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Γειτονίας στην Αντιμετώπιση Προκλήσεων
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**“The Contribution of the European Neighbourhood
Policy (ENP) in Addressing Security Challenges After
the Arab Spring”**

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«Η Συνεισφορά της Ευρωπαϊκής Πολιτικής Γειτονίας στην Αντιμετώπιση Προκλήσεων Ασφαλείας μετά την Αραβική Άνοιξη»

Σημαντικοί Όροι: Ευρωπαϊκή Πολιτική Γειτονίας, Αραβική Άνοιξη, Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, Ασφάλεια, Οικονομική Ανάπτυξη, Βόρεια Αφρική, Μέση Ανατολή, Συμφωνίες Σύνδεσης, Σχέδια Δράσης, Ευρωπαίος Επίτροπος, Νότια Διάσταση, Ένωση για τη Μεσόγειο, Διαδικασία της Βαρκελώνης, Τρομοκρατία, Οργανωμένο Έγκλημα, Παράνομη Μετανάστευση, Διαχείριση Συνόρων, Επίλυση Συγκρούσεων, Διασπορά Όπλων Μαζικής Καταστροφής, Παράνομη Διακίνηση Ανθρώπων, Ένοπλες Συγκρούσεις, Διεθνείς Οικονομικοί Οργανισμοί, Ευρωπαϊκή Πολιτική Ασφαλείας, Κοινή Εξωτερική Πολιτική και Πολιτική Ασφαλείας, Ανασφάλεια, Κράτος Δικαίου, Δημοκρατία, Οικονομική Περιφερειακή Ανάπτυξη, Σεβασμός Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων και των Δικαιωμάτων των Μειονοτήτων, Οικονομική Σύγκλιση, Διεύρυνση, Ισλαμικό Κράτος, Παράνομη Διακίνηση Ναρκωτικών και Όπλων, Εναρμόνιση Νομοθεσίας.

Περίληψη στα ελληνικά

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Πολιτική Γειτονίας (ΕΠΓ) γεννήθηκε το 2003 και τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή το επόμενο έτος. Ο αρχικός στόχος της δημιουργίας της ήταν να αποφευχθεί η εμφάνιση νέων διαχωριστικών γραμμών μεταξύ, από την μία πλευρά, της ενωμένης Ευρώπης και από την άλλη, των νοτίων και ανατολικών γειτόνων της. Κατά αυτό τον τρόπο η ΕΕ οραματιζόταν την οικοδόμηση ενός αδιαίρετου χώρου πολιτικής ασφάλειας και οικονομικής ευημερίας που θα επεκτείνεται στην ευρύτερη περιοχή. Η εν λόγω πολιτική βασίζεται κυρίως στις αξίες της δημοκρατίας, του κράτους δικαίου, της κοινωνικής συνοχής, της οικονομικής περιφερειακής ανάπτυξης, της επίλυσης των συγκρούσεων και του σεβασμού των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και αφορά τις σχέσεις της ΕΕ με 16 από τους πλησιέστερους ανατολικούς και νότιους γείτονές της. Ωστόσο, αδυναμίες όπως η έλλειψη ευελιξίας στους μηχανισμούς της, η ανικανότητά της να απευθυνθεί στις πραγματικές ανάγκες των χωρών αυτών, η έλλειψη πραγματικής βούλησης των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ να λάβουν και να υλοποιήσουν κοινές αποφάσεις σε ζητήματα ‘υψηλής πολιτικής’ συνέβαλαν στην αποτυχία αντιμετώπισης των προκλήσεων ασφαλείας μετά την Αραβική Άνοιξη.

“The Contribution of the European Neighbourhood Policy in Addressing Security Challenges After the Arab Spring”

Keywords: European Neighbourhood Policy, European Commission, Common Foreign & Security Policy, Democracy, Terrorism, Rule of Law, Organized Crime, Social Cohesion, Illegal Immigration, Economic Regional Development, Rogue States, Conflict Resolution, Insecurity, Respect for Human Rights, Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Border Management, European Union, Southern Dimension, Trafficking of Human Beings, Political Extremist, Islamic State, Racism, Enlargement, International Financial Organizations, Action Plans, Association Agreements, Drug-Trafficking, Approximation, Economic Convergence, European Security Policy, Smuggling of Arms and Weapons, Justice, Internal Security, Cyber Terrorism, Security Sector Reform, Transnational Crime.

Abstract

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was launched in 2003 and developed throughout 2004. Its initial objective was to avoid the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its southern and eastern neighbours, and thus strengthen the prosperity, stability and security in the wider region. According to the principles laid out in the ENP official documents, the project is based primarily on the values of democracy, rule of law, social cohesion, economic regional development, conflict resolution and respect for human rights, and governs the EU's relations with 16 of the EU's closest Eastern and Southern Neighbours. Nevertheless, factors such as lack of collective political will and action on ‘high-politics’ issues, the existence of multiple institutional layers with overlapping competences within the EU, lack of substantial incentives (absence of full membership) on the part of the neighbours to adopt EU’s values, failure to put rhetoric into action and partiality on the part of the EU, dealing with two so large and dissimilar in needs geographical areas, have crippled the EU’s effectiveness and credibility in the wake of the Arab Spring, making it impossible to uplift itself to the level of a truly global player, thus leaving vital geostrategic space in its own neighbourhood to others.

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1. Introduction

The dissertation deals with the southern aspect of the ENP¹ with regard to its response to challenges posed following the Arab Spring. The EU's approach to the Mediterranean partners is twofold: bilateral and multilateral. The Southern Dimension of the ENP focuses on the bilateral level via a network of agreements: the Association Agreements. Of pivotal importance, too, is the Action Plans, which determine the short- and mid-term priorities in the field of political and economic reforms. On the multilateral level, the Southern Dimension is enriched through the Union for the Mediterranean, which succeeded the Barcelona Process in 2008.

In the framework of the revised ENP adopted in 2011 - in the wake of the world-shaking developments of the Arab Spring - a roadmap was drawn up in May 2012 for the implementation of the EU's new policy towards its southern neighbours. Concurrently, annual country progress reports were issued by responsibility of the European Commission and the European External Action Service, detailing and assessing each partner-country's approach to the EU. It should be noted that EU assistance is granted in accordance with the special country needs, priorities and progress manifested by each of the southern partners, while special attention is given to financially rewarding those partners who actually proceed to democratic reforms. The developments of the Arab Spring in the countries of the European Neighbourhood combined with recent tensions within the EU itself opened up the debate in the direction of a new revision (November 2015) of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

The aspect of security could not, of course, be absent from the ENP framework. In fact, nowadays the notion of security in the EU has extended far beyond traditional military/defence-related concerns, to embrace risks to stability emanating from sources as diverse as the attempts of extremist political forces in Europe to exploit

¹ It governs the EU's relations with 16 of the EU's closest Eastern and Southern Neighbours: To the South: **Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia** and to the East: **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine**. Russia, though not a part, takes part in Cross-Border Cooperation activities under the ENP. In fact, one ENP country in the south, Morocco, had applied for full EU membership in 1987 but it was turned down as ineligible on territorial grounds. Since then, however, Morocco has expressed satisfaction for its inclusion in the ENP, acknowledging its non-European vocation but expressing its wish to come as close as possible to Europe.

tensions surrounding immigration, terrorism, drug-trafficking networks, Islamic radicalization leading to terror, human-trafficking, xenophobia, racism, intolerance and last but not least risks connected to environmental degradation (COM, 2015: 13-18).

The aim of the dissertation is to identify the major security challenges posed in the southern periphery of Europe which may have contributed to the inception of the ENP project altogether and to assess the ENP's role in addressing these security concerns, especially after the Arab Spring revolts which have perplexed further the security situation in North Africa. Special attention will be drawn to matters such as structural limitations of the ENP, overlapping competences within EU agencies dealing with the ENP, lack of collective political will on the part of EU member states as well as lack of incentives on the part of ENP countries to follow EU policies, shortage and/or delay in disbursements of EU funds towards ENP countries etc. Given the inconsistency of EU policies, the lack of a membership carrot as well as the "one size fits all" policy for a quite different set of countries, it is argued that the ENP has been unsuccessful in increasing the stability of the neighbouring countries and in achieving the desired reforms within them.

My dissertation relies on bibliographical material provided solemnly by open, undisclosed publicized primary and secondary sources, i.e. official documents, books, magazines, journals, articles, internet browsing and public announcements, statements by state and government officials, press communiqués, government and ministries' statements, international organizations, NGOs, research centres, independent think-tanks and reports.

2. The Concept of Security

The notion of security has evolved from a very specific militaristic/defence-oriented conception dealing exclusively with a state's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence issues within the prism of geopolitics and geo-strategy to include almost every single aspect of a state's existence (Calleya, 2013: 2-3, Buzan & Hansen, 2009: 187, 258, Buzan & Waever, 2003: 2, 12, 23, 26). The Copenhagen School has also stressed that the notion of security is much more complex and multidimensional than the traditional politico-military approach, and therefore focuses on five sectors serving as a source of instability: military, political, economic, environmental and societal. For example, equally important aspects of a state's security are geo-economic issues, safeguarding raw materials, protecting sea lanes, defending overseas territories and colonies that provide vital goods to the metropolis, economic organized crime and fraud, trade, protection from industrial espionage, economic intrusion, terrorism, political extremism, migration, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, environmental degradation, civil emergency planning and natural disasters, commutable illnesses, failed, rogue and pariah states, etc.² As Buzan argues, "leaders and peoples have considerable freedom to determine what they do and do not define as security threats" (Buzan & Waever, 2003: 26)³.

As it is stated in the European Security Strategy, the most formal official EU document which set out for the very first time in 2003, barely two years after the 11th September 2001 terrorist attacks and very probably as a result of that, identifying the EU common security threats, "in the post-Cold War era, the military threat gave way to diversified threats, risks and challenges and a distinction between internal and external security concerns was more difficult to make" (Council of the EU, 2003: 7). The European Security Strategy specifically highlighted that "neighbours who are engaged in violent conflict, illegal trafficking of various kinds, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, environmental degradation or organized crime on their borders all pose problems for Europe" and the document went on to describe solutions to the aforementioned problems, suggesting that "trade and development policies and

² A reference to pariah states as security threats was also made in the recent speech of the President of the United States Donald Trump at the UN General Assembly. Press Telegram by the Athenian-Macedonian News Agency, AFP & Reuters, 19.9.2017, 17:38.

³ Buzan even mentions that there are places (e.g. the Islamic State) where globalization is seen as a major threat (ibid., p.13).

assistance programmes can be powerful tools for promoting reform and contribute to better governance” (Council of the EU, 2003: 8). The European Security Strategy was adopted in December 2003, and has become a landmark in the development of the EU’s foreign and security policy. For the first time, the EU agreed on a joint threat assessment and set clear objectives for advancing its security interests, based on EU core values.

Additionally, as it is written in the 2015 ENP review, the causes of instability often lie outside the security domain alone. Poverty, inequality, injustice and perceived sense of injustice, corruption, weak economic institutions and social underdevelopment, lack of work opportunities, especially for the thriving young Arab communities of the Middle East, to name a few, can be serious roots for instability, social and political turmoil. The ENP aims to support local economies and improve prospects for the local population so as to minimize the increasing vulnerability for radicalization that might lead to terror or/and political violent extremism (COM, 2015: 3-4).

Critical security studies, constructivism (in international relations), critical theory and peace studies have also added useful contribution to our understanding of security nowadays.

3. The Genesis of the ENP and the Need for a Southern Dimension

Today, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is a foreign policy tool run mainly by the European External Action Service (EEAS). It was launched in 2004 based on a European Commission communication called “Wider Europe-Neighbourhood” (COM, 2003). After consultations with the EU Council and the European Parliament, it started being implemented as an official policy in 2005. The governing reasoning for drafting it in the first place and for making it official EU policy a year later was the fear and the need for the EU to reassure itself and to safeguard its member-states from the security threats developing not inside the EU itself but literally speaking just outside its border. The year 2004 was significant for Europe as it was the first year of the 21st millennium which included a new and promising round of EU enlargement containing not only countries in the very south periphery of Europe, namely Malta and Cyprus, but also countries to the east, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and the three Baltics which merely a few years ago were still part of the Iron Curtain and under the Soviet influence and tutelage. The year 2004 was also only two years after the official introduction of the Euro as a single EU currency in the Euro zone, which signified the EU’s successful attempt to a much closer and deeper Europe in an effort to attain true federalism, leading to greater financial stability.

However, terrorism was quite vivid all around Europe. Spain was hit by multiple terrorist attacks by the home-grown ETA in railway stations and railway carriages causing the death of 191 persons and the injury of 1460. Athens too experienced in March, May and September 2004 multiple terrorist attempts by the home-grown terrorist organisation “Revolutionary Struggle”. Russia experienced its own terrorist nightmare when 300 persons lost their lives when Chechen and Ossetian terrorists invaded a school in Breslan. In 2005 (i.e. the first year of ENP implementation) Britain faced terror on its soil as well.

Europe felt vulnerable and insecure not only because of multiple, parallel and unprecedented in death tolls and ferocity terrorist strikes but also because for the very first time it was incorporating in its own fabric countries of the former eastern bloc.

These countries had not only been for more than 40 years under the strict and watchful eye of the Soviet Union's yoke but also they never had an open, free economy and market which could adequately adapt to internationally competitive market forces, rules and regulations⁴, had very few contacts with the EU as an institution and were rather unfamiliar with concepts such as pluralism, good governance and public accountability.

The EU's interest in North Africa and the Middle East is definitely not new. Since the 1970s the EU has expressed interest in security and stability in the MENA region. As regards the southern periphery of Europe, nearly all countries of North Africa and the Middle East had been run by autocratic, royalist, hereditary regimes based on nepotism, clientism, flagrant violation of human rights and widespread corruption for more than 30 years, offering no expectation of prosperity to their disenchanted population (Del Sarto, 2016: 224). Political and economic reform and a true prospect for the people living in North Africa were urgently needed if stability and security were to be maintained not only in North Africa itself but also in the southern EU countries (COM, 2003: 3-4, Lavenex, 2017: 66).

The ENP was shaped to do exactly that. To create a circle of security, prosperity, social cohesion, stability and reform in the countries - both in the east and in the south - that circled the EU and in this way to establish a geographical space of mutual confidence that would guarantee the safety of the EU as a whole from political instability and economic backwardness (Silander & Nilsson, 2014: 464). The aim was to create a buffer zone at the very further frontier of the EU that could annihilate any security threat emanating right beyond its frontiers (Lavenex, 2017: 64). The EU was creating therefore, a ring of friendly states around its southern and eastern periphery with which it could work together, firstly, to quickly identify any potential threats within these states and beyond which could be transcended to the EU territory, and secondly, to be able with their assistance and cooperation to eradicate these threats before they could engulf those states (COM, 2003: 3-4).

Yet, the ENP did not promise or even imply the inclusion of these states into any future EU enlargement. The ENP was therefore a EU's active foreign and

⁴ The values of the EU as formulated in the 11th-12th December 2002 Copenhagen European Council conclusions include the rule of law, the respect for minority rights and the existence of a market economy.

development scheme envisaging the creation of a group of friendly states surrounding the EU in the east and in the south, which would not necessarily join the EU.

The ENP structure was formed on a multilateral and a bilateral approach (Council of the EU, 2003). As a composite policy, the ENP encompasses at the same time multiple objectives such as security, viable development, economic prosperity and democracy, and cuts across various functional areas directed by different institutional arrangements. The freedom of action or inaction of each different EU agency differs in areas as diverse as external aid, visa policy, conflict management, democracy and human rights, regional development, etc. (Noutcheva, 2015: 22-23). The ENP is also addressing two large, totally diverse in nature, people, culture, religion, economic viability, living standards, history, climatic conditions, perceptions and above all, ambitions, areas, one in the east and one in the south of Europe.

On the one hand, the ENP had categorized the ENP-participating countries geographically according to their geographical position, that is east or south and created specific policies that matched the needs, challenges and menaces that each specific geographical bloc was facing. At the same time, however, and within each of the two blocs, the ENP was planning and forming a country-tailored approach that could match the very specific needs of each particular country and could adapt to their political, economic and social model (COM, 2017: 4-10). The ENP was not a forceful tool in the hands of the EU. The EU was not exerting any pressure, coercive influence or any other intimidating method to compel the states to participate in the ENP. Each country could join or not join the ENP according to its own free will and follow the programme to the extent and to the degree that its government wished.

The ENP was set up as a joint endeavour that required action on both the partner states and the EU as a whole. It was planned as an attempt to build on common interests, common approaches, shared views and mutual trust between the EU and the partner countries. The aim behind the ENP was to build a shared vision on key priority areas, such as democracy, rule of law, respect of human rights and social cohesion,⁵ and to find common solutions to security challenges. The key underlying aspect was the fear that any security threat to one of the two collaborating partners, either the EU or any partner state, if unchecked, could easily transcend to the other collaborating partner and thus challenge the security, stability, and prosperity of all

⁵https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/330/european-neighbourhood-policy-enp_en

(COM, 2015: 12-18). In reality, the fear lay with the EU that possible unconstrained security threats emanating or developing in the periphery of the EU could pass into the EU territory and affect the security of its member-states, and not vice-versa. Therefore, it aimed at achieving the closest possible political cooperation and economic integration between the EU and its ENP partner states.

The ENP is run by a combination of key EU institutions: The European External Action (EEAS), the European Commission services and each EU member state in line with the Common Foreign and Security Policy on the whole. The EEAS is supporting the work of both the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, Federica Mogherini and the Commissioner responsible for dealing with the ENP and the Enlargement Negotiations, the Austrian Johannes Hahn.⁶

Since the launch of the ENP, the programme has developed considerably due to a number of radical changes taking place in the periphery of Europe and affecting the security, prosperity and stability of both the partner states and the EU itself. For example, to the South: The Arab Spring revolts, the escalation of terrorism and increased radicalization, especially in the Middle East, as a spill-over effect of the West's failed military involvements in the internal affairs of the North African and Middle East countries (Iraq 1990-91/ Libya 2003), the 6-year Syrian civil war, the Libyan sectarian and religious civil war, large-scale uncontrolled migration, the refugee crisis as a result of the ongoing wars and political instability, the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict with sporadic conflagrations, the Cyprus imbroglio, Greek-Turkish border disputes and other outstanding international law disputes, the worrying Lebanese internal situation etc. To the East: Russian expansionism and interventionism perceived as such by the EU as a result of the military confrontation in Georgia's de facto seceded Southern Ossetia and Abkhazia in 2008, the crisis over Ukraine and the Russian formal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, the unsettled border dispute over Transnistria, energy disputes over current and future pipelines and pricing between Russia and Ukraine.

As a result of the aforementioned and unforeseen crises that could advance, the ENP was reviewed first in 2011 following the major political disturbances in North Africa.

⁶ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/330/european-neighbourhood-policy-enp_en

The basic principle of this first revision was greater involvement by the EU individual member-states and shared responsibility. The ENP offers the potential of greater access into the EU's internal market by the partner states, financial assistance, economic aid and know-how on EU regulatory framework, institutions, rules, internal agencies, programmes, and technological support. A new incentive that was introduced following the 2011 revision was the 'more for more' principle that allowed each partner country to acquire more EU funds and other support by adopting more reforms (COM Press Release, 2017).

Another ENP review was made in November 2015 by the European External Action Service and the European Commission. It took place in parallel with the publication of the EU Global Strategy Review which also aims in strengthening the ENP process by attempting to consolidate the reforms attained so far in the partner countries of the ENP. This 2015 ENP review gave additional weight on security and stability by making clear that any economic development, social prosperity and political stability cannot be attained without security, which is a precondition for all (COM, 2015). The emphasis had shifted "towards process (stabilisation) and cooperation in security matters (security sector reform, counter-terrorism, conflict resolution)" (Ciancara, 2017: 57). As Ciancara argues, "for the first time the narrative shifted from emphasis on *finalité* to the emphasis on process. Instability was linked to conflict, extremism and terrorism in the South and 'increasingly assertive Russian foreign policy' in the East" (Ciancara 2017: 57). The review identified four areas of further enhancement between the EU and the ENP partner countries in the terms of political interaction: 1. good governance, 2. democracy, rule of law and human rights, 3. economic development as a precondition for state stability and security, and 4. migration and mobility (COM Press Release, 2017).

As a result of the 2015 ENP review, the principle of flexibility was increased in order to speed up assistance to the ENP partner countries in supporting them to adjust to rapidly evolving political and economic conditions, threats and challenges. The ENP has established specific mechanisms for aiding the ENP partner countries, i.e. the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), providing financial assistance to the ENP countries⁷, and has also set up Trust Funds to ensure the fast provision of financial

⁷ In terms of grants endowed: €15 billion Euros for the period 2014-2020 (€2.3 billion just for 2016).

help through greater use of mixed EU institutional and EU member-states' support to ENP partner countries.⁸

The need to include a southern dimension to the ENP is quite evident. With such a close geographical proximity between the EU and the ENP southern partner countries, security issues possibly arising there could easily surpass into EU territory and threaten the prosperity and stability of EU states as well. The countries of the southern dimension also faced chronic internal problems in the field of human protection, such as democratic deficiency, lack of pluralism, lack of respect of human rights, poor record of protecting individual freedoms and fundamental rights of the minorities, social exclusion etc. Moreover, most of these states have been governed by autocratic, unpopular hereditary regimes which were based on widespread corruption, clientelism and brutal suppression of any resistance (COM, 2003: 6-8, Del Sarto, 2016: 224). As it was vividly manifested during the Arab Spring, all these factors led to political instability and social unrest and therefore “uprisings against authoritarian leaders in southern Mediterranean provided a useful opportunity to narrate European Union as an effective facilitator of democratic transition in third countries” (Ciancara, 2017: 57).

Political and economic reforms have not progressed as quickly, deeply and widely as in the set of ENP partner countries that make up the Eastern dimension. Economic underdevelopment and undergrowth persisted in the countries of the southern dimension. At the time of the ENP launch, economic growth was very low and relative poverty was a serious issue since 30% of the population lived on less than \$2 a day whereas illiteracy rates remained high. At the same time only 0.6% of the population used the internet and only 1.2% had access to a computer (COM, 2003: 6-7). Moreover, active conflicts such as the Israeli-Palestinian one, the Gaza insoluble plight of the enclaved Palestinians, the Syrian civil war, the Iranian nuclear issue, not to mention the Greek-Turkish border disputes and the long-lasting intractability of the Cyprus problem added to the tension in the south of Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean.

⁸https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/330/european-neighbourhood-policy-enp_en

The ENP southern dimension was attempting therefore to create a list of countries laying in the southern periphery of Europe in which security threats could develop. The EU's strategy in the south was twofold: First, to identify the existing or would-be problems that could turn these countries into political and economic volatility before they escalated and threatened not only themselves but even worse the EU countries laying in the northern shores of the Mediterranean. Such an eventuality could jeopardize the stability and prosperity of the whole EU. The second goal was to find as quickly as possible and as a result of a permanently structured political dialogue the best solutions to mitigate the above mentioned menaces, based on a twin simultaneous approach: a peripheral one, on the account that all countries of the southern dimension were geographically located in the same area and therefore faced more or less similar problems, and secondly a country-tailored approach based on the specific needs and problems of each ENP partner country separately.

The next chapter sets out to examine whether and how these goals have been re-shaped as a result of the Arab Spring.

4. Security Challenges in the Wake of the Arab Spring

Both eastern and southern regions surrounding Europe have faced a compound of problems more or less similar. Of primary concern for Europe's security and the security of the ENP partner countries is active and frozen conflicts. First of all, active conflicts, such as the Israeli-Palestinian one, are possible flashpoints in the future and a clear and present danger to Europe's security and stability. Secondly, frozen conflicts, such as the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Russo-Georgian and Russo-Ukrainian crises and the Ukrainian-Moldova border dispute, are conflicts which may not be an immediate threat to the EU's security and stability, but have not been settled and therefore they are security challenges for the periphery of Europe, that is the neighbour countries. Additionally, they can flare up quite easily as past history has demonstrated very vividly (COM, 2015: 12-15).

Both aforementioned categories have produced scores of internally displaced persons and caravans of refugees who normally look into Europe as their best chance for survival and protection. In addition to geographical and border disputes, there are serious transnational security challenges that transcend countries, peripheries and borders, such as terrorism, violent extremism, radicalization, organized crime (illegal trafficking of people, smuggling of small arms and light weapons, financial frauds, money laundering, drugs trafficking, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction), illegal migration, refugee fleeing, etc. that pose serious security challenges, some of which have been accentuated as a result of the active and frozen conflicts that persist in the area (COM, 2017). Crisis (mis)management has been an area of particular importance for the EU and the ENP in an attempt to resolve any potential flashpoints before they arise and in case they do and escalate, to resolve them as quickly and as effectively as possible so as not to contaminate the rest of the Middle East (COM, 2015: 12-15).

The ENP has reviewed the security aspect within it as a result of the November 2015 review, giving additional emphasis on resilience, security and stabilization (COM, 2015). But even before the 2015 review, the 2011 ENP review had dramatically increased its focus on security aspects as a result of the Arab Spring revolts. As a result of both the 2011 and 2015 reviews, the ENP has adopted a comprehensive approach to the security dimension, adopting a bilateral, peripheral and cross-border

approach encompassing a wide range of new issues of cooperation on security with ENP partner countries. The new areas of cooperation include conflict prevention, crisis management, security sector reform, early warning, humanitarian assistance, counter-terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and arms control (COM, 2015: 12-14). Counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism possibly leading to terrorism has acquired an additional focus between the EU and the ENP countries following the resurgence of violence attributable to terrorism, violent extremism and proselytism. At the same time the ENP has increased its attention to the disruption of all forms of organized crime and to the security sector reform in the ENP partner countries, especially as a result of the Arab Spring revolts. Border security, integrated border management, refugee crises, as a result of frozen and ongoing conflicts, dealing with hybrid threats and cybercrime constitute additional security challenges that the ENP has listed up (COM, 2015: 13-15). The challenges of massive uncontrolled refugee crises and irregular migration have remained high on the agenda of the ENP security portfolio. The EU has placed a comprehensive approach in order to identify the root causes of migration. In collaboration with the neighbour countries from which illegal immigration is caused or developed, the EU is attempting to reduce and control it by increasing integrated border management control and security, without nevertheless impeding regular migration, mobility and the right of EU citizens to freely move within the EU (COM Press Release, 2017).

In dealing with irregular and uncontrolled migration, enhanced border security and integrated border management, the EU has allowed ENP partner countries to participate in the activities of a large number of EU selected agencies, such as Frontex, Europol, Ceuol, EEA, EFSA, EMCDDA, etc. (COM, 2015:17). Libya is the main EU target for assistance related to uncontrolled migration and disrupting smugglers' and traffickers' criminal networks, in addition to EU's close cooperation with Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and regional forums such as the Seahorse Mediterranean network (COM Fact Sheet, 2017). In this spirit, the EU has intensified counter-migration dialogue with the Members of the Khartoum and Rabat Processes, both neighbour partner countries, enhancing political cooperation on migratory issues and offering technical, financial and consultative aid.⁹ Moreover, the ENP countries can also participate in more or less 20 programmes according to their needs. A formal

⁹ European Commission Fact Sheet on the European Union's cooperation with Africa on migration: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-6026_el.htm

protocol to the relevant Association Agreements with the EU needs to be signed to enable ENP countries to participate to EU programmes. So far, from the ENP southern bloc of countries, Algeria, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia have signed such a protocol, whereas Egypt and Palestine have not. Tunisia and Israel have also joined the Horizon 2020 programme in full between 2014 and 2016.

Another area that has attracted ENP's attention related to security matters is the Security Sector Reform. The Security Sector Reform is a common aim between the EU and the partner countries and among the ENP priorities. It has already been agreed with Lebanon and Jordan. €23 million Euros had been earmarked for the Security Sector Reform in Tunisia, Lebanon and Jordan, and counter-terrorism plans and EU experts have been dispatched to all EU delegations in Algeria, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Lebanon to assist these countries in dealing with violent extremism and political violence, potentially associated with terrorism (COM, 2015: 13, COM, 2017: 19-22).

Yet, security is far from strictly defence and territorial-related issues. The ENP is paying special attention to economic stability, fiscal consolidation and regional development as a precondition for state and people's prosperity that enhance security. Economic development continues to be at the heart of the EU's contribution to stabilizing EU's neighbourhood and it is vital for increasing the resilience of the partner countries. The EU has invested considerably in structural reforms to improve economic governance, strengthen fiscal stability, enhance social cohesion, increase competitiveness and business environment and decrease social exclusion (COM, 2015: 7-10).

In parallel with the ENP but not within it, the EU has launched a further approach to deal with security threats originating from the Middle East. As a result of the Arab Spring revolts and the 2015 ENP review, the EU initiated in November 2015 the EU-League of Arab States Strategic dialogue. Recognizing the special needs of the Arab world and diagnosing the security challenges that can emanate from the Arab world, the EU set up this complementary political dialogue between the aforementioned partners in the field of crisis management, conflict prevention, early warning, humanitarian assistance, counter-terrorism, arms control and counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery mechanisms. The aim is to hold regular and as high-ranking as possible bilateral and regional talks on common threat perceptions and to exchange views between all parties. Another aim is to share

assessments, experiences and methods on how to tackle the aforementioned threats and to quickly identify possible new security threats springing from the Arab world. In this process, representatives from the EU and the League of Arab States met in Cairo in November 2016 to hold the joint 5th meeting of the EU Political and Security Committee and the League of Arab States. The outcome was a unanimous decision to strengthen the Euro-Arab interchange in a number of key security topics. The 2nd meeting of the Strategic Dialogue between the aforementioned countries was held in Cairo in November 2016, and two Working Groups on migration and transnational organized crime were initiated, signifying the shared security anxieties and peripheral challenges faced by both partners as well as their joint endeavours to deal with them decisively.¹⁰

The Arab Spring revolts have proven that the political stability, economic prosperity and economic development of the Arab nations in North Africa and the Middle East should not be taken for granted. The security situation during, right after and a long time after the end of these revolts was precarious and the political cohesion of almost the whole Arab world was in danger. Since then, two of the southern dimension Arab partner countries, Syria and Libya, have fallen into a devastating civil war. Syria's war goes on without any end on site. As regards Libya, although it seems to have escaped further civil war, devastation has plunged itself into the hands of local warlords, sectarian, tribal and religious fighting and uncontrolled terrorism. Despite the fact that the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) was signed in December 2015, large segments of its territory are not under the control of the main political forces but in the hands of the Islamic State/Daesh, launching, training, proselytizing and planning more terrorist attacks, whereas the Libyan coasts are in the mercy of human traffickers, immigration smugglers and small arms and light weapons dealers.

The rest of the Arab countries, in some cases following the removal of their illiberal regimes, more or less are still battling for political stability, the rule of law, democratic values, justice reform, independence of the judiciary, steady political parties and institutions, fighting corruption, protection of human rights, fundamental freedoms and civil society dialogue, social reforms and economic strength. Irregular migration and refugees' flows remain important security challenges for both the EU

¹⁰ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/330/european-neighbourhood-policy-enp_en

and the neighbour countries while the multiple terrorist attacks in European and Arab countries is a gruesome reminder of the fact that terrorist cells and networks remain active.

The following chapter aspires to assess the contribution of the ENP in addressing these security challenges.

5. The Contribution of ENP in Addressing Security Challenges

As already mentioned, the ENP started to be implemented in 2004, which is well before the unfolding of the Arab Spring events. Therefore, the ENP was in theory put in place first to be able to ‘foresee’ the Arab Spring protests and secondly to try to placate them. However, neither was the case.

The ENP, though in its constitutional inception document it has included the goal of stability and economic prosperity to the periphery of Europe as well as numerous references to the aspects of respect of human and civil rights and the rule of law, it has consistently turned a blind eye to the plentiful accusations and allegations for unabated violations of human rights and the absence of any rule of law for most if not all the Arab countries. In addition, although these countries have been governed for many consecutive years by corrupt and oppressive regimes, the ENP and its patron, the EU, miserably failed to influence the regimes’ behaviour vis-à-vis the internal political situation and the abundant abuses of fundamental human rights. It is purely EU geostrategic and geopolitical reasoning that clearly outweighed any adherence to human rights as the EU went on to support dictatorial and unliberal Arab regimes (Bechev & Nikolaidis, 2010: 481, Del Sarto, 2016: 222-3).

Since the EU rhetoric and declarations did not accord with EU actions, this would definitely hurt the EU’s image. The basic reasons that fueled the Arab Spring were not even touched upon the ENP: the latter was unable to use the EU’s leverage, if any, to press for reforms in the Arab societies so as to avert the Arab Spring revolts and to minimize the dangers looming in the proselytizing of young, unemployed Arabs in the hands of political extremism, violent activism and much worse, terrorism. The EU’s impact on major internal reforms taking place in Ukraine (Colour Revolution & the EuroMaidan uprising) and the Arab Spring countries was negligent or even non-existent (Panchuk & Bossuyt, 2014: 1343). Moreover, after each revolution “the EU continued “doing business as usual” with the actors it had closest connections with for the sake of stability and preserving the status quo, which often had little to do with democracy” (Stewart, 2013: 174 as cited in Panchuk & Bossuyt, 2014: 1343).

Equally important, the ENP has failed to forecast the rise of the Islamic State and its regional terrorist associates and to uproot its causes for being so appealing not only for the Arab masses but also for a significant portion of the EU young societies. On the contrary, as Federica Bicchì argues, the EU member states' response to the Arab Spring revolts, was cautious at best, if not conservative. Most European capitals opted for a pro-status quo stance and could not decide to distract themselves from life-long allies even though many of the North Africa and Middle East regimes had been authoritarian for decades. Therefore, the EU was found in the awkward position of having to deal with a difficult and absolutely new situation for which it was not prepared (Bicchì, 2014: 319, Del Sarto, 2016: 225)¹¹.

The major reason for the ENP's failure has been, first of all, the diminishing role, leverage and influence of the EU as a whole, as a global international relations player when dealing with foreign and security issues compared to that of the US, China and Russia. The inability of the EU institutions to agree to a single common foreign and security policy and to a single EU action without any intra-EU member-states' antagonism has been equally crippling. Usually, what is agreed in the EU institutions is either not applied or applied belatedly or softly and diluted as a result of EU members-states' debate, opposition and competition. Therefore, EU actions within the ENP framework are a byproduct of a much-damaging compromise between EU members-states and a result of the lowest common denominator (Bechev & Nikolaidis, 2010: 483).

As a result, EU actions and decisions are fully thinned as a consequence of EU members-states' acrimony. Many times EU common decisions and actions are later on annulled as an outcome of national foreign security policy on the part of a single or some EU member-states which may have second thoughts on what was agreed as an EU common decision just before (Missiroli in Whitman & Wolff, 2010: 264)¹². "Different member states have different opinions regarding the preferable state of relations with countries in the neighbourhood" (Whitman & Wolff, 2010: 14). As Bicchì advocates, there has been a substantial underlying political divergence among EU member states concerning EU stance post the Arab Spring, with the northern countries envisaging a rather stronger and stricter EU stance so as to speed transition

¹¹ Del Sarto analyses the initial responses of Great Britain, Italy, Germany and France to the Arab Spring.

¹² The author refers to the different cases of Germany, Poland, Finland, Denmark, France, Spain, UK and Italy.

policies in the Arab societies. On the contrary, the southern EU members which actually bordered the Arab world in transition and therefore having to lose so much if the reforms failed and the transition backfired, supported a more 'wait to see' and risk-aversion policy (Bicchi, 2014: 322). Such actions not only cancelled EU's concerted foreign policy but also discredited the EU in the eyes of the North African and Middle East countries.

Another cause for the failure of the ENP in appearing as a reliable instrument of the EU foreign policy is, as described by Francisco Melo, that it has to be regarded as legitimate by the target countries (Melo, 2014: 192). For the EU to play a role in international relations, the gap existing between the EU rhetoric and actual practice must be lessened and the partner countries should be given a significant role in actually designing policy-making and not just be considered as merely policy-takers. Besides, this policy is targeted to them and therefore they should have a say in its formulation (Melo, 2014: 192).

In addition, as Federica Bicchi argues, though the EU has launched a series of new projects and institutions as a response to the Arab Spring which in theory could deliver more assistance and commit more funds to the neighbouring Arab countries, in practice it has spent less than before. Directly as a consequence of the Arab Spring uprisings, the EU has expanded the ENP budget. In September 2011 the EU created the SPRING project to deal with the Arab countries that had been most directly affected by the revolts. This programme received €65 million earmarked for Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. Tunisia was the first Arab country to profit from that programme with €20 million in autumn 2011 and another €80 in 2012. For the year 2012 SPRING was supported with an initial sum of €350 million that was increased to €390 million to include Algeria and Lebanon, while in 2013 the budget was further increased with €150 million to reach altogether €540 million for the period 2011-2013 (Bicchi, 2014: 328-9). Israel, Libya, Palestine and Syria were not included in the countries which could benefit from the SPRING programme. SPRING aimed at creating a sustainable and all-inclusive growth and development scheme for the Arab countries and at supporting democratic transformation and institution building, while

applying the ‘more for more’ EU principle and allowing the EU more flexibility regarding funds (COM, 2011: 1)¹³.

In terms of EU institutional approach, following the inauguration of the European External Action Service in December 2010, the EU has launched two additional institutions as a direct response to the Arab Spring revolts: the EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean Region and three Task Forces. The position of the EU Special Representative (EUSR) for the Southern Mediterranean Region was established in July 2011 and headed by the Spanish diplomat Bernardo Leon. The task of the EUSR was to enhance the effectiveness and visibility of the EU’s assistance. Moreover, the EU established three Task Forces, one for Tunisia, one for Jordan and one for Egypt aiming to bring together technocrats from the European Investment Bank, the EU member-states, EU institutions, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as well as representatives from other international financial institutions and the private sector so as to propose small-range EU initiatives towards specific Arab countries. The result of this endeavour was a series of multilateral meetings where funds were pledged but not committed or disbursed. The EU, in this case, acted as a mere facilitator, without committing any funds and merely expressing existing interests (Bicchi, 2014: 320-322). As clearly shown from the above mentioned EU schemes, EU’s best intentions were not met with the disbursement of funds.

Moreover, as Noutcheva notices, given the limited institutional freedom in the EU, member-states’ interference in foreign policy and mixed, unclear and overlapping competencies among EU agencies, it is not surprising that post-Arab Spring EU approach regarding conflict settlement in the neighbourhood has been limited to rhetoric repeats of commitment to peace and security without any clear plan on what EU is actually willing to do and what is able to deliver (Noutcheva, 2015: 30-31). As Dimitrovova suggests, the ENP has been “a very weak instrument in conflict resolution where parties in conflict are not responsive to the EU’s soft modes of action, or convinced of its attractiveness. The EU’s soft strategy of ‘winning hearts and minds’ has also been confronted with the coercive and military-oriented policies

¹³ Noutcheva claims that the EU has allocated around €12 billion for the period 2007-2013 to the Neighbourhood under the ENPI, which was increased to €15 billion for the next financial period 2014-2020, though the European Commission had initially requested a robust 50 per cent increase of the ENPI budget to €18 billion, in Noutcheva, 2015: 28. .

of two other ‘empires’” (Dimitrovova, 2012: 253). Therefore, “the absence of military power can undermine the EU’s mission to bring peace and stability to its Neighbourhood” (Dimitrovova, 2012: 253), in contrast with two other global players such as the US and Russia which possess credible military forces. Dimitrovova concludes that “the US remains the dominant power in the Arab Mediterranean Neighbourhood and the EU remains an observer rather than a policy shaper” (Dimitrovova, 2012: 253).

As explained above, factors such as the structural weakness of the EU institutions and EU member-states’ indifference or disunion in agreeing to a collective action has fully crippled EU’s effectiveness in foreign policy (Noutcheva, 2015: 32). The lack of consensus and inconsistency of response on the part of EU member states concerning democratic deficits in different countries (e.g. the case of Egypt and Ukraine) could be explained by the different vision each individual member-state has in relation to democracy and human rights violations (Balfour, 2012 as cited in Panchuk & Bossuyt, 2014: 1343). After all, “the last say in EU democracy promotion belongs to individual member states” (Smith, 2008 as cited in Panchuk & Bossuyt, 2014: 1344), which could also be reflected to the amount of funds (high or low) each one commits to advancing democracy.

Given the ENP’s shortcomings, the next chapter seeks to examine whether a further revision would boost its effectiveness in the Neighbourhood and to make suggestions that could possibly make a difference within the ENP’s context to the benefit of all.

6. The Way Forward: A Need for an ENP Revision?

The inability of the ENP to predict and to mitigate the Arab Spring and its repercussions also has to do with the ability of the EU to “sell” itself and the ENP “product” to the partner countries as a credible, objective and capable international actor. The EU must persuade its ENP partner countries that when it speaks about partnership and shared ownership, this is done in good faith and the best way to prove it, is to decentre the ENP and other EU similar foreign policy schemes from the Brussels headquarters (Bechev & Nikolaidis, 2010: 497).

Projects such as the ENP, the Union for the Mediterranean, the Barcelona Process, the Euro-Mediterranean, the MENA, TACIS, etc. must be the ownership of the countries to which they are addressed, and not of Brussels. Special relationships should also aim to address key issues of the partner countries and not of Brussels, such as free movement of people, of goods, and especially of agricultural goods for which the southern partner countries are much interested, and greater or even full access to the EU markets. The breakthrough would be for the EU’s diminishing credibility to be able to persuade the partner countries that cooperation in polity-building, rather than construction of defensive fortifications is what actually sets in motion the special relationship between the EU and its partner countries. The EU could also allow its neighbours to contribute to the EU decision-making process than simply require or “bribe” them to follow its policies, something that is already taking place for all European Free Trade Agreement/European Economic Area countries.¹⁴ Neighbours should be perceived by Brussels as potential contributors to the integration and enlargement processes, rather than as a potential drain or forestaller. Better integration means “refusing the stark dichotomy between a Europe-fortress and a Europe-refuge” (Bechev & Nikolaidis, 2010: 498).

While at the beginning the EU’s motto vis-à-vis the ENP’s partner countries was “more for more”, that is more reforms applied will bring more concessions from the EU, the picture of EU’s assistance through the ENP in the post-Arab revolts was

¹⁴ The 3 EFTA/EEA countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway have not only been granted extensive access to the EU market but have earned the right to be consulted by the European Commission on legislative draft proposals related to the single market and hold meetings twice a year between the EEA Council and the EU. The fourth EFTA but not EEA country, Switzerland, has preferred to abstain from that agreement but has maintained its separate special agreement with the EU which has granted it accession to the Schengen agreement since September 2005.

characterized as “less of the same”, meaning same principles and same reforms to be implemented for fewer funds dispersed against worsening socio-economic conditions in Middle East communities still in transition. Federica Bicchì argues that while the EU had relinquished its attempts to foster region building in the Mediterranean *even before* the Arab Spring, after it, and even though the need for rapid, active and effective engagement on behalf of the EU was even more urgent and pressing than before, the EU weakened its long-term vision for the region to the point that Bicchì questions if there was one after all (Bicchì, 2014: 319).

The EU seems to have opted for a “less of the same” approach, being in charge of shielding a rather conservative vision for the ENP southern partner countries post the Arab Spring while their needs increased considerably. Production stoppage and damage to infrastructure during the first weeks of the revolts in Tunisia cost the country €1.16 billion and that was before the autumn of 2011 when the loss of foreign direct investments was estimated at -35% (Galal & Reiffers, 2011: 17). The International Monetary Fund in April 2011 estimated the financial needs of the oil-importing North African and the Middle East countries at \$900 billion for the 2012 alone.¹⁵ It seems that as needs for the Arab countries increased, EU’s assistance was getting weaker.

In political terms too, region building which always used to be the basis of EU’s foreign policy through the ENP, has also vanished from the political agenda as both Bicchì and Gillespie argue. The move from the Euro-Mediterranean Policy to the Union for the Mediterranean diminished the role of regional meetings. Bicchì goes on to claim that post-Arab Spring EU policies do not actually express any vision for the southern Mediterranean. The Arab Spring simply exposed to the world the impotence of EU strategic planning and the failure to counter regional disintegration (Bicchì, 2014: 325). Europe’s response to the Arab Spring has been small, without a clear vision and a strong political backing.

Additionally, the creation of more EU institutions has not eased or cleared the EU’s vision and priorities vis-à-vis North Africa. On the contrary, it has created additional layers of institutional structure with overlapping, diverging and even confrontational competencies, creating even antagonism among EU services and agencies. Moreover,

¹⁵ ‘Middle East and North Africa: Historic Transitions under Strain’ IMF Regional Economic Outlook Update, 20 April 2012 at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/reo/2012/mcd/eng/pdf/mena-update0412.pdf>

the creation of more EU structures has not been supported by additional disbursement of EU funds, nor has it been accompanied by a clear sign of a *truly new* European vision towards North Africa and the Middle East. European policy makers have created a disconnect between the rhetoric of establishing a new EU policy with strong political commitment and a lack of regional vision coupled with declining financial engagement (Bicchi, 2014: 330).

Based on the up to now results of the ENP, as Eris argues, the EU's approach towards its neighbourhood does not seem to be the outcome of a thorough assessment concerning previous policies. The ENP was designed and implemented to achieve a three-fold goal: first, to spread stability, prosperity and security in the EU's neighbourhood, secondly to prevent feelings of new dividing lines in far eastern Europe and within the southern periphery of Europe and third, to avoid a new circle of further enlargements due to enlargement fatigue and absorption incapacity. Despite some degree of cooperation between the EU and its neighbour countries, the EU's periphery is still "affected by low living standards, high levels of corruption and organized crime, volatile political systems and violent domestic conflicts" (Eris, 2012: 256).

Also the EU did not appear "legitimate" or influential enough in the eyes of the neighbourhood, adopting a highly normative convergence that insisted on a strict level of compliance on the part of the neighbours. On that issue, as Dimitrovova suggests, the EU feared that it could be labeled as a neo-colonial empire by the ENP partner-states. Practically, all of the countries belonging to the southern aspect of the ENP had been for many years former colonies or mandate territories of today's EU member states and predominantly of Great Britain, France, and Italy. The EU's policies to establish itself in the Arab countries using as a tool a very normative language of common values is easily construed with suspicion by those Arab countries with a relative recent and unfriendly experience of occupation by colonial and imperial powers which have nowadays become EU member-states. These former colonies suspect that any EU project, including the ENP, could be a disguised form of neo-colonialism, an EU attempt to re-impose western attitudes and norms. The EU's strict insistence on the adoption of the full package of EU legislation by the neighbours can be easily misunderstood as a non-militaristic intrusion into the domestic affairs of

these nations, particularly when security and defence aspects of the ENP are involved (Dimitrovova, 2012: 256)¹⁶.

It should have rather assumed more clear material incentives, modest rhetoric and truly cooperative stance. The result was that the EU was primarily, if not exclusively, concerned with its own interests, risks and challenges rather with the realities of socio-economic problems of the surrounding countries. Eris concludes that “by failing to legitimize the EU’s extension of liberal democratic values, the ENP is unlikely to contribute consistently to the socio-economic development of the EU’s neighbours” (Eris, 2012: 256).

On May 18th 2017 a joint report by the European Commission and the High Representative on the implementation of the ENP review, and a press release were released. This wide joint report was a follow up to the European Neighbourhood review adopted in November 2015. The revision of the ENP was deemed necessary as by the end of 2006 there were visible signs of ENP weariness among ENP partners-countries, and recognizing that, the EU decided to adopt the German EU presidency’s proposals in June 2007 about a revision of the ENP policy (Council of the European Union, 2007).

According to the release, the review of the ENP in 2015 was about making it more flexible, based on differentiation and joint ownership. The revised European Neighbourhood Policy had reinvigorated the relations between the EU and its periphery placing more emphasis on security, resilience and stabilization. This new policy approach ensured stronger joint ownership and recognized the different aspirations of each partner. According to the press release, the reviewed ENP has mobilized significant resources to support ENP partner countries’ reforms in four priorities’ areas: 1. good governance, 2. democracy, rule of law and human rights, 3. sustainable economic development and security, 4. migration and mobility. This new EU approach has reemphasized the ENP’s central role in creating favourable conditions for the stabilization of EU’s periphery and in increasing the EU’s ability to allow rapid response to crisis situations and changing circumstances in close

¹⁶ Additionally, Dimitrovova quotes Borocz & Sarkar, 2005: 152 who write that “the states that constituted the EU at the turn of the 21st century are the same states that had exercised imperial rule over half the inhabitable surface of the globe outside Europe just two or three generations ago”, p. 257.

cooperation with other international financial institutions (COM Press Release, 2017: 2).

To answer the question of this chapter, is an ENP revision necessary? The reply is yes, but a revision that would simply recycle the same policies with the same goals without being a genuine product of a sincere dialogue between two equal partners is futile. What it is really needed is a revision that would take into consideration the specific needs of each different geographic area and of each different partner country so that each country's Action Plan can be truly tailored upon its needs. The ENP should have to do with the actual needs and challenges, security or otherwise of the states to which it is addressed and not of the sponsor (EU). The EU should not merely formulate policy and request the partner states simply to implement it, rewarding them with financial assistance if they comply with it or punish them if they do not. Rigidity and sticking to a certain formulated policy run by Brussels makes no sense unless it is flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances. Since both ENP geographical areas (especially the southern one as so vividly portrayed through the Arab Spring) are volatile to sudden change - political or otherwise - an ENP revision that does not heed to the special problems of these two geographical areas is bound to make little sense.

What would also make a difference in a future revision of the ENP would be if Europe decided to stick to its words, and actually implement something decided as an EU consensus-agreed action without it being diluted in the process due to member-states' frictions. The EU should stick rhetoric and action into place and attempt to be less biased towards different neighbours, because in the end this detracts from its impartiality. Finally, a revision process should consider the long-standing view of the partner-countries about *true* joint ownership of the programme. This means that these countries should not merely implement EU policies which could even end up being disproportionately costly and counter-productive for them. As argued by Del Sarto, "whereas neighbouring states are free to decide on the intensity of their ties with the EU, the rules and practices of cooperation are non-negotiable" (Del Sarto, 2016: 220). Last, in a process of an ENP revision we could propose that the ENP should be clearly divided into two sub-categories: the ENP-East and the ENP-South so that Brussels can formulate policies designed for each specific sub-category and thus make it easier for each policy to adjust to the specific problems of each geographic area. Designing and implementing common policy for two so dissimilar areas (in terms of culture,

religion, living standards, climatic conditions etc) was from the very beginning quite challenging. Planning policies that match the tailored needs of the areas and the countries within them will provide the EU with more leverage and authority, especially if the latter has nothing more substantial to promise to these countries, for instance full membership. It will also make the EU appear that it actually devoted time, effort and funds to devise policies that match their real needs.

On my aforementioned argument, the European Parliament in its resolution of October 2007 expressed serious concerns about the meaningfulness of the ENP geographical scope to include in the same bundle European countries which are geographically and culturally European with distinctly Mediterranean non-European countries, even though the lack of a European perspective should not demote the southern ENP countries to second class partners (European Parliament, 2007). “The EU should clearly distinguish between European countries with European aspirations and common European histories and those which are not willing to subscribe European values. Those aspiring to one day become members of the EU (Moldova and Ukraine) or wishing to have privileged relationships (Morocco) are expected to integrate and to overcome the existing differences, at least to a degree compatible with the EU rules” (Dimitrovova, 2012: 261). Missiroli too advocates in favour of distinction between east and south and of not putting apples and oranges in the same foreign policy basket (Missiroli in Whitman & Wolff, 2010: 260, 265-6)¹⁷.

¹⁷ Actually, Missiroli advocates even further categorization within each sub-region.

7. Conclusions

It was perhaps the letter addressed by British Foreign Minister, Jack Straw to the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi in early 2002 stressing the problems of unregulated migration and human trafficking from Eastern Europe that prompted the creation of the ENP. It seems therefore that from its outset, the ENP was all about EU's security and specifically how to deal with illegal and unregulated immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe. Apart from migration, as Ferrero-Waldner maintains, the ENP has been conceived on the principle that as long as there is conflict, even a frozen one, in any part of the EU continent, "none of us can live in total security" and since peace is indivisible, she argues that by helping our neighbours, we help ourselves (Ferrero-Waldner as cited in Barbe & Jonansson-Nogues, 2008: 87)¹⁸. She also states that the ENP was designed to respect the sovereignty of the ENP partners and that any EU support for reforms was not about imposing EU specific models (COM Press Release, 2002)¹⁹.

Security therefore seems to have been the cornerstone of the ENP's inception and implementation (Lavenex, 2017: 65)²⁰. However, as Barbe and Jonansson-Nogues argue, the EU's conflict-resolution ability has not rested so much on the forceful approach, or on a new argumentative line about peace, but mostly on a combination of aid ("carrots") and soft power. From the EU's point, the use of incentives ("carrots") has been the most effective way the ENP can assist in increasing security throughout the ENP area (Barbe & Jonansson-Nogues, 2008: 88). Yet the ENP seems to have failed in significant sectors such as border management and irregular migration, democracy and liberal reforms as well as conflict resolution. The EU has perceived the ENP as an adequate and balanced tool for dealing with undocumented migration. The partner countries, on the other hand, have found that the ENP is unfair and imbalanced, not taking in mind the needs and challenges of specific countries (Lavenex, 2017: 65).

¹⁸ Ferrero-Waldner (2005). "The European Neighbourhood Policy: helping ourselves through helping our neighbours", speech delivered at conference of foreign affairs committee chairmen of EU member and candidate states, London, 31 Oct. 2005 as cited in Barbe & Jonansson-Nogues, 2008: 87.

¹⁹ Speech 06/341. Benita Ferrero-Waldner.

²⁰ Lavenex also cites Biscop, 2015: 369, arguing that in the 25 years since the end of the Cold War, there has rarely been a single year without conflict in one or the other of the EU's neighbours.

In summing up the reasons why the ENP failed to produce the desired results, one could notice that flaws in its inception and implementation combined with EU structural weaknesses, member-states' indifference and political myopia clearly plagued the scheme. More specifically, lack of collective political will regarding 'high-politics' issues, the existence of multiple institutional layers within the EU with overlapping competencies, lack of substantial incentives (full membership) on the part of the neighbours to adopt the *acquis* (or even suspicion towards ENP policies), funds not always reaching the partner countries though pledged, allotted and earmarked (or reaching them with great delays), absence of putting words into action on the part of the EU, addressing two large dissimilar areas (south and east) at the same time, taking sides and not keeping impartial on peripheral conflicts, not addressing challenges of the neighbours but rather the EU's and not allowing the partners to co-formulate policies (a truly joint ownership is not the case) can be enlisted to the factors that produced the ENP's deficiency.

Hence the ENP is perceived as biased in favour of the EU, something that clearly undermines the credibility of both the project itself and the EU as a whole. ENP neighbours have come to believe that they lose more by participating in ENP border management than they gain. As Melo puts it, "reality takes neighbours to emphasize more the onus (conditionality and reforms) instead of the bonus (deeper and wider integration with the EU), which undermines the ENP together with EU's normative hegemony" (Melo, 2014: 192). As a foreign policy, this strategy has "underestimated the weakness of bottom-up integration dynamics and has overestimated the transformational potential of its sectoral policies" (Lavenex, 2017: 67). Even the European Parliament has been critical of the EU's immigration policy because it seems that the EU has been more concerned with its own security in combating illegal immigration than with viable development which is urgently needed (European Parliament, 2006).

In evaluating the ENP's contribution to democracy promotion and human rights upholding, Theuns claims that the ENP democracy promotion policy has been inconsistent because the goal of "democracy promotion is in conflict with some of the other goals of the ENP such as market liberalization, trade policy reforms and private sector developments" (Theuns, 2017: 287). The writer goes on to argue that success in promoting democracy will risk undermining success in other domains, therefore the

ENP must promote either democratisation or economic integration with neighbouring states since one can come at the expense of the other (Theuns, 2017: 289, 299). Besides, according to Börzel and van Hüllen, “differences in the EU’s (in) effectiveness are due to the democratization-stabilization dilemma” as “promoting democratic change entails the risk of destabilizing” (Börzel & van Hüllen, 2014: 1040-1). Ciancara concludes that since ‘deep and sustainable’ democracy was not achievable in the vast majority of countries in question, “more realist and less value-oriented policies needed to be pursued” (Ciancara, 2017: 59).

Even so, giving a “prominent role to domestic actors in the democratization process” (Panchuk & Bossuyt, 2014: 1344) and allowing them more say in implementing EU democracy programmes, in other words putting them in the “driver seat”, could potentially enhance the effectiveness of democracy promotion in the Mediterranean (Panchuk & Bossuyt, 2014: 1344).

Moreover, the critics of the ENP also claim that it suffers from lack of fairness and transparency. By focusing almost exclusively on economic issues and excluding “uncomfortable” for the government human rights issues, a serious imbalance is created (COM, 2006, Lavenex, 2017: 70-1). As it seems, in *Realpolitik*, EU geostrategic consideration matters more than forcing partner countries to uphold human rights and democracy (Del Sarto, 2016: 218). When Romano Prodi spoke about creating a ‘ring of friends’, this was not necessarily synonymous to democracy-abiding and rule-of-law-countries, and also quite different from Javier Solana’s statement of ‘well-governed states’ (Bechev & Nikolaidis, 2010: 481). Prior to the Arab Spring revolts, the EU’s foreign and security policy was solemnly dictated by the support to authoritarian rulers in exchange for cooperation in migration, counter-terrorism and other security related issues (Noutcheva, 2015: 22) without paying any attention to human rights’ abuses and democracy serious shortfalls in these countries (Lavenex, 2017: 71, Del Sarto, 2016: 218). As also exemplified by the history of sanctions, even though such an option was always available in the EU’s diplomatic arsenal, the EU never used it as a foreign policy tool to punish governments for human rights’ abuses and shortages of the rule of law for years upon years before the Arab Spring uprisings. In contrast, the imposition of sanctions against the dictatorial regimes during the Arab Spring revolts was made not because of EU’s solidarity towards the rioters but only to secure itself against the possibility of a spill over of the

crisis over the Mediterranean (Noutcheva, 2015: 28). As Silander and Nilsson argue, the EU's neighbourhood policy has failed to produce security through democracy (Silander & Nilsson, 2014: 460).

Furthermore, as Barbe & Jonansson-Nogues argue, the ethical imbalance of the ENP stems from its ineffectiveness to generate an adequate balance between intergovernmental and civil society actors and to include in its financial assistance more objective criteria (Barbe & Jonansson-Nogues, 2008: 93), thus failing to sustain a dynamic transformation of democratic forces in the ENP partner-countries, as proposed by the European Parliament (European Parliament, 2006).

Similarly, in the conflict resolution sector, the ENP's policy has been characterized by a lack of fairness and objectivity and has been considered unethical²¹. Though conflict resolution was a key EU target, directly related to security, stability and the EU's overall contribution to conflict management, as prescribed in the ENP original strategy (COM, 2004), it seems that conflict management has failed to produce the desired results and has become simply a political dialogue tool (Esther & Jonansson-Nogues, 2008: 95). As Noutcheva argues, the EU's conflict resolution action was one of hesitation and inaction, "putting into question member-states' support for the EU's officially declared security objectives for both itself and its neighbours" (Noutcheva, 2015: 25-6).

Evaluating the overall performance of the ENP, Barbe and Johansson argue that one might claim that EU had strived to maintain a balance of not resorting to cruel coercion and not failing to provide technical, financial and know-how aid to its partners as a tool of reward for adapting, incorporating and implementing reforms according to the union's decisions and directives. On the other hand however, the existence of ambiguity and double standards in EU policies and actions, the bad coordination between EU institutions and agencies, the overriding competences intra EU institutions and finally tension between EU members-states concerning EU

²¹That was amply manifested by the EU's unwillingness to recognize the age-longing occupation of Azeri Nagorno-Karabakh by Armenian military forces, its reluctance to recognize the legitimate victory of Hamas government after the 2006 elections in Gaza, which was read by the Arab ENP partner-states as double standards, and the EU's disinclination to support Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty following the 2008 Russo-Georgian military clash (which resulted in the secession of Georgia's Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions into Russia). Lastly, the EU also failed to protect Ukraine's territorial integrity following the Russo-Ukrainian confrontation in 2012 and the annexation of Crimea to Russia.

priorities and policies, have diminished the role and value of the ENP (Barbe & Jonansson-Nogues, 2008: 95-6).

The partner countries also felt that the EU's repetitive rhetoric about joint ownership of the ENP was not the case. It seemed more as a condition where the partner with the most political and economic leverage would simply formulate policy -short of coercion- that the weaker one would have to conform with and in return, it would receive the very much needed financial and other assistance.

In judging the ENP's failed performance post the Arab Spring, after two ENP revisions, institutional changes, operational innovations and new initiatives, Noutcheva notices that the EU is well suited to achieve its results in the economic and financial sphere, that is the 'soft power', but it is unable or dysfunctional with varying degrees when it comes to deal with hard political issues such as "conflict management, democracy support and mobility of people" (Noutcheva, 2015: 28-9). Ultimately, it is the EU member states that decide whether the EU will act proactively and to what extent. If profound divisions exist between the EU member-states on what policy to formulate in sectors of high politics, then EU inaction or inadequate action follows, which contradicts official EU rhetoric and stance (Noutcheva, 2015: 28-9).

The Arab Spring has taken, literally speaking, the EU by surprise. Structural weakness within the EEAS, CFSP, the ENP and other EU agencies, institutional ambiguity, conflicting priorities and above all, lack of collective consensual will and action on the part of the EU member-states have crippled the EU's response. Instead of acquiring an effective and rapid proactive role as a soft power of good and mediation, the EU was forced to sit and watch as a mere bystander the Arab Spring fully unfold. Caught also in its own economic crisis and enlargement fatigue, the EU has failed to project itself as a global power but has merely been content to passively act by mere rhetoric to crises unfolding in its neighbourhood, the same neighbourhood it has sought to shield against crises. The ENP has paid little attention to the distinct social, economic, cultural and political conditions prevailing in the south, especially at a rapidly deteriorating environment and has done little to sustain peaceful democratic transition in that area following the Arab Spring, with the exception perhaps of Tunisia (Lavenex, 2017: 64, 67).

For this reason, the EU should reprioritize and redesign its policies so as to address the challenges post the Arab Spring. It has to listen more to the anxieties of the

neighbours than its own. As Calleya puts it, “when addressing the plethora of security issues in the Mediterranean, international actors such as the EU must guard against promising more than they can deliver” (Calleya, 2013: 8).

In short, it has been six years since the wake of the Arab Spring and the security situation in the ENP southern dimension countries of North Africa and the wider Middle East has not improved. The Syrian civil war has entered its seventh disastrous year, the internal political situation in Libya is far from secure, the Iranian nuclear issue is back on the table at the insistence of the new US administration and the Kurdish referendum of independence in northern Iraq (25.9.2017) will probably aggravate the regional Middle East security situation even worse.

Therefore, can one claim that the ENP was an EU success as a foreign and development tool? Can someone instead claim that the ENP has equally been an EU outright failure? Of course not. What one can surely claim is that the ENP has been a modest EU approach in foreign and development policy. It was an attempt by the EU to act proactively and to exert its ‘soft’ power, i.e. diplomacy, political dialogue, economic development and financial assistance in dealing with its periphery. Besides, let us not forget that “the EU only makes an offer and it is the responsibility of partner countries to make good use of it” (Ciancara, 2017: 59). The ENP was masterminded exclusively in Brussels as a direct response to security challenges developing just outside its neighbourhood.

The initial aim was not a *noble oblige* cause, that is to spread EU’s values and stability in the countries residing just outside EU’s borders but to secure that any threats emanating or simply transplanted in the neighbour countries would not be transmitted in the EU territory as well. To this end, the EU would, and it actually did, transfuse expertise, financial aid and technology to the partner countries.

To conclude, the ENP was born in Brussels out of the anxieties, uneasiness and insecurity of some of the EU member states and specifically those, which, following the demise of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, in combination with the global rise of terror (11th September 2001), were faced with a new world, definitely not entirely benevolent. It was a compromise of the EU member-states’ ambitions, policies and fears and therefore initially it did not take into consideration

the equally important fears, ambitions, challenges and scopes of the geographical areas and states it was supposedly addressing. Thus, the ENP was a genuine product of Europe in addressing Europe's anxieties and fears. And as a Europe's product, it was endowed with all the merits and the faults of a European scheme.

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