards the Palestinians.⁵ Since the outbreak of the *Al-Aqsa Intifada* this trend has become even more apparent. However, we cannot conclude from this that everyone who criticises Israel's policies is an anti-Semite. Studies also point to the fact that anti-Semitic attitudes are more common among elderly persons and are less representative of the views of young people.⁶ It is, however, alarming that a recent poll found that over sixty percent of Germans in all age groups are in favour of "of making a clean break with the past and of no longer talking so much about the persecution of Jews."⁷

Rational Factors of Influence

In comparison with these emotional elements, rational factors play a comparatively minor role in the bilateral relationship. The security and stability of the Middle East region – in which Israel plays a decisive role – is of primary importance here.⁸ We should also not underestimate the significance of German-Israeli economic relations. Germany is Israel's second most important foreign trade partner after the United States, while Israel is approximately fortieth among Germany's trade partners.⁹ In 2000, Israel exported goods valued at 2.66 billion DM to Germany, while Germany exported 5.27 billion DM of goods to Israel.¹⁰ Of even greater significance for the future is the impressive high-tech scene that has developed in Israel over the past years, including quite a number of start-up companies. This development has prompted large German companies such as Siemens and BMW to place increased emphasis on this promising field of bilateral economic relations.

5 Fifty-four percent of those questioned firmly rejected this view. See the Forsa survey from December 1998.

6 According to this survey, thirty-eight percent of those over sixty-four years of age have latently anti-Semitic views, in comparison to ten percent of those under twenty-four years of age.

7 See the survey mentioned above.

8 See chapter 8 for more details on this issue.

9 Figures for the year 2000 (not including the Israeli diamond trade). Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, "Foreign Trade", <http://www.cbs.gov.il/ftrade2000.pdf>; Federal Ministry of the Economy (BMW).i

10 Source: BMWi.

If we consider German-Israeli relations from an Israeli perspective, the bilateral relations are also influenced by numerous emotional factors but rational considerations play a role for Israel as well. Thus David Ben Gurion, for example, argued for the conclusion of reparation agreements with the Federal Republic, insisting that the young nation of Israel could not afford to refuse a helping hand. He used this to counter critics in Israel who rejected his co-operation with Germany. As the young Israeli nation's head of state, Ben Gurion was primarily interested – understandably enough – in consolidating and securing the existence of the new state. He consistently rejected the position that Israel could not, for moral reasons, have any contact with Germany. In accordance with the agreements in the Luxembourg Reparation Treaties mentioned above, Israel received more than 200 million DM of German goods annually for two decades. After twenty years, this support was transformed into preferential loans in the form of developmental aid, which finally expired in the 1990s.

In the meantime, economic relations between Germany and Israel have also developed. As mentioned above, Germany has been one of Israel's most important trade partners for many years. However, in building the Israeli state, the intimate exchange of experience with German specialists was at least as important. Israel has maintained close contact with German partners, specifically in the areas of trade unions, the military, universities as well as science and research. This close contact has continued up to the present between these two highly specialised national economies. Finally, Germany is regarded – after the United States – as Israel's most important political ally, in particular within the European Union, a fact that is also related to Israel's ambivalent relationship to Europe. Many Israelis have retained an emotional scepticism in regard to most European nations; they are often critical, for instance, of the relations between these nations and Arab countries, or of their role in the establishment of Israel as a state. According to these criteria, many Israelis are critical of Germany as well. However, they do rec-

85 ognise that Germany is a nation that has confronted its own past in an open and honest way – some would say it is the only European country to have done so – and that, in addition to this, Germany has developed a deep understanding for Israeli interests through numerous close personal relationships.

The significance of emotional factors

Apart from these rational points of view that are significant for a small and young state, we also find powerful emotional elements in the Israeli perspective of the bilateral relationship. The Holocaust certainly plays a decisive role here. It is understandable that during the initial phase of bilateral relations many Israelis rejected all contact with Germany. We should bear in mind that even today many Israelis remain sceptical about Germany, in spite of the intense relations between the two nations. Recent opinion polls commissioned by the *Friedrich-Ebert Foundation* indicate a strongly ambivalent attitude towards Germans among the Jewish-Israeli population as a whole and a predominantly negative view of Germany among Israeli youths.¹¹ I cannot discuss this phenomenon in detail here. However, it appears that the Holocaust continues to be anchored in the collective memory of the Jewish people and that, particularly among young people, the resolve not to let this traumatic experience be forgotten has maintained an association of Germany with the Holocaust.

It is all the more remarkable that, despite this widespread scepticism, Israelis also exhibit a great interest in Germany. One often encounters Israelis who want to get to know the country and the people responsible for the murder of European Jews during the Nazi era. This interest often takes the form of an exploration of one's own personal history; and such an exploration encompasses, almost necessarily, the people who live in Germany today. This in-

11 See Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (ed.), *Israelis und Deutsche. Die Ambivalenz der Normalität*, Tel Aviv, February 2000; and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (ed.), *The Jubilee Year: Israeli Youth's Attitudes Toward Personal, Social and National Issues*, Tel Aviv, June 1998.

teraction is facilitated by the fact that contact with Germans today occurs primarily with a generation that was not itself involved in the Holocaust. It is often the children or grand-children of Holocaust survivors who, in search of their own understanding of this era, encounter their German contemporaries. In a certain sense, this need to confront history on a personal level ties together the descendants of perpetrators with the descendants of victims.

The interest that many Israeli's of German descent take in Germany is impressive and sometimes even shameful. From a German perspective, it is remarkable that even today there are German compatriot organisations in Israel, for example, organisations of former Bavarians and Rheinlanders, which co-exist in a (once sizeable) general association, the CENTRA, and which even have their own weekly newspaper, the "Israel-Nachrichten". Since these organisations are made up almost exclusively of first generation Jews of German descent, the average age of group members increases steadily. Certainly, many Israelis of German descent do not want to have anything to do with these associations. However, they do exist and they even view the German ambassador in Israel somewhat as "their own" diplomatic representative.

The density of political relations

What consequences should we draw from this unusual and special relationship between Germany and Israel, a relationship influenced by so many emotional factors? First, we should bear in mind that an extraordinarily dense network of personal relations has developed as a result of this unusual mutual interest. There is probably no other nation of a comparable size with which Germany has such an intensive exchange of opinions and ideas. This exchange takes place on a number of levels. It is most evident in the intensive official German visits to Israel and – to almost as great an extent – the official Israeli visits to Germany. Since the first state visit in 1971 by then German Foreign Minister Walter Scheel, the number of visits to Israel has risen continuously. Foreign Minister Fischer was in Israel twice in the year 2000, three times in 2001 and has

87 as already been there twice in 2002 (February and June). Foreign Ministers Levy, Ben Ami and Peres have travelled to Germany several times, though some of their stays were very brief. Israeli Prime Minister Barak was the first state guest in Berlin following the move of the Federal government from Bonn. High-ranking German visitors from the federal states and local municipalities travel regularly to Israel. And the German-Israeli Parliamentary Group is the second largest of its kind in the German Bundestag.

Since the 1950s, trade unions of the two countries have cultivated intensive contact. There are over 80 twin city partnerships between German and Israeli cities and municipalities, whereby a number of Israeli cities have more than one German partner. All Israeli universities as well as a number of individual faculties have formal or informal contacts with German universities. The German Sports Federation and the German Soccer Federation have cultivated relations in Israel for decades. In addition to this, there are numerous short-term visitors, for example, on the regular trips by the Federal Central Office for Political Education and many State Central Offices, a number of which send several groups to Israel every year. This is also true of the German-Israeli Lawyers Association and the contact between the two countries' highest constitutional courts.

In order to understand the significance of such contact, it is useful to imagine the course of a typical visit. The first hours of direct contact between Germans and Israelis – frequently the first time for both parties – are often relatively informal today. The parties discuss issues, laugh, but remain at a cautious distance to one another. At some point several hours later, perhaps over a beer together after dinner, the discussion becomes serious. Most Germans, particularly when they are in Israel for the first time, want to talk with Israelis about the Holocaust in some way. And Israelis themselves are, for the most part, also highly interested in finding out how the children and grand-children of Third Reich generations of Germans think and feel. Intense and engaged conversations frequently develop out of this unusual constellation, encounters that sometimes lead to personal ties between Germans

and Israelis in a form one would hardly have expected. Through many difficult and even controversial conversations, ties develop over the course of time that are close and intimate. The number of personal friendships that develop from such contacts are unusually high, particularly given the difficulties of the initial encounter. And even for people who have only engaged in such conversations once, these encounters usually make a lasting impression.

We must differentiate here among generations. I have frequently witnessed the conversations and the emotional situations described above in encounters between the so-called first and second generations. With the younger generation, the situation is often quite different. Young people are more interested in environmental protection, human rights or high-tech. And particularly with school exchange programs, one quickly notices that both sides are often more interested in Israeli-Palestinian relations than in the Holocaust, which is rather abstract and, for many, difficult, if not impossible to comprehend rationally. In Israel, I have witnessed heated political discussions among young people, discussions that are carried out with an openness that would have been unthinkable ten years ago. More than once these discussions have ended with one of the participants asking, "Do you want to go the beach now?"

As a result of such personal encounters, many Germans are quite familiar with the problems of Israeli society. In comparison with other Europeans, a large number of German politicians and commentators certainly have a highly developed understanding of Israeli argumentation and the emotional world of Israelis.

Prospects for the future

In closing, I turn to the question of the prospects for the German-Israeli relationship. How long will relations between Germany and Israel continue to correspond with the emotional state of the two peoples? Will the Middle East conflict and the images of violent confrontations between Israelis and Palestinians leads to a change in Germans' perception of Israel? If the ambivalent views

89 that many Israelis have regarding Germany continue among the younger generation, then we must reflect on the form that the bilateral relations should assume in the future.

Relations will probably develop in two directions. First, the special and intimate relationship between the Federal Republic and Israel will develop a new significance. Germany can use its close relations to Israel to help find a solution to the Middle East conflict. There is hardly any other nation in Europe that has so much understanding for Israel's problems and for the primeval fears of its population. Through this understanding and this trust, we Germans must support Israel in the search for comprehensive peace in the Middle East. In so doing we can certainly also criticise Israeli policies, where criticism is necessary. It must be possible to exchange an open word between friends, even if this does not always have to occur publicly. At the same time Germans must be very clear that they fight all aspects of anti-Semitism. First and foremost, however, we must engage in dialogue, with Israel as well as with our European partners. And we must assure Israel that we do affirm and will continue to affirm its right to existence. This will be a difficult and laborious process, but it is the only path that will lead to long-term success – and we owe it to Israel to take this path.

Secondly, we must place bilateral relations on a new basis and direct our attention to the future. The memory of the Holocaust and the awareness of the past will continue to influence the mutual relationship for a long time to come, but it will not determine everyday bilateral relations. It is important, particularly with contact among young people, that contemporary problems are addressed, problems that interest them personally and directly. In doing so, the Holocaust will continue to be a central issue. However, the relations can only function in the long-term if both societies face the problems and challenges that confront them today, and if they discuss these problems and challenges openly and trustingly. Both governments should have a great interest in ensuring that this occurs.

“BARCELONA” AND THE GERMAN ROLE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) was launched in 1995 by the foreign ministers of the fifteen EU Member States and twelve so-called Mediterranean Partners¹. Also called the “Barcelona Process” after the city where it was founded, the EMP is the largest and most complex EU initiative to deal with the region bordering it to the South and for that matter it is also the largest and most complex initiative to deal with any other non-European region in the world. This process has created a series of multilateral and bilateral arrangements and institutions in different policy fields under the three “volets” (chapters) of the Partnership: the Political and Security Partnership, the Economic and Financial Partnership and the Partnership in Social, Cultural and Human Affairs. In concrete terms, the aim is to gradually establish – by the year 2010 – a Euro-Mediterranean free-trade zone as well as to develop various security arrangements and institutionalised social or cultural linkages (in the broadest sense of the term) that span the entire Mediterranean region.² Seven years later, despite an impressive list of activities,³ we are still far away from the explicit goals of the process: creating a Euro-Mediterranean “zone of peace and stability” and – as representatives of the southern Partners in particular emphasise – “shared prosperity”. Particularly in the area

1 Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Turkey and Tunisia.

2 On this issue, see the “Barcelona Declaration” and the “Barcelona Work Program”, Euro-Mediterranean Conference, November 27–28, 1995, European Commission, DGIB-External Relations, Brussels.

3 The EMP is not only a multi-lateral and multi-dimensional process, but also a multi-level process with contributions from several continuous groups of senior government officials, regular meetings of foreign ministers, diverse conferences of sectoral ministers as well as meetings of experts, mid-level bureaucrats, local functionaries, non-governmental organisations and other social groups. The work plan of the EMP for the first semester of 2002 included the following listings: a Euro-Med committee meeting on terrorism (as part of the Political and Security Partnership); a forum on the information society, a meeting of the

91 of security policy, co-operation lags far behind the expectations of the EU Member States. In the domain of economy and finance, it has remained behind those of the Mediterranean Partners.

At the beginning of the 1990s, Germany was very reserved in its support of plans for a new, expanded Mediterranean policy by the EU, fearing that this would come at the expense of policies regarding Eastern and Central Europe. The issue was regarded essentially as a special interest of the southern EU member states. Only after the Barcelona Conference did German interest in the Mediterranean dimension of European foreign policy increase. This is, first and foremost, the necessary result of a progressive European integration process and its geopolitical effects. In fact, it is in Germany's interest, as well as in Europe's interest as a whole, that the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership progresses and develops. And Germany can also provide its own accent to the Partnership by contributing to the resolution of some of the difficulties inherent in the process.

The Barcelona Process: an unequal partnership

The EMP was established in 1995 with considerable enthusiasm. This can be traced, in particular, to the fact that all of the participants expected a rapid conclusion of Middle East peace negotiations as well as substantial peace dividends – in both political and economic terms. Since then, the difficulties and inherent contradictions of the Barcelona Process have gradually become clear. Disillusionment predominates, above all, among the Southern partners, but also among EU member states. The high expectations have given way to a realistic recognition that the EMP is a long-term process, the difficulties of which soon become apparent while the benefits are less secure and only to be expected after

“correspondents” of the Environmental Action Program, a conference of industry ministers (as part of the Economic and Financial Partnership); a conference of the Civil Forum, an expert seminar on the role of the media in the Euro-Med dialogue between cultures and civilisations and a meeting of parliamentarians (as part of the Partnership in Social, Cultural and Human Affairs). Source: EU Commission, “Calendar of Priority Actions of the Barcelona Process”.

some years. It is also a protracted undertaking with problems yet to be solved both on the multilateral and bilateral levels. Consider that, as of summer 2002, bilateral Association Agreements negotiated in the context of the EMP have been signed with all partner states except Syria. But only three of these agreements – Morocco, Tunisia and Israel, as well as a preliminary agreement with the Palestinian Authority – have come into effect. This is largely due to the slow ratification process in Europe.

One of the fundamental contradictions of the process lies in the fact that while the EMP does define the EU's relations to its Mediterranean neighbours as a partnership, it is clearly a European project. This could already be seen in the fact that it was the EU that designed the process and determined, according to its own geopolitical conceptions, which nations were considered to be part of the "Mediterranean" region. Jordan, which does not border on the Mediterranean Sea, was regarded as a member from the beginning, while Libya – the country with the longest Mediterranean coastline – was excluded until the Foreign Ministers' Conference in Stuttgart in 1999, where it was granted observer status. The nations of the former Yugoslavia and Albania have yet to be integrated into the process at all. The EU has financed the process alone and has also directed it. The Commission co-ordinates the activities that take place within the framework of EMP's work program, and chairs the sessions of official rounds alternately with the EU Presidency. Incidentally, almost all of the EMP's conferences and ministerial meetings have taken place in Europe – although the reasons for this lie with the Mediterranean Partners rather than the EU.

The EMP is therefore an *asymmetrical* partnership. This is true in two respects. First, the EU has a clear economic, military and political predominance over its Mediterranean Partners. Second, relations among the participants of the process can be characterised as "pluri-bilateral": on the one hand, there is the European Union, which seeks to act in a unified manner; on the other hand, there are the individual Southern Mediterranean nations, which do not generally co-ordinate their policies. This asymmetry has become clear in all areas of the Partnership's work.

For European decision-makers, the security component of the Mediterranean Partnership is clearly the most important. Without this component, the Commission certainly would have supported particular Mediterranean programs. However, a broad-based Mediterranean policy would not have been established, a policy which was then expanded during the European Summit at Feira in the summer of 2000 into one of the “common strategies” of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).⁴ European concerns continue to relate primarily to what have been called, since the beginning of the 1990s, the “new Mediterranean risks”: “soft” or non-military risk factors. These were not, in fact, new risks, but they were perceived with a new clarity after the end of the East-West conflict. These risks include in particular drug smuggling and organised crime, uncontrolled migration, the export of internal conflicts from Mediterranean Partners into the EU, as has occurred at times with the Kurdish-Turkish conflict in Germany or with inter-Algerian conflicts in France, and terrorism – the “hardest” of all “soft” risks, as it were.⁵ Occasionally, anxious politicians and observers have also regarded political Islam, or Islam itself, as a threat to Europe. However, anti-Islamic slogans have generally been of no significance for the EU’s Mediterranean policy. Policy makers are aware that the soft security risks mentioned above are an expression of political and socio-economic problems *in* the South, rather than the expression of a North-South conflict. After all the root causes of al-Qa’ida type international terrorism are to be found in the region. European policy-makers are also aware that nations along the southern and eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea do not even pose a potential military threat to Europe.⁶ Measured in

4 “Common Strategy of the European Union on the Mediterranean Region”, Euromed Report, 10 (20 June 2000).

5 On the European perception of risk, see e.g., “Brennpunkt Mittelmeer” (Schwerpunktheft), *Internationale Politik*, 2 (1996), 51.

6 In addition to diverse EU documents, see also, Assembly of Western Union, “Security in the Mediterranean Region,” Report submitted on behalf of the Political Committee by Mr. de Liphowski, Rapporteur, Forty-second Session, 4 April 1996 (document 1543). For more detail, see Volkmar Wenzel’s chapter in this volume.

terms of their economic productive capacities, these states are relatively heavily armed, and in view of regional stability and peace efforts, the arms race and the efforts to obtain weapons are seriously disconcerting. These issues, however, can be explained through conflicts among these nations themselves, rather than through possible conflicts with EU member states or with NATO.⁷ This is also true of the spread of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems in the region. Europe is indirectly affected by this insofar as stability risks arising from regional conflicts could expand into the entire Mediterranean area. The “Barcelona Declaration” does directly address the question of arms and weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, it is clear that the goal of establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction can neither be negotiated nor attained solely within the context of the EMP. This could only be achieved – if at all – with the participation of more distant regional nations (Iran and Iraq) and the United States.

The solutions proposed by Europeans to the risks and the factors of uncertainty in the southern Mediterranean area – the European philosophy of the EMP, as it were – concentrate on efforts to establish stability in the Mediterranean area. On the one hand this goal should be achieved through an improvement of the economic and political environment of the Mediterranean partner states, i.e., through economic aid, through support of administrative and political reforms, but also through the promotion of good governance and the respect for human rights. On the other hand, stability should be attained through the establishment of comprehensive Mediterranean structures, at the very least through common dialogue and, if possible, through the establishment of common principles and norms.

The unresolved territorial conflicts between Israel and its neighbours form one of the essential obstacles to the co-operation planned and desired by the EMP. For a time, the Barcelona Process

7 On the subject of the arms race and the effort to obtain weapons in the Middle East and North Africa, see Margret Johannsen/Claudia Schmid (ed.), *Weg aus dem Labyrinth? Friedenssuche im Nahen Osten*, Baden-Baden (1997), pp. 202–230.

95 was the only forum in which Israelis, Syrians, Lebanese and other representatives of Arab nations spoke to one another. The stalemate and breakdown of the peace process, however, had a negative effect on the dynamics of Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. This was demonstrated when Syria and Lebanon boycotted several important political meetings of the EMP that took place in the shadow of the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation that began in the fall of 2000, including the Foreign Ministers' conferences in Marseilles and Valencia in November 2000 and April 2002. The majority of Arab states has long made it clear that they have little interest in discussing, let alone implementing, confidence-and-security-building measures (CSBMs) in the Mediterranean area as long as Arab-Israeli negotiations have not been led to the "comprehensive" conclusion they desire. As a result, over the first six years of the Partnership, only one confidence-building measure (a pilot project for the co-operation of the civil defence services of the 27 countries) and one so-called partnership building measure (the Euro-Mediterranean Studies Commission, EuroMeSCo, a network of foreign policy research institutes) could be agreed upon and initiated.

The general political, economic and socio-cultural dimension of Euro-Mediterranean co-operation has also been directly affected by this. Syria and other Arab nations have thus far rejected meeting with Israeli representatives in an Arab country – whether at ministerial level, with senior officials, or experts and non-governmental organisations – as long as no progress has been made in Arab-Israeli negotiations. Such meetings, they have argued, would be equivalent to a premature normalisation of Arab-Israeli relations and thus an Arab concession to Israel that they were not prepared to make. As a result, almost all official meetings of the EMP have taken place in European countries. Israel, for its part, refused to recognise the EU's Association Treaty with the Palestinian Authority. As a consequence, the EU was not prepared to enact a cumulation of rules of origins for exports from Israel and its neighbours to the EU.⁸

8 The EU has already planned such a cumulation of rules of origin for the Maghreb nations. Products that are made in part in Tunisia and in part in Morocco could then be sold duty-free on the EU market as the product of one

It would be facile, however, to hold the Israeli-Palestinian conflict solely responsible for the difficulties of co-operating in the realm of policy and security. In fact very different notions about what security co-operation means exist within the partnership, and there are real differences of interest as well. While the EU Member States are primarily concerned with the “soft” Mediterranean risks mentioned above, the nations to the South are much more strongly affected by “hard” security problems. These include, above all, the Middle East conflict, but also the Western Sahara conflict, conflicts involving Turkey’s Kurdish minority or water disputes between Syria and Turkey. Before the attacks of 11 September 2001, at least Southern states could also legitimately claim that terrorism is less a European than a Southern concern. Indeed, terrorism is a priority problem for Arab countries as well as for Israel. Both Arab and Israeli leaders believe that the serious shortcomings in the fight against terrorism are to be found in Europe rather than in their own nations. Israelis often accuse Europe of not developing an adequate understanding of the terrorist threats they face. And Arab policymakers would rather discuss the extradition of persons whom they designate as terrorists and who are political refugees in European countries with their EU counterparts than democracy and human rights. Several Arab states as well as Israel have also expressed significant uneasiness about the discourse of democracy and human rights within the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. They are not so much disturbed by general statements in the “Barcelona Declaration”, but rather by concrete European inquiries concerning the situation in individual nations and by European programs that would directly support local human rights organisations. In this context, representatives of Arab nations have warned of sovereignty violations and occasionally of a European “human rights imperialism”.⁹ These states are sim-

country or the other. A cumulation of rules of origins for the Mashreq nations (Israel and its neighbours) would mean, for example, that Israel could also sell products, the preliminary stages of which were produced in Jordan or Palestine, as Israeli products on the European market.

9 Tunisia, for example, made unmistakably clear at the first meeting of the European-Tunisian Association Council in July of 1998 that it was not prepared to discuss the question of human rights with the EU.

97 ply not prepared to permit the EU to interfere in matters of home affairs and security to the same or similar degree that they are, of necessity, forced to accept interference in issues of economic policy, whether by Europeans or by international financial institutions. The war in Kosovo has heightened scepticism about the EU's human rights discourse even more.¹⁰ The concern for *national* sovereignty combines here with a very real – if normatively dubious – concern for the stability of one's own *regime*. Despite its (partially significant) critique of a number of their Southern Mediterranean partners' governmental conduct, the governments of the EU member states are not unconditionally interested in a regime change in these nations – they have, after all, become accustomed to their partners. Thus they are often prepared to accept those partners' claims that they alone can guarantee the stability of their respective countries.

The fact is that we still do not have a common operational definition for security and security co-operation. This was evident in the debate over a "Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Freedom and Stability", which was originally supposed to be proclaimed at a Euro-Mediterranean Summit in the fall of 2000. In the face of the stalled peace process, the planned summit was cancelled and the charter drafts were added to the many working documents that have assembled on the desks of officials in charge of the EMP. The *Group of Senior Officials* from all twenty-seven Partners did intensively discuss individual aspects of security policy, including the question of terrorism. In doing so, they contributed, according to the assessment of participants, to the development of a common understanding. However, they were still unable to work out a charter that was worthy of the name, one which moved beyond a mere repetition of the Barcelona Principles. In addition to this, the discussion of the various drafts indicated different positions not only between the EU and its Mediterranean partners, but also within the EU itself. While France, in particular, appeared to be interested in the political symbolism of a common declaration, other European and non-European

10 See Claire Spencer, "CBMs and CSBMs and Partnership Building Measures in the Charter," unpublished working paper (final draft), October 1999 (Euro-MeSCo Working Group on the Euro-Med Charter for Peace and Stability).

Partners regarded a common charter rather as an instrument – as a kind of instructions for action – for future co-operation. It is also not surprising that states such as Tunisia wanted, and still want, the charter to contain clear statements about the economic and financial basis for security and stability in the Mediterranean area.

The economic and social dimension

For the Mediterranean partners, the economic, financial and social aspects of the Barcelona Process are of central importance. Here, in the areas of the second and third chapters of the “Barcelona Process”, they regard the European states to be in arrears. Thus, North African states object increasingly to the fact that Europeans regard questions of migration above all from the perspective of security. They have a point here in demanding European responsibility or even pointing to European paranoia. International migration does, of course, always have a security dimension. This is especially true of illegal migration, which is frequently accompanied by trafficking in human beings and other forms of organised crime.¹¹ However, international migration is primarily an economic and social problem and should be treated with the appropriate means. Europe must concede that it has behaved in a contradictory manner on this issue. On the one hand, Europe demands a free-trade zone, i.e., the free traffic of goods and services, as well as an intensified dialogue between civil societies and increased political co-operation. On the other hand, Europe does not appear to be prepared to accept the free movement of human beings, or even consider making it easier for citizens of its Mediterranean Partners to obtain visas. As part of the Partnership, North African states have declared themselves ready to combat illegal migration from their countries. However, they also expect the EU to become more open to visitors and migrant labourers from those countries.¹²

11 George Joffé, “The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Two Years after Barcelona”, London, May 1998 (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Briefing No. 44).

12 See Cathrine Wihtol de Wenden, *La Politique des Visas dans l’espace Euro-Méditerranéen*, Lisbon, April 2000 (EuroMeSCo Papers No.10).

The implementation of bilateral EU association agreements with Mediterranean Partners and the gradual establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean free-trade zone require comprehensive structural reforms by the Mediterranean partners. These reforms include, in particular, the dismantling of customs and trade barriers as well as of currency controls, along with the reform of investment laws and privatisation. In return, the EU has promised technological support and financial assistance from the MEDA budget.¹³ One problematic dimension of this process, however, is that the structural reforms required here may have predominantly negative economic and social consequences in the short term. In particular, they may lead to the collapse of an essential part of the import substitution industries in the partner countries. This would mean a rise in unemployment before the expected positive effects would materialise: in particular, an increase in direct investments and the establishment of new industries that are more efficient and capable of producing export goods. Industries in the partner countries, particularly when they produce primarily for local markets, feel threatened by the required opening of markets. For this reason, resistance to the partnership has developed in part from those interest groups that Europe should be particularly interested in co-operating with. For example, the Union of Egyptian Industries, one of the largest Egyptian employers' associations, expressed its opposition to the Egyptian-European Association Agreement and was supported by the Egyptian Minister of Industry and Technology. The industrialists feared the collapse of various branches of local industry, not least that of the metalworking industry, which is hardly capable of competing with European products.¹⁴ It is true

13 MEDA are funds provided by the EU within the framework of the EMP. Over the first five-year period (1995–1999), the MEDA budget amounted to 4.685 billion ECU of grants. In addition to this, the European Investment Bank (EIB) assigned approximately the same amount in the form of soft loans. Some 26 per cent of commitments have actually been disbursed. For the 2000–2006 period, 5,35 million Euro in MEDA funds, and 7,4 million Euro of EIB funds have been earmarked.

14 See *al-Hayat*, 7 September 2000. According to a number of assessments, about one-third of the local industrial companies in Tunisia will have to close. See Hafedh Zaafrane / Azzem Mahjoub, "The Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade

that for most of the Mediterranean partners, the loss in revenue from duties will reduce the financial autonomy of the state unless a new, effective tax system is established at the same time. Overall, this would result in a relative weakening of the state and a relative strengthening of the private sector. Some Europeans may see this as a genuinely positive development. The governments affected, of course, see the matter quite differently.

Given the scope of the expected structural reforms, it is not surprising that the Southern partners regard the EMP's financial package as insufficient. In addition to this, they have also criticised the slow payment of promised funds,¹⁵ and have accused European member states of demanding reforms only from the South. Finally, free trade has only been planned for industrial goods and services. A general opening of European markets for Mediterranean agricultural products – that is, for those products for which the Mediterranean partners have a comparative advantage – has been prevented by the agricultural lobbies of individual EU member states.

In the mid-term, it seems that MEDA aid will in fact only be able to provide a partial cushion for the immediate negative social and economic effects that go along with structural reforms. However, as a whole, the EMP's pressure for economic liberalisation, the adoption of European standards and the strengthening of the private sector can contribute to the emergence of more efficient and competitive national economies, as well as to the promotion of sub-regional co-operation in the Middle East and North Africa region and also in making the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean area more attractive locations for European or Arab capital investments. For states such as Morocco, Tunisia and Lebanon, and ultimately for Algeria

Zone: Economic Challenges and Social Impacts on the Countries of the South and East Mediterranean", in: Álvaro Vasconcelos / George Joffé (eds., 2000), *The Barcelona Process – Building a Euro-Mediterranean Regional community*, London: Frank Cass, pp. 9–32; Jon Marks, "High Hopes and Low Motives: The New Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Initiative," *Mediterranean Politics*, 1 (1996), pp. 1–24.

15 Even the EU's own evaluation of the MEDA program described the handling and disbursement of MEDA funds as "sub-optimal". The program was consequently re-organised. See, for more details, <http://www.euromed.net/MEDA/com19990494en.pdf>.

101 and Egypt as well, the medium-term and long-term prospects of integration into the European economic sphere do in fact provide an essential incentive. Other members – in particular Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Syria – have entered the EMP primarily for political reasons. For Israel, the Mediterranean Partnership means a further possibility of breaking out of its regional isolation. For the Palestinians, it means recognition as an equal, quasi-national player. And for Syria (as well as for Egypt), the Euro-Mediterranean project represents a politically acceptable alternative to the perspective of a “New Middle East” dominated by Israel.

In general, it is true that the Mediterranean Partners have perceived the Barcelona Process – if with gradual differences – as a European project, rather than as a truly joint Euro-Mediterranean process. They regard it, in other words, as an EU initiative, the individual activities of which one either accepts, supports or rejects. They have yet to see themselves as joint owners or as really having a joint responsibility for the success of the process.¹⁶

The German approach to the Mediterranean

At the beginning of the 1990s, when the European Commission was preparing a new Mediterranean policy, Germany displayed an attitude somewhat similar to that which the Mediterranean Partners have today. The Mediterranean dimension of the EU's foreign policy was viewed as a hobbyhorse of the Commission and as an interest of the Southern EU member states. While one respected this interest, one had no particular interest in the matter, and even regarded reductions in the proposed MEDA budget as a success.¹⁷

Since the Barcelona Conference, German policy interest in the process has gradually increased. This was not the result of the change in government in Germany in 1998. Rather, Germany has,

¹⁶ See George Joffé, “EMP Watch: Progress in the Barcelona Process,” Interim Report, Lisbon (Instituto de Estudos Estratégicos e Internacionais), n.d. (2000).

¹⁷ The MEDA budget of almost 4.7 billion ECU, approved at the European Summit in Cannes (1995), was approximately 1 billion ECU below the recommendations of the Commission, essentially due to German pressure.

as it were, moved closer to the Mediterranean through Amsterdam and Schengen, that is, through the increased co-ordination or “communautisation” of European policies and the disappearance of most internal borders.¹⁸ It is also Germany’s self-defined role as a motor of the EU that has made Bonn and then Berlin into one of the essential supporters of a common foreign and security policy that truly deserves that name. To declare one’s support for the development of a common European foreign and security policy does not, however, mean leaving specific foreign policy questions to European institutions. Rather, the interest in a common foreign policy implies that Germany and other EU states concern themselves with issues that they could previously regard as the special interests of other member states and, for the most part as was the case of Germany’s interest in Mediterranean issues, ignore. It also implies that Germany and other EU member states must now be prepared to assume a certain responsibility for these issues. Foreign Minister Fischer reflected on this change in a speech before the French National Assembly in January 1999. He pleaded for supplementing the eastern expansion of the EU “with an engaged Mediterranean policy”. One must not, he argued, permit any “geoclientism” in the EU – in the sense that Germany takes care of the East, and France of the South: “It is in both of our interests and in the interest of Europe as a whole to stabilise the areas to the East and to the South.”¹⁹

This does not mean that Mediterranean questions have become a top priority for Germany. However, it does mean that Germany accepts the Mediterranean as one of the priority fields of action and interest for European foreign and security policy. This obligation to a common foreign, security and defence policy – including its Mediterranean dimension – implies at the same time that German policy deal more intensively than before with regional developments and problems that might at some point require the im-

¹⁸ The former is regulated by the Amsterdam Treaty, which came into force in 1999; the latter is regulated by the Schengen Agreement already in force in 1995.

¹⁹ Speech on 20 January 1999. Source: Webpage of the German foreign ministry, [http:// www.auswaertiges-amt.de](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de).

103 plementation of crisis-reaction measures by Europe. These could include “Petersberg Tasks” (rescue operations and deployment of armed forces in crisis management for the safeguarding of peace or for the establishment of peace), or outright defence measures which might then involve German personnel.

At the same time, through the removal of internal borders, Germany has moved closer to the Mediterranean and to the “soft” security problems of the region. Today, Germany is, in geo-political terms, already a Mediterranean country at least as far as its external borders are concerned. The border between Morocco and Germany, for example, is now located on the Spanish coast. This does not mean that Germans will now define themselves as part of a Mediterranean culture, or that Germany’s relations to individual Southern Mediterranean countries will ever assume the post-colonial emotional character of relations between France and Algeria, or France and Lebanon, or Italy and Libya. However, German decision-makers have moved closer to their Southern European colleagues in their perception of Mediterranean security policy. The traffic in drugs and human beings over the Mediterranean Sea is no longer regarded as a Spanish or an Italian problem; and the economic and political stability of the countries on the southern and eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea is no longer regarded as a special interest of the Southern EU member states, but rather as one’s own interest. German decision-makers also regard the EMP – as the attempt to transfer the EU’s stability onto the southern neighbourhood – and the EU’s common Mediterranean strategy (approved in the summer of 2000) as being appropriate instruments for promoting this interest.

It is possible that the development of this new German interest in Mediterranean stability will also lead to a rather uncritical acceptance of apologetic arguments offered by North African or Middle Eastern regimes regarding human rights issues. Representatives of these regimes often justify their bad governmental practices, the lack of rule of law in their nations or the persecution of opposition members (in particular Islamists) by pointing to the internal stability of their countries and to the common interest in

maintaining stability. To accept such arguments would be counter-productive. With all respect to the sovereignty of member nations, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is supposed to contribute to the strengthening of good governance, the rule of law and democracy and to the respect for human rights and political pluralism – all explicit goals of the “Barcelona Declaration”.

German interest in a common European Mediterranean policy is based primarily on political and security motives, motives that have more to do with developments in Europe than in North Africa or the Middle East. German interest towards the region is hardly economically motivated. German trade with nations in the Southern Mediterranean region is limited. And while an increase in both trade and investment opportunities can be expected, it should be recognised that economic associations in Germany only jumped on the “Barcelona process” when it had taken off, rather than encouraging the Federal Government to help its EU partners in getting things started.²⁰ There is still no powerful lobby in Germany for co-operation with the region. Yet, at the same time, there is also little economically motivated resistance in Germany – except from rather marginal groups – to a stronger EU association of Mediterranean Partners or to the opening of EU markets to the Partner’s agricultural products. Resistance to the latter comes in particular from those EU countries – for example, Spain – that have a central political interest in a European Mediterranean policy. Representatives of the German economy and German politicians generally understand that free trade with the Mediterranean Partners cannot be a one-way street – Germany, in any case, does not produce olives or oranges.

German Accents

If Germany does have an interest in the success of the Mediterranean Partnership, this interest should also be supported by visible engagement. This is irrespective of whether there is primarily a direct interest in promoting the political, economic and social devel-

²⁰ See chapter II.

105 opment of the countries in North Africa and the Middle East and in promoting regional co-operation and regional stability in this area, or rather an indirect interest concerned with the institutional development of the EU. One area in which Germany can make constructive contributions has already been suggested by the fact that there are no important German interest groups that support protectionist EU policies vis-à-vis the Mediterranean Partners.

- In the domain of economic relations, German policy can contribute to establishing rational approaches to the inter-European decision-making process. Perhaps, Germany can make clear to the Southern EU member states that the legitimate interest of the Mediterranean partners should not be sacrificed for short-term group interests. After all the goal of the EMP is not the short-term improvement of export opportunities. Nor is the goal of the partnership the protection of European producers from their Mediterranean competitors, but an improvement of the economic opportunities of Europe's Mediterranean Partners. Over the medium and long-term, the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean free-trade zone will lead to a structural improvement of trade conditions with the Mediterranean states.
- Germany can and should start its own initiatives and demonstrate that it is not only one of the motors of a common European foreign and security policy, but also a credible partner for North African and Middle Eastern nations. German policy-makers could, for example, develop ideas and projects for a liberal visa policy regarding these countries, a policy that ultimately declares them to be privileged partners as part of the "Barcelona Process". The introduction of a "Barcelona visa" might be a sensible step – a non-bureaucratic and easily obtainable entry permit for persons participating in the partnership. Such persons would include not only businesspeople and government officials, but also the representatives of civil society (scholars, students, journalists, artists, representatives of non-governmental organisations, trade unionists, association representatives and others). The "Barcelona Declaration" calls

for promoting contact with precisely such people, i.e., people whose subjective experiences determine to a great extent the public perception of the EMP in the Mediterranean partner states.

- The confluence of German policy with the security perceptions of the Southern EU member states should not lead German policy-makers to adopt short-term notions of stability, notions in which stability policy is confused with a “lid-on” approach that only contributes to political stagnation. Instead, Germany would do well to promote a rational discussion of stability both within Europe and with its Mediterranean partners, a discussion that emphasises that stable development and regional stability always imply change. The EU has no reason to accept the position of authoritarian regimes that reject any discussion of their human rights policies and their governmental practices by referring to stability risks or that demand European support for the persecution of dissidents. Europe should not – out of consideration for the Southern Mediterranean partners – give up its liberal asylum practices that provide refuge, if necessary, even for Islamist dissidents.
- In the field of political and security co-operation, German policy-makers should make it clear that they are more concerned with content than with ceremony. In further debates about the planned Euro-Mediterranean Charter, for example, German representatives should try to ensure that this does not become a “Barcelona Declaration minus”, i.e. a document that is adopted ceremoniously but that, in terms of content, is less substantial than the “Barcelona Declaration”, which took clear positions on democracy, human rights, tolerance and the rule of law or on the decentralised co-operation in the exchange between civil societies. The partnership, in other words, should not simply be a matter of visiting programs for managing editors and trade union leaders, but should involve exchange at a lower level as well. Uniquely symbolic events such as a Euro-Mediterranean Summit for Heads of State only make sense if they actually introduce or document a strengthening of co-operation – not

if we are forced to forego certain central statements or values for the sake of the summit itself.

- Euro-Mediterranean policy documents frequently refer to, among other things, “enhanced political dialogues” between the EU and its Mediterranean partners. This goal has yet to be realised. Germany can and should contribute to filling this “enhanced” dialogue of the EMP with substance and should not allow it to degenerate into a sterile formal exchange of official positions. This could involve the organisation of fora, in which decision-makers and government officials as well as civil society representatives from both sides of the Mediterranean engage in dialogue. Germany should make its own expertise available, where this could be put to good use. Problematic issues that need a focused dialogue are to be found in all areas of the partnership. Within the “Political and Security Partnership”, these could include, in addition to discursive attempts to identify common political values (there is much evidence that a greater congruence of values exists between Europe and Southern Mediterranean nations than between the states of the Mediterranean and those of the Gulf region), legal issues concerning the threat of terrorism or international police co-operation. Within the “Economic and Financial Partnership”, such problems might include questions of the structural change and transformation of socialist economies (Germany is still the only EU nation that has dealt with this issue within its own border). Additionally, within the “Partnership for Social, Cultural and Human Affairs”, this could include the development of public, but not government-dependent media, or dealing with xenophobia, the treatment of migrants, their integration in European societies and the reintegration of returnees.

RELATIONS WITH THE PERSIAN GULF STATES

As far as relations with the Persian Gulf states are concerned, fundamentally different approaches are discernible between the United States on the one hand and the countries of Europe on the other. Whereas the United States' interests in the Gulf region are clearly defined, unequivocally underlined by maintaining a permanent military presence as well, Europe has so far failed to co-ordinate the individual interests pursued by the countries within it. Yet Europe's geographical proximity to the region and the economic importance of these relations suggest that it would certainly be reasonable for the European Union to play a greater role. The Gulf region has the same geo-strategic importance for the EU and Germany as it has for the United States. Here, it would be in Germany's interest to incorporate the traditionally closer relations maintained with the region by both France and Great Britain into a common policy on the Gulf. Pooling capabilities could also lend greater weight to the European conception of security which tends to favour regional co-operation involving all the countries of the region rather than support for individual "players" at the expense of others.

Different Approaches to Policy on the Gulf

1. United States: Maintenance of the balance of power and "dual containment"

Prior to the occupation of Kuwait by Iraqi forces on 2 August 1990, the United States had always sought to maintain a balance of power between the two medium-sized powers Iran and Iraq. The object was to prevent a single state from achieving hegemony over the Persian Gulf. In the 1970s and 1980s, this seemed to Washington to be the best way of safeguarding oil production, which, in addition to preventing the possible manufacture and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), is doubtless the overriding

109 US concern in the region to this very day. Since then containment, has been the main feature of America's approach to the region. It was fully in keeping with this policy for the world power not to shrink from giving massive support to Saddam Hussein's regime after the Islamic revolution in Iran. Of course it should not be forgotten that, at the time, Iraq was no less of a "problem state" than it was in the 1990s and still is today.

When the United States went to war with Saddam Hussein in January 1991, it abandoned the policy of maintaining a balance of power in favour of a doctrine of "dual containment" which, despite some easing in its dealings with Iran, still applies to a great extent today. The policy of "containment" has continued to be the dominant feature of George W. Bush's Gulf policy too. In his state-of-the-union address¹ delivered in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the President named Iran and Iraq along with North Korea as states belonging to the now proverbial "axis of evil", which needed to be overcome in the struggle against terrorism. The declared objective of US foreign policy, now more than ever before, is to curb possible threats from Iraq, and specifically to prevent Saddam Hussein's regime from developing WMD and their delivery systems.

2. European uneasiness has not led to a policy of its own

During the Gulf War, the United States was assured of the support of its European Allies. Until today, this applies especially to Great Britain's support in enforcing the no-fly zones in Iraq. These are not covered by any UN resolutions, but were set up instead by the Gulf War allies directly to protect the Shiites in the south and the Kurds in the north of the country. However, in view of the questionable success of the American action, all its European partners have come to feel uneasy about this policy, albeit to varying degrees. This is not only because of America's policy towards Iran and Iraq, but also the way in which "states of concern" are treated by the United States in general. A promi-

1 Cf. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>.

nent example of this is the so-called “critical dialogue” with Iran, propagated by former foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, and timidly embarked upon by Germany. Today, this experiment is deemed to have failed, for it foundered in the face of pressure from the United States (or more precisely, self-imposed German reticence in view of the US’s position), bilateral diplomatic tensions and the domestic pressure that was organised against any form of dialogue with the “regime of the Mullahs”, given the considerable breaches of human rights in Iran.

None of the other EU countries, let alone the EU itself, have succeeded in formulating a policy on Iran because the reforms begun by President Khatami have not been introduced. The same applies to a much greater extent to the policy on Iraq in which France, for example, openly favours Russia’s anti-sanctions policy, but at the same time has so far not made any concrete proposals indicating a way out of the present impasse.

3. Replace containment by co-operation

Today as never before the US’s doctrine must be subjected to critical scrutiny. If it is to succeed, one principle of European policy should be an approach diametrically opposed to containment: instead of simply resisting threats with military force, co-operation should be intensified so as to create a climate conducive to stimulating the interest of the regional forces themselves in peaceful development and closer co-operation within the region on the one hand, and with the EU on the other.

Such an approach applies in particular to the nations of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) with which the EU already concluded a Co-operation Agreement in 1989. It can also increasingly apply to Iran as long as domestic reforms are continued there, and as far as foreign policy is concerned, conservative forces do not succeed in enforcing a return to the policy of “exporting” Islamist revolution. Such an approach has its limits, of course, vis-à-vis Iraq with which co-operation based on trust will not be possible for the foreseeable future. As Iraq will not be a structural part of a regional security architecture for the present, even in the currently unlikely event of

111 a change of regime in Baghdad, policy towards Iraq will have to be treated separately. The accusation that this European perspective is naive is belied by the political conditions locally which are currently far more favourable to such an approach in the Gulf region, again except for Iraq, than, for example, in the eastern Mediterranean. Unlike the countries directly bordering on the state of Israel, there is no direct functional link for the Gulf states between economic development, regional co-operation and security partnership with the West on the one hand, and progress in the increasingly crisis-ridden peace process on the other. Admittedly, the solidarity that the Arab Gulf states feel for the Palestinians has led to an appreciable cooling towards the West in the current crisis. Even so, the countries of the European Union are much less affected by this than the United States which, as Israel's chief ally, is held partly responsible for the violence against the Palestinians.

4. A specifically European conception of security

Security, stability and economic prosperity in the Gulf region are in Germany's and Europe's interest. In the event of another armed conflict occurring in the Gulf, the Federal Government would be faced with a dilemma: either Germany as a member of the NATO alliance would participate in the conflict directly, or else its important relations with the United States would be severely impaired by its refusal to do so. Added to this are the economic consequences of a possible future escalation of violence in the Gulf. This factor will assume still greater importance in the medium-term as, given the enormous oil reserves in the Gulf, the Gulf states' share of global oil exports is forecast to rise from 62 to 69 per cent by the year 2020.²

2 "In the AEO [Annual Energy Outlook, C.M.] 2001 reference case, Persian Gulf producers are expected to account for more than 50 percent of world-wide trade by 2002 – for the first time since the early 1980s. After 2002, the Persian Gulf share of world-wide petroleum exports is projected to increase gradually to more than 62 percent by 2020. In the low oil price case, the Persian Gulf share of total exports is projected to exceed 69 percent by 2020. All Persian Gulf producers are expected to increase oil production capacity significantly over the forecast period, and both Saudi Arabia and Iraq are expected to more than double their current production capacity." Source: Energy Information Administration, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/archive/aeo01/economic.html>.

Admittedly, the growth in oil exports from the Gulf region will be less to the European Union than to North America or developing countries, due to the growing importance of gas imports. Overall, however, it must be assumed that oil imports from the region to Europe will rise.³

Consequently, the Gulf region, which in any event provides more than 50 per cent of Europe's oil supplies, will continue to be of crucial importance for the security of Europe's energy supplies in the long-term too. This applies especially to Europe's interest in stable oil prices which enable domestic reform processes to be planned in the long-term as well. The periodical debate about rising petrol prices in Germany shows that fluctuations in the oil price can give rise to domestic tensions too.

The notion of security developed by the European Union differs markedly from that of the United States. Economic development, economic and cultural exchange and far-reaching integration play a more important role in this than they do when seen from the perspective of the distant American superpower. It would, of course, be a mistake to assume that Europe could therefore do without a "hard" security infrastructure, or indeed leave this aspect to the United States alone. It is merely the case that Europe (obviously unlike the US) simply cannot do without deliberately developing factors associated with the "soft security" sector. In this, the absence of a military potential comparable with that of the superpower plays as much a role as the fact that for Europe the Gulf is a neighbouring region, whereas for the United States it is many thousands of miles away. The Gulf would move still closer to the EU if Turkey were to become a member of the latter. Then two Gulf states – Iraq and Iran – would border directly on the EU. Even if this scenario seems less than likely in the immediate future, the geopolitical consequences of such a step for the EU must be considered.

3 "With a moderate decline in North Sea production, Western Europe is expected to import increasing amounts from Persian Gulf producers and from OPEC member nations in both northern and western Africa." Source: Energy Information Administration, International Energy Outlook 2002, 19 April 2002. <http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/ieo/oil.html>.

Given the bloody conflicts of the not so distant past, the security concept of the Gulf states themselves is naturally closer to that of the United States than of the EU. The vast amounts of money spent by the Gulf states on armaments are clear evidence of this. This could change, however, if the countries of the region were to integrate further and a regional security partnership were to be formed. Important prerequisites for this exist in the rapprochement of Saudi-Arabia in particular to Iran, and the slow but sure economic integration of the GCC states. Iran does indeed play a special role in regional security co-operation: the strategy of having Iran assume a regional leadership role, pursued by both conservative and moderate forces in the country, can meanwhile be considered a success. By building up modern conventional land and sea forces, together with strategic delivery systems, and making progress in developing WMD, Iran has become a regional power. In more than one manoeuvre, the Iranian navy has demonstrated its ability to seal off the Strait of Hormuz and so control oil transports out of the region, something that would give Iran a key position in any future conflict.

Iraq would remain excluded from such a system, however, as long as the nature of the regime does not change at all. Despite its momentary military weakness, it will continue to give the Gulf states grounds for feeling threatened in the medium-term too. For some time now, however, there have been people, even in Kuwait, who would advocate including Iraq in a regional security structure at a later date. Such a vision goes way beyond realistic scenarios in the short-term, but in the event of a change of regime in Iraq – by whatever means – it could offer the country a way out of its isolation.

Iraq, the special case – ways of pursuing a consistent policy by the West

The United Nations Security Council continues to be divided over the issue of policy towards Iraq. For a long time, the United States and Great Britain insisted on sanctions being imposed in full and on the no-fly zones in north and south Iraq being enforced by military means.

In May 2002 it was decided, after protracted negotiations, to replace the existing sanctions regime by so-called "smart sanctions". These provide for civil goods to be imported more easily, whilst stiff military sanctions continue to be enforced. Despite this compromise, the arrangement does not really go far enough for Russia and China. Their position is also supported by the representatives of France. Like many countries in the region, these three permanent members of the Security Council demand the lifting of most of the economic sanctions at least. The reason given is that, for more than ten years now, the sanctions have been a burden on the Iraqi people without causing the dictator Saddam Hussein serious difficulty. Neither had this tool succeeded in persuading him to adopt a constructive attitude towards the United Nations. The discussions between Iraq and the UN, resumed in 2002, have done nothing to change matters either.

But the threat that the regime in Baghdad continues to pose can only be effectively and permanently kept in check by the main parties involved in pursuing a consistent policy on Iraq. To achieve such a policy, fundamental agreement must first be reached between the United States and its western allies; then, as a second step, this policy must be discussed in detail with the countries of the region, as well as with Russia and China.

Not being a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, Germany's scope for direct action is limited here. Even so, in the event of Germany being re-elected to the Security Council for the period 2003/2004, it should start playing an active part in efforts to solve the problem now. Furthermore, Germany in particular has opportunities for mediating between the partners of the western alliance which could make a major contribution towards finding a solution to the problem. Moreover, it is in our own interest to take the offensive in using these opportunities, instead of referring to the contradictory positions among our alliance partners and practising abstinence as has been the case up to now.

Currently, however, not even the most elementary prerequisites for such a process exist, namely a common assessment of the status quo, and the political will of all the parties to really seek a

115 solution together. For this reason, the main facts are set out and evaluated below, and then, as a second step, joint options for action reflecting the interests of individual countries outlined.

The situation in Iraq after ten years of UN Sanctions

1. The domestic and humanitarian situation in Iraq

Ten years of sanctions and the constant military pressure with which the no-fly zones have been enforced have served to strengthen rather than weaken Saddam Hussein's regime. In its role as a distributor of foodstuffs and medicines, the government has even regained a measure of legitimacy. In addition, the distribution network, composed primarily of loyal local cadres, has woven a closely-knit web of social monitoring. This, along with the domestic intelligence services, which by tradition are strong, make an effective opposition – or even an independent civil society – to form at home practically impossible at the moment.

Sanctions have not, therefore, brought about a change in the power structure of Iraq. Neither have they been able to force the regime in Baghdad to co-operate with the UN over disarmament and arms control on a permanent basis. At the same time, there is no disputing that large sections of the population suffer extreme hardship under the terms of Iraq's isolation and have been reduced to abject poverty over the last ten years. If one calls to mind the so-called first Gulf war between Iran and Iraq which lasted almost nine years (1980–1988), it is clear that, ever since 1980, a whole generation of Iraqis have grown up in a permanent state of war, that is to say without sufficient food, education and life prospects. The degree of neglect suffered by this "lost generation" makes a restoration of decent living conditions in the short-term, even in the highly unlikely event of a change of government occurring peacefully, seem nigh on out of the question.

2. The effect of sanctions on Iraq's military potential

Iraq's conventional military potential to pose a threat is smaller today than it has been for a long time. By weakening the country

economically and carrying out “hot disarmament”, that is to say the Anglo-American air attacks conducted on an almost regular basis, the Iraqi army’s operational capability has been severely restricted. The German Federal Intelligence Service (BND) estimates that only ten to twenty per cent of Iraq’s conventional arms capacities have survived. Today, as in previous periods, the sense of threat felt by Iraq’s Persian Gulf neighbours is based more on the continuously aggressive nature of the regime than on a currently credible military threat.⁴ It is to be feared, however, that in the event of sanctions being lifted unconditionally, Iraq’s oil wealth will enable it to rearm relatively quickly and regain its previous strength.

To this day, the stage reached in the development of Iraqi WMD and missile technology, and their availability are largely open questions. Since UNSCOM’s departure from the country, it has been possible for programmes to increase the range of delivery systems to continue undisturbed. No-one can say for certain, for example, whether and when Iraqi missiles could pose a threat to Europe.

Options for action

The United States is pursuing three main objectives in its policy on Iraq: the first is to prevent Iraq from developing WMD and their delivery systems; the second is to reduce Iraq’s conventional capabilities to prevent it from re-emerging as a troublemaker or indeed as an aggressive hegemonic power in the region; and the third is to weaken and ultimately oust the regime of Saddam Hussein. To this end, the following means have so far been deployed in addition to the actual UN sanctions:

- Military monitoring of the no-fly zones in north and south Iraq, including vigorous air raids on Iraqi positions

⁴ The following news item, for example, published at the beginning of 2001, is evidence of this continuing aggressive nature of the regime: “Iraqi President Saddam Hussein’s eldest son Uday has renewed claims to Kuwait as forming part of a “Greater Iraq”,” in an excerpt of a report to parliament. He called for the National Assembly “to prepare a map of the whole of Iraq, including Kuwait City as an integral part of Greater Iraq ...” (Mid East Media Press Digest [MEPD], 03/2001, 1/16–22).

- Enforcement of a restrictive licensing practice in connection with the import of dual-use goods under the oil-for-food programme, so as to weaken Iraq economically
- Financial and logistical support for the Iraqi opposition in exile
- Since the beginning of the “War on Terrorism”, the possibility of the United States intervening in Iraq direct has been openly discussed.

The opposition in exile, which is made up of many splinter groups, has scarcely any opportunity to act in Iraq itself, despite the financial aid from the United States. Above all, however, it lacks the necessary credibility which is a *sine qua non* if wider support is to be given by western countries. One wonders whether the people being supported there would set up a “better” regime than Saddam Hussein’s. All in all, an overthrow of the present power constellation from this quarter can largely be dismissed in the immediate future. The US administration has obviously arrived at a similar conclusion for whilst it has increased its political and financial support, along with civil training for the opposition forces, this support continues not to include direct military support in the form, for example, of arms supplies or military training.

As already noted, military action together with the disarmament measures, undertaken under UN auspices until 1998, and the arms embargo have succeeded in largely restricting Baghdad’s conventional military capabilities at least. However, it is questionable as to how much more can be achieved in this regard and with the tools mentioned, over and above preventing Baghdad from embarking on new and greater armaments programmes.

Ultimately, therefore, it remains a matter of judgement, even for the United States too, as to whether economic sanctions are still a worthwhile means of achieving its own objectives, given their humanitarian consequences and their political impact on America’s allies and the United Nations Security Council. This is especially relevant since the effect of the sanctions is increasingly being called into question by smuggling and the watering-down of the regulations in practice.

The stark contrast between the positions adopted by Great Britain and France make agreement on a joint European approach seemingly impossible. Furthermore, the sanctions against Iraq are the domain of the United Nations Security Council and thus are excluded from the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy machinery from the outset. For Great Britain and France, the two European permanent Security Council members the purpose of this reservation is to prevent a modification of their commanding position by being bound into European structures. At the same time, it also prevents the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy from gaining a high profile in the case of Iraq.

Despite the divisions in the Security Council, there is no diplomatic alternative in the long-term to agreement amongst the major players on the main elements of a future policy on Iraq. After all, assuming that military intervention is not being contemplated, anything other than such an agreement would mean further erosion of the present system, and this would not only perpetuate the humanitarian disaster but also do permanent damage to the reputation of the UN Security Council. First, the United States and Europe must agree on a common position. Then, as a second step, the countries of the region, together with Russia and China, must be involved. The purpose of this is not only to alleviate conditions for the Iraqi people appreciably, but to maintain the military sanctions, which are currently being eroded, permanently. This is the only effective way of preventing Iraq from posing a serious threat to the region or indeed Europe on a permanent basis.

Possible individual measures

Serious consideration should be given to the following individual measures as a way of extending the spectrum of "smart sanctions":

- Intensify the personal sanctions against the regime's elite.
- Draw up a list of individuals holding positions of responsibility in the regime and those profiting from it, on whom travel restrictions could be imposed abroad, and whose private accounts abroad could be confiscated.

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- Set up an international tribunal to indict those heading the regime so as to rob the dictator, Saddam Hussein, and his entourage of legitimacy.
 - Suspend economic sanctions for all other Iraqis unilaterally “for a probationary period”.
 - Announce clearly defined “red lines” that would provoke punitive measures if crossed. This could, for example, be the case if Kuwait were threatened, or if forces were to proceed to the north. The international community would then have regained the initiative.
 - Maintain full UN supervision of the proceeds from the sale of Iraqi oil.
 - Maintain the no-fly zones while at the same time reducing the military force deployed.
 - Accept resumption of regular international air traffic to Iraq.
 - Do not abandon the objective of having the UN monitor capabilities to produce WMD effectively.

Despite all the scepticism surrounding the effects and consequences of the present sanctions regime, the arms embargo must on no account be called into question. It should be possible to persuade the countries of the region, as well as the members of the Security Council, of the need for a universally acceptable solution, and also to interest them sufficiently in the lifting of economic sanctions so as to obtain their consent to maintaining arms embargo in full.

The great advantage of such a strategy is that all these measures can be decided upon and carried out even without Baghdad’s approval. Naturally, the active co-operation of Iraq with the UN in rebuilding the country would be desirable. However, whilst an improvement in the humanitarian situation as described above would also mean Saddam Hussein losing some of the prestige gained from his role as the unyielding one, it remains doubtful whether he would really be interested in the lot of the Iraqi people being alleviated. This would particularly be the case if, as a result, he would after a while again have to consent publicly to Iraqi sovereignty being appreciably restricted for a long time. But

it is precisely for this reason that it would be useful and proper to provide positive incentives for Iraq to co-operate with the UN, and so develop positive prospects for an Iraq “after Saddam” in the medium- and long-terms well. This would entail in particular:

- Emphasising and actively preserving Iraq’s territorial integrity.
- Recognising Iraq’s legitimate security interests as a matter of principle.
- Commencing development of a regional security co-operation in the Gulf region, with a vacant seat reserved for Iraq from the outset.
- Concrete offers of economic co-operation, and discussion of the debt question.
- Promoting contacts between Iraqi and foreign experts, scientists and businessmen, as well as intellectuals, artists, theologians or journalists.
- Specific scholarship programmes to enable Iraqis to undergo relevant training abroad in non-military fields.
- Technical co-operation with Iraq in rebuilding the civil infrastructure, especially in providing medical care for the population.

As already observed, these points can be decided without any special willingness to co-operate on Iraq’s part. At the same time, however, pressure must be brought to bear for inspections to be resumed – something that can only be done with the consent of the Iraqi leadership. The Iraqi side broke off discussions about this in February 2001. It is only since 7 March 2002 that negotiations about deployment of UNMOVIC, the successor mission held constantly in readiness, have been resumed. Since termination of the UNSCOM mission in December 1998, however, uncertainty about the actual stage reached in Iraqi efforts to manufacture WMD and their delivery systems has grown considerably. That is why the international community must continue to demand that Iraq consent to the resumption of inspections, even though these must not be made a precondition for providing relief to the people and facilitating the civil economy.

In Europe and the United States it is still taken for granted that regions of the world seeking to join in the global economy automatically turn to the West. However, at the same time there is freedom of competition in the "global market place for inter-regional co-operations" in which, unlike in the days of confrontation between the blocs, ideological barriers are hardly an obstacle any more. The sole issue of importance today is which co-operation offers the more favourable terms. For the Gulf region, closer relations with India, Pakistan, the tiger states and ASEAN are genuine alternatives to further integration in the EU.

This threat to turn one's back on Europe is continually being voiced towards European politicians. In some cases it has already become a reality. It is based on natural relations in a whole range of fields:

- Today, Asia is already a prime importer of oil and petroleum products from the Gulf states. In China for example, energy consumption can also be expected to increase considerably in the medium-term, whereas in western Europe – despite an accelerating economic growth – consumption is stagnating.
- Pakistan and Indonesia to the east of the Gulf region are at least two Islamic states offering the potential of closer co-operation, and with which relations have traditionally been close.
- Foreign workers in the Gulf states also come largely from Asian countries. This creates ties which can be developed into trade links in the medium-term.

Germany and Europe should therefore be fully aware of the competitive situation prevailing in the "global market place for co-operations". The GCC states' complaint that, in co-operation negotiations, the EU concentrates on securing access to Arab markets for European products whilst practising protectionism in respect of petroleum products must be taken seriously. In addition to the hard facts, atmospheric elements should not be underestimated either, and these also include Europe paying the region due diplomatic attention.

EU countries continue to have the impression that the countries conducting negotiations on co-operation and association agreements with us derive benefit from this co-operation unilaterally. This is a misconception, however, because EU countries also have an economic and political interest in closer co-operation with the countries of the Middle East region. Negotiations should therefore be conducted with potential partners as equals. When doing so, we should not forget that such co-operation projects must also call existing structures in the European Union's economic system into question.

Co-operation between EU and GCC hitherto

Following the association agreement of 1989 between the EU and the GCC, the negotiations being conducted within this framework have been dragging on. Regular meetings have been held since 1991 to discuss a free trade agreement. Real progress in this question is being impeded by the relative sluggishness of the integration process within the GCC itself. The setting up of a customs union, for example, which is a formal prerequisite for a free trade agreement, will certainly not happen before 2005. During this long period of slow-moving negotiations and constant complaints by representatives from the Gulf region that Europe does not pay them sufficient attention, trade has at best stagnated, whilst with some GCC countries it has even declined substantially.

EU-states	Exports (Mio. USD)			Imports (Mio. USD)		
	1991	1995	2000	1991	1995	2000
Saudi-Arabia	12949	11069	10928	13717	10638	14491
Bahrain	860	704	827	168	180	405
Oman	981	1709	1031	241	149	198
Qatar	767	1438	1242	84	54	347
Kuweit	992	3058	2151	255	1678	2848
UAE	4735	8129	11277	2323	1010	2218
Total	21284	26107	27456	16788	13709	20507

Table 6.1: EU-Trade with the GCC-States 1991–2000*Source: IMF*

In the meantime, the mandate forming the basis of the negotiations held since 1991 has also become obsolete. The Treaties of Amsterdam, Maastricht and lastly Nice (7 and 8 December 2000) have transformed the European Community into the European Union. For this reason, and because all the GCC states except for Saudi Arabia, which is in the negotiating process, have meanwhile become members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), a new negotiating mandate must pay heed to the following points:

- The free trade agreement must be compatible with WTO rules,
- the agreement must contain a clause about observing human rights and
- it must also contain a provision providing for illegal migrants to be taken back.

These points are, of course, additional hurdles in concluding a free trade agreement, but it should be possible to overcome them in negotiations. At the same time, more complex negotiations with a “deepened” European Union mean extending the scope of

the talks in a future-oriented way. After all, Europeans no longer feel it possible to separate agreement about trade questions from such issues as human rights, democracy and the development of civil society. Furthermore, the situation in the various GCC states is not even remotely satisfactory in any of these fields. Europeans know, of course, from sad experience that negotiations about democracy and human rights are complex, lengthy and permanently beset by the risk of cultural misunderstandings. Yet it is impossible for the European Union to set these questions aside. On the one hand, this would call its basic values in question; on the other, democratic development is as much a cornerstone of Europe's conception of security as are economic prosperity, education and social justice.

A good argument for continuing to deepen co-operation between the GCC and the European Union is Europe's experience with its own unification process which the Gulf states could profit from in pursuing their own difficult course to economic integration. After all, Central Europe too still finds it difficult today to dispense with protectionist measures, and in some cases, it takes a great deal of effort here as well to secure harmonisation of legal provisions which is an important prerequisite for creating a common market, even when reference is made to an overriding common interest.

Though the way in which the GCC has functioned up to now may seem unsatisfactory to European eyes, it has achieved a relatively high degree of integration compared with the Mediterranean countries included in the Barcelona process. In the negotiations, the European Union must state clearly that its goal is to use this integration and support it. After all, the alternative would be separate bilateral negotiations with all the GCC states which would doubtless be a much lengthier process. In addition, only a multilateral process can ensure that not just export-oriented strategies of individual countries are pursued, but that local and regional economic cycles promoting stability are stimulated as well.

In connection with this, the EU should also do more to encourage the GCC to press for Yemen to be included in the organisation.

125 Admittedly, Yemen is not comparable with the Gulf states in terms of structure and economic resources, but it could play an important role in the GCC's future security tasks, simply by virtue of its long coastline and its location opposite the Horn of Africa. The fact that Yemen is already granted access to some GCC forums, such as those for health, science, labour and social affairs, is a good starting point for this integration.

Germany as the Gulf region's "broker" in the West

Not having a colonial past in the region, Germany has the advantage of being able to act as a "broker". Germany should use this and establish itself in the EU and the western alliance as the Gulf region's advocate. This can be done without ingratiating oneself and without jeopardising Germany's special relationship with Israel because, as explained above, there is no close functional connection between the peace process and the Gulf region. In the Gulf, therefore, unlike many other parts of the world, there are no historical obstacles whatsoever to Germany playing a more of a lead role in developing Europe's Gulf policy further.

In this way, Germany can act as a broker in Europe's relations with the countries of the Gulf region in both directions. In addition to playing a prominent role vis-à-vis the region, this also means generating and maintaining interest in and understanding for the concerns of the region in Europe itself. A positive example of this is the dialogue of cultures with Iran which Germany, above all, brought to Europe despite all the difficulties. Under immeasurably better prerequisites, it takes up basic elements of the above-mentioned critical dialogue and enables many areas of possible co-operation to be discussed. This relaxed approach, which is still prone to setbacks, is meanwhile characteristic not only of Iranian-German relations, but increasingly of relations with France, Italy and Great Britain too.

Germany should therefore also actively seek co-operation bilaterally, for example in the field of sustainable energy supplies. In this way, German know-how combined with capital from the

oil-producing states could enable future-oriented technologies to be developed. At the same time, these would also be calculated to contribute to a diversification of the economies in the GCC region, which, given the widespread oil mono-structure, most of the GCC states will want to do in the medium- to long-term. At the same time, this link could further develop the position of German high-tech firms in the sustainable energy sector.

Cultural policy abroad as a long-term investment

Germany must especially closely examine whether a special emphasis should be placed on the region as far as its cultural policy is concerned. Young elites in the Gulf states learn mainly English; German is only taught at very few schools. As a result, the German educational market has no attraction for them whatsoever. One year spent learning the language before admission to a German university must, after all, seem like a lost year. Consequently students from the Gulf attend British and American universities, and naturally make business contacts primarily with English-speaking countries.

In the years to come, no-one can expect miracles of the Federal Foreign Office's budget in this regard. However, urgent consideration should be given to the possibility of concentrating funds on this part of the globe, which is of such economic importance, as part of a special programme. Another possibility would be to increase the number of courses of study offered at German universities in English. This cannot be a substitute for German language schools, but it would provide a worthwhile additional opportunity of attracting international elites – including those from the Gulf region as well – to Germany.

However, cultural policy abroad is not confined to language training. The culturally tense situation currently prevailing between western and Islamic countries in particular makes it necessary to awaken a deeper mutual understanding for each other's culture. Here, it is not merely a question of a better European understanding of Islam, but one of presenting European culture in

127 the Gulf region better as well. After all, the values of the European Age of Enlightenment are not self-evident either. They need to be put across and explained. This is Europe's fundamental task in its cultural dialogue with the region.

The “Barcelona Process” and the Gulf Region

A much more serious factor than the largely technical problems between EU and GCC, which are perfectly capable of negotiation, is the enduring lack of political interest in the entire region shown by the European Union member states. This attitude is apparent, for example, from the fact that the Gulf was not included in the “Barcelona process”. The Mediterranean has so far patently been given preference over the Gulf region by the EU by including the Mediterranean countries in the “Barcelona process”. This is also logical and consistent, after all the Mediterranean area is Europe's immediate neighbour in the south. That is why it rightly enjoys priority on the political agenda. At the same time, however – for the very reason of our dependence on oil imports for one – we should not entirely disregard the European Union's economic interests in the Gulf. The regular discussions held at EU-GCC level are not an adequate substitute for such a comprehensive approach as the “Barcelona process” in this respect either as, despite being broadened as described above, they still focus chiefly on removing trade barriers, and so are far less comprehensive.

As was the case with the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, the experience gained by the EU and the GCC should be used as a basis for instituting a wide-ranging discussion process with the Gulf states which must be open to all the countries in the region from the very outset. But this depends on there being a clear political will on the part of Europeans to do so. Currently, this does not seem to be the case. Germany will therefore have to canvass for stronger engagement in the region, press for more speed in negotiations with the GCC and ask whether and how the Gulf states can be included in the “Barcelona process” directly.

A “Common Gulf Region Strategy” within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy?

At present, trade between Europe and the Gulf states – oil aside – is marginal compared with other regions. Nevertheless there are potential markets here. It is of great importance, above all for Germany, whose consumer goods in the technological sector in particular are greatly prized in the region, that economic co-operation is intensified and facilitated.

This economic potential and the vital security interests that Europe has in the region (particularly with regard to long-range missile systems proliferation and increasing migratory pressures) are reason enough to define European Union policy in a “Common Gulf Region Strategy” within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. However, it is far from enough simply to make this demand. Given the wide-spread lack of interest in the region, much lobbying will need to be done. That is in Germany’s and Europe’s interest. The fact that in 2002 the EU Commission is at last proposing to open a permanent representation at the headquarters of the Gulf Co-operation Council in Riyadh is an important first step in this direction.

RELATIONS TO THE ARAB WORLD

A one-sided love affair?

The Arab perception of Germany is broadly characterised by a certain tension between the disappointment with post-World-War Germany's pro-Israeli stance and a deep sympathy for Germany. Germany, after all, was never a colonial power in the Middle East and Arab thinkers have, for better or for worse, frequently made use of German political philosophy and political ideologies. Germany's history and its economic and technological achievements are admired in the Arab world. It is no secret that Germany and the Germans do not reciprocate the sympathies that the Arab world has for them to the same degree. For Germany, relations to Arab states are subordinate to other foreign policy priorities. Political relations tend to reflect far more the relatively limited scope of current trade with those states than trading potential or the geographical proximity of the Arab world to Germany. There is, of course, the usual exchange among experts in diverse fields, which has increased within the framework of Euro-Mediterranean relations, at least with Mediterranean states. But the social elements of German-Arab relations are, as a whole, underdeveloped. Even the number of Arab students at German universities has more or less stagnated.

The history of a relationship in the shadow of policies relating to Germany and Israel¹

Until the middle of the 1960s, the foreign policy of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was based on the belief that, despite its special relationship with Israel, it could establish good bilateral relations to Arab states and that it did not have to take a position

¹ I would like to thank Ursula Schröder and Nicole Stracke for their assistance on this section.

on the Arab-Israeli conflict. In addition to the policy of non-intervention, German Middle East policy was largely characterised by two factors. On the one hand, it was *Deutschlandpolitik*, policies concerned with the issue of German unity and division, being reflected in the Middle East;² on the other hand, it was an expression of the close ties between the FRG and the United States. At times, these two factors came into conflict with one another.

The same can be said of the effects the “Hallstein Doctrine” (1955) had on the FRG’s relations to the Arab states. This doctrine combined the FRG’s claim to be the sole legitimate representative of *all* Germans with the demand for the international non-recognition of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The Federal Government classified violations of this doctrine by other states as “unfriendly acts” that would only deepen the division of Germany. Bonn would consider sanctions and the breaking-off of bilateral relations in such cases. From 1954 onwards, the GDR actively sought to promote its international recognition through economic aid agreements with Third World states. Arab states used the intra-German conflict to play the two states off against one another. Hence, the GDR sought to increase its influence with Egypt, Iraq and Syria, while the FRG tried to prevent this through further promises of payments. Development aid from both German states ultimately depended on the respective Arab states’ stance regarding the two Germans.

In 1964, the first serious crisis in German-Arab relations arose over the “Hallstein Doctrine”. The crisis developed after reports surfaced of extensive arms deliveries that had been negotiated from 1957, and implemented from 1960, with the support of the United States.³ At the height of the Cold War, the FRG could not

2 See Friedemann Büttner and Peter Hünseler, “Die politischen Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und den arabischen Staaten. Entwicklungen, Stand und Perspektiven,” *Deutsch-Arabische Beziehungen. Bestimmungsfaktoren und Probleme einer Neuorientierung*, Karl Kaiser / Udo Steinbach (eds.), Munich (1981), pp. 109–152 (118).

3 Due to pressure from Arab nations, the Reparation Agreement from 1952 contained a clause stating that deliveries to Israel could contain no weapons, munitions or other military items. The FRG’s arms export guidelines from 1957 also forbade the delivery of arms to areas of tension.

131 and did not want to refuse such a request from Washington: The West German Republic was dependent on the strategic protection of the United States, and it possessed only limited sovereignty.⁴ In February 1965 the situation escalated when Egyptian President Abd al-Nasir, reacting to West German military assistance of Israel, invited Walter Ulbricht, the GDR Chairman of the Council of State, to Egypt for the signing of a loan assistance agreement and threatened to recognise the GDR. The FRG responded on 12 May 1965 by establishing diplomatic relations with Israel – a step that had already been postponed twice, in 1956 and 1963, due to the opposition of Arab states and the Foreign Office in Bonn. At the same time, West German economic aid to Egypt (the United Arab Republic) was stopped. On 13 May 1965, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, North Yemen, Lebanon and Algeria broke off relations with the FRG; Morocco, Tunisia and Libya recalled their ambassadors.⁵ This marked the failure of Bonn's attempt to avoid taking a position in the Arab-Israeli conflict and, at the same time, to maintain good bilateral relations with all states of the region. The non-recognition policy based on the "Hallstein Doctrine" had come into conflict with the policy of reparations to Israel, at least insofar as this included weapons deliveries.

The War of 1967 brought German-Arab relations to a further low point. Officially, the government continued to pursue a policy of non-intervention. However, public opinion and political parties generally took Israel's side. When, in 1969, the GDR was officially recognised by Iraq, Sudan, Syria, Yemen and Egypt, the complete failure of the FRG's non-recognition policy in the Middle East became clearly apparent.

Federal Chancellor Willy Brandt's social-liberal government reformulated the main elements of German Middle East policy. This reformulation was based on the principle of balance (*Ausge-*

4 See Josef Joffé, "Reflections on Germany policy in the Middle East," *Germany and the Middle East. Patterns and Prospects*, Shahram Chubin (ed.), New York (1992), pp. 195–209.

5 Contrary to fears of the FRG, these states did not immediately establish diplomatic relations with the GDR. It was only in July of 1969 that Egypt recognised the GDR.

wogenheit), which stipulated that good relations should be sought with all states of the region and that relations to Israel should be normalised. Arab states initially reacted with reserve to this policy change. In December 1971, Algeria and Sudan resumed diplomatic relations with Bonn, despite opposition from Syria and Iraq. In March 1972, the Council of the Arab League passed a resolution supporting the resumption of diplomatic relations with the FRG. By 1975, relations with all Arab states had been re-established.⁶

German Middle East policy within a European framework

The next crisis in German-Arab relations also occurred in this period, during the October War of 1973. Two factors contributed to the renewed deterioration of relations with the Arab states: first, American weapon supplies reached Israel through the German city of Bremerhaven; second, Arab exporters used oil as a weapon against Western nations, leading to the “oil crisis”. The latter, however, ultimately promoted renewed European interest in increased co-operation with the Arab world.

With the beginning of European Political Co-operation (EPC) in 1971, the states of the European Community began to co-ordinate their foreign policy positions regarding the Middle East. Most importantly, the European Community passed a declaration on the Middle East crisis in November 1973, calling for the end to Israeli occupation, the recognition of the legitimate rights of Palestinians and respect for the sovereignty of all states in the region. The acquisition of territory through the use of force was declared unacceptable. This criticism of Israeli policy provided the Arab League with an opportunity to suggest the launch of a European-Arab dialogue which consequently began in November 1973. Between 1974 and 1979, this dialogue facilitated an exchange of opinions at the level of ministers, diplomats and experts on a relatively regular

⁶ Jordan had already re-established diplomatic relations with Bonn in 1967. Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt resumed diplomatic relations with the FRG in 1972, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in 1973, Iraq, Syria and Yemen in 1974 and the Sultanate of Oman in 1975.

133 basis. It was interrupted for the first time in 1979 when Egypt's membership of the Arab League was suspended. The dialogue was resumed again at the end of the 1980s but it became obsolete after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, an event which rendered the existence of a unified Arab position impossible for years to come.

While both European and Arab governments were interested in a dialogue, it was engaged with differing notions and goals. In the 1970s, Europeans were concerned with their energy supply, and they wanted to make sure that oil revenues would be re-cycled into Europe through lucrative export and service contracts. They were also particularly interested in winning Arab oil exporters for the financing of European projects in other Arab states. For their part the Arab states sought a collective trade agreement between the European Community and the Arab League that would allow Arab products to be sold duty-free on European markets. They also had a broader understanding of technology co-operation than did the Europeans, one that included, for instance, the peaceful use of nuclear energy. They also emphasised that dialogue must not be limited to economic issues, but should have a political dimension as well. Here they were concerned in particular with creating more understanding in Europe for Arab positions, especially regarding the question of Palestine. The Arab demand that the PLO participate in the dialogue was only initially problematic – both sides quickly agreed to engage in dialogues with joint delegations and not with representatives of individual states. The failure of the Euro-Arab dialogue was not the result of differences of opinion between the European and the Arab sides, but ultimately of inter-Arab developments and an increasing lack of interest on the part of the Europeans. With the collapse of oil prices in the 1980s and the 1990s, Europe would no longer require, at least for the foreseeable future, this type of political framework to safeguard its petroleum supply. Since 1981 the GCC has represented an independent, sub-regional organisation of Arab Gulf monarchies, one that is well suited as a partner for dialogue on economic and trade issues. With the “Barcelona Process”, the EU has developed its own multilateral instrument for the Middle East and Mediterranean region

and has sought to contribute to the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict through bilateral and multilateral initiatives.⁷ 134

The FRG began to emphasise the Palestinians' demand for self-determination at an early stage, and even assumed a leading role in regard to this particular issue within the European Community. The reason for this lay essentially in the fact that the FRG, committed to the "self-determination of the German people", could not deny another people the same right. Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher tried to define Germany's "balanced approach" thus: "[T]he legitimate rights of the Palestinian people as well as Israel's right to existence within secure and recognised borders have equal rank (...) and [must] not obstruct each other (...). This means that a solution is only possible if Palestinians recognise Israel's right to existence and if Israel recognises the Palestinians right to self-determination."⁸ A similar position was adopted in the European Council's Declaration on the situation in the Middle East issued in Venice on 13 June 1980.⁹ In addition to the right to existence of all nations in the region and the obligatory renunciation of the use of force, the Declaration also called for the Palestinians' right to self-determination and, for the first time, for the participation of the PLO in the peace process. The Venice Declaration also represented the beginning of an independent European Middle East policy. Since then German policy towards the region has moved within the parameters of European policy.

While the FRG was interested in good bilateral relations with all Arab states, it simultaneously sought to give political questions as low a priority as possible, placing economic co-operation in the foreground. Relations were particularly good with Egypt, Jordan and Morocco – a fact that was evident in the exchange of relatively

7 For more on the Euro-Arab dialogue, see for example, 'Abd al-Mun'im Zana-bili, al-hiwar al-'arabi al-uribi [The Arab-European Dialogue], Damascus (1992); Bichara Khader, "L'Europe et la Méditerranée: Géopolitique de la proximité", *L'Europe et la Méditerranée: Geopolitique de la proximité*, Bichara Khader (ed.), pp. 249–282.

8 Translated from: Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, Bulletin, 143/1975, p. 1427.

9 See Appendix.

135 high-level visitors. Bilateral crises did occur: in the late 1980s, for example, a crisis broke out with Syria whose complicity in terrorist acts in Germany caused a temporary reduction of diplomatic relations and the freezing of financial aid. Germany itself was implicated in the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait insofar as it was discovered that German companies had contributed to the build-up of the Iraqi chemical weapons programme either directly or through the export of dual-use products. During the Gulf War, Germany did contribute massive financial and material support to the states of the anti-Iraq coalition but for primarily constitutional reasons it did not participate in the military alliance. While the FRG did not break off diplomatic relations to Iraq, German personnel were withdrawn. Until the end of the 1990s, relations between Germany and Iraq remained at the lowest possible level.

German policy always sought to foster the Arab nations' understanding for the fact that Germany had a special relationship with Israel. This became easier with the Madrid Conference of 1991 and the ensuing Arab-Israeli peace process. Today, Arab states are more prepared than they have been to accept Germany's historical responsibility to the Jewish people. They did react with some anger in the spring of 1997 when Germany was the only EU state that abstained in a UN General Assembly vote on a resolution that condemned Israeli settlement policy. They also criticised the delivery of German submarines to Israel in 1999 and 2000, an act that certainly did not contribute to the promotion of regional stability. All of this underlines the fact that Germany has had and continues to have a particular interest in the success of the peace process which is usually not spelled out: Peace between Israel and the Arab states would not only remove the Arab world's uneasiness about Germany's relationship to Israel. It would also help to prevent German policy from being too partisan – even, as the voting episode at the UN in 1997 indicates, against its own better judgement.

With the peace process and specifically with the signing of the Oslo Agreement by Israelis and Palestinians in September 1993, it was only logical that German-Palestinian relations should start to improve significantly. As early as December 1993, PLO leader

Arafat visited the FRG at the invitation of Foreign Minister Kinkel. In 1994, Germany was the first state to open a representative office in the Palestinian Territories. German leaders like to emphasise the fact that Germany – with its own bilateral aid and its share of EU aid – is the largest single financial supporter of the Palestinian community. Today, visits by German politicians to the Palestinian territories are as much a part of the routine of German Middle East relations as visits to Israel. This has continued even during the confrontation that broke out in the autumn of 2000, and despite increasing Israeli demands, from the end of 2001, to isolate the Palestinian leadership.

Points of departure for German-Arab relations

Relations with the Arab world as a whole should be integrated into the framework of Mediterranean and Middle East policy. This is particularly true if one expects that the Arab-Israeli conflict will be resolved in the mid-term future. Germany, like other European nations, has an interest in regional and sub-regional integration schemes that involve both Israel and Iran. Arab states can be expected to understand this policy and at least some of them are sure to welcome it.

- For this reason, there will be little interest in the reestablishment of a Euro-Arab dialogue. This dialogue has not moved international relations forward and has, for the most part, ignored inter-societal relations. German and European relations to Arab nations should not be made dependent on how well the Arab League functions or how much Arab nations cooperate with one another. Europeans should not seek to be more pan-Arab than Arab nations and societies themselves. At the same time, it is important that we take into account the truly significant political and cultural links within the Arab world, and that we develop specific initiatives and instruments that promote our relations to Arab states and societies.
- In this regard, German policy makers should leave no room for doubt that – contrary to the widespread assessment in Arab

circles – neither Germany nor Europe has an interest in fragmenting the Arab world. Inter-Arab co-operation, whether on an economic or a political level, will facilitate the co-operation of Germany and Europe with Arab states.¹⁰ Openness among Arab states – the dismantling of tariffs and non-tariff barriers between Arab countries – would also create larger markets and lead to greater interest from potential German investors who would like to produce for these markets. A co-ordination of Arab positions could also facilitate debates within the Euro-Mediterranean relationship (the Barcelona Process). The EU – motivated by its own interest – has pressed the GCC states to unify their external tariffs before an EU-GCC free-trade zone is established.

- German policy makers and institutions should not only support the establishment of relations between Israel and Arab states; they should also contribute to promoting exchanges among Arab states and societies. Sub-regional co-operation schemes in the Maghreb or in the Gulf region remain underdeveloped and could use encouragement and support. The same is true of confidence-building measures in difficult bilateral relationships, such as those between Syria and Palestine or Algeria and Morocco. In fact, Arab societies have so little knowledge of the structures and developments of other Arab nations that almost any form of exchange between societal actors would have a positive effect. German political foundations could use their experience here to help promote such exchanges within the Arab world, between Arab states and Israel, as well as between Arab states and Iran.
- Bilateral political dialogues between Germany and individual Arab states – dialogues that include political actors from both sides and that occur on informal levels – could contribute to lessening mutual mistrust and combating the simple lack of

¹⁰ For more on this issue, see Volker Perthes, “imkaniyyat al-ta’awun al-urubi – al-‘arabi: wajhat nazr almaniyya” [The possibilities of European-Arab co-operation: a German perspective], *al-Mustaqbal al-‘arabi*, 22 (11/1999) 249, pp. 9–14.

knowledge. Such dialogues are often well suited for addressing sensitive issues in a small circle and for learning how the other side discusses particular issues of common interest. These dialogues should be initiated by political foundations or scholarly institutions engaged in policy-oriented work. One example of this is the German-Syrian political dialogue organised by the German Institute for International and Security Affairs and the Strategic Studies Centre at the University of Damascus.

- We are far from having exhausted the possibilities of cultural co-operation between Germany and the Arab nations. There is still great interest in Arab countries for German language and German culture – the current demand surpasses the Goethe Institute's capacities. A sensible combination of development policy and cultural co-operation is both possible and meaningful. German schools as well as vocational training measures based on German models and supported by German development co-operation have successfully contributed to technological developments in the partner nations and to the establishment of contacts and ties between Germany and Arab partner countries. The idea of establishing one or more German technical colleges has been repeatedly raised. This idea should be followed up with some urgency. Since student exchange among Arab states is not limited by language barriers, the establishment of such an institution in one or two Arab countries would have an effect throughout the entire region.
- At the same time, German-Arab student exchange programs should be expanded. Here we should focus in particular on recruiting Arab university and technical college students from those states for which Germany has a special political interest, for example Egypt, Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine or Syria. We should regard the expansion of scholarship and target programs for Arab students in Germany as a means of establishing a solid basis for social relations over the long-term – not least with nations such as Iraq where official political relations prove difficult. After the events of 11 September 2001, it is essential to make clear that Germany will continue

to welcome students from Arab countries, not least so in fields that have always attracted Arab students, such as sciences and engineering.

- A further means for promoting social and economic relations in the Arab world – a means which has yet to be used adequately – are practical training programs for young Arab working people in private German firms, German universities and research institutes and German government offices. Any such programme should include business associations as well as federal and regional institutions and local administrations.
- The Federal Government should appoint a “Co-ordinator for German-Arab Co-operation” (analogous to the “Co-ordinator of German-American Co-operation”). This position should be filled by a person who has sufficient experience in the region and in co-operating with the Arab world. Preferably the co-ordinator would be a scholar, an entrepreneur or a politician. In any case, it should be someone who is not subject to the official constraints of a government position. The tasks of the co-ordinator would lie primarily in the inter-societal and cultural domains. The co-ordinator would neither replace professional diplomacy, nor obstruct diplomatic work. Rather, he or she would contribute to the establishment and expansion of contacts and would occasionally assist in clearing up misunderstandings or in sounding out ideas and, above all, in setting an example of good will and readiness for neighbourly relations and serious dialogue with the Arab world.
- Special initiatives and programs for promoting co-operation with Arab nations cannot replace an active European policy in the Mediterranean or the Middle East. They can, however, supplement such a policy. These initiatives should be particularly concerned with cultivating and expanding existing sympathies, as well as making it clear that Germany recognises the predominantly Arab character of the Middle East and is prepared to develop its relations with the Arab world, even if regional peace and structural developments supported by Germany and Europe do not progress as quickly as one might hope.

NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST IN GERMAN SECURITY POLICY

Security policy challenges and German interests

1. Lessons of the past

Until the early 1990s, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) lay beyond the horizon of German security policy. Germans concentrated on the confrontation between East and West in their own divided country. Foreign policy toward the MENA region was not motivated by security policy considerations, but rather reacted when necessary to crises and conflicts. German policy-makers regarded it as a key interest to avoid being talked or even coerced into security commitments in the Middle East by allies and friends. Within the strategic constellation of the Cold War, the question of German responsibility for the region simply did not arise. This partial blindness of German foreign policy, however, repeatedly produced blunders. Most of them stemmed from the one-sided pursuit of *export interests* in the region. Germany tried for a long time to ignore its particular susceptibility, namely that being a leading export nation in the chemical and engineering industries it unwittingly contributed to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and missiles. When and if proliferation occurred it was the result of the criminal misconduct of individual German exporters. But it was the Federal Government that was held politically responsible. Only after Germany had been taken to task by the international community for supplying chemical weapons facilities to Libya and Iraq were export controls tightened to a standard that is probably not matched by any of its European partners. But even after this change in export policy Germany never really tackled the question of whether it should take security policy responsibility for involuntary participation in WMD proliferation and if so how this should be done. The resulting damage to the reputation of German foreign policy was highlighted by the

141 malicious remark of an American commentator, who referred to the Libyan arms facilities built with German supplies as “Auschwitz in the sands”.

An examination of *Germany's role in the second Gulf War* provides the most instructive example of the negative effects of the reactive policy of the past, with its lack of foresight or clear objectives. Germany successfully managed to avoid direct military participation. In foreign policy and logistical terms, however, Germany was an important, indeed an essential, component of the coalition against Iraq. The Federal Republic assumed the function of a turntable for American troop deployment, supporting the allies massively with Bundeswehr logistics, and paid a substantial proportion of the direct costs of the war. Thus even if Germany did not provide troops, politically it was part of the coalition and was probably also responsible under international law. Despite enormous material contributions to the coalition, Germany was not accorded any say in political decision-making. Instead of deriving benefits in the form of political or economic influence in the region, Germany's reputation was greatly damaged. German-Israeli relations suffered because Israel, bombarded with Iraqi missiles, faced the risk of chemical weapons attacks, and a few German firms had contributed in a criminal manner to Iraq's armaments program. The debacle of German foreign policy in the Gulf subjected the Federal Republic to disproportionate financial demands from many sides. Overall, Germany's most important allies gained the impression that Germany was not a full and reliable partner.

2. Current challenges from the region for German security policy

Only after the end of the East-West conflict did the German government and the public in general slowly begin to understand the importance of its security interests in the Middle East. Until then attention had been focused primarily on eastern and southeastern Europe and the security challenges which those areas presented. Consequently, Germany and its European allies engaged massively in the conflicts erupting in the wake of Yugoslavia's demise. In contrast, the South seemed remote and the possibility of a *direct*

threat to Germany and the European Union was excluded. This perception continues to prevail in Germany although a laborious process of re-evaluation can be observed in the public discussion on security issues. Of course, the numerous conflicts and crises in this region were always felt in various ways in the North. Europeans, however, considered the risks to their security to be more indirect, diffuse and remote than those emanating from southeastern Europe. The attacks of 11 September 2001, the current escalation of the Middle East conflict, and the possible emergence of a new war against Iraq increasingly convince Germans – and Europeans in general – that their security interests in the neighbouring MENA region carry more weight than those in any other region outside of Europe.

Quite naturally, the Mediterranean members of the European Union have always looked intently to the South when setting their security priorities. In the process of harmonising EU foreign and security policies the southern European states introduce their security interests and they are represented accordingly in EU policy. As a consequence, they also gain unprecedented prominence in Germany's security policy. European integration, and especially the creation of a single currency and a visa union, literally brings the Southern shore of the Mediterranean in many ways closer to Northern Europe, bringing its previously distant security problems with it. This calls for responses. For example, today the EU would have to react as a whole if unrest and conflict were to result in a massive population movement in the Mediterranean region.

In the Middle East, a notoriously high proportion of resources is expended on arms. The continuing arms build up in the region negatively influences European security, since it increases the dangers emanating from armed conflicts in the region. New direct and indirect security problems are being created by the proliferation of long-range missiles and WMD. The range of these missiles is increasing and covers ever larger parts of European territory. Regional conflicts that see the use of WMD might force the EU to get involved because it cannot ignore the proximity of

143 these horrors. The increasing availability of conventional arms and WMD in the region increases the danger that irresponsible forces such as terrorists could gain access to these instruments of violence. The current debate in Washington as to whether the United States should take preventive military action against Iraq highlight the challenges posed by the possible association of WMD and terrorism.

Israel's security has been and remains a foreign policy priority for Germany. Current conditions in the region call for a more active German involvement concurrent with the escalation of the Middle East conflict and the EU's growing role in containing it. Germany's closer engagement in the Middle East conflict, its good relations with both parties and its substantial aid for the Palestinians are expressions of German security policy. This engagement is based on the assumption that Israelis and Palestinians need international support to find a formula for peace which will give both peoples their own state with internationally recognised borders and a shared security. Because of the crimes of the Nazi period, Germany will continue to feel a special responsibility for Israeli security for the foreseeable future and will have to provide what assistance it can. In the future the German public will also react sensitively to any genuine threat to Israel and demand in any such case a response from the German government. If called upon by the conflicting parties to do so this might include a commitment that could go further than what the Federal Republic has been willing to do elsewhere.

A strategic interest that Germany shares with most countries in the world is the *security of oil supplies* from the Persian Gulf. It is true that Germany draws only a modest proportion, around ten percent, of its oil imports from the Persian Gulf. Nevertheless, any disruption in the flow of oil from this region would have negative effects on oil prices and thus on the world economy as a whole. During the next two decades, oil exports from the Gulf are expected to play an increasingly important role. Reserves must maintain sufficient levels and production costs need to remain at a reasonable level in order to support the projected economic growth

in Asia. The Gulf states' share of the world market is expected to double to around fifty percent by 2020. 144

3. Questions of burden sharing

Even if Germany did not initially feel directly effected by a conflict in North Africa or the Middle East, it would inevitably become involved as soon as the United States, NATO allies and/or EU partners became engaged.

Parallel to the development of European security and defence policy, Germany's European allies will increasingly demand that the Federal Republic assume its fair share of costs and burdens. Once a European power has exhausted its national potential in a given situation it will demand help from its European partners. The EU is working on the realisation of a number of ambitious plans and schemes intended to harmonise European foreign policy and turn it into an effective common security and defence policy. Currently, Europeans are developing a limited military and civil intervention capability including the necessary decision-making bodies and command arrangements. In any EU engagement, Germany would be expected to contribute in accordance with its capabilities: Germany produces roughly 25 per cent of Europe's economic output. Among the large nations – Britain, France and Italy – the German armed forces still have the strongest manpower.

The question of burden sharing has always been a prominent issue in the transatlantic relationship. Today, a mere repetition of the scenario of Germany's involvement in the Gulf War can be ruled out. If the United States need support from Berlin they would expect that Germany make a contribution in proportion to its capabilities including critical military assets and combat troops.

In the "war on terrorism" the United States preferred to act outside of NATO, although for the first time in its history the Alliance was prepared to act in collective self-defence against an attack on one of its members. When asked, the German government decided to make a sizeable military contribution to the coalition against terrorism. On 15 November 2001 the German parliament

145 mandated a contribution of 3,900 soldiers to the coalition. For the first time in the history of the Bundeswehr troops were sent into a combat mission in Afghanistan. In the summer of 2002 most of these German units are still on duty. Moreover, the German armed forces have contributed more than 1,000 troops to the peace keeping force of the United Nations in Kabul (ISAF). Germany is also making a substantial long-term commitment to nation-building and reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Since the shock of September 2001 the United States has emphasised that in security matters they will act multilaterally if it suits their purpose but unilaterally whenever they deem it necessary. In spite of this shift toward unilateralism and tactical multilateralism the question of burden sharing has not lost any of its importance in the transatlantic relationship. Recent American led military operations in major crises suggest a typical distribution of roles. The main combat effort is entrusted to US forces who use local irregulars for the bulk of ground operations. Europeans are given a large if not the largest share in peace-keeping, nation-building and reconstruction. This distribution of roles corresponds to the transatlantic realities of economic parity and military inequality. It also implies a time sequence which tends to put Europeans in the awkward position of being called upon to engage in massive crisis management and conflict resolution efforts only after the United States has unilaterally and decisively determined the situation the ground. In order to preserve a strong transatlantic relationship this new dimension of burden sharing will have to be discussed. A strong and unified European voice is needed when discussing transatlantic engagements in major conflicts with the United States. This voice can only be strong and united if Germany participates and puts its weight behind it. In any crisis, European allies and partners from the region will expect to hear a clear German voice in the European concert. More generally, the German federal government must prepare itself that in case of a large scale military deployment where German troops are put at risk, the German public will also ask for an effective political contribution to crisis management.

4. Germany's security interests in the region

Past experience, current developments in the region and the challenges of European integration suggest a definition of the most important German security policy interests in the MENA area with the following lines:

- Promoting stability in the region by encouraging the states of the region to recognise each other's right to exist in secure borders, to regulate their cross-border conflicts by peaceful means and to develop regional mechanisms for co-operative security.
- Co-operating with allies, Europeans, and regional partners in recognising and analysing traditional and non-traditional security risks and working with them in order to develop and apply appropriate instruments for conflict prevention, risk control, and risk reduction, giving preference to policies integrating regional partners.
- Anticipating direct conventional and non-conventional threats at an early stage and developing defensive counter-strategies within the EU and NATO.
- Defining Germany's and Europe's role in a given regional conflict as precisely as possible on the basis of German and European capabilities, making purposeful contributions to conflict resolution, looking for and exploiting complementarities between the United States and the EU in a spirit of common purpose, and avoiding getting entangled in a conflict without a clear notion of the limits and conditions of an engagement and without an exit strategy.
- Supporting all of this with a general foreign policy and foreign economic policy that promotes the prosperity and internal stability of the states of North Africa and the Middle East. In order to do this, intelligent policies are needed to solve the conflicts between the various objectives, such as preserving the internal stability of regional countries and promoting democracy at the same time or encouraging economic reform and structural adjustment without ignoring social justice.

The following lines will attempt to review the risks proceeding from North Africa and the Middle East and, building upon this, to outline some options for German policy.

1. Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in North Africa and the Middle East

The main concern of current security policy discussions about the region is how to defend against the risks posed by the proliferation of WMD and their delivery systems. Since the end of the 1990s American analysts designated Iranian and Libyan (alongside with North Korean) missiles armed with non-conventional warheads as the most serious middle- and long-term strategic threat to the United States and the interests of its allies. Whether or not one shared this analysis in regard to these three individual countries did not invalidate the underlying argument. Germany, like all allies, has to recognise the growing threat from the Middle East. Uncontestedly, there is a build-up of missiles and other means of delivery in this region. In addition to that, every advance in industry – take for example the fields of chemicals and pharmaceuticals – inevitably enhances the technological capabilities of the more developed MENA states to produce non-conventional weapons. As a result, Europeans face a direct security policy challenge at least from the larger countries of this neighbouring region. These countries will automatically continue to improve their technological capabilities to produce WMD and their means of delivery, as long as they are subject to a high degree of uncertainty as to their future political orientation.

Many observers fear that tensions and conflicts in the region will generate new sub-regional arms races triggered by an increasing availability of such technology. Such scenarios centre on the development of WMD and their delivery systems. The *Middle East conflict* is one focus of this development. All of Israel's Arab neighbours have chosen peace with Israel – if only in the form of a “cold” peace – as an irreversible strategic option. Nevertheless, they react

with disquiet to what they see as the unrestricted expansion of Israel's regional superiority, and are looking for counter-strategies. In the past, they were found it unacceptable that Israel was not member of the most important non proliferation regimes (above all the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention). This enabled Israel to develop its nuclear arsenal and achieve its presumed technological lead in other WMD outside of any international obligation or inspection. Arab concerns are being magnified by Israel's delivery systems, which are capable of reaching most of the Arab world. This strike capacity is currently being complemented by a missile defence system integrating different components and depending to a certain degree on American early warning systems. Even a large country like Egypt, which has made peace with Israel one of the chief pillars of its foreign policy, fears for its position within the region and senses a diffuse threat emanating from Israel's non-conventional weapons. In the Mashreq countries – particularly Egypt and Syria – a discussion is going on how an Arab deterrent can be maintained also against an Israeli missile defence system. The simplest measure discussed is an increase in the number of existing and available missile systems. There seems to be a tacit assumption that only biological or chemical weapons can form a counterweight to Israeli nuclear weapons. Theoretically, a country with Egypt's technological potential has also an additional option of entering a limited technological race to counter regional missile defence capabilities. Fortunately, Arab governments seem unwilling so far to engage seriously in such an arms race against missile defences.

Another focal point of regional arms races is the *Persian Gulf*. Among the bordering states, Iraq's immediate neighbours feel a long term threat by possible land attacks from this country which could rapidly grow stronger once it regained the full measure of sovereignty. All of the Gulf states, however, have drawn an identical conclusion from their experiences in the first and second Gulf Wars and from UNSCOM's inspections of the Iraqi arms programs: Iraq possesses the technology to produce and deliver WMD and it will not shirk from employing them for its political aims. As a re-

149 sult the entire sub-region feels threatened. The states of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), that is, the oil-rich emirates, seek protection from WMD mainly by co-operating with the United States. They try to supplement American deterrence by developing their nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) defences. In this field, the GCC nations would also like to intensify co-operation with Germany, whose defensive NBC technology is considered to be leading in certain areas. We may also soon witness the development of a GCC missile defence by the Arabs. American offers are being discussed by the GCC. Such a missile defence system would be identified by competing regional powers as extra-regional and American. It could provide an additional impetus to Iraq, once it is freed from restrictions, to develop a new offensive potential.

The situation looks quite different for Iran whose strategic calculations, because of its size and geography, extend far beyond the Gulf region. In the first Gulf War with Iraq (1980–88) Iran learned the bitter lesson that its conventional armed forces could only defend the country to a limited extent and that Iraq could use chemical weapons without provoking any substantial political reaction in the West. Since then Iran has sought to make security gains against Iraq by strengthening the global non-proliferation regimes and by supporting UN inspections in Iraq. In this line of logic Iran also acceded to all of these regimes. By developing missile systems that are not subject to any restricting international regime, Iran seeks to maintain its position in the region which abounds with systems of all ranges already deployed. As a back up, Iran appears to be keeping the option of a break out strategy in case it feels the imminent necessity to field a non-conventional deterrent. Like the other Gulf states, Iran feels directly threatened by Iraq. Israel is perceived as a lesser threat, while the nuclear armament of Pakistan is viewed with suspicion. In Iranian calculations, Turkish and Saudi missiles also diminish its regional position. Iran's stance toward the strong US presence in the Persian Gulf is ambivalent. On the one hand Teheran vehemently rejects this presence which inhibits the development of Iranian power in the region. Because of American support for Saddam Hussein during

the first Gulf War, it is also perceived as a potential threat. On the other hand Teheran realises that America's policy toward Iraq also increases, if not guarantees, Iran's safety from Saddam Hussein. It is difficult to judge how an American-Arab missile defence system stationed in the Gulf would be viewed by Iran. If Iran were to regard it as obstructing its deterrent and self-defence capabilities against WMD, it might adopt counter-measures such as a massive expansion of its missile arsenal. If Tehran thought that Baghdad was rearming, it might be tempted to play the break out option and develop a non-conventional deterrent without concealment.

Only in the Maghreb are there no signs of such a dynamic for the proliferation of WMD and delivery systems. In the past, the only country that gave cause for concern was Libya. As a sparsely populated oil producing country, however, its technological capacities will remain limited for the foreseeable future. This fortunate situation in the Maghreb is all the more significant for Europeans since the proximity to their coasts would make any stationing of missiles in these countries a particular security risk for Europe.

2. Policy implications of proliferation for Germany

The proliferation of WMD is a global phenomenon which demands global responses and solutions. In accordance with its interests as a state that has long renounced NBC weapons, Germany pursues an active non-proliferation policy. To the extent that Germany and its Allies can take concrete precautions the pertinent measures are co-ordinated and adopted within NATO.

The NATO partner Turkey and the NATO and EU partner Greece are both already within the range of short- and medium-range missiles deployed in the Middle East. Apart from the highly developed Israeli arsenal, a number of other regional countries possess such missiles and muster some basic capabilities to arm them with WMD. Iran and Iraq are mentioned most often in this context, with Syria and Egypt coming second. Any increase in the range of the missiles in commission in the area south of the Mediterranean would put further parts of the EU at risk. Today, Germany is still outside the range of these missiles. However,

151 the Federal Republic must face up to the issue. On the one hand, the projected increases in range make the inclusion of German territory appear to be only a matter of time. On the other hand, Germany is already a state bordering on the Mediterranean from the standpoint of security policy by virtue of its membership in NATO and the EU.

A quantitatively limited direct assault from the Middle East on Germany, the European Union, or NATO employing WMD seems unlikely today or in the near future. Neither have potential attackers from south of the Mediterranean established a significant and sophisticated weapons arsenal, nor does Europe see a political will emerging in the countries of the region to develop, let alone to deploy, such weapons for objectives outside the region. As for the residual risk, until now Europeans have counted on the NATO deterrent (and that of the European nuclear powers) to retain its efficacy.

The United States, however, does not believe that this deterrent alone will continue to guarantee its safety from regional actors. Typical scenarios assume that regional states with second-rate technological capacities and questionable internal stability will eventually have non-conventionally armed delivery systems at their disposal. Even if deterrence is generally regarded a policy that has some efficiency toward these states, American analysts believe that deterrence cannot deal sufficiently with all the risks posed by these countries. Among the risks cited there are accidental launches or launches based on false assessments of the situation, the risk of erroneous political calculations or by a government acting on wholly irrational motives. The Bush administration pursues the plan to protect US territory against these risks with a limited missile defence system with renewed vigour. According to American analyses, increasing numbers of countries are likely to acquire the capability for quantitatively restricted assaults on the United States. The "irrationality" of their political regimes could encourage them to use these weapons. States in the region, primarily Iran but also Iraq and Libya, are prominently cited as potential aggressors and a potential threat to the national security of the United States.

Alongside the plan for a national missile defence system, the United States is offering its allies world-wide opportunities to participate in the development of regional missile defence systems to combat these new dangers. From the US perspective, the security of American troops stationed locally is often the primary task of such systems. The development of missile defence on a global and regional scale raises issues of global security policy, arms control and disarmament that cannot be discussed here. They are the subject of intensive consultation and also controversy among the most important powers. Within the context of our topic, German security policy will have to find specific answers to the question of whether defensive measures, i.e. a limited missile defence, against potential threats from the region appear desirable and feasible within the broader considerations of German (and European) security interests. Europeans must face the fact that such a threat could arise in the medium term, even if they do not share the American analysis of the “irrationality” of certain states and tend to consider American classifications of “good” or “evil” or “rogue” states to be merely classifications to describe which states in the region oppose certain American domestic and foreign policy interests. However, the pace of proliferation in the region affords Germany and the EU sufficient time to analyse and consider all the regional and global implications before they make up their mind on missile defence.

The states of the Middle East that possess WMD or aim to acquire them do so primarily for reasons based on the competition for regional power. Should they actually employ such weapons, the most likely scenarios for employment are within the region. The risk that Germany and its partners might become drawn into a regional conflict that is being fought by WMD should not be underestimated. This risk is probably greater than any of the other risks associated with these weapons. It is difficult to imagine the United States, Europe, or Germany standing idly by were Israel or one of the GCC states to be attacked with WMD. It also seems rather unlikely that the world would look on without any reaction – as happened during the Iran-Iraq war – while one of the parties introduced chemical weapons into the conflict. It is true that

153 chemical and biological weapons were not used in the second Gulf War. Deterrence seems to have worked. The investigations into “Gulf War syndrome” show, however, that substantial dangers can arise below the level of actual use, for example through preventive medication or military attacks on relevant arsenals. During the conflict, western armed forces continually had to fear the use of such weapons being used against themselves, their regional allies, or Israel. Any future intervention by western powers in a regional conflict in which one side might use WMD would be accompanied by incalculable risks for the region and the intervening forces.

The proliferation of WMD is accompanied by a number of risks hard to evaluate even when their use is not imminent. Thus the production and storage of NBC weapons alone generate considerable dangers. Judging from what is known about past attempts to produce NBC materials in the Middle East, the security standards being followed do not meet the minimum requirements considered necessary in the West. Insufficient risk consciousness, time and cost pressures aggravate this situation. The partial success of export controls in effectively denying the transfer of critical technologies aggravates the poor conditions under which work on WMD is being done. The consequences of accidents or inadequate precautions in the production of NBC materials are potentially extensive and lasting. The EU might be forced on account of its own interest to intervene in the case of accidents.

After 11 September 2001, American and international concerns refocused on the risk that NBC weapons might fall into the hands of terrorists. This could happen through corruption, deficient controls – for example in a situation of upheaval – or through a policy of WMD being deliberately passed to terrorists. These weapons could be transferred to their destination, for example to Europe or the US, by hard to monitor clandestine means.

It is precisely this latter scenario that worries most American strategists when thinking about the MENA region. They assume that deterrence is not a reliable policy against Iraq and that UN inspections and monitoring, if resumed, will not succeed in removing and controlling NBC production capabilities. Many observers

in Washington consider Iraq's likely possession of WMD and its production capabilities a "clear and present danger" warranting preventive military action. If this analysis prevails the United States might attack Iraq without giving the question of international legality the attention it deserves. Although a preventive attack might in the end remove the risk of Iraq possessing WMD such an intervention would raise numerous further complications and create considerable dangers for the region that cannot be discussed here. Europeans and particularly Germans will probably not be able to follow a US call for a war against Iraq or any other regional state if the legal case behind it is based only on an interpretation of the right to self defence exceeding the limits of the UN Charter. European history of the twentieth century with its tens of millions of recorded victims has left Europeans placing a high price on the basic tenets of the international law on war.

3. Regional conflicts

In recent decades, many states in North Africa and the Middle East have remained surprisingly stable. Numerous pessimistic prognoses have been proved wrong. The oil producing Gulf emirates, whose allegedly poor chances of survival analysts have deplored ever since they were founded, may serve as an example. Their political systems, often referred to as "weak states", were forced to make the best of their peculiar combination of political weakness and financial strength. They had no choice but to adapt quickly and thoroughly to the changing problems of domestic and foreign policy thus securing their internal stability. Even the revolutionary Arab republics mastered the dangerous transitions from the successive ideologies of nationalism and socialism and finally transformed into stable authoritarian regimes headed by long-lived presidents. Despite the unexpected relative success of nation-building in the region, its record of violence has been a terrible one in recent decades. In this grim reckoning the main components are a Middle East conflict erupting repeatedly into wars and continually causing violence in between: Iraq instigating two Gulf wars with immense loss of life and property; persistent civil

155 wars in Lebanon and Algeria; a never-ending series of conflicts between Kurds and their respective central governments; incessant struggles in the Sudan, a conflict in the Western Sahara that has so far defied all attempts at mediation. In the past, many of these conflicts seemed remote from Germany. In the age of globalisation, which is also characterised by easy access to telecommunication, rapid and cheap transportation and strong flows of migrants, the MENA region has in many ways come closer to Europe than ever before. If present instabilities in this region were to continue with equal intensity Germany would have cause to feel increasingly uncomfortable in this area. As a member of the European Union Germany is wide open to all influences that cross the EU's southern frontier. These influences grow stronger with every step towards further European integration.

It is difficult to judge whether the danger of armed conflict in the region is growing or diminishing. Protracted economic failure and demographic pressure weakened the ability of the region's larger Arab countries to arm and modernise their forces so that they could fight a conventional war. The fact that Israel does no longer face a conventional security threat from its immediate neighbours underlines this development. However, insecurity in the region seems to be on the increase below the state level. It appears in the form of civil wars, political disintegration, catastrophic population migrations, terrorism and large scale violence. A system of order is missing that could focus and regulate conflicts. In the past, the East-West conflict injected a modest measure of stability into the region. For decades, many regional states, for example Syria and Egypt, relied economically and militarily on the Soviet Union for stabilising their regimes. Since the disappearance of the Soviet Union the regimes of these countries have not been able to find a genuine alternative for the loss of this outside support.

The recent escalation of violence in the Middle East conflict must not obscure the fact that the broad outlines of a solution are known. On the level of statecraft and diplomacy a defusing of the Israeli-Arab conflict seems possible. Violence on the ground and a lack of international co-ordination and commitment have however

prevented in the last year or so any meaningful progress toward a peaceful resolution. The record of negotiations and violence between Israel and the Palestinians in the last two years makes it abundantly clear that overcoming the political chasms separating the parties will be a long and painful process. Even after a formal settlement of this conflict by a peace agreement, ensuring a lasting peace in the Holy Land will require a long period of intensive work. For some time to come, individual groups might be tempted to demonstrate their rejection of the painful compromises of a future Middle East peace by resorting to terrorism and violence against regional state powers. If large segments of the population in this sub-region reject a peace settlement the stability of regional states could suffer badly and serious crises of legitimacy could emerge. The only thing that seems certain at present is that Germany and the EU will need to make a long-term commitment to stabilisation in the Middle East.

Since the 1980s, of the many states in the region sponsoring terrorism or developing WMD some have been ostracised under American leadership as international pariahs. In the political language of the US they were successively dubbed “rogue states”, “states of concern” or elements of an “axis of evil”. Some of these countries were subject to Security Council sanctions and some to unilateral US sanctions. These sanctions certainly left an impression on the targeted regimes and in general they imposed a degree of containment. On the whole, however, they yielded less than expected. In some cases, the unwanted side effects dominated. For these reasons the instrument of sanctions has been discredited internationally and is increasingly difficult to implement. The American policy of dual containment toward Iran and Iraq illustrates the problems involved.

With regard to Iran, the United States has gradually had to weaken its original policy of national sanctions against this country in response to changing geo-strategic realities and to the political evolution within Iran. In the recent Afghanistan war both countries which continue to pretend to be locked in visceral enmity underwent the experience of playing side by side in the winning

157 team. Neither the leading military power United States nor its de facto ally Iran were able to acknowledge this fact and enter into a less absurd relationship. If there were another US-led war aimed at changing the regime in Iraq both countries would face once again the question of co-operation, this time maybe in an even more acute form.

Despite many years of UN sanctions, continued attention from the Security Council and the use of American and British air power, Saddam Hussein was able to whittle down the sanctions. By holding his own population hostage he succeeded in expanding the oil-for-food program and gaining the tacit acceptance of massive oil smuggling activities corrupting the whole sub-region. The central objectives of sanctions against Iraq – verified disarmament and the unannounced aim of regime change – have not been achieved.

Iraq continues to be the most unpredictable political hot spot in the region. Neither on a regional nor on an international level can convincing strategies for reintegrating the country into the international community be found. The current government of the United States has made a public commitment to regime change in Iraq without spelling out how it could be achieved and how the country could be stabilised once this change has taken place. There is no obvious successor to Saddam Hussein if we rule out his family and close supporters. The three largest segments of the Iraqi population – Shiites, Kurds and Sunnis – have so far not maintained a significant dialogue with each other, and their presumptive leaders have not been able to draw up a political blueprint for an Iraq without Saddam. The country faces a real danger of disintegration. Its northern regions already enjoy an unprecedented degree of autonomy protected by United States air power. If disintegration occurs not only Turkey, which is already present in the north of Iraq, but all the directly affected neighbours might step forward to secure their interests. Iraq's neighbours understand that such a development carries high risks for all parties involved. On the positive side, fears about a future strengthening of Iraq have contributed enormously to a diffusion of political tensions in the Persian Gulf during the past three years.

Except for the threat posed by Iraq, there seems to be no significant danger of war arising in the rest of the Persian Gulf. Iraq remains a latent danger to its rich neighbours, a danger that would not necessarily disappear with a change of regime. Iraqi standard of living has sunk to a level comparable perhaps to that of the 1940s. An Iraq free to act will probably place renewed demands for extensive reconstruction aid on its neighbours, particularly on its Arab "brothers". These demands would surely be perceived as a threat in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Only a strong regional security arrangement could establish a feasible counter-weight to such a development. In turn, without American participation this is inconceivable for the time being. The American presence in the Gulf, however, cannot be taken for granted in the long term. Iraq and Iran, a majority of Saudis and broad segments of the population elsewhere in the Gulf oppose the US presence for political and ideological reasons. But the risk of conventional war appears to be limited at present since none of the Gulf states, including Iran and today's Iraq, can field troops equipped, trained and motivated to fight more than a series of border skirmishes. The many territorial conflicts on the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf have been and continue to be worked through by the parties involved at a snail's pace, but by peaceful means. However, the most prominent among these conflicts, the one between the United Arab Emirates and Iran over the status of three islands in the Gulf currently occupied by Iran, remains outside of this development and continues to trouble the political atmosphere in the Persian Gulf and thus prevents a complete easing of Iranian-Arab tensions. The conflict poses no threat of war, however, because the interests of both sides are limited and the United Arab Emirates do not have the military strength to retake these islands against a vastly bigger Iran.

In the *Maghreb*, there is less potential for violent conflict, but a number of political hot spots remain. The conflict over the western Sahara awaits resolution, relations between Morocco and Algeria are notoriously bad, civil war continues to rage in parts of Algeria, and the internal stability of Libya is difficult to judge from the outside.

4. The challenges of regional conflicts for Germany

Conventional conflicts in the region are unlikely to pose a direct threat to Germany in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, there is a very real possibility that Germany could be drawn into conflicts in the region.

This applies in particular to the hypothetical case of a major conflict breaking out, a repeat of a scenario similar to that of the second Gulf War. If important German, European or transatlantic interests were effected – a serious threat to the security of Israel, massive migration to Europe as a result of war, or the fall of a state owing to outside aggression – Germany would probably be unable to avoid intervening alongside its partners and allies. In view of the limited German and European military capabilities, any large intervention could only be led by the United States with an overwhelmingly large deployment of US troops. It will be many years before the planned European crisis reaction force will be in a position to carry out sizeable interventions on its own. Even when fully operational, it certainly would not be sufficient to intervene into any major regional conflict. Another potential risk for Germany is entanglement in smaller regional conflicts when European partners are already involved and a case of uncontrolled escalation mean that their capabilities become stretched. This is a scenario that could apply for both traditional peace-keeping measures – for example in the Middle East or the Maghreb – and rescue actions or policing operations that escalate unexpectedly. If a European partner regarded an operation south of the Mediterranean as absolutely vital but beyond its capacities, Germany would have to reckon with strong pressure to deploy the common European force.

5. Non-traditional security risks

The internal stability and economic welfare of the Middle East states today appear to be particularly dependent on mastering a set of new challenges. As a whole, the region has long resisted the world-wide trend toward democratisation and globalisation. Without their oil exports, large and relatively developed countries such as Egypt, Iran, or Algeria have an absurdly low level of inte-

gration into the world market. Moreover, their per capita income derived from oil is predicted to decrease over time. The belated reaction of the Arab countries to global economic liberalisation drastically increased the social costs of structural adjustment. In most countries of the region, a new generation of political leaders has recently come to power or is about to do so. Today it is evident to the leaders of the region that the free circulation of opinions and information through the internet and satellite television can no longer be suppressed. A population explosion accelerates social change and social tensions are bound to exacerbate as economic growth fails to catch up with the pace of demography. Increasingly vociferous *demands for democratic participation* represent opportunities for positive change, but also pose considerable risks. Conflicts suppressed for decades can erupt when spent regimes fail to address the political and economic problems at hand. Opinion polls show that a majority of young people – and demographically young people are the majority in these societies – would emigrate given an opportunity. This also implies that many young people despair of their future. Free and fair democratic elections and the abolition of censorship could lead at first to an Islamist backlash because in many countries broad segments of the population are socially more conservative and religiously more intolerant than their leaders. Islamist and populist politicians might use the new-won freedoms for their profit without wishing to preserve them. That the largely successful trend towards the consolidation of the nation-state might suffer a turnaround in individual countries or sub-regions cannot be ignored. If that happened we should expect that state authority retreats, civil wars flare up, and mafia-like structures create a vicious equilibrium of violence and illicit economic activities, fuelling terrorism.

Uncontrolled *migration from the South to the North* represents another type of political risk. As mentioned above, surveys conclude that a majority of young people would try to work in Europe if freedom of movement existed. Apart from labour migration people also move to the North in an attempt to flee repression against minority groups and – often in conjunction with this – escape local

161 wars and other security deficits. In the first half of 2002, almost half of those seeking asylum in Germany came from (Northern) Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. The reality is that many minority problems in Turkey and Iraq are being “solved” nowadays by emigration to Europe, particularly to Germany. There is no end in sight to this trend of labour and minority group migration.

Over the past decades Europeans have become painfully well-acquainted with the security risk of *terrorism*. Terrorists from North Africa and the Middle East blew up airplanes in flight and committed spectacular assassinations in Europe. Terrorism has always been an option for groups from the Middle East seeking to draw attention to their genuine or supposed plight as an ethnic or religious minority or their struggle against oppression. Unresolved national conflicts, the dire social and economic situation of many young people in the region, and the widespread usurpation of state power by the few and their special interests continuously renew the ground for future terrorists. However, the attacks of 11 September 2001 on New York and Washington have given terrorism a new and catastrophic dimension, threatening the Western world as a whole. In the MENA region, terrorists originally fought for local issues by attacking local groups or authorities. In the 1970s, Palestinian terrorists began to act on the international level in order to draw the world’s attention to their cause. This was quickly taken up by other groups and by regional governments which sponsored acts of international terrorism to pursue their political objectives. In the second half of the 1990s Middle Eastern terrorists adhering to extreme forms of Islamist fundamentalism congregated in Taleban-ruled Afghanistan. There, they developed the most recent and dangerous form of transnational terrorism. Building on a widespread feeling among Muslims of being victimised by a triumphant West which supposedly tries to impose its lifestyle and values on the rest of the world, these terrorists formed a network revolving around the leadership of al-Qa’ida and began to develop a campaign of terrorist massacres designed to bring about a clash of civilisations between the West and the Muslim world.

In the light of al-Qa'ida's massacres the proliferation of biological and chemical weapons is cause for concern in so far as terrorists might succeed in getting hold of them. The only way of removing this risk is by reversing the trend of proliferation in the region. America's current administration plans perhaps also favours military countermeasures whereas Europeans do not want to give up their efforts at threat reduction through the strengthening of non-proliferation regimes. Of course, both approaches are not mutually exclusive and, unfortunately, both cannot guarantee that terrorists will be denied access to WMD. This problem will continue to need attention for years to come.

For some time it has been evident in the Euro-Mediterranean context that terrorism is not a phenomenon that can be dealt with at individual nation-state level alone. Terrorists from the South have fled from prosecution in their home countries and found refuge in the European states. There they have often continued to work for their causes and supported violence in their countries of origin by abusing the freedoms granted in Europe. When it was discovered that the September attacks had partly been planned and prepared in Germany, this sent a shock wave throughout German society. Government, parliament and security authorities are now tackling the difficult question of how to deny terrorists a safe haven and freedom of action in Germany and Europe and of how to reconcile these defensive measures with the preservation of a high standard of individual rights and freedom.

Any internal destabilisation of the countries in the MENA region indirectly effects Europe in various ways. *Uncontrolled arms trade, drug-smuggling, traffic in human beings and organised crime* have always been transnational phenomena with diverse causes. The *disintegration of states or the retreat of the state* from parts of its territory or the lapse of essential state functions exacerbates the spread and professionalisation of these undesirable concomitants of globalisation. The prime example for this was found in Taliban ruled Afghanistan which represented an essential junction for terrorist and drug trade networks spanning Europe and the MENA region. Northern Iraq, which enjoys a de facto autonomy exercised by vari-

163 ous local groups, also represents another junction for all manner of illegal trading and criminal transnational interactions that thrive on the corruption of Iraq's neighbours in the business of circumventing sanctions. The potential dangers of such zones must be part of Germany's and its partners' regional policy considerations.

Economically, Europe is less dependent on the region than the public on both shores of the Mediterranean usually assumes. One important exception with direct implications for security policy needs to be emphasised: the free flow of oil and gas remains indispensable to a functioning world economy.

6. Effects of non-traditional risks on Germany

Instability of states in the region, economic failure, widespread disregard for basic human, minority and political rights produce tangible security problems for Germany and Europe. They chiefly take the form of terrorism, waves of refugees, migratory pressures, organised crime, drug smuggling and other types of illegal trade. These problems could worsen or improve depending upon future developments south of the Mediterranean. It is in any case to be expected that unwelcome interactions will increase. European freedoms and civil rights not only attract the oppressed but also opposition groups from the South which abuse these rights to exert undesirable or even illegitimate influence on their home countries. Although terrorism is currently in the focus of German attention the other non-traditional security risks will also continue to need careful monitoring and prevention.

The framework for German security policy in the Middle East and North Africa

Formulating an active security policy toward North Africa and the Middle East and co-operating with the states of this region implies a number of problems which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Most regional conflicts have local causes, and only those directly involved can eventually solve them. Lacking concrete possibilities

for intervention, Germany and Europe exert only marginal influence over these conflicts. Even massive engagement by the super-power America, as seen in the Persian Gulf, has succeeded at most in checking such conflicts. A realistic view of how much influence Germany and Europe can exert is needed. Consequently, a measure of modesty must accompany the setting of political objectives if we are to formulate responsible and outcome-oriented policies.

Because forces from outside the region have a limited effect on regional conflicts, only a balanced and co-ordinated European security and foreign policy can hope to gain substantial influence. European policy toward the region, however, varies widely. EU policy on Iran, for example, has enjoyed a degree of consistency and solidarity for many years now. As far as the Middle East conflict is concerned, Europe has, since the Venice summit in 1980 succeeded in gradually developing a fundamentally unified policy. In the meantime, even basically rejectionist partners like Libya or Iran acknowledge Europe's support for peace in the Middle East as a positive and even-handed contribution. Occasional European differences of a tactical nature over Middle East issues pale alongside the fundamental dissent within the European Union over Iraq. Here, a minority tended to support British-American positions, while the majority voted with France. This substantive disagreement was frozen in place by a deliberate gap in the European treaties: Security Council matters – such as the UN sanctions against Iraq or Libya – are not part of common European foreign and security policy. Since Germany is not a permanent member of the Security Council, neither the Federal Republic nor the European Union as a whole can raise their voice convincingly as long as the permanent council members France and Britain disagree. In order to achieve a uniform European policy toward the region, a great deal of work will be needed to be done within Europe. The upcoming issue of a possible intervention in Iraq will test European resolve to develop and show a stronger unity of will in this region.

Furthermore, a common policy toward the region must also take into account that the European Union does not have matching regional partners. The Arab League and the Gulf Co-operation

165 Council – the best integrated organisation in the region – lack the capability for meaningful political and economic action. When dealing with them, the EU can only discuss general issues. Political culture in the MENA countries is characterised by strong bilateralism. This often clashes with unrealistic European expectations for joint multilateral action. Many Europeans, for example, hope that the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) can become a model for introducing a regional system securing peace and fostering co-operation. In the region, however, the real issue is how to create the necessary basis of trust and transparency for any kind of regional co-operation. For the time being, any multilateral approach to the region must thus be supported by strong bilateral efforts on the part of the participating Europeans. For many regional states Germany would be a particularly welcome bilateral partner for the simple reason that it is perceived to be the largest EU country.

German and European opportunities to pursue regional policies independent of the United States are modest, but they do exist, mainly in the field of economics. Middle East security, however, is certainly not among them. Regional governments are fixated on issues of “hard security”. This stems from the harsh realities of the regional system. In the short term, regional governments will not be convinced of the merits of a culture of co-operative security. The military and political power of the United States in the region is such that Europe can only seek a complementary role based on a division of labour.¹ To make complementarity work Europeans need creativity and patience and both sides must show a willingness to engage in meaningful consultations. If Europeans disagree among themselves about American policy on the region there is a danger that the European voice will fall silent altogether. This has happened many times with Europe’s stance toward Iraq. Any widening of transatlantic differences of opinion – for example over how to deal with the Middle East conflict or over how to treat presumed “rogue states” – will further weaken the limited influence Europeans can claim in the Middle East.

1 For more on this see Chapter 3.

The regional countries first look to Washington when trying to solve their basic security problems. However, the regions' economic relations are stronger with Europe. Therefore, the EU bears an important responsibility for the welfare and, indirectly, for the stability of regional states. European policy builds on the economic interdependence between the shores of the Mediterranean when it tries, using the comprehensive approach of the "Barcelona process", not only to establish close economic links, but also to work through critical political issues including questions of security policy and non-traditional security problems. In the Barcelona framework, the Europeans can play out their considerable diplomatic stamina and capabilities. They aim at institutionalising a co-operative approach to dialogue, transparency and confidence-building in the arena of security policy. However, the laborious progress of this multilateral process and its repeated obstruction by the unresolved Middle East conflict demonstrate that the region must still mature before such an approach is possible.

German or European policy toward the region is also complicated by the lack of a recognised canon of shared values. Democracy, human rights, protection of minorities, and the rule of law are not priorities for the governments of the Middle East. As yet, these values have taken only shallow roots in the societies of the region. Often simple acts of maintaining a working relationship with regional states are criticised in Europe as kowtowing to authoritarian regimes, catering to particular interests and unscrupulously pursuing strategic advantages. There is an unspoken assumption that a trade-off exists between material goods and moral values and, logically enough, a demand for economic sanctions in order to improve the human rights situation in regional countries. But no such simple causality exists. It is true that a regime like Saddam Hussein's relies for its survival on the systematic repression of basic human rights. It thus behaves any democratic state, even if it cannot contribute to effectively protecting human rights in Iraq, to name human rights violations clearly and to underline this with an appropriate foreign policy. In the Arab world – and this includes the peaceful and liberal parts of it – there is a widely held view that western demands for

167 full human rights are not sincere, but rather an attempt to attack native values rooted in tradition and religion. Most Arab countries are ruled by authoritarian regimes which over the last decades have mellowed to some degree. As far as these countries are concerned no measurable influence on the human rights situation of these countries can be expected by refusing to cultivate trade and political contacts. On the contrary, ostracism usually strengthens the local anti-western forces which try to isolate their countries from of an alleged western campaign of corruption and it tends to discourage the local advocates of human rights and democratic values.² The German public's critical attitude toward a close engagement in the region is also an obstacle to a rational security policy engagement. On the one hand, people fail to recognise that preventive political and security policy dialogue is necessary with precisely those states that endanger the peace and stability of the region. On the other hand, because of the incompatibility of values, a security policy engagement with states that are clearly on the defensive (for example the Gulf monarchies) or guarantee Middle East peace (for example Egypt) is considered illegitimate as soon as military and arms co-operation are included. The increase in Germany's security policy role in the MENA region, inevitably brought about by the imperatives of European and transatlantic burden sharing, merits a broader debate than has been witnessed in the last years.

Conclusions

Germany has limited but important security interests in North Africa and the Middle East, which will probably gain importance. An active and farsighted German policy in the region could make a modest but not insignificant contribution to security in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Dialogue and co-ordination within the framework of European foreign, security, and defence policy, in NATO, and in the transatlantic relationship are essential for an effective German policy in the region. Germany should develop a better capacity to con-

² See Chapter II.

front the various interests and perceptions of allies and European partners with its own qualified and well-reasoned positions. The German public will increasingly demand that Germany's interests and political positions are taken into account by the emerging European consensus on security policy in the Middle East and whenever a transatlantic division of labour is implemented. Above all, they will expect this whenever German troops are put at risk.

German foreign and security policy has limited options in the region. This speaks in favour of setting objectives carefully and calculating precisely before investing scarce resources. In order to sharpen the contours of German policy a broad discussion is needed among the government, the parliament and the interested public about a role in this region. This discussion should critically examine existing commitments and identify possible contributions. A strong political consensus is necessary for a lucid security policy toward the region. Without this, we would return to the earlier situation in which German security policy positions toward the region developed only under the pressure of acute crises, carrying with it the risk of repeating the same mistakes.

- In *disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation*, Germany might exploit its comparative advantages when contributing to a transatlantic and European division of labour. Germany is not burdened by a colonial past in the region. It is considered a trustworthy partner in bilateral relations and perceived as the largest state in the EU and an important European NATO member. In addition to that Germany has long renounced NBC weapons. Germany could employ this capital more effectively in containing the non-conventional arms race in the region by entering into security dialogues with critical regional countries. These dialogues should not be limited to questions of disarmament that are generally treated within global multilateral fora. Only if all security concerns as they are viewed by the regional leaders are addressed in this dialogue, can Germany hope to enlist support for non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. The German government is engaged in relevant dialogues with some of the large states in the region, but im-

portant countries are missing from this particular map. Most probably, talks with the smaller countries that are unable to play an active role in the global disarmament fora would also prove useful. A classic diplomatic initiative, which would have to pursue a long-term perspective, could thus serve German and European security interests in the Middle East and at the same time strengthen Germany's profile in the fields of global disarmament and multilateralism.

- An intensified *political and security policy dialogue* with the region would bring sharper contrast to the picture that the government, parliament, and media have of regional conflicts, risks, and threats. This would be important and helpful in several respects. First, only precise knowledge of the region can help identify potential German contributions to crisis prevention. Second, only on the basis of competent information produced by national means can Germany argue convincingly in the EU and NATO and act effectively to shape European security policy. Third, a correct analysis of regional conflicts is also a prerequisite for recognising the limits of German engagement. Germany must be clear what its capabilities are and what is politically feasible, particularly when it comes to making decisions about possible Bundeswehr participation in UN-mandated missions, whether as part of a national, a European or a transatlantic contribution. This would make it easier to avoid incalculable entanglements in regional conflicts.
- A credible security policy engagement in North Africa and the Middle East encompasses more than just diplomatic activities. Bilateral defence and mutual assistance pacts such as the United States, Britain and France have concluded with states in the region are ruled out for Germany because its engagement in the region will remain limited. Other possible instruments for strengthening relations that should be explored include *talks between the Ministers of Defence and the Chiefs of Staff, armaments relations and defence co-operation* including joint exercises or UN missions. The current map of co-operation in these areas reveals concentrations and blank spots that can be

explained neither by German interests nor by reticence toward anti-Western and undemocratic regimes. Rather, coincidences in the development of bilateral relations appear to bear responsibility for the main emphases as well as the gaps. The same seems true for the existence of meaningful security policy dialogues. The real problem for German foreign policy is which of the existing instruments should be used and how the guidelines for employing them should be defined. Security co-operation must serve German interests, but must not violate general foreign policy orientations. This demands difficult deliberations at home covering domestic and foreign policy issues. It also needs a precise focus on each individual partner country. In this context the question of regional concepts arises. Comparable partners ought to be treated equally. For example, if arms are exported to one GCC state they can scarcely be refused to another member of this organisation. The formation of a group of countries that qualify, from the German perspective, for a certain type of co-operation, could be based on criteria such as membership in non-proliferation regimes, contribution to the Middle East peace process, membership in regional organisations, and contribution of troops for the United Nations.

- A further important German objective is to maintain and improve *export control regimes* to regulate the technology transfer for WMD. They make the procurement of WMD more expensive and delay their development for a few years. The struggle against this technology transfer also yields valuable information about arms development in suspicious states, so that export controls can also serve as an early warning system. In addition, Germany, a leading “export power”, remains highly susceptible to undesirable transfers of critical technologies and must actively protect itself. The single European market and the progressive “europeanisation” of arms production are forcing Europeans to take a joint approach. For that reason Brussels must be convinced of the need to adopt as much as possible of the restrictive German export practices. Export controls also represent a further area for co-operation with regional part-

ners. States whose industrial level and arms programs already permit proliferation should receive concrete offers for developing their own export control mechanisms.

- The large and confusing area of “soft” security risks demands an array of diverse approaches beyond the classic instruments of security policy. In the wake of 11 September 2001 a new intensity of co-operating against terrorism has developed among Europeans and NATO allies. Even before this tragedy, the EU had introduced its combined ideas of harnessing migration and combating organised crime into the Barcelona process which allows the relevant problems in dialogue with the region to be addressed. However, for many sensitive issues, above and beyond the fight against terrorism, Euro-Mediterranean co-operation must make progress beyond this multilateral framework. Where feasible, Germany and its European partners should also develop their bilateral relations to the region in order to exploit all possibilities for the sharing of intelligence, for co-operating against transnational crime and illegal migration and for drying up the sources financing terrorism. Diverging political interests and differences in legal frameworks that impede co-operation have to be addressed with a sense of urgency. Co-operation with Mediterranean partners will continue to be a very difficult task because the fight against terrorism will not absolve Germany from protecting individual freedoms and the rule of law. In addition to international co-operation, a wise policy on home security is needed. Central elements would be rational and well-thought-out immigration laws and decisive action against undemocratic groups that work in Germany and Europe for political goals in their countries of origin. In the long run, the non-traditional security risks can only be harnessed by a successful integration of North Africa and the Middle East into globalisation. In order to facilitate this integration which must go beyond the economic sphere Germany should be strongly committed in its Mediterranean relations to an open dialogue between civilisations and advocate democracy, pluralism, cultural diversity, minority rights, freedom of worship and the empowerment of women.

GERMAN ARMS EXPORTS: A POLICY CAUGHT BETWEEN MORALITY AND NATIONAL INTEREST

According to the arms export guidelines of January 2000,¹ German arms exports to countries that are not members of NATO or the EU and that – like almost all the states in the Middle East – cannot be regarded beyond doubt as democratic should, as a matter of principle, only be licensed if special foreign and security policy interests support the exceptional granting of a license in the individual case. In particular, the following disqualifying criteria apply where:²

- the internal situation in the country in question, for example, involves armed internal conflicts;
- there are reasonable grounds to suspect serious human rights violations;
- the recipient country is involved in armed conflicts or it is located in an area of tension.

Arms exports – a dilemma between morality and the national interest

There can therefore be no doubt about the principle that the supply of arms to regions where wars or civil wars are taking place is prohibited. Greater difficulties are encountered when defining areas of tension, i.e. regions in which armed conflicts are possible or even probable. The Middle East, in particular, is marked by tensions between states that have also led to military conflicts in recent decades. Consequently, the disqualifying criterion “area of tension” has repeatedly led to the refusal of export licenses, in particular, for military equipment being supplied to Arab states that could have resulted in a possible threat to Israel, such as the Leopard tanks

¹ Cf. Policy Principles of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Export of War Weapons and other Military Equipment, <http://wassenaar.org/secadmin/contacts.htm>.

² Cf. Policy Principles, Part III (Other countries), section 5.

173 intended for Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, exports to the region have also been licensed, legitimised as contributions to crisis prevention: for example, tanks for Kuwait required to deter an aggressive neighbouring state and for the purpose of legitimate self-defence, and armoured vehicles for the United Arab Emirates required to establish a regional balance of power and for defensive purposes (Fuchs NBC reconnaissance vehicles).

Wide scope for interpretation is offered, above all, by the criterion of the human rights situation which has been particularly pushed into the foreground since January 2000 by the German government, a coalition between the Social Democrats and the Green Party. Firstly, the question arises of what level of severity the human rights violations in a recipient country have to reach in order to disqualify it from receiving arms supplies. For example, do capital punishment in the USA, the lack of democratic voting rights in some Arab states or corporal punishment in some Islamic states – all human rights violations by European standards – disqualify these countries as recipients of German weapons? Secondly, the question arises as to whether there is a causal connection between weapons supplies and human rights violations. Hitherto, only the possible misuse of arms for human rights violations has been regarded as legitimate grounds for the refusal of an export license. Consequently, the requirement of an instrumental connection between the weapons and a human rights violation has led, for example, to the conclusion that “anything that floats is alright” – since it is not directly evident how naval vessels could be used for human rights violations, it has generally been possible for them to be supplied despite extremely grave human rights violations in recipient countries.

The arms export guidelines of January 2000 merely describe, but do not resolve, the tension between the interests of policy on foreign affairs and security, development, the economy, technology and employment, on the one hand, and the primacy of action to promote peace, human rights and stability postulated for national foreign policy, on the other. Nevertheless, they contain further information on the concrete implementation of arms export policy. Supplies to NATO and EU countries or countries with NATO-

equivalent status are subject to a “reservation of prohibition”, i.e. exports are, in principle, permitted provided that there are no special reasons for a license to be withheld. In contrast, arms supplies to countries outside NATO and the EU that do not have NATO-equivalent status are subject to the principle of “reservation of approval”, i.e. exports to these countries require special legitimation for a license to be granted. According to the arms export guidelines, when weapons of war are exported to other countries, licenses “will not be granted unless in a specific case this is exceptionally [!] warranted on particular foreign and security policy grounds, having due regard to Alliance interests.”³ Supplies of other military equipment must, at least, not prejudice the interests of “security, peace among nations and Germany’s foreign relations.”⁴

However, this fundamental distinction⁵ is completely blurred in the licensing practice of the German Federal Government, which appears to be implicitly based on the fundamental legitimacy of all arms supplies. As the whole field of arms exports is surrounded with an aura of secrecy, it is to a great extent impossible to know what arguments have been put forward by the German Federal Government in seeking to establish positive reasons for the licensing of arms supplies. It is evident that only particularly serious grounds prevent it from granting a license.

Finally, the establishment of a hierarchy of criteria in the export guidelines provides further guidance for decision-making in individual cases. For example, the special weight accorded to the human rights situation in the recipient country is emphasised as a criterion for decisions – a clear indication that a problematic human rights situation alone can lead to the rejection of export applications and that the instrumental suitability of the military equipment in question for human rights violations is

3 Policy Principles, Part III (Other countries), section 2.

4 Policy Principles, Part III (Other countries), section 3.

5 Even the inclusion of this distinction in the export guidelines, let alone the practice of the German Federal Government, is in conflict with the intentions of the authors of the German constitution: Art. 26 paragraph 2 of the *Basic Law* prohibits the marketing of arms as a matter of principle and makes any such activity dependent on the permission of the executive.

175 therefore of subordinate importance.⁶ Furthermore, the supply of the equipment in question must not impede the sustainable development of the recipient country,⁷ i.e. a state that squanders a disproportionately large amount of its financial resources on arms instead of investing in health, education, development and the social sector should hardly be able to expect an export license to be granted for equipment it wishes to purchase. However, in this respect too, there is a lack of quantifiable criteria with which to draw a line between military profligacy and legitimate provisions for national defence.

The lesser importance of economic interests and the expressed disregard of “labour policy considerations” are reflected more clearly in the guidelines. However, in view of the minor importance of the arms industry to the German economy and the growing extent of international co-operation in the defence-technology sector, other considerations are gaining significance in the current discussion. Often, it is only exports that permit economically justifiable developments to take place in the defence-technology industry. Consequently, if minimum technological capacities are considered necessary for reasons of national interest, in many cases only exports make it possible for them to be maintained on an economically justifiable scale. The more tanks produced in Germany for export, the cheaper the unit price for the Federal Armed Forces. Nevertheless, the guidelines state that export activities should not lead to the development of “additional, specifically export-oriented capacities”.⁸ In reality, it is virtually impossible to prove the creation of specifically export-oriented capacities in the arms industry, particularly as a considerable reduction in capacity has taken place in the defence sector since the end of the East-West confrontation. Nevertheless, the problems of the ailing shipbuilding industry as it struggles for survival have been used again and again as an argument to legitimise the granting of licenses, particularly for the export of naval vessels.

6 Policy Principles, Part I (General principles), section 2.

7 Cf. Policy Principles, Part III, section 6.

8 Policy Principles, Part III (Other countries), section 1.

The co-operative approach to defence-technology issues within the EU agreed in the European treaties¹⁰ and the various international co-operative ventures involved in major arms projects, such as the “Eurofighter”, the “Tiger” helicopter and the future transport aircraft, make it clear that it is already becoming less and less possible for arms export policy to be determined at the national level alone. Co-operation in the defence-technology field requires a common arms export policy. However, conflicts are pre-programmed where the partners in a co-operative venture in the defence-technology sector follow different export practices, particularly if one country wishes to oblige the other partners to follow its own restrictive approach. There is therefore a growing fear, particularly in the German arms industry, that over the long term a restrictive export policy will leave Germany isolated and “incapable of co-operation” because no other country will be prepared to comply with German standards. There is a feeling that Germany is running the risk of falling behind technologically and in terms of arms policy, as well as losing the capacities it still possesses.

Attempts are being made to escape this dilemma in two ways. Firstly, the necessity of balancing Germany’s interest in co-operation, on the one hand, and restrictive arms export principles, on the other, is explicitly emphasised.¹⁰ Secondly, the export guidelines require various consultative mechanisms to be incorporated into co-operative ventures in the defence sector that at least make it possible to exert limited influence on subsequent joint export decisions. Finally, also for political reasons, efforts are being made among the Western states to harmonise export practice. Thus, at EU level, there is now an – admittedly non-binding – European code of conduct on arms exports, though it has done little to further harmonisation so far.¹¹

9 Cf. EU Treaty, Art. 17 (1).

10 Policy Principles, Part II (NATO countries, EU member states, countries with NATO-equivalent status), section 3.

11 Cf. EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports of 8 June 1998. See also Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers adopted by the OSCE on 25 November 1993, and the Framework Agreement between The French Republic, The Federal Republic of Germany, The Italian Republic, The Kingdom of Spain, The

Ultimately, the dilemma between morality and national interest in arms export policy becomes completely clear if arms exports are understood as an instrument of foreign policy that can be used to intervene in conflicts and potential conflicts, safeguard one's own (supposed) economic or political interests, shape bilateral relationships, influence international relations and cultivate an international network based on dependency and co-operation. This is the highly complex environment within which German policy on arms exports, with its claim to be restrictive, has been positioned for years. Whether a restrictive policy on arms exports is capable of resolving the contradictions between morality and national interest continues to be the subject of heated political debate.

Arms exports to the Middle East

The new principles designed to underpin a restrictive arms policy have not made it possible to avoid arguments about disputed individual decisions. Again and again, it is exports to countries in the Middle East that cause controversy. As a rule, supplies to this region draw particular public attention, especially in Germany, since the relevant decisions are influenced by specifically regional factors:

1. The region is of particular geo-strategic interest to the industrialised countries on account of its oil deposits.
2. The Middle East is one of the preferred regions targeted by the global arms industry because the recipient states – most of which export oil – possess considerable financial resources.
3. In practice, on account of the special nature of German-Israeli relations, co-operation on arms policy with Israel takes place outside the scope of the arms export guidelines.
4. For decades the region has been the scene of various wars and internal conflicts. In this respect, decisions on arms exports are particularly influenced by the attitudes of the recipient countries towards Israel.

Kingdom of Sweden and The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Concerning Measures to Facilitate the Restructuring and Operation of the European Defence Industry signed on 27 July 2000.

Despite the public controversies that have been triggered by a number of positive and negative decisions on exports to the region in the past, it continues to be the case that German arms exports to the Middle East are not of outstanding significance. At less than five percent of the total volume, they have constituted a relatively insignificant proportion of German arms export agreements in recent years (see Table 9.1).

Recipient regions	1993–1996	1997–2000
Near and Middle East	12.5 %	62.5 %
Asia	81.3 %	25.0 %
Latin America	6.3 %	12.5 %
Africa	0 %	0 %

Table 9.1: German arms export agreements with developing countries by region 1993–1999 (in per cent)

Contractual agreements concluded concerning the export of weapons and other military equipment from Germany to developing countries by region. Source: CRS Report for Congress, Conventional Arms Transfer to Developing Nations 1993–2000, Washington D.C., 2001.

Although about three-fifths of its global arms supplies to developing countries go to the Middle East, Germany, which exports a rather small proportion of the military equipment going to the region, evidently plays only a subordinate role when compared to other arms exporters (see Table 9.2).

A look at German export figures to the individual countries in the region shows strong variations over the years (see Table 9.3), an indication that German arms supplies do not play a key role in the military capabilities of these states. Other countries are evidently the main suppliers. The increase in licenses for exports to certain countries in 2000¹² is explained by the granting of licenses for lorries

¹² The figures on export licenses cover what are termed “weapons of war” and “other military equipment”. By contrast, the volume of arms actually exported is only recorded in the statistics for weapons of war. Cf. Bericht der Bundesregierung über ihre Exportpolitik für konventionelle Rüstungsgüter im Jahr 2000 (Rüstungsexportbericht 2000) (Report of the Federal Republic of Germany on Exports of Conventional War Weapons covering the Year 2000 [2000 Arms Export Report]), November 2001, http://bmwi.de/Homepage/download/aussenwirtschaftspolitik/REB2000_E.pdf.

179 and mine clearing vehicles (for Jordan), training equipment and armoured personnel vehicles (for Egypt), and lorries and components for armoured vehicles (for the United Arab Emirates). No weapons of war were supplied from Germany to Jordan, Syria and Iraq between 1993 and 2000. The high figures for Israel in 1998 and 1999 include, among other things, the export licenses for two submarines, the purchase of which had already been agreed in 1991.

Supplier countries	Recipient countries (by region)							
	Near and Middle East		Asia		Latin America		Africa	
	USD (Mill.)	%	USD (Mill.)	%	USD (Mill.)	%	USD (Mill.)	%
USA	50,654	47.8	23,518	38.0	3,785	43.4	220	3.3
Russia	5,500	5.3	9,800	16.3	600	7.3	1,400	21.2
France	10,700	10.0	10,300	15.1	500	5.8	400	6.0
UK	24,100	22.4	5,300	9.0	400	4.8	200	3.0
China	2,000	1.9	2,500	4.4	100	1.0	800	12.1
Germany	1,400	1.3	3,000	5.7	400	4.8	0	0
Italy	300	0.3	1,100	1.7	0	0	100	1.5
Other European countries	10,000	9.5	3,300	5.6	1,700	20.8	1,700	25.7
Other countries	1,700	1.6	2,500	4.3	1,100	12.2	1,800	27.1
Total	106,35	100	61,318	100	8,585	100	6,620	100
Global share	58.2 %		33.5 %		4.7 %		3.6 %	

Table 9.2: Arms supplies to developing countries by supplier 1993–2000 (in million US dollars/percentage of total arms imports to each region)

* Regional share of global supplies of weapons and other military equipment to developing countries. Source: CRS Report for Congress, *Conventional Arms Transfer to Developing Nations 1993–2000*, Washington D.C., 2001.

For all the criticism of German arms export practice, it has to be noted that German arms supplies to the Middle East do not play a special role, either in the region or for the German arms industry.¹³

Recipient countries	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
Israel	181.2	186.4	62.3	60.6	51.7	982.2	477.2	346.4	2,348
Jordan	0.157	0.269	0.415	0.231	0.133	1.438	4.820	0.615	8.078
Syria	0.035	0.480	0.010	1.0	1.5	-	0.005	0.002	3.032
Lebanon	-	-	0.002	-	0.053	0.008	0.006	0.005	0.074
Egypt	61.5	24.9	14.3	18.4	8.6	8.1	32.3	18.6	186.7
Kuwait	45.1	3.1	1.2	1.3	4.5	4.2	0.886	3.1	63.4
Saudi Arabia	168.7	29.4	34.1	33.4	96.4	64.7	51.0	72.8	550.5
United Arab Emirates	17.4	81.0	236.4	220.7	258.2	40.8	336.7	46.3	1,237.5

Table 9.3: Value of German arms export licenses to the states of the Middle East 1993–2000 (in million DM)

Value of licenses for the export of war weapons and other military equipment.

Source: German Federal Economics Ministry, 2000 Arms Exports Report. In contrast to Table 10.2., Table 10.3. counts licenses, not actual supplies.

The controversy surrounding arms exports

The public controversies in Germany about arms exports to the Middle East are out of proportion to the real significance of these transactions, both as regards the actual volume of exports and the

¹³ It is possible to reach this conclusion despite the limited comparability and informational value of arms export statistics. In general, the data on arms export agreements and export licenses does not take account of arms actually delivered at a later date or arms not delivered at all, while different categories of weapons and other military equipment are sometimes included, particularly in the figures on arms actually exported.

181 armaments situation in the region. These sometimes passionate public debates are connected with Germany's special relationship to Israel and the Middle East conflict. For decades Israel has enjoyed an exceptional position in policy on arms exports beyond the scope of any export guidelines. All the governments of the Federal Republic of Germany have legitimised arms exports on the basis of the special German obligation to support the existence of the state of Israel and its right to self-defence.

This became clear once again during the *intifada* in early 2002. In view of Israel's military invasion of the autonomous areas on the West Bank, applications for the export of armaments – in particular spare parts and drive units for tanks – were not approved routinely, but put on ice. This move was actually confidential, but was leaked to the Israeli press by interested parties and, as was to be expected, triggered protests. This prompted the German Federal Government to lift its temporary suspension of deliveries. Unofficially, these export licenses were justified by the threat to the state of Israel.

Wide sections of public opinion in Israel interpret any German restrictions on weapons supplies to Israel as a withdrawal of solidarity. Even critics of the Israeli government's policies regard German sanctions, in particular, as counterproductive, since they believe that economic pressure from outside merely strengthens the government's domestic position and stirs up the feeling in Israel that the country stands alone and has been abandoned by the whole world in its struggle for survival. In addition to the attention paid to the danger of a ban on supplies being instrumentalised for internal political purposes and to Israel's right to self-defence, any form of sanctions or threats of boycott against Israel are considered to be illegitimate in Germany, primarily for historical reasons. Furthermore, it is argued that measures of this kind would put contacts with partners in Israel at risk, and condemn any attempts at mediation to failure. The Federal Government's approach can therefore be summed up as "Political pressure yes, sanctions no". Against this, the critics of weapons exports claim that even terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians do not threaten the existence of

the state of Israel. They argue that the military measures taken by the Israeli occupying forces in the Palestinian areas run counter to international law, infringe the principle of proportionality and serve other purposes alongside the fight against terror. From this point of view, arms supplies represent de facto support of these Israeli policies and cannot be justified against the background of continuing human rights violations either.

By comparison, exports of armaments to Arab states are still handled restrictively. Above all, consignments of weapons that could in some way threaten Israel generally are not approved. However increasing consideration is being given to the need to combat terrorism and be aware of the dangers represented by aggressive conduct on the part of regional powers (for example Iraq and Iran). To sum up, we can say that the current escalation of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians has not changed export practice significantly.

Peace in the Middle East and increasing weapons exports?

It appears questionable whether this restraint can be maintained in future. This will depend not least on whether in spite of all the current difficulties it will be possible to guide the Middle East peace process to a successful conclusion. A peaceful solution could make the German restrictions irrelevant if one assumes that, in view of the fundamentally restrictive approach being taken, the volume of exports to the region has been minimised especially by the concrete danger of military conflicts (“area of tension”) and the threat to Israel. However, the political situation in the Middle East, past experience of arms export policy in general, and to the region in particular, and the correct application of the arms export guidelines make it unlikely that in the future the supply of weapons to the region will increase:

- A successful peace process between Israel and its Arab neighbours would remove the justification for Israel’s special role in arms export policy. Although it has, to date, been possible

to legitimise the supply of arms, in particular, by referring to Germany's special responsibility for Israel's existence against the background of German history, as well as Israel's right to self-defence, these arguments would lose their significance if a peace settlement were reached.¹⁴ This does not imply a call for the normalisation of the special German-Israeli relationship. The definition of the German-Israeli relationship on the basis of specific moral and ethical categories introduced to describe the special quality of this relationship should not be allowed to bring about the collapse of the normative framework of the arms export guidelines – however inadequate that framework may be. In future, it will no longer be easy to legitimise the supply of certain types of weapons to Israel, particularly if the assumption of “obligations in the area of non-proliferation and other aspects of arms control and disarmament”¹⁵ is made a condition for the granting of export licenses. Even now, it is almost impossible to reconcile the supply of submarines that can be armed with nuclear weapons with the arms export guidelines.

- If the Middle East conflict were to be defused, one might conclude that weapons could then be supplied to the former “confrontation states” as well, since the threat of these weapons being used against Israel would have become negligible. Nevertheless, any ending of the Israeli-Arab confrontation must not lead us to ignore the fact that there are many other potential conflicts in the region.
- Furthermore, the critical human rights situation in almost all the countries in the Middle East will prohibit weapons supplies, assuming that no causal link between the weapons to be supplied and their possible misuse for human rights violations must be established for an export license to be withheld. The human rights situation in the states of the region can only be

¹⁴ See in this connection the provisions set out in Policy Principles, part III, section 5, which exceptionally permits arms to be supplied to “countries involved in external armed conflicts” or where there is a danger of such conflicts “in cases covered by Article 51 of the UN Charter”, i.e. cases of legitimate self-defence in response to armed attack.

¹⁵ Policy Principles, part III, section 7.

described as highly varied. Given the need to respond in a highly differentiated manner to the widely varying human rights situation in the states of the region, it will be extremely difficult to draw up criteria for the volume and quality of permissible arms supplies on the basis of the varying severity of human rights violations in different countries.

- Rather, in connection with the provision of equipment to the armed forces and the police, opportunities to promote the rule of law and democracy should be exploited more effectively by using the training of personnel to strengthen their understanding of constitutional and human rights standards.
- The heterogeneity of the states in the Middle East and, in particular, the wealth of some of these countries make it impossible to sustain the assumption that arms exports inevitably detract from sustainable development. However, even if, thanks to the great wealth of many Arab states, arms programmes do not necessarily take up resources that are urgently needed for the sustainable development of society from the perspective of development policy, there is still no denying the historical experience that military might makes it more difficult to overcome developmental and democratic deficits. Particularly in systems ranging from the authoritarian to the dictatorial, a determination to hold on to power and a willingness to decide internal conflicts by force if necessary often manifest themselves in the trappings of military power.
- The need to maintain or create opportunities to exert influence on a national level is another argument generally used to legitimise arms exports. There is a great temptation to use arms policy co-operation to gain or maintain far-reaching influence, especially in a region of vital geo-strategic significance to Germany and Europe. However, here there is room for considerable doubt. Germany's economic strength and international political weight are so great that, in view of the modest volume of its arms exports and export potential, it will hardly be possible to demonstrate that they have earned Germany any special influence. Above all, it will hardly be possible

to compete with other suppliers by taking this approach (see Table 10.2). The lead enjoyed by other supplier countries to the region is so massive, both in quantitative terms and as a result of the military systems already in use, that there appears very little likelihood of Germany catching up with them, even if only in specific sectors – by supplying tanks, for example. The idea that German influence in the region could be extended by increasing weapons supplies of all things, must therefore be termed largely illusory.

- Furthermore, a value-oriented foreign policy concerned with peace, stability and human rights does not allow for special national interests that can be asserted in the region solely by means of arms exports. Germany will only be able to effectively pursue its interests in the region within the framework of the European Union's co-ordinated Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Instead of venturing into competition in the field of arms policy, the aim in future should be to press ahead with the common political efforts to strengthen stability, peace, democracy and the rule of law in the region within the context of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. Anyone who argues in favour of German arms exports to the Middle East should define the specific German interests that differ from those of the European Union or that cannot be implemented within the framework of the CFSP.
- Attempts to help bring about a breakthrough for human rights in the region by means of a conditional arms export policy should also be opposed. Experience shows that the linkage of arms exports with conditions relating to respect for human rights and commitments to sustainable development have no prospect of success. No one has yet managed to demonstrate a causal connection between the acquisition of military equipment, on the one hand, and progress on human rights and development policy, on the other. To date, no case has come to light in which a recipient country has sought to improve its human rights record because this was made a condition for the licensing of arms supplies. In view

of the competitive situation in the arms market, the approval of exports subject to conditions of this kind would effectively undermine the arms industry. There have repeatedly been cases, particularly in the Middle East, where regimes, such as those in Iraq and Iran, for example, that had been supported for years with arms exports have proved completely immune to the influence of their suppliers and committed systematic human rights violations on a particularly large scale or acts of aggression against neighbouring states in contravention of international law. It is impossible to use arms supplies to force a recipient country to abide by the law.

- Even when the legitimate defence needs of recipient countries are used to justify arms supplies, the hoped-for gain in stability often does not last very long. Decisions about arms export policy are frequently made on the basis of short-term economic and political interests without consideration of the long-term consequences for the dynamics of armament and conflict specific to a particular region. Arms supplied with the aim of maintaining or establishing a supposed strategic balance or for the purposes of legitimate self-defence can later become instruments of destabilisation and aggression.
- To sum up, arms exports are therefore not a suitable instrument with which to bring about sustainable stability, improvements in the human rights situation and lasting peace in an unstable region like the Middle East. Apart from arguments relating to economic and industrial policy, Germany has no legitimate interest in the supply of weapons and other military equipment to the region that could not be pursued by other political means within the framework of a European foreign policy.

GERMAN ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION WITH THE MENA COUNTRIES

The overall volume of Germany's economic and trade relationship with the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is modest. However, a few of those countries are important trade partners, the region is an important market for certain sectors and its main export commodity is indeed a strategic good. The form and scope of economic relations between Germany and the region are not constant, but are subject to economic, political and socio-demographic trends in the region. In addition, German and European politics can have considerable influence on the prevailing structure of economic interaction, in particular its medium and long-term development.

An overview of German economic relations with the MENA countries

During the 1990s, Germany's *foreign trade* with the countries of the Arab League, Israel and Iran stagnated at a fairly low level. As a percentage of overall foreign trade, the level of trade with the MENA region actually dropped from 3.1 per cent (1991) to 2.5 per cent (2000).¹ In hard numbers, in the 1990s, German exports to the region ranged from USD 14 billion (1993) to USD 17 billion (1992) and were most recently USD 15.4 billion (2000). Imports from the region ranged from USD 7.9 billion (1997) to USD 11.2 billion (2000). More than 17 per cent of German exports to the MENA countries (USD 2.7 billion or about 0.5 per cent of total 2000 exports) go to Israel. By comparison, exports to Turkey, which are not included here, were USD 7.6 billion in 2000; total

¹ Unless otherwise specified, all data are from the International Monetary Fund, *Direction of Trade Statistics*; BMWi (the German Ministry for Economics and Technology), <http://www.bmwi.de>; or the World Bank, <http://www.worldbank.org>.

foreign trade with Turkey was USD 13.3 billion or 1.3 per cent of Germany's total foreign trade. 188

A breakdown by sub-region at the end of the 1990s gives the following results: the countries of the Gulf region (members of the Gulf Co-operation Council plus Iran and Iraq) absorb about 1.2 per cent of Germany's total exports and 0.8 per cent of Germany's total foreign trade. The Mashreq countries (Israel and its neighbours) account for about 1.1 per cent of the exports and 0.9 per cent of Germany's total foreign trade. About 0.5 per cent of Germany's exports go to the Maghreb countries (members of the Arab Maghreb Union), giving it 0.7 per cent of total German foreign trade. These figures show that Germany has a clear balance of trade surplus with the region as a whole; a trade deficit exists only with the Maghreb countries, due to oil imports from Libya and Algeria, and recently with Syria. The German model of trade relations with the region closely mirrors that of the European Union. MENA countries account for a slightly higher percentage of overall EU foreign trade than they do for Germany, however that share has also dropped during the 1990s (from 4.3 to 3.3 per cent). The EU also has a positive balance of trade with almost all the countries in the region, the only deficit is again with the Maghreb due to oil and gas imports from Algeria, Libya and Syria.

Despite the relative lack of importance that trade with the region has for the German economy, there are four points that should not be overlooked. First, the region has enormous growth potential, as detailed below. This is primarily due to demographic developments and structural changes that are to be expected within the context of stronger Euro-Mediterranean integration and a cautious, but clear-cut trend towards economic liberalisation in Middle Eastern states. Secondly, for certain German economic segments, exports to the region are significant. These tend to be the labour-intensive sectors like construction, industrial facilities and equipment, automotive and machinery, and electronics and telecommunications.² Thirdly,

2 As an example, data from the Central Association for Electro-Technology and Electric Industries show that Germany delivers more than 11% of all electric and electronic products imported by MENA states.

189 given that more than 80 per cent of the imports from the region are crude oil, oil products, or natural gas, trade relations with the Middle East and North Africa are indeed of strategic importance for the German economy at large. And fourthly, Germany is one of the region's most important trade partners. With its large export volume to the MENA countries, Germany can count itself as one of the region's top three trade partners (taking all EU countries together makes the EU the largest trade partner for the MENA countries). Germany's share in those countries' imports is often around or above 10 percent.³

	German Exports 2000 (Mill. USD)	German Imports 2000 (Mill. USD)	Export Trends 1991–2000
Israel	2,661	1,761	Increasing
Saudi Arabia	2,420	1,007	Down slightly
Egypt	1,476	258	Strong increase until 1999, then reduction
UAE	2,384	238	Strong increase
Iran	1,435	526	Reduction since 1992
Libya	366	2,678	No significant change
Syria	348	1,476	Increasing

Table 10.1: Germany's most important trade partners in the MENA region *Source: IMF*

³ In 2000, Germany was the largest source of imports for Iran (with 9.8% of all imports) and Jordan (9.8%); the second largest for Libya (9.8%) and Egypt (7.5%); third for Tunisia (9.5%), Lebanon (8.3%), Syria (7.2%) and Algeria (6.0%); and fourth overall for Kuwait (7.7%), Israel (7.3%) and Saudi Arabia (7.3%), the United Arab Emirates (with 6.3% of an import volume of more than \$2000 million) and Morocco. Even in countries where the German portion of import volume is significantly lower, for instance in Oman or Bahrain, which import primarily from one or two countries (the UAE or France and the USA), Germany remains one of the most important other trade partners.

From the German point of view, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are the most important export countries in the region. In addition, Libya is one of Germany's most important trade partners as its biggest supplier of OPEC oil. During the 1980s, Iraq was also one of Germany's most important customers. All the oil exporting countries experienced falling export revenue in the 1990s, which reduced their overall foreign trade volume. The only clear exception is the UAE, which is increasingly developing into a regional trade centre (including a substantial amount of re-export of imported consumer goods). German exports to the member states of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) remained largely stable during the 1990s.⁴ The collapse of German exports to Iran is a reflection not only of the political turmoil that shook German-Iranian relations in the 1990s, but also of a crisis in Iran's balance of payments, such that the country was at times unable to service its debt. The collapse of exports to Iraq is due to the international trade embargo and Germany's limited involvement in the oil-for-food program. A significant increase in German exports to Israel and Egypt (as well as Tunisia) is at least partially attributable to the success of economic reforms in those countries, leading to a greater, albeit overall still relatively limited, willingness on the part of German industry to invest.

At the same time it should be noted that no German investment in any single Arab country, Iran or Israel reached 300 million Euro, while direct German investment in Turkey at the end

4 By contrast, German exports to the GCC states fell significantly at the beginning of the 1980s, from \$5,504 million in 1982 to \$3,117 million in 1985. Exports did not stabilise at the current level of ca. \$5,000 million until the beginning of the 1990s, whereby the increase during this period was largest to the UAE (from \$723 million in 1982 to \$429 million in 1985 and finally to \$2,384 million in 2000). A decisive factor in this downward trend during the 1980s was a drop in exports to Saudi Arabia, the largest importer of German goods in the Gulf. A reverse in this trend was seen only in exports to Qatar and Oman (albeit on a relatively insignificant volume of about \$100 million each). The value of imports from the GCC countries also declined steadily, largely influenced by falling crude oil prices. In 1983, for instance, the value of GCC exports to Germany dropped from 1982's \$5,834 million to \$2,622 million. During the 1990s, GCC export value to Germany stabilised at about \$1,000 million.

191 of 2000 added up to 1,716 million Euro.⁵ There is considerable German investment (around 300 million Euro at the end of 2000) in Libya – in the oil sector – as well as in Egypt, Israel, the UAE and Tunisia (industry, tourism, energy sector). In addition, we can expect an increase in German investor interest in Algeria and Saudi Arabia. Both countries have improved conditions for investors since the end of the 1990s, creating significant interest among multinational companies.

A third area of economic relations that is important, at least for the partner countries, is German development aid. In the years 1995–2000, between 15 and 20 per cent of new bilateral German aid commitments and 10–20 per cent of net aid payments went to the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries.⁶ The main aid recipients in the region (BMZ figures for 2000) are Egypt, Morocco, Yemen, the Palestinian Territories, Jordan and Tunisia.⁷ The level of German payments relative to population provides us with a better picture due to the varying sizes of the partner

5 Source: BMWi. Data on direct investment are approximate, since some figures are not published. German direct and indirect foreign investment (net transfers) are estimated at a total of ca. 506 billion Euro (at the end of 2000).

6 Source: BMZ (Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development), <http://www.bmz.de>. Net payments fluctuated widely (as an example DM 1.2 billion in 1997, DM 524 million in 1998). This was due not only to changing priorities and problems with the outflow of promised aid, but also to varying capabilities for the repayment of earlier loans.

7 Source: BMZ. In 1996 and 1997, Iraq was also among the main recipients, largely due to aid for the virtually autonomous Kurdish regions and German contributions to international aid organisations. In 2000, Morocco (re)paid Germany more than it received in German funds (aid and loans). According to figures published by the BMZ, Iran was also one of the main recipients of bilateral German development aid. However, the figures are to a great degree misleading. In fact, *no* bilateral development aid payments went to Iran; the reported sum (40.4 billion Euro in 2000) consisted entirely of costs for university slots advanced by the German states for the approximately 7,900 Iranian students registered at German universities. The official figures on German aid to other countries in the region also include payments for university slots. Other donor countries also calculate the cost of foreign students as part of their development aid. Thus the data used for statistical comparison of Western donor countries are entirely correct. Nonetheless, particularly in the case of Germany, a distorted picture emerges: most of the Iranian citizens studying at German universities are the children of Iranians who are permanent residents of Germany. So in that sense, the money is going to develop German and not Iranian human capital.

countries. Net development aid of 9.78 Euro per capita (2000) for Jordan and 6.61 Euro for the Palestinian territories puts them ahead of other recipients by far. By comparison, per capita German aid in Yemen was 1.88 Euro; in Lebanon 1.72 Euro; Egypt 1.04 Euro; Syria 0.81 Euro and in Morocco 0.22 Euro (and when calculated for Iran, 0.57 Euro).⁸ Of course, economic and political factors partially determine the scope and intensity of German cooperation with the MENA countries. Searching for a pattern to German commitment in the region reveals that there is no clear-cut, direct relationship between the extent of economic ties or the intensity of political ties on the one hand and the level of German development aid on the other. Individual countries are considered “important” partners for a variety of reasons. Development aid largely reflects political considerations. Particular need is only an additional criterion. For instance, Yemen is undoubtedly one of the poorest countries in the world; at the same time, the Yemeni leadership has succeeded in establishing a lobby with Germany’s top politicians that other, comparable countries do not have. Germany’s relatively high level of aid to the Palestinian Territories and Jordan is quite clearly politically motivated and reflects Germany’s considerable interest in providing economic support for the Arab-Israeli peace process. Apart from Israel, which is both a priority political partner and Germany’s most important trade partner in the region, and to a certain extent Egypt, it appears that concentrated economic ties do not necessarily mean particularly profound political relations, nor is the latter a condition for the former. Relations with important trade partners like Saudi Arabia or the UAE are generally free of tensions, yet German policies reflect a lack of interest in political contact and dialogue with those states. Maybe the one is even a direct result of the other. The corresponding interest from partners in the Gulf is far greater and there are plenty of potential subjects for dialogues, including potentially contentious or thorny issues such as human rights or regional security. In cases like Libya and Algeria, and also at times (in the 1980s) Syria, substantial economic and trade

8 Source: BMZ.

193 contacts were established or maintained although political ties to those countries were not good. Germany keeps its political and economic ties to the region far more separate from one another than other countries, like France or the United States, do.

The effect of changing regional conditions on German interests

Germany is not exactly dependent on the region, not even on oil imports from the MENA states. Libya, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Syria are Germany's biggest oil suppliers in the region, but overall, until now, Germany gets more oil from Russia, Norway and Britain than from the MENA region. Any willingness to cultivate stronger political relations would have to stem either from direct political interests (as in the case of the core parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict and peace process) or be oriented toward future goals, that is to say not only a long-term stabilisation of existing exchanges between countries, but also their further development; the harnessing of growth potential, and a role in the determination of structural conditions in the region. There are plenty of good reasons to cultivate that kind of interest. The only country where the potential for business relationships is currently being fully, or almost fully, exploited is Israel.⁹ Looking at the region as a whole and at most of the individual countries, there is no doubt that a great potential for growth exists. If and how this can be realised depends on social, economic and political factors.

1. Socio-demographic trends

While levels of population growth in the MENA countries overall are dropping, particularly in the Maghreb (more slowly in the Middle East), by 2030 the population of the Southern Mediterranean and Middle East will have grown from 280 million (1999) to more than 480 million. In the Southern Mediterranean states, the popu-

9 Eberhard von Koerber, "Germany in the Middle East – The Economic Dimension", lecture at a conference on "Germany in the Middle East", Hebrew University Jerusalem, 19–20 March, 2000, p. 2.

lation will grow from 160 million to 260 million. By contrast, the population in the countries of the Northern Mediterranean (excluding Turkey) will drop from ca. 206 to less than 200 million, and that of the countries that are now part of the European Union from 372 to 360 million.¹⁰

The diverging demographic trend between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean regions should not and must not be perceived as a threat. One reason for this is that Germany and other EU countries are likely to have to implement more liberal immigration policies in the near future in order to provide a solid basis for an increasingly top-heavy demographic profile. Whether or not population increases in our neighbours to the south will lead to greater migration pressure depends above all on whether those countries can provide their citizens with acceptable living conditions and prospects. In any case, emerging generations in the MENA countries will need to be educated, will consume goods and energy, will communicate and seek access to global economic and cultural developments. There is an enormous need for investment, not least of all in social and economic infrastructures like education, the energy sector, housing construction, and water and waste management. The World Bank estimates that providing clean water and waste disposal alone in the MENA countries will require an investment of USD 40 billion over the next decade.¹¹ The needed investment in the energy supply sector is estimated at up to USD 200 billion over the same time period.¹² In theory, this opens up considerable opportunities for German exporters and investors. This applies both to the sectors mentioned above and to the overall market which is likely to double in volume within a few decades even if living conditions in the region remain the same. It can be assumed that infrastructure investments of that magnitude cannot be financed solely from the public funds available in the individual countries, or even from Western development aid.

10 Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators* (1999).

11 See *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18 March 2000.

12 From Koerber, "Germany in the Middle East", p. 7.

Political and economic policy decisions in the MENA countries will determine to a large extent whether those countries can realise their growth potential, create jobs, and securely provide or generally improve living conditions for their populations. Economic liberalisation that encourages the productive use of domestic and foreign capital, opening up to regional and international markets (not least of all dismantling customs and non-tariff barriers between Arab states and in the entire region), new social welfare policies, and most importantly improvements to the educational and vocational training systems are essential if the risks of increasing unemployment and poverty, with their attendant increase in outward migration and societal instability are to be avoided.

Improving intra-regional co-operation would be a significant step for the MENA states that are not primarily oil producers. Such co-operation is currently severely hindered by political factors, not only by structural difficulties in co-operation between authoritarian systems, but also by unresolved conflicts. The most significant of these is the Arab-Israeli conflict, but there are also other Arab-Arab and regional conflicts, like the one between Morocco and Algeria, or Iran's conflicts with its neighbours. Without these political obstacles, it would be possible to double the currently meagre portion (less than 10 per cent) of the region's overall foreign trade accounted for by intra-regional trade.¹³

In addition to strengthening exchanges between Europe and the MENA region supported by the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, the EU countries, including Germany, should actively foster co-operation between individual countries in the region. There is no basis for any concern that strengthening interregional co-operation would restrict opportunities for German or European exporters. It is true that stronger trade within the region would lead to certain trade diversions, and that some consumer goods

13 See Jamal Eddine Zarrouk, "Intra-Regional Trade in Industrial Products: Past Trends and Future Prospects", Cairo 1996 (Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran & Turkey, working paper 9609); and the United Arab Economic Report (al-taqrir al-iqtisadi al-'arabi al-muwahhad), Abu Dhabi, September 2000, p. 143.

that until now have been imported from Germany or other EU countries would then be imported from countries in the region that are developing or have already developed export industries (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon). But at the same time, a reciprocal opening up of regional trade would create a large and integrated market, which would make investment in the region's processing industries a worthwhile proposition. Increased production of consumer goods would also open up opportunities for European suppliers of installations and industrial goods. In addition, stimulating the intra-regional market would precipitate growth. Promoting growth and development in partner countries is more than just a humanitarian concern or an expression of good neighbourliness, although both of those would be motivation enough. It is also in keeping with the informed self-interests of the European industrialised states: among other things, development creates good economic partners and regional stability.

Similarly, Germany should be more concerned with functional co-ordination between the oil-exporting countries than with over-production and falling prices. It is true that price hikes, especially sudden ones, can be very damaging for certain sectors of the economy. But while low oil prices (as was the case at the end of the 1990s) may help certain businesses in the short term, they do not meet the long-term needs of the economy. They also have a negative impact on the environment and on innovation. Since revenue from oil exports is to a large extent recycled, and Germany has a balance of trade surplus with most of the oil exporting countries (that is to say that Germany gets more from that recycling process than it pays for oil from the region), stable oil prices are something to be strived for, at least in terms of trade policy. The stagnation of German exports to the region is largely the result of falling oil prices during the 1990s. In political terms as well, Germany and the EU should have a vested interest in ensuring price stability and with it solid planning capability. Thus, a joint interest in stable oil prices is an important subject for dialogue between the EU on the one hand and the GCC countries or Libya, Algeria, Iran or Syria on the other.

3. Political developments

Both intra-regional economic co-operation and co-operation between the MENA states and Europe would benefit from greater political freedom and increased opportunities for political participation in the partner countries. Authoritarian systems can open up their markets, but structurally they are ill-suited to multilateral co-operation. Firstly, the centralised, often even personalised decision-making apparatus in those countries fosters bilateralism and the politicising of economic relations, and hinders the process of delegating authority that is essential to multilateral co-operation. Additionally, political conditions in the region are increasingly proving to be a growing obstacle to investment. The majority of MENA countries are not only undemocratic, that is to say there is limited political participation by citizens; but they are often also models of bad government. There is an absence of transparency and the rule of law. Far-reaching corruption aggravates social and political conflicts, raises transaction costs for potential foreign investors and deters local businesspeople from placing their capital in the country. The combination of bad government and the lack of regional co-operation leads to a “catch 22” for investors. For certain large, multinational companies that have enough capital coverage and can exercise enough pressure on governments to risk investing even in countries where transparency and the rule of law are generally deficient, the individual countries of North Africa and the Middle East simply do not represent big enough markets. For small businesses, on the other hand, that would find investments even in limited markets like Syria or Saudi Arabia worthwhile, the risks arising from the lack of good governance are simply too great.

Options and approaches for German and European policies

Foreign policy cannot only be the handmaiden of business and trade. However, strengthening economic ties to the MENA states is central to German policy. But there are political as well as economic reasons for this. In the final analysis, economic ties can lead

to the strengthening of multilateral structures and other international arrangements and to a rapprochement between societies. 198

- **Fostering the common structures and regional partnerships with Europe**

Currently, the most advanced example of building common structures with regional partners is the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), the “Barcelona Process”. In addition, a free trade zone between the EU and the GCC is being prepared, and Yemen has an individual partnership agreement with the EU. No serious thought has yet been given to the possible creation of co-operative structures that would include Iran and Iraq.

It is not advisable to revive earlier efforts to further economic and political co-operation through an institutionalised Euro-Arab dialogue. Such a purely inter-governmental forum is, in any case, unsuited to fostering economic co-operation. At the same time, it makes sense to link the European Union’s various initiatives for co-operation with the MENA region. This would imply a structural linkage of the planned Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone with the EU-GCC free trade zone, while at the same time working towards integrating Yemen, Iran and, in the long term, Iraq into those arrangements. It is important to make sure that efforts to promote free trade and reciprocal economic liberalisation are not restricted to the North-South dimension, but include South-South exchanges. This is why Germany and the EU should support Arab League efforts to establish an Arab Free Trade Zone with advice and technical help as needed. Europe has a chance to positively influence events here – the structural pressure created by the EU – GCC free trade zone project played a decisive role in advancing attempts by those countries to set up a customs union.

While the EU countries launched the “Barcelona Process” more for political and security reasons than economic ones, the partner countries, particularly in North Africa, hope it will bring better trade opportunities and increased European investment in the region. For Germany too, economic interests were of secondary importance. But in contrast to some of the southern EU countries

199 that are among the strongest political forces behind the “Barcelona Process”, Germany has less of a problem with opening up markets to imports from partner countries. The EMP only has a future if Europe can be persuaded to lower its protectionist barriers on agricultural imports from Mediterranean partners, since those are the only products in which these countries enjoy a comparative advantage. Germany could demonstrate that it is interested in a real partnership with the Mediterranean states and set a policy example for the southern EU countries by making it clear that free trade in the Mediterranean region is not a one-way street. It should even be possible to overcome the opposition of some agricultural lobbies – the narrow interests of German potato and cut-flower producers cannot be allowed to become an obstacle to Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. That is true not only because those industries do not have anything of the importance to the German economy that, say, the production of olives or citrus fruits has in Spain. European policies simply lose all credibility when they are directed at demanding profound structural reforms from partners in the Southern Mediterranean, while the EU countries themselves refuse even relatively minor structural reforms for fear of losing the competitive edge, or losing votes and facing protests.

- **Development and structural aid as a tool of self-interest**

As outlined, German development aid is currently concentrated on countries neighbouring Israel (Palestinian Territories, Jordan) that are considered to have an important and positive influence on the peace process, or particularly poor countries in the region (Yemen, Egypt). It is not tied in any direct recognisable way to economic or export interests, nor would that be desirable, considering the humanitarian and political function of aid policies. Nonetheless, it is true that development aid pays off, either directly or in the medium term. The same is true of foreign cultural policies: recipients of financial or technical help from Germany, scholarship students at German educational institutions, foreign students who learn German at a Goethe Institute, and consumers of German culture at these institutions are all intermediaries for strength-

ened economic ties. Every time a Goethe Institute is closed down, it has a negative effect on German industry's opportunities in that country. Thus the budget for promoting German culture abroad, like the scholarship program for students from the region, should be considered at least partially as a contribution to fostering economic relations.

In addition to fighting poverty and other goals that are common to aid policies towards any country in the world, Germany's aid to the MENA region should also promote two important policy goals. It should support the Arab-Israeli peace process and foster intra-regional co-operation. Thus the massive financial aid that Germany provides to the Palestinian Territories (including payments made through the EU, Germany is in fact the largest individual donor to the Palestinians) is fully justified. The survival of some kind of Palestinian state is of central importance to the revival and success of the peace process. In contrast, the high per capita level of aid given to Jordan may be examined critically. Jordan is neither particularly needy, nor does Germany acquire any influence of note on the kingdom's policies through this aid. The fact that the US or Israel want Germany and Europe to support Jordan is not in itself a sufficient reason to do so to this extent. Co-operation with Lebanon and Syria should be strengthened. Syria in particular needs advice and support to prepare for the challenges of a new regional division of labour, in which Israel will be playing a strong economic role.

In order to help both prepare and shape this new division of labour in the MENA, the EU – as well as Germany – is intensely focused on fostering regional co-operation projects. While that approach is correct in principle, three things should be taken into account. First, we must avoid the functionalist illusion that joint economic projects or societal contacts (“people-to-people projects”) will circumvent, or even solve, hard political and territorial conflicts in the Middle East. Secondly, German policy makers should make clear that Europe has a strong political and economic interest of its own in furthering regional co-operation – namely to fostering regional stability and creating larger markets – that

201 its efforts to support regional co-operation initiatives are not only aimed at furthering Arab-Israeli normalisation. Germans and Europeans support the normalisation of Arab-Israeli relations, however any efforts towards economic co-operation among the North African and Middle Eastern states is worth supporting, whether or not Israel participates. Thirdly, any help for economic co-operation projects should be conditional on those projects not having just a symbolic political function, but a solid economic rationale. Above all this means that those projects must stem from the initiatives of local players, who must also be willing to invest their own resources.

It makes sense for Germany to provide aid in those sectors where it has expertise (for instance: water management, environmental technology). In addition, German policy, whether bilateral or in the context of the EMP – and once again there is no need to deny self-interest – should be concentrated on programs that will help the partner countries adopt more open, flexible, and efficient economic systems. This includes not only supporting banking and tax reform, improved vocational training and the introduction of European norms and standards, but also, importantly providing specific help for the region's small business sector. This can include the establishment of European business centres that make it easier for local private enterprises to develop business contacts, or help in setting up business schools where desired.

In the final analysis, economic partnership also means supporting opportunities for the MENA countries on the German and European markets. One could imagine joint state and private sector initiatives, such as ones offering young people from the region apprenticeships at German companies; training measures for small businesses from the MENA countries; co-operation with local health authorities (in particular for exporters of agricultural products); helping those countries conform to norms and standards or in setting up the necessary organisations or authorities to do so; or providing support for the region's market initiatives (establishing trade centres or a presence at trade fairs, co-operation with marketing agencies, etc.)

• German industry's commitment could be greater

Unlike in its relationship to Eastern Europe, there is as yet no strong industrial lobby for co-operation with the MENA region. Nor is there a prominent industrial leader, a kind of “Wolff von Amerongen for the Middle East” who points the way for policy-makers by a public display of interest in the region's economy. Individual companies or sectors have sometimes pushed decision-makers to get relations with Iraq or Iran in order, so that they could re-capture lost markets. But overall, German industry's commitment to relations with the MENA countries is weak compared, for instance, with other EU countries. Industry tends to follow policy instead of furthering it. So while industry groups welcomed the EMP, they did not actively advance any similar ideas or initiatives. Characteristic of this is the fact that the North Africa – Middle East Initiative of German Industry, under the aegis of the Federal Association of German Industry (BDI), was not set up until 1996, after the “Barcelona Process” had begun and after the first MENA economic conference (Casablanca, 1995).

Since then, a series of mixed chambers of commerce and industrial associations have sprung up as a manifestation of Germany's interest in the region.¹⁴ Those kinds of forums and offices are important to demonstrating German industry's interest in real co-operation with the partner countries. Despite that, German industry has a reputation in the region for primarily wanting to market itself, but not being willing to make a long-term commitment, i.e.

¹⁴ These include the German-Arab Chamber of Commerce in Egypt (which is de facto a German-Egyptian institution) with branches or parallel organisations in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria; the German-Iranian Chamber of Industry and Commerce; the Forum Algéro-Allemande des Affaires; the Saudi-German Businessmen's Dialogue Steering Committee; the German-Egyptian Business Forum; the German-Libyan Economic Forum; and the Office of German Industry in the Palestinian Territories. In addition, Germany's Chamber of Industry and Trade (DIHT) maintains German foreign trade offices in Egypt, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi-Arabia, the UAE and Tunisia. The DIHT is also working with the Amman Chamber of Industry as part of a trade chamber partnership project on, among other things, developing a website to provide information on economic conditions and industrial structures in Jordan. This is one of so far only three international DIHT partnership projects (the other two are with Indonesia and China).

203 invest. Round tables and similar events at which specific barriers to investment are discussed can dispel misunderstandings, but they cannot conceal the fact that the majority of German industry views the region more in terms of its current potential than its opportunity for growth, and is unwilling to make an investment in its future. On top of that, not only many politicians, but also leaders of industry find dealing with the Arab world difficult. Politics cannot be expected to take that burden off the shoulders of industry. If German business wants to exploit the region's potential, then it will have to learn how to deal with its partners and the Arab world's business culture.

- **Political support for economic relations still makes sense**

Despite that, and particularly in the MENA, German decision-makers should not shrink from supporting economic relations with political measures. Among other things, these should include a greater exchange of political visits, participation by German politicians in trade fairs and economic conferences in the region, additional bilateral discussion and a liberal visa policy.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY AS AIMS OF GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY IN RELATION TO THE STATES OF THE MENA REGION

The core values of German and European foreign policy are the support for human rights and democracy. As human rights are violated in all states of the Middle East and North Africa (the MENA region), albeit in widely varying degrees from one country to another, our policy towards these countries is an eminently suitable litmus test to prove the validity of the above statement. Moreover, in the Islamic world in particular, international human rights standards and mechanisms are increasingly being challenged as manifestations of Western cultural imperialism. Although the growing power of Islamism as a political force is an obstacle to the enforcement of human rights, it would be wrong to overlook the fact that violations of human rights in the MENA region are only partly rooted in the Islamic orientation of government policies. Some of them also derive from conflicts within or between countries in the region. In many cases, human rights abuses are also perpetrated by authoritarian secular regimes as part of their fight against Islamist fundamentalism.

The need to differentiate

It is necessary to distinguish carefully between countries when assessing the human rights situation, although it is not possible in the present context to provide an exhaustive country-by-country analysis.¹ It is, however, possible to identify and examine some basic trends that characterise the situation in the individual countries of the MENA region. Apart from Israel, none of the countries of the region comes close to our understanding of a state based on the rule of law. There are glaring defects in their judicial systems.

¹ For an overall view of the situation, see *Amnesty International Annual Report 2002*, AI, London, 2002.

205 The death penalty is imposed and is generally executed in all countries but one – once again, Israel is the exception. Nevertheless, there are also encouraging signs.

Besides *Lebanon*, which has traditionally had Western leanings, other states of the region have also implemented major liberalisation measures in recent years.² *Jordan*, for instance, took encouraging steps towards greater freedom of expression and more democracy in the first half of the 1990s. However, particularly in the last two years, the postponement of parliamentary elections, arrests for political reasons and reports of torture or ill-treatment of detainees point in a different direction.

Bahrain seems to be setting out along a very promising path. Since Emir Hamad ibn ‘Issa al-Khalifa succeeded to the throne in March 1999, numerous political prisoners have been released. A committee to monitor human rights has also been set up. In spring 2001, a referendum was held on the introduction of a national charter, designed to serve as the basis for the creation of a new constitution with provisions for free elections and for guaranteed freedom of expression. On 14 February 2002, Emir Hamad bin ‘Issa Al-Khalifa declared Bahrain a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral parliament. He mentioned May and October 2002 as dates for local and parliamentary elections, in which women shall have the right to vote and to stand for election.³

In *Morocco* too, the succession of a new head of state has led to progress on human rights. Since his enthronement, King Mohammed VI has emphasised the importance of human rights and has specifically stressed the importance of women’s rights. Serious violations of human rights, however, are still occurring within the context of the conflict in the Western Sahara. Disappearances, po-

2 These liberalisation measures are not so much designed to democratise the countries in question as to effect a limited and, as far as possible, controlled introduction of pluralist and liberal principles, as Gudrun Krämer postulates in her article “Fremde Nachbarn: Der nahe und der mittlere Osten”, published in Karl Kaiser and Hanns W. Maull (ed., 1995), *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik, Band 2: Herausforderungen*, Munich: Oldenbourg, pp. 157–173; the statement referred to here is on p. 169.

3 See “Bahrain als konstitutionelle Monarchie”, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 15 February 2002.

litical imprisonment and repression continue to be part and parcel of the struggle between the Moroccan authorities and *Polisario*. But as the peace process has unfolded perceptible improvements have been made in this domain too, with the result that both the UN Committee Against Torture and the UN Human Rights Committee have recently expressed their approval of the measures introduced by the Moroccan Government.

In *Qatar* a draft constitution is currently being prepared, on the basis of which parliamentary elections are to take place. In the first local elections in Qatar in 1999, the right to vote and stand for election was extended to women. Still, the problems in the realm of human rights persist; these relate to about 100 people who were on trial for allegedly plotting to seize power in 1996. Human rights abuses in *Kuwait* stem primarily from the period of martial law that followed the withdrawal of Iraqi troops in February 1991. Over the past few years, the Kuwaiti government has been trying to adapt to international standards, and in fact there are now few reports of serious human rights violations in that country. In recent months, sentences imposed for defamation of Islam have been quashed on appeal or shortened by virtue of an amnesty.

Despite their Islamic rhetoric, there are various regimes in the region which are essentially secular and engaged in efforts to secure their position, chiefly against Islamist opposition groups. These efforts have led to particularly brutal totalitarian excesses at various times in *Syria*, *Libya* and *Iraq*. The despotism of the dictators and their clans in those countries left a legacy, which still exists to some extent, of hundreds of political prisoners, torture, disappearances and massive recourse to the death penalty. In September 2000, an appeal was made by 99 intellectuals in Syria for the repeal of the emergency laws, an amnesty for political prisoners and fundamental political freedoms; it remains to be seen whether the new president, Bashar al-Assad, is guiding Syria towards an open political system. At any rate, the release of numerous political prisoners is a hopeful sign. In Iraq, on the other hand, there are absolutely no signs of any change for the better in the domestic political situation. Amnesty International speaks of "innumerable executions"

207 in Iraq.⁴ The death penalty can be imposed in Iraq for numerous offences, including many acts of “political misconduct”, such as defamation of the president or political activity by serving members of the armed forces. Veritable spates of executions take place time and again in the framework of “clean-up campaigns”. At the end of 1997, for example, more than 1,500 inmates of the Abu Ghraib and al-Radhwanিয়া prisons alone were executed, and a further 100 executions took place at Abu Ghraib in October 1999.

Severe restrictions on freedom of expression and on the freedom of the press are also a feature of the political systems in *Egypt* and *Tunisia*. In these countries numerous political prisoners are subjected to unfair trials and torture. In Egypt in particular, the death penalty is frequently imposed. But whereas an increasingly assertive Egyptian judiciary has been demonstrating its independence, thereby raising hopes of further democratisation, the last ten years in Tunisia have seen a deterioration in the human rights situation.

Algeria was torn by a bloody civil war after the regular army effectively seized control in 1992 by declaring a state of emergency following the electoral victory of the Islamist Salvation Front (*Front Islamique du Salut*, FIS). In the course of the struggle with the FIS and smaller Islamist terrorist groups, a struggle that claimed some 100,000 lives, the Algerian government enacted a number of anti-terrorism laws, which essentially served as the basis for drastic curtailments of fundamental rights. A cautious reconciliation process that took place in connection with the presidential elections of 1999 has led to a reduction in the number of politically motivated arrests and in the incidence of torture. Nevertheless, the situation remains highly unstable, the level of violence remains very high, and it is far from certain whether the reconciliation process will bear fruit.

In *Yemen* too, the civil war of 1994 triggered numerous serious violations of human rights. Since then, however, the situation has become less tense, and free elections, freedom of the press and freedom of expression are now largely guaranteed – at least on paper. The government is making active political efforts to improve the situation but has not yet succeeded in effectively preventing

4 Cf. *ai-Journal*, available at <http://www.amnesty.de/de/journal.htm>.

abuses of human rights. The use of torture, capital punishment and attacks on opposition members and journalists continue to attract justified criticism.

The *Palestinian Autonomous Areas* are a special case. In this territory, which has attained semi-statehood, president Arafat rules in an extremely authoritarian manner with the aid of his security forces. For the Palestinian police, riding roughshod over fundamental rights and freedoms is the order of the day. Political “undesirables” are imprisoned, tortured and subjected to unfair trials. The need to wage an effective fight against terrorism is repeatedly cited as the reason for this dictatorial behaviour. After all, say the Palestinian Authority (PA), this is precisely what the international community is forcefully urging them to do. It must be said, however, that one of the main reasons why the PA restricts freedom of expression and freedom of the press is its desire to silence criticism of corruption within the the PA’s own administration. In this context, it is a positive sign that, in May 2002, the head of the PA, Yasir Arafat, announced reforms and changes within the Authority as well as new elections. It remains to be seen, however, to what extent these plans will be realised.

In *Saudi Arabia* – and in the *United Arab Emirates* too, albeit far less conspicuously – the violations of human rights that occur are essentially a manifestation of the conservative Islamic orientation of these countries. This applies, for example, to the cruel and degrading punishments of amputation and flogging that are administered for certain offences. In addition, it is clear that Saudi Arabian women have almost no rights at all – they are not entitled to possess identification documents in their own right and are not allowed to drive a car, for example – and that a very large number of executions take place, some of them in public.

The present situation in *Iran* is ambivalent. While the results of the last parliamentary elections very clearly showed that a majority of the population are in favour of political liberalisation, the Islamic clerics, who control the judiciary through their special religious courts, have responded to these liberal aspirations primarily by restricting freedom of expression and freedom of the press. React-

209 ing to cautious liberalisation attempts, the Islamic vice squad has reverted to a harder line in recent months; people who consume alcohol and women who are deemed to be indecently dressed are frequently punished by flogging.⁵ The routine imposition and execution of the death penalty also remains a problem in Iran. Death sentences are regularly passed in cases of murder, drug trafficking and armed robbery. Amnesty International speaks of at least 139 executions and 285 floggings in the year 2001.

In view of the considerable restrictions on freedom of expression in all of the countries referred to above, the creation in Qatar in 1996 of the television channel *Al-Jazeera* which has considerably enhanced freedom of expression in the Arab countries is of particular importance. Programmes transmitted by *Al-Jazeera* deal with topics that are scarcely mentioned in the conventional Arab media. These include issues relating to human rights and democracy, such as torture in prisons, oppression of women, corruption and the fate of “missing” opposition supporters, as well as other taboo subjects such as issues relating to sexuality. The spectrum of opinions expressed on *Al-Jazeera TV* ranges from objective reports on Israel to interviews with the terrorist leader Osama bin Laden and his videotaped statements.⁶

The only democracy in the region, *Israel*, is also guilty of serious human rights abuses, chiefly in the occupied territories. Amnesty International and even Israeli human-rights organisations such as *B'Tselem* condemn the excessive use of force against the Palestinians by the Israeli security forces since the fresh outbreak of violent Palestinian protests in September 2000. Indeed, following the beginning of the so-called *second Intifada*, there has been an escalation of violence on both sides in Israel, the West Bank and the

5 See Christiane Hoffmann, “Peitschenhiebe wegen anstößiger Kleidung, Alkohol oder obszöner Musik”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 January 2001.

6 See “Medienrevolution im Morgenland”, *Die Zeit*, 13 July 2000 and “Unzensurierte Nachrichten aus der Streichholzschatel”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5 October 2001. The TV station has also been criticised for “a sharp change in the media coverage towards polemics and agitation”, following the outbreak of the so called *second Intifada*. See the article “Tor zur Demokratie”, *Rheinischer Merkur*, 4 April 2002.

Gaza strip. Armed Palestinian groups fired at Israeli civilians and killed alleged “collaborators” who had supposedly co-operated with Israeli military forces. The number of Palestinian suicide bombers – who are increasingly being recruited from the Al-Aqsa brigades close to Fatah – grew without the PA taking convincing steps to counter these terrorist activities. Indications that terrorist attacks by the Al-Aqsa brigades were financed by Arafat himself have to be taken very seriously and need to be scrutinised. Israeli security forces temporarily blocked off the autonomous territories, besieged and invaded Palestinian cities. Tanks fired at Yasir Arafat’s headquarter in Ramallah and the head of the PA was set under house arrest for 150 days from December 2001 until May 2002. Human rights organisations reproached Israel for extra-judicial executions, the destruction of Palestinian property, arbitrary and mass arrests. The work of relief organisations and journalists was impeded; doctors and international reporters were sometimes even shot at. The events in the refugee camp in Jenin, which was completely destroyed after intense fighting, caused a particular stir. A United Nations commission charged with investigating the incident and in particular to assess the extent to which Israeli action targeted the local civilian population and not just Palestinian terrorists, was denied entry into the country by the Israeli authorities. By forestalling this necessary investigation of the alleged massacre, the Israeli authorities snubbed the United Nations. Already at the beginning of the *intifada* human rights organisations pointed out that a more restricted use of firearms could have resulted in far fewer casualties among the Palestinian protestors, many of whom were minors. The practice of punishing entire families further belie the Israelis’ claim that their country is a democracy rooted in the rule of law. Action by Israeli security forces against the Arab population of Israel and the way in which the Arabs are systematically treated as second-class citizens in relation to Jews have also been the focus of criticism. It must be stated, however, that Israel differs radically from other countries in the region in that its independent judiciary, free press and active human rights organisations have played a crucial part in securing major improvements, such as the prohibition of torture

211 pronounced by the Supreme Court in 1999. In the foreseeable future the Supreme Court will also have to deal with the Israeli policy of killing Palestinians suspected of terrorist activities. In the case that is pending at the present time there are serious doubts about this type of involvement in terrorism.

In the context of a dialogue on human rights with Islamic states and of efforts to support any moves by those states to establish secular legal systems, it must not be forgotten that a majority of Israelis believe that Jewish Orthodoxy is too influential – there is no civil marriage or divorce in Israel, and questions of civil status and inheritance are matters for the religious courts; something which is also seen by liberal Jews as a human rights problem.

The problem of double standards

However much the situation may vary between countries, it goes without saying that the same standard must be applied to each and every country when it comes to assessing respect for human rights. The universality of human rights, the conviction that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights), lies at the very heart of the concept of human rights. Human rights are the birthright of every human being. They are the rock on which every political system must be built. Their validity cannot be diminished by reference to divergent traditions and cultural differences. In the words of the Vienna Declaration, adopted at the end of the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993: “While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms”.⁷

In the Islamic world, however, this type of position is increasingly being challenged, and a particular Islamic understanding of human rights is presented as an alternative to this “Western”

⁷ Vienna Declaration, adopted as the concluding document of the UN World Conference on Human Rights, which was held in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993.

concept. One of the reasons for this is a perception that the West's commitment to human rights is based on varying standards.

This criticism focuses especially on what the Islamic States see as *de facto* connivance by the West in Israeli violations of human rights, as well as Western reluctance to take Israel to task about the situation in the occupied territories and Palestinian prisoners' conditions of custody and similar abuses. The application of double standards is a charge also levelled at the West, specifically its reticence when police state tactics are used in various countries to prevent the spread of Islamist fundamentalism. The violations of human rights committed by the Palestinian Authority are also blamed in part on the pressure that the international community exerts on them to take vigorous action against opponents of the peace process.

The consistency and credibility of our policy on human rights depends on us clearly addressing all violations, including Israeli violations and breaches of international law in the occupied territories, such as those that occur in the framework of Israel's settlement policy. Nor can political efforts to halt the spread of Islamist fundamentalism justify violations of human rights such as those that were committed in the wake of the military coup in Algeria.

The application of uniform standards to identify violations of human rights does not mean that either Germany or the EU must behave in exactly the same way towards each offending state. Firstly, even where uniform standards are applied, the general trend in a country, in other words whether the human rights situation is improving or deteriorating, must play a major part in determining the policy to be adopted towards that country. Secondly, it is, of course, equally legitimate to apply other yardsticks when deciding how to deal politically with a particular country; we might consider, for example, whether the country is threatening its neighbours or is helping to resolve conflicts between other states, or the likely impact of our measures on other German interests, including economic interests. Such factors, however, including any relevant conflicts of interests, must be clearly spelled out in strategy documents on relations with individual countries in order to avoid the impression of arbitrary discrimination.

Important though specific country-by-country strategies are, it is nevertheless possible to identify some general challenges and objectives that must be pursued if the human rights situation in the MENA countries is to be improved:

- The human-rights dimension of our policy towards the MENA region must become more obvious and transparent. For example, the report on human rights that the Federal Government presents to the German parliament, the Bundestag, every two years should deal in detail with the human rights situation in the countries of that region (and of other regions of special interest, where applicable). The profile of each country must be presented from the perspective of the international human rights conventions and in the light of the main specific priorities of German human rights policy, namely commitments to the abolition of the death penalty and to the protection of national minorities. The report should also specify the action taken by the Federal government to improve the human rights situation in each country. While quiet diplomacy will always have a place in any government's policy on human rights, the special role of the German parliament should be to speak out clearly and unmistakably about abuses of human rights and champion the victims' cause. The committee on human rights and humanitarian aid has a particularly important role to play here. The special mission of the parliamentary delegations is to seek dialogue on democratisation, on the creation of a more open society and on human rights. This is more relevant than ever following the dreadful attacks by the Al-Qa'ida terrorist network in New York and Washington on 11 September 2001. International co-operation in the battle against international terrorism must not result in accepting attempts by states to eliminate organisations, political opponents and parties who have fallen out of favour with their governments under the pretext of fighting terrorism. Violations of human rights must not be tolerated or passed over for utilitarian considerations of

power politics. Human rights deficits must be unambiguously identified – as was done by the US State Department in its human rights report of March 2002, which referred to human rights deficits not only in China, Russia, but also in Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Palestinian territories.⁸ To preserve its credibility, our policies also need to make clear that there can be no discount of human rights. The co-operation that has been established as a result of the common fight against terrorism must be used as a means to enlarge and deepen the dialogue on human rights with our partner governments.

- Commitment to human rights and economic relations must not be mutually exclusive. On the contrary, economic relations can contribute to the emergence of a middle class which is often the driving force behind moves to create more open societies. Moreover, in many countries of the region, the alleviation of poverty can help to defuse conflicts within society, to eliminate corruption and to make people less willing to resort to violence. The spread of modern communications technology, and particularly Internet access, can strongly reinforce freedom of expression. Breaking off economic relations and yielding to isolationist temptations, on the other hand, are not normally the best way to make a country more democratic. At the same time, it remains true that there must be no pussyfooting on human rights to enhance our own economic prospects. German export credits should not only serve the interests of our own exporters but should also take account of the political situation in the countries in question. We must continue to conduct a restrictive policy on arms exports, giving particular consideration to the human rights situation in recipient countries.
- Issues relating to human rights and democracy must be at the heart of our political dialogue with the MENA region. As far as our relations with the coastal states of the southern Mediterranean are concerned, the “Barcelona process” provides the political framework for this dialogue which must cover fundamental

⁸ Cf. the human rights report: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001>.

issues regarding the international protection of human rights. This is especially necessary since a number of the MENA states have been undermining almost every attempt to strengthen the world-wide protection of human rights, such as the efforts that have been made in the framework of the UN Commission on Human Rights. Political co-operation, and more specifically economic co-operation within the Barcelona process, as well as bilateral development co-operation, offer the opportunity to eradicate some of the social reasons for the rise of militant Islamist fundamentalist groups. We should seek a political dialogue along the same lines as the “Barcelona process” with the states of the Gulf region; such a dialogue must include the discussion of human rights and democratisation issues.

- The concept of human rights does not have sufficiently deep social roots in many countries of the MENA region. This means that the only calls for the governments of these countries to comply with human rights standards often come from outside, which leads in turn to accusations of “Western” interference. It certainly takes a long time for a society to become imbued with the principle of respect for human rights. And yet there can be no sustainable improvement in the human rights situation in the countries of the MENA region unless efforts are made to initiate and foster that long and gradual process. In addition to intergovernmental relations, it is therefore essential that we try to intensify dialogue between the various social groups in Europe and those in the countries of the MENA region. Universities, religious communities, various cultural groups and political foundations can make important contributions to this dialogue between societies. Such a dialogue must also involve moderate Islamists who actually play quite a significant role in society in many of the MENA countries, sometimes in professional organisations but also, in many cases, as members of opposition groups or as human rights activists. Not all conservative religious leanings can be equated with potentially violent fundamentalism. In the context of such a dialogue, however, we must clearly oppose any attempt to “Islamicise” human rights, to reject specific hu-

man rights on the grounds that they are inconsistent with the *shari'a*. One example of such Islamicisation is the Declaration of Human Rights in Islam, which was adopted by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, an international organisation of Islamic States, in Cairo in August 1990. Article 24 of the declaration states that “All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this declaration are subject to the Islamic Shari’a”. Insofar as such reservations serve to legitimise unequal treatment of the faithful and infidels or men and women, they strike at the very heart of the concept of human rights by denying the equal dignity of all human beings. Whereas this sort of “Islamicisation” of human rights must be resolutely resisted, in the human rights dialogue particular attention should be paid to criticism levelled from inside the Islamic world at certain schools of thought within the Islamic tradition that have stunted the development of human rights. There are those in the Islamic world, for example, whose main concern is to promote the restoration of the *ijtihad*, the free use of the intellect to develop the law by constantly re-examining the sources of Islamic dogma and discerning the will of Allah.⁹ Such an approach, which is conducive to the establishment of human rights, can only yield lasting dividends if it is accepted in the Islamic world as an original Islamic idea and not rejected as a “Western implant”.

- Since numerous violations of human rights in the countries of the MENA region occur in the fight against terrorist groups, cooperation in the field of security policy should focus on respect for the rule of law as a principle to be enforced in the struggle against terrorism. This can involve an input into police training or the sharing of experience between judges and public prosecutors. Technical assistance in equipping the security forces should,

9 See Heiner Bielefeld, “Menschenrechte und Islam – Konflikte und Perspektiven”, in W. Heitmeyer *et al.* (ed.), *Die bedrängte Toleranz*, Frankfurt am Main, 1996, pp. 360–381, especially pp. 371 *et seq.* On the issue of Islam and human rights, see also Heiner Bielefeld, *Philosophie der Menschenrechte*, Darmstadt, 1998, especially Chapter V, which deals with the antithesis between “Western” and “Islamic” human rights, and Bassam Tibi, *Im Schatten Allahs – Der Islam und die Menschenrechte*, Mannheim, 1996.

wherever possible, be linked to training programmes which include instruction in human rights. At the same time, those engaging in political talks should spell out the fact that allowing members of the security forces to abuse human rights with impunity is entirely incompatible with the principles of co-operation. Lastly, attention should be paid in the framework of such co-operation to the social circumstances of ordinary members of the security forces, since the dire poverty in which they often live is liable to predispose them to violence and corruption.

- If liberalisation is to make headway in the region, particularly in the conservative Islamic countries, it will be especially important to support all initiatives that are designed to improve the opportunities for women to take part in the social, economic and political life of their native countries. In the framework of development co-operation – in the promotion of education, the establishment of credit systems and the provision of support for micro-businesses, for example – care must be taken to ensure that local women also benefit from the various co-operative ventures. Wherever possible, provision should also be made for special support programmes for women and for measures to promote the creation of women’s organisations. We should stress more emphatically in every type of international forum that we do not accept any abuse of women’s rights. For example, in view of the special contribution of sport to the international prestige of many states, the Olympic Games could be used to express unequivocal criticism of those states which exclude women from sport because of their sex and which send all-male teams to the games, since these states are acting in flagrant breach of the Olympic Charter.
- In a number of countries in the MENA region, conditions are very difficult for ethnic or religious minorities. In the latter case, it is sometimes a branch of Islam that is in the minority in a particular country, or Christian Churches, or the Baha’i faith, whose followers are subject to relentless persecution in Iran. In some countries, the discrimination or even persecution endured by religious minorities is not officially sanctioned

but is the work of militant Islamist groups. In other countries, however, such as Saudi Arabia, religious freedom is drastically curtailed by the government itself. The position of minorities within a country is always a good gauge of overall progress towards the liberalisation of the society in question. States in whose territory ethnic and religious minorities suffer discrimination or even persecution must be told plainly that we regard the equality of all nationals, regardless of whether they belong to a minority, as the keystone of a state founded on the rule of law. But consideration must also be given to the fact that there are some minorities, such as the Coptic Christians in Egypt, who do not welcome any outside interference whatsoever.

- However necessary all these efforts to enter into constructive dialogue on individual human rights issues with the States of the MENA region on the basis of specific country-by-country strategies may be, it must also be clear that we are not prepared to “pay” for this dialogue by refraining from any reference to explicit criteria and to enshrined international human-rights standards. The dialogue must not be an end in itself, for the sake of which necessary criticism is supplanted by fawning diplomacy. Especially if serious violations of human rights are committed in a country and, needless to say, if a government refuses to enter into any dialogue on the subject of human rights, we shall always remain duty-bound to issue clear public condemnations of such conduct. In this respect, the many non-governmental organisations render an indispensable contribution to the cause of human rights, because they are usually the first to expose and condemn abuses. The fact that this leads time and again to the creation of “productive tension” between the commitment of the non-governmental organisations and the pursuit of German and European policies is due in no small measure to the divergent missions of governmental and non-governmental operators. At the same time, this “productive tension” is the sign of an open society, indeed a sign of the selfsame openness that we desire for our partners in the MENA region.

APPENDIX

I Declaration of the European Council regarding the Middle East Process in Berlin, 24–25 March 1999 (“Berlin Declaration”)

The Heads of State and Government of the European Union reaffirm its support for a negotiated settlement in the Middle East, to reflect the principles of “land for peace” and ensure the security both collective and individual of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. In this context, the European Union welcomes the decision by the Palestinian National Union and associated bodies to reaffirm the nullification of the provisions in the Palestinian National Charter which called for the destruction of Israel and to reaffirm their commitment to recognise and live in peace with Israel. However, the European Union remains concerned at the current deadlock in the peace process and calls upon the parties to implement fully and immediately the Wye River Memorandum.

The European Union also calls upon the parties to reaffirm their commitments to the basic principles established within the framework of Madrid, Oslo and subsequent agreements, in accordance with UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338. It urges the parties to agree on an extension of the transitional period established by the Oslo agreements.

The European Union calls in particular for an early resumption of final status negotiations in the coming months on an accelerated basis, and for these to be brought to a prompt conclusion and not prolonged indefinitely. The European Union believes that it should be possible to conclude the negotiations within a target period of one year. It expresses its readiness to work to facilitate an early conclusion to the negotiations.

The European Union urges both parties to refrain from activities which prejudice the outcome of those final status negotiations and from any activity contrary to international law, including all settlement activity, and to fight incitement and violence.

The European Union reaffirms the continuing and unqualified Palestinian right to self-determination including the option of a state and looks forward to the early fulfilment of this right. It appeals to the parties in good faith for a negotiated solution on the basis of the existing agreements, without prejudice to this right, which is not subject to any veto. The European Union is convinced that the creation of a democratic, viable and peaceful sovereign Palestinian State on the basis of existing agreements and through negotiations would be the best guarantee of Israel’s security and Israel’s acceptance as an equal partner in the region. The European Union declares its readiness to consider the recognition of a Palestinian State in due course in accordance with the basic principles referred to above.

The European Union also calls for an early resumption of negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of the Middle East Peace Process, leading to the implementation of UNSCRs 242, 338 and 425.

(Source: homepage of the EU:
http://europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/mar99_en.htm.)

II „Idea paper for Middle East Peace“ by German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, submitted at the EU foreign ministers meeting in Luxembourg on 15 April 2002

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The Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be solved by political means. Such a solution can only be brought about by the peaceful coexistence of these two peoples living in two states, bound in mutual security and embedded in a regional peace that is guaranteed by the international community, in particular the USA, the EU, Russia and the UN Secretary-General. To this end we propose the following steps, starting with an all-out cease-fire including Israel's withdrawal to positions held before 28 September 2000.

1. Separation

Israel's further withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza including the dismantling of settlements. Securing of the provisional line of separation on the Israeli side by the IDF – no annexation of territory under international law.

2. Proclamation of the State of Palestine

The State of Palestine will be proclaimed and recognised by Israel and the international community. Its constitution and institutions will be democratic. The international community will assist the constitutional process including the organisation of elections and the establishment of democratic institutions. Demilitarised status. Its borders, like its capital, will be provisional. A final settlement will be negotiated within two years in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, 1397, 1402 and 1403 with Jerusalem as capital of both states.

3. Commitments of both parties

Mutual recognition of each other's right to exist; full and unconditional renunciation of violence; prosecution of and punishment for every terrorist act emanating from their respective territories; the banning and suppression of all terrorist organisations and activities, a complete halt to all incitement and demands for any forcible transfer of population; the creation of joint commissions for media, historians and school books.

Both parties commit themselves to the conclusion of the final status negotiations regarding all unresolved issues between Israel and Palestine within two years.

4. International guarantees

The international community, led by the USA, the EU, Russia and the UN Secretary-General, undertakes the following guarantees:

- It will monitor and guarantee full compliance with the commitments entered into by both parties and ensure their implementation.
- It will provide a concrete, sustainable and effective security component for this purpose.
- It will provide assistance in building up democratic state institutions in Palestine, in particular the police, the justice system, and civil society.
- It will provide support for the development of the Palestinian economy

through a long-term economic reconstruction programme.

- It will provide humanitarian and reconstruction assistance.
- It will engage with all countries in the region which co-operate in the fight against terrorism. Countries which renounce terrorism will benefit from the same guarantees. Any country which continues to support terrorism or its organisations or members will be completely isolated politically and economically.

5. Negotiations about a comprehensive peace and final status negotiations

For this purpose, the USA, the EU, Russia and the UN Secretary-General will convene a conference with the participation of interested states. The following will be carried out under the aegis of this conference:

- Final status negotiations for Israel / Palestine:
Border issues, settlements, the question of the capital / Jerusalem / holy sites, refugees, security – army, water, transit.
- Syria / Lebanon:
Resolution of all unresolved issues.

Following the conclusions of a comprehensive, conclusive peace, the complete normalisation of relations between Israel and all its Arab neighbours and members of the Arab League on the basis of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah's initiative, as endorsed in Beirut by the Arab League.

The negotiations must be concluded within two years.

6. Regional security

The convening of an international conference for security and co-operation in the Middle East.

7. United Nations

This road map is to be endorsed in the form of a resolution of the UN Security Council.

III Declaration of the European Council on the Middle East, Venice, 12–13 June 1980

1. The Heads of State and Government and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs held a comprehensive exchange of views on all aspects of the present situation in the Middle East, including the state of negotiations resulting from the agreements signed between Egypt and Israel in March 1979. They argued that growing tensions affecting this region constitute a serious danger and render a comprehensive solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict more necessary and pressing than ever.
2. The nine member states of the European Community consider that the traditional ties and common interests which link Europe to the Middle East oblige them to play a special role and now require them to work in a more concrete way towards peace.

3. In this regard, the nine countries of the Community base themselves on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the positions which they have expressed on several occasions, notably in their declarations of 29 June 1977, 19 September 1978, 26 March and 18 June 1979, as well as in the speech made on their behalf on 25 September 1979 by the Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs at the 34th United Nations General Assembly.
4. On the bases thus set out, the time has come to promote the recognition and implementation of the two principles universally accepted by the international community: the right to existence and to security of all States in the region, including Israel, and justice for all the peoples, which implies the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.
5. All of the countries in the area are entitled to live in peace within secure, recognised and guaranteed borders. The necessary guarantees for a peace settlement should be provided by the United Nations by a decision of the Security Council and, if necessary, on the basis of other mutually agreed procedures. The Nine declare that they are prepared to participate within the framework of a comprehensive settlement in a system of concrete and binding international guarantees, including (guarantees) on the ground.
6. A just solution must finally be found to the Palestinian problem, which is not simply one of refugees. The Palestinian people, which is conscious of existing as such, must be placed in a position, by an appropriate process defined within the framework of the comprehensive peace settlement, to exercise fully its right to self-determination.
7. The achievement of these objectives requires the involvement and support of all the parties concerned in the peace settlement which the Nine are endeavouring in keeping with the principle formulated in the declaration referred to above. These principles are binding on all the parties concerned, and thus on the Palestinian people, and on the PLO, which will have to be associated with the negotiations.
8. The Nine recognise the special importance of the role played by the question of Jerusalem for all the parties concerned. The Nine stress that they will not accept any unilateral initiative designed to change the status of Jerusalem and that any agreement on the city's status should guarantee freedom of access for everyone to the Holy Places.
9. The Nine stress the need for Israel to put an end to the territorial occupation which it has maintained since the conflict of 1967, as it has done for part of Sinai. They are deeply convinced that the Israeli settlements constitute a serious obstacle to the peace process in the Middle East. The Nine consider that these settlements, as well as modifications in population and property in the occupied Arab territories, are illegal under international law.
10. The Nine have decided to make the necessary contacts with all the parties concerned. The objective of these contacts would be to ascertain the position of the various parties with respect to the principles set out in this declaration and in the light of the results of this consultation process to determine the form which an initiative on their part could take.

(Source: homepage of the EU:

http://www.euromed.net/eu/mepp/venice_en.htm)

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