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REGIONAL DYNAMICS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND PROSPECTS FOR TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

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of the United States
STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

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Istituto Affari Internazionali

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Cover photo: A refugee camp in Rayak, Lebanon hosting Syrian bedouins. The hills in the background mark the border to Syria. March 1, 2013. © Alex Kuehni

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FOREWORD

SILVIA COLOMBO

Zooming in on the Arab Uprisings: Domestic and International Factors

Explanations of the Arab uprisings have tended to put a premium on either domestic or international factors. Regional dynamics are indeed more complex to grasp than domestic and international trends, particularly in a region — the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean — that has always suffered from one of the lowest levels of cooperation and integration in the world. Nevertheless, regional dynamics in the political, social, economic, and human domains can help sharpen our understanding of the current situation and future outlook for the region in the wake of transformative changes. This report tries to fill this gap by contextualizing regional dynamics in the broader framework of transatlantic relations with the Mediterranean.

The so-called Arab Spring has led to shifting domestic political alignments, reforms, and — in some cases — regime changes. A host of accounts have focused on the domestic factors that triggered the unprecedented wave of unrest that precipitated the fall of what were once regarded as robust and consolidated regimes. Among them, structural and contingent factors, ranging from the unsustainability of the social contract between the rulers and the ruled, to the deteriorating socio-economic conditions suffered by large strata of the population, in particular young people and the shrinking middle class, to the acute obliteration of civic and political rights, have often been among the explanations offered for the events that altered the image of North Africa and the Middle East in early 2011. Sometimes adding to these assessments, but more often providing alternative views, international factors have also been prominently quoted as being among the main dynamics underpinning and explaining the Arab uprisings and the ensuing transition processes. The eurozone crisis and the failure of the European Union (EU)-sponsored democracy promotion initiatives in

the region, as well as the United States' growing disengagement from it and its strategic pivot toward Asia have often been pointed at as long-term factors that have shaped, and will continue to shape, the future of the North African and Middle Eastern region.

Taking these explanations into account, two major trends can be identified that characterize the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries (SEMCs) in the wake of the Arab uprisings. The first is their increased fragmentation and the appearance of seemingly centrifugal trajectories across the region with countries at different stages of the transition process. While it is not yet possible to have a clear picture of the outcome of the Tunisian and Egyptian transitions due to the uncertainties associated with such processes, it is clear that in the short-to-medium term, the differences between the political development of the two countries will tend to prevail over the similarities. This can be explained by the different timing and sequencing of the various steps of the transition, e.g., the constitution-drafting process, the election cycles, and reforms, and by the different degrees of conflict existing among the elites in the two cases. The second hallmark of the region today has to do with the pivotal position occupied by new political actors, namely the various Islamist parties that have emerged by and large as the most victorious political forces in the region after the first free and fair elections ever to be held in many countries in the region.¹ The cases of Tunisia and Egypt are again in point here.

As important as factoring these two new trends into the policies pursued by the external players might

¹ The role played by these new actors was assessed and discussed in a previous Mediterranean Papers Series report published in February 2012. See S. Colombo, P. Caridi, and J. Kinninmont, "New Socio-Political Actors in North Africa. A Transatlantic Perspective," *Mediterranean Papers Series*, February 2012, <http://www.gmfus.org/archives/new-socio-political-actors-in-north-africa-a-transatlantic-perspective>.

be, the revision of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), completed in mid-2011, resulted in a mildly strategic document whose implementation still suffers from a number of bureaucratic and policy-related shortcomings. At the same time, the United States has adopted a more pragmatic approach in cases such as Egypt by lending its support to the new Islamist leadership in an attempt to save the country from the abyss of economic bankruptcy and political collapse. This situation has on many occasions risked endangering relations with the secular/civic opposition, as well as compromising the United States' declaratory pro-democratic stance.

Both the European and the U.S. responses to the changes brought about by the Arab uprisings testify to the significant extent to which the capability of both these players to encourage change along the path that was once regarded as the only alternative to the ingrained authoritarianism prevailing in the region has been reduced. The European and U.S. responses have also indirectly acknowledged the need to engage with a number of old and new players, such as Russia, Turkey, China, and the Arab Gulf States, which occupy a prominent position on the Mediterranean chessboard today. It is not possible to disregard the extent to which all of these either vie with Western powers for influence in the Mediterranean in light of their autonomous and assertive roles as regional and international players or have increasingly become invaluable partners of the United States and European countries in the

context of the Arab transitions.² This is strikingly evident in the case of Syria, where a possible way out of the conflict can only be devised and successfully implemented by taking the role and interests of Russia, on one hand, and Saudi Arabia and Qatar, on the other, into account. Similarly, the extent to which the fate of Egypt is tied to Qatar was captured by a banner standing out in Tahrir Square in May 2013 that said: “min qabl...al-Islam hua al-hall, fa-al-youm...qatar hua al-hall” (“in the past, Islam was the solution...today Qatar is the solution”).

New Regional Dynamics

Upon closer inspection, however, the two trends mentioned above underscore the potentially growing interconnections and relations at the regional level in the new context created by the Arab uprisings. Regional dynamics have traditionally been absent from most analyses regarding the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region, or were at best squeezed between domestic and international factors, which long represented the only, often mutually-exclusive, lenses through which this region was viewed. Instead, most of the root causes and factors triggering the unrest that enveloped the Arab world in early 2011 have displayed a marked regional dimension. Socio-economic grievances and political disaffection have spanned the entire Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region, even though they have been anchored to strictly domestic stories and meanings.

² See N. Tocci, E. Maestri, S. Özel, and S. Güvenç, “Ideational and Material Power in the Mediterranean: The Role of Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council,” *Mediterranean Papers Series*, June 2012, <http://www.gmfus.org/archives/ideational-and-material-power-in-the-mediterranean-the-role-of-turkey-and-the-gulf-cooperation-council>; S. Colombo *et al.*, “The GCC in the Mediterranean in Light of the Arab Spring,” *Mediterranean Papers Series*, December 2012, <http://www.gmfus.org/archives/the-gcc-in-the-mediterranean-in-light-of-the-arab-spring>; D. Huber *et al.*, “The Mediterranean Region in a Multipolar World. Evolving Relations with Russia, China, India, and Brazil,” *Mediterranean Papers Series*, February 2013, <http://www.gmfus.org/archives/the-mediterranean-region-in-a-multipolar-world-evolving-relations-with-russia-china-india-and-brazil>.

By the same token, in the transition phase, potentially centripetal forces have begun to appear, thus effectively countering the fragmentation going on at the regional level. Not only is the emergence and consolidation of Islamist-led governments one of the novelties of the post-Arab Spring context, but it also represents one of the factors potentially leading to greater integration in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean as a region.

It is therefore important to introduce a regional perspective into the study of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. Going beyond the discussion of whether this part of the world represents a region or rather a sub-region at the intersection of different geographical spaces, i.e., Africa, Asia, and Europe, the “outside-in” and “inside-out” relationship needs to reconnect with the regional perspective. In other words, the domestic and international dimensions can only be properly understood if one takes the regional dynamics into account. These are likely to become increasingly important in the coming years.

This report attempts to illustrate and study the new regional dynamics (or lack thereof) in the Mediterranean through four papers written by European and Southern Mediterranean experts. They tackle regional dynamics in the Mediterranean in the areas of trade and investment patterns; movement of people; energy cooperation; and civil society, culture, and means of communications. The goal of the report is to go beyond describing the current trends that underscore the existence of regional dynamics (or lack thereof) to assess the impact of domestic, regional, and global changes on them and to put forward policy recommendations for the transatlantic partners. To achieve this goal, each paper tackles the following questions in its relevant subject area:

- What are the current dynamics in trade and investment/migration/energy cooperation/civil society, culture, and communications in the Mediterranean region?;
- How have they evolved in the past decade and in what way, if any, do they differ from the pre-Arab Spring context?;
- What are the most important country-specific, regional, and global events and processes that have shaped regional dynamics in these fields in the Mediterranean region?;
- How does this relate to existing relations between the region, on one hand, and Europe and the United States, on the other?; and
- How could the transatlantic partners contribute to increased cooperation in these fields in the Mediterranean region?

Notwithstanding some differences between material (trade, investments, and energy), human, and cultural factors, all four contributions to the report reveal that the region needs and is seeking further integration through specific projects. As we shall see, results are mixed, depending on the sector. Examples range from the existing joint projects to build more integrated energy grids to plans for cooperation in the renewable energy sector. Furthermore, after suffering major disruptions as a result of regional instability, intra-regional investment and trade flows are now on the rise again. Alongside this, the movement of people, contacts, and commonalities among societies, and the use of state-of-the-art communication technologies have contributed to forging bonds and sharing experiences in all the phases of the Arab uprisings. Existing links among societies are also shaping the transition phase in the different countries in light of the new role played by civil society groups, youth movements, and networks of people in general.

Trade and Investments: *Plus Ça Change?*

As far as trade and investment dynamics are concerned, the paper by Ahmed Ghoneim insists on the fact that although the economies of the SEMCs have been affected differently by the turbulence associated with the Arab uprisings, with Egypt suffering from one of the most serious economic crises ever, they all seem to be facing a difficult economic adjustment period. New social contracts are being put in place between the states and the citizens after the failure of the old ones. As fraught with pitfalls as this phase might be, the situation is made even more complicated by the fact that the new regimes are squeezed between rising social demands and limited resources in a period of global economic recession. With regard to the recipe to exit from the socio-economic crisis, the author argues that it is very unlikely that trade and investment patterns will change in the short-to-medium term as such changes would require drastic reforms at the political and institutional levels.

Two further problems seem to arise from this situation. On one hand, the SEMCs' integration in the world economy is expected to remain shallow since attaining deeper integration requires potentially unpopular decisions that entail a loss of national sovereignty — something the new regimes may not be ready to take in this delicate transition phase. On the other hand, the prospects for increased intraregional trade among the countries of the region also remain modest in the short run. In this respect, scarce incentives have been provided by the United States and the EU to achieve what is both an important economic and a very significant political objective.

Population Movements and Refugee Flows: The Existence of an Arab Region

The migration and refugee flows generated by the Arab uprisings and their impact on regional dynamics are discussed in the paper by Ibrahim

Awad, which focuses on the cases of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria. The paper argues that the Arab uprisings have confirmed the existence of an Arab region for refugee purposes, which extends into Turkish territory as well. Open and porous borders, unfettered movement, and unregistered refugees trying to blend with the local population of neighboring countries are the features of this Arab regional refugee system, which does not function according to formal rules and norms. The existence of such a refugee system at the regional level frequently clashes with the needs of the nation states during refugee crises. The capacities of the host countries are indeed far from adequate to meet the needs of the refugees, and tensions have openly surfaced between the local population and refugees, often taking on a sectarian slant.

Another point that emerges from the paper, which is connected to the existence of an Arab regional refugee system, is that migration and refugee flows during the recent wave triggered by the Arab uprisings have largely spared European countries. Southern European countries have been only marginally affected by the population movements arising from Tunisia and Libya. Two factors account for this situation: European migration policies have partially contributed to staving off migratory flows, but the dismal economic situation affecting most European countries has acted as an effective inhibitory factor for potential migrants.

The Mediterranean Energy Landscape: The Challenge of Diversification and Integration

The Arab uprisings seem to have only marginally altered the importance of the SEMCs in energy terms for both the United States and Europe. The current energy situation in the SEMCs is characterized by a rapid increase in energy demand, low energy efficiency, and low domestic energy prices. Thus, all countries are under strong pressure to finance investments in new energy facilities as well as maintain or expand costly energy subsidies.

In short, the current energy situation does not appear sustainable and poses several obstacles to the prospects of socio-economic development of the region. Furthermore, rapid population growth, urbanization, and sustained economic growth, coupled with low energy efficiency all add to rising energy demands, putting pressure on existing infrastructure and necessitating large new investments in electricity, oil, and gas.

At the same time, SEMCs are endowed with a huge renewable energy and energy efficiency potential, which could be developed through ongoing technological and institutional changes. While hydropower potential alone was exploited in the past (mainly in Turkey, Egypt, and Morocco), today all these countries have developed plans to rely on renewable sources such as solar, wind, and biomass. The core challenge to the production and trade of renewable energy in SEMCs is still ensuring the financing of such projects. For this reason, innovative cooperation schemes aimed at developing new financing methods are needed.

The transatlantic partners could contribute considerably to increasing energy cooperation in the enlarged Mediterranean region by facilitating investments from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to the SEMCs. In fact, there is a strong complementarity between these regions in the field of renewable energy. The availability of GCC capital, the renewable energy potential of the SEMCs, with the possibility (considering their geographical proximity) of exporting some of it to Europe, and the political and institutional support of the transatlantic partners could represent the three main pillars of a new “triangle of growth,” thus also fostering the further integration of the Arab world in energy terms. This is the main conclusion presented in the paper written by Manfred Hafner and Simone Tagliapietra on new transatlantic energy cooperation initiatives in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region.

New Media, Cultural Awareness, and Integration from Below

The final contribution to the report, written by Leila Nachawati, touches upon a very important immaterial factor of regional consciousness and integration: the role of culture and new means of communication. The author argues that the new communication dynamics, including the new means of communication that were at the forefront of the revolutionary *avant-garde* during the Arab Spring, are strongly connected to the idea of the revolutions from below, as opposed to the revolutions from above that took place in the region during the 1960s. The sense of regional belonging linked to the idea of pan-Arabism implemented from above has been replaced by a new, spontaneous, largely decentralized form of consciousness that is not controlled by any hierarchical organization. Horizontal connectivity and participation, in particular by the most marginalized groups, such as youth and women, go hand-in-hand with a stronger awareness of the common challenges, threats, and aspirations for the populations across the SEMCs.

However, the challenges to this emerging consciousness are many, including the difficulties each country faces and the different nature of each transition, the obstacles to the development of a region truly integrated economically and politically, and the increasing sophistication of surveillance and harassment techniques by the governments. Each one of these factors poses a threat to the emerging integrationist consciousness based on similar global aspirations for freedom, justice, and accountability in the Mediterranean region.

1

TRADE AND INVESTMENT DYNAMICS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION: NO REAL CHANGE AFTER THE ARAB SPRING AHMED FAROUK GHONEIM

Introduction

The Arab countries that experienced uprisings, starting with Tunisia in 2010 and followed by Egypt, Yemen, Syria, and Libya, are going through dramatic political and economic changes. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that those countries are in a state of flux on all fronts (politically, socially, and economically). Yet, an important question remains unanswered. What are the implications of the Arab Spring and its aftermath on the trade and investment dynamics and prospects in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries (SEMCs)? This chapter will investigate whether a change is expected to take place in this field in eight SEMCs: Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya. This set of countries represents a mixture of oil-based economies (Algeria and Libya) as well as more diversified economies (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan, Syria, and Tunisia). These SEMCs present a wide array of political regimes and economic structures. Some are monarchies, such as Jordan and Morocco, whereas others have or have had more or less authoritarian presidential regimes. The only country that can be truly characterized as a democracy is Lebanon, even though it suffers from an unstable political system and serious spill-over effects from the Syrian crisis. Some of the SEMCs have experienced the phenomenon of the Arab Spring while others have not. In fact, there are only three things that join the SEMCs together in the context of this essay, namely that they are Arab countries, that they are considered part of the Southern Mediterranean from the view point of the European Union (EU), and that all of them are net food importers.³

This chapter analyses the patterns of trade that previously existed in terms of geographical and commodity orientation, and the nature of trade, that is whether or not it was part of the global value chain. Patterns of investment are analyzed according to sector, geography, and type (green field versus brown field).⁴ The time span for this analysis is 1990–2010. Anecdotal evidence is used in case of data paucity. This chapter addresses the link between the nature of political regimes, and hence the social contract that used to exist between the governing regimes and their populations before the Arab uprisings, and the trade and investment patterns, considering aspects such as crony capitalism and corruption.

Following this, this chapter tackles the issue of expected change in these dynamics since the Arab uprisings, discussing the political, economic, and strategic reasons behind such expectations. Concretely, a political economy approach is used to explain the drivers of change, including politics (rise of political Islam), model of economic development, social and economic constraints, exogenous factors (crisis in the EU, change of U.S. policy), and endogenous pressures (deteriorating economic situation). Policy prescriptions to the West are provided based on the analysis undertaken. Moreover, the study aims to differentiate between the short and long term.

Trade and Investment Patterns Before the Arab Spring

Due to difficult domestic economic conditions (unemployment rates among the highest in the world, surpassed only by sub-Saharan Africa, and concentrated among the educated youth; widening budget deficits in the majority of the SEMCs; and modest progress in industrialization)

³ Arab countries import on average 60–80 percent of their food needs. See I. Saif, “Arab World’s Looming Crisis: Rapidly Rising Cost of Food,” *Al-Hayat*, September 25, 2012, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2012/09/the-arab-worlds-looming-crisis.html>.

⁴ Green field investments are investments where no previous facilities exist, while brown field investments are done on a site previously used for business purposes that is expanded or upgraded to achieve superior return.

accompanied by international pressures (mainly from international organizations and especially the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Trade Organization (WTO), the eight SEMCs started to open up in the mid-1990s, albeit at different paces,⁵ and started to be engaged in international and regional trade arrangements. Of the eight SEMCs, four are members of the WTO (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia).⁶ Lebanon is in an advanced stage of negotiating accession, whereas Algeria, Syria, and Libya are in early stages of accession. Moreover, the eight SEMCs have joined several preferential trade agreements (PTAs). Yet, the opening up of the SEMCs did not affect their trading patterns. In fact, their trade remained highly concentrated on geographical and commodity bases. For example, Egyptian, Moroccan, and Tunisian exports remained highly concentrated in ready-made garments, processed food, and agricultural products, whereas Libya and Algeria did not diversify from oil and natural gas.⁷ Moreover, all SEMCs' trade remained focused, in terms of their geographical orientation, on the EU, whose share in their trade remained relatively stable over the years and reached 70-80 percent for countries like Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria. The EU remained the most important trading partner for all SEMCs, whereas the Arab Gulf countries and the EU remained the major investors in the SEMCs. Most of the investments were concentrated in the oil and natural gas sectors, followed by services (mainly financial sector and telecommunications).

⁵ J.-P. Chauffour, "From Political to Economic Awakening in the Arab World: The Path of Economic Integration," *MENA Development Reports*, January 2013, <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/12221>.

⁶ Egypt became a GATT member in 1970, Morocco in 1987, Tunisia in 1990, whereas Jordan joined the WTO after its establishment in 2000.

⁷ M. Mouhoud, "The Arab Economies in Face of Crisis: Assessment and Perspectives since the Tunisian Revolution," *Mediterranean Yearbook 2012*, pp. 39-44, http://www.iemed.org/observatori-en/arees-danalisi/arxiu-adjunts/anuari/med.2012/mouhoud_en.pdf-en.

The ability of the manufacturing sector to attract investments and act as an engine for growth remained weak.

Two main features arose in the 2000s: a new orientation toward the East (China has been acquiring an advanced position as a main exporter to these countries⁸ and trade with both China and India has been increasing with high growth rates tilting more toward imports than exports),⁹ and a slightly diversified export structure in the non-highly oil dominated SEMCs.

Oil has always played an important role in shaping trade and investment patterns in these countries. Hence, the investment and trade patterns of Libya and Algeria remained highly oil concentrated, while other SEMCs experienced a relatively higher degree of diversification in their trade and investment patterns (Table 1). In fact, countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt had a relatively diversified industrial base, which attracted some domestic and foreign direct investment, however in many cases it was brown field and not green field. The export structure of the SEMCs remained highly geographically concentrated toward the EU,¹⁰ focused mainly on low-tech products (agricultural or processed food, minerals, and textiles and ready-made garments), and relatively

⁸ In fact, China has been ranked the second or the third main exporting countries to all the SEMCs. See WTO, *Trade Profiles 2012*, 2012, http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/publications_e/trade_profiles12_e.htm. For example, its share in total imports in Egypt rose from 4.6 percent in 2000 to 8.4 percent in 2008, and in Jordan from 4.2 percent in 2000 to 10.4 percent in 2008. The same increase was recorded in Tunisia and Morocco, where its share in total imports of both countries increased from 1.2 and 2.3 percent in 2000 to 3.7 and 5.7 percent in 2008. See J.-P. Chauffour, "From Political to Economic Awakening in the Arab World...", *cit.*

⁹ World Bank, *Strengthening MENA's Trade and Investments Links with China and India*, Washington, The World Bank, 2008, <http://go.worldbank.org/6ZK8UTFV10>.

¹⁰ The EU is the main trading partner for all the SEMCs, with the exception of Jordan. See WTO, *Trade Profiles 2012*, *cit.*

delinked from the global value chain.¹¹ Moreover, the trade and business environments suffered from the proliferation of non-tariff barriers, a lack of effective institutions, and vulnerability to political changes.¹² In fact, in the latest Doing Business report (2012) of the World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC), no SEMC appeared in the 100 first countries, out of a total of 185 countries, with the exception of Morocco, which ranked 97th. The rest were far behind, indicating a poor business environment. The trading environment in SEMCs suffers from the lack of enforcement of regulations, weak adherence to international standards, and modest port and trade infrastructure facilities.¹³

SEMCs also engaged in several PTAs both among themselves and with other trading partners. The PTAs among themselves included the Pan Arab Free Trade Area (PAFTA), which encompasses 18 Arab countries including the eight SEMCs, the Agadir agreement (a free trade area between Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan), as well as several bilateral PTAs between the eight SEMCs. PAFTA's performance remained relatively weak, in that intraregional trade never exceeded 12 percent of the total trade of PAFTA members (18 percent after excluding oil). The Agadir agreement was meant to enhance trade among the SEMCs through the coordination of rules of origin in order to maximize

the benefit from their PTAs with the EU, yet trade among its four members remained weak as well. Several bilateral PTAs between SEMCs were in place before PAFTA and Agadir, but were highly ineffective in enhancing trade. In other words, all the means used to enhance intraregional trade fell below expectations. The eight SEMCs also engaged in a number of PTAs with other trading partners such as the EU (all eight, although some with interim agreements and some in which negotiations were held up), the United States (Jordan and Morocco), the Common Market for East and South Africa – COMESA – (Egypt and Libya), as well as a number of other countries or areas such as Turkey, EFTA, Singapore, and Canada.

Factors Behind Such Patterns

The slow pace of change of the SEMCs' patterns of trade and investment is deeply rooted in their economic structures as well as their political regimes, both of which have been highly affected by the developmental model adopted in the countries since the 1960s. In several SEMCs, this was a rentier model in which oil revenues cushioned the governing regimes and their macroeconomic status, enabling them to provide generous untargeted and inefficient subsidies. Other SEMCs remained highly dependent on other sources of rent such as remittances or foreign aid. Such models ensured the ability of the governing regimes to continue with their economic policies, which in many cases did not aim at providing any type of inclusive growth and development and served only the economic interests of the elite. In the mid 1980s, economic conditions started to deteriorate significantly in a large number of SEMCs. Windfall gains proved insufficient to tackle the economic ills (proliferation of unemployment and increasing levels of poverty, macroeconomic imbalances, and deteriorating living conditions). The need to adopt reform programs, mainly crafted by international institutions (particularly the IMF and WB), started

¹¹ Countries as well as firms have started shifting toward specialization in a specific process or part and away from manufacturing a commodity (good or service) that is traded globally based on comparative advantage. This system of global value chain is different from the old system of producing a whole commodity. The value chain scheme is highly associated with the phenomenon of outsourcing.

¹² A.F. Ghoneim, "Analysis of NTBs in Euro-Med Zone," in L. De Wulf and M. Maliszewska (eds.), "Economic Integration in the Euro-Mediterranean Region," *CASE Network Reports*, No. 89, December 2009, <http://www.case-research.eu/en/node/55790>.

¹³ A.F. Ghoneim et al., "Shallow versus Deep Integration between Mediterranean Countries and the EU and within the Mediterranean Region," *CASE Network Reports*, No. 96, June 2011, <http://www.case-research.eu/en/node/55930>.

Table 1 – Export Structure of SEMCs (1990-2011)

Country	Exports (% of merchandise exports)	Average (1990-1999)	Average (2000-2009)	2010	2011
Algeria	Agricultural raw materials	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.02
	Food	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.5
	Fuel	95.7	97.4	97.3	97.2
	Ores and metals	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3
	Manufactures	3.2	2.0	1.8	2.0
Egypt	Agricultural raw materials	5.4	4.2	3.0	2.9
	Food	9.6	9.6	17.2	14.9
	Fuel	41.0	43.6	29.8	31.7
	Ores and metals	5.8	4.2	6.3	6.0
	Manufactures	37.4	31.2	43.4	44.4
Jordan	Agricultural raw materials	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.2
	Food	18.9	15.2	16.6	17.1
	Fuel	0.0	0.4	1.1	0.2
	Ores and metals	29.7	13.8	8.5	12.1
	Manufactures	50.6	70.5	73.6	70.4
Lebanon	Agricultural raw materials	1.6	1.9	0.7	0.8
	Food	20.9	17.0	14.9	18.4
	Fuel	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1
	Ores and metals	8.6	10.2	10.7	13.7
	Manufactures	68.8	69.9	63.6	66.9
Libya	Agricultural raw materials	0.1			
	Food	0.5			
	Fuel	94.3			
	Ores and metals	0.0			
	Manufactures	5.1			
Morocco	Agricultural raw materials	2.6	1.6	1.7	
	Food	27.4	20.3	19.0	
	Fuel	2.4	2.3	1.1	
	Ores and metals	12.2	9.5	11.7	
	Manufactures	55.4	66.2	66.3	

Syria	Agricultural raw materials	6.5	2.7	1.7	
	Food	15.1	16.2	21.0	
	Fuel	62.3	58.2	49.9	
	Ores and metals	1.1	1.5	2.7	
	Manufactures	14.0	19.0	24.7	
Tunisia	Agricultural raw materials	0.7	0.6	0.5	
	Food	10.9	9.0	7.7	
	Fuel	10.9	12.5	14.2	
	Ores and metals	1.4	1.4	1.6	
	Manufactures	76.1	76.2	76.0	

Source: World Bank, WDI Database.

to shape the economic structures of the SEMCs. As a result, almost all SEMCs, with the exception of Libya and Algeria (the former with its oil dominance and the latter suffering from civil war), started to diversify their economies, and open up to the rest of the world. Nevertheless, the extent of diversification and the ability to catch up with other emerging economies in Asia remained weak. There are several reasons for the modest diversification efforts and the rigid investment and trade patterns:

- The geographical proximity and historical colonial ties, which have remained among the most important factors in shaping the trade and investment patterns in SEMCs.
- The inefficient business environment in a large number of SEMCs, creating numerous obstacles to business, as explained above.
- Weak governance, including the proliferation of rent-seeking activities and corruption in several SEMCs, which added to the transaction

costs of doing business and affected investment negatively.¹⁴

- The high level of political uncertainty in all SEMCs either because of the authoritarian regimes, which became intolerable over time, or because of the political and social unrest arising from domestic and/or regional factors.
- The relatively low level of education and productivity in several SEMCs and the brain drain phenomenon in others, meaning that the labor force in such countries did not act as an incentive to investors.
- The opening up of the services sector in the majority of SEMCs, which attracted investments, but led to a concentration in either the oil or services sector, not in manufacturing. When investments did go into manufacturing, they remained concentrated to a large extent in light industries rather than in high tech or heavy

¹⁴ According to the *Corruption Perception Index 2012*, the level of corruption in the SEMCs is relatively high, with Jordan ranking relatively the best among the SEMCs and Libya the worst; other countries are in between. Jordan ranked 58th and Libya 160th out of 176 countries and territories. See Transparency International, *Corruption Perception Index 2012*, <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2012/results>.

industries. In addition, most of it was brown field rather than green field.

- The weak intraregional trade among SEMCs, despite the engagement in several PTAs, as explained above, due mainly to economic factors (similarity of production and export structures and dominance of oil), political factors (lack of political will), and institutional factors (weak regulatory framework and several non-tariff barriers).¹⁵

The Arab Spring: Is it Likely to Change Such Patterns?

The Arab Spring has affected the majority of SEMCs either directly, by experiencing revolutions, or indirectly, as the governing regimes had to accommodate the Arab Spring on political and economic fronts.

On the political front, most of the SEMCs are experiencing the rise of political Islam. Islamists are either leading the new regimes, or are a significant part of them. In fact, the rise of Islamists is the only certain feature of the political arena in SEMCs. All other aspects of potentially new political systems remain unclear. The transitional periods in the SEMCs in which the revolutions have ended (Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya) have proven to be problematic. The road to democracy is full of bumps of all kinds, ranging from ethnic contrasts, to tribal struggles, to religious polarity. Syria's political scene after the civil war ends remains difficult to predict, but it is also clear that Islamists will have a stake in whatever regime is likely to take shape. Lebanon has always been distracted by frictions on its political scene. Jordan and Morocco might look relatively stable, but there are creeping

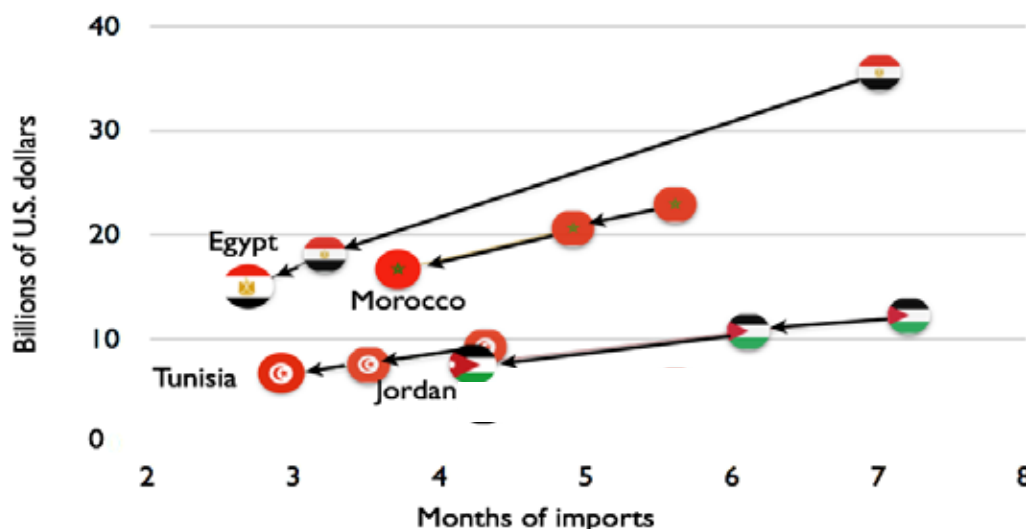
frictions either below or already on the surface there too and, again, Islamists seem to be becoming visible in shaping the system of new governance. Algeria remains the only country that is relatively more stable than other SEMCs, but that may not be for too long as there is uncertainty about the successor of the current president. But the question that remains unanswered so far is whether the rise of political Islam and the road to democracy will affect trade and investment patterns in the SEMCs.

The SEMCs have been affected differently by the Arab Spring, but they all have one thing in common, which is that their economies are going through difficult times. The Arab Spring has increased social demands, which the current governments seem unable to meet. The old social contract, whereby the governing regimes extended subsidies in return for loyalty, seems to be breaking up. The new social contract is still in the process of being shaped, but it is certainly affecting the economic situation, and the type of developmental model to be adopted. Elements of crony capitalism that used to prevail in the old regimes are likely to diminish and the level of "grand" corruption might decrease as well, at least for a while.¹⁶ It is worth noting that petty corruption is not expected to decrease in the short term. It has been acting as a substitute for the formal social safety net that the former regimes failed to provide, and will continue to do so as long as the socio-economic conditions remain poor and the economic situation does not improve. Adding to that, the significant impact of the Eurozone crisis on the SEMC economies, which depend heavily on Europe, implies that the governments are being squeezed between rising

¹⁵ H. Kheir-El-Din and A.F. Ghoneim, "Arab Trade Integration in Retrospect: Comparison with the European Union Experience and Lessons Learnt," in "Integration and Enlargement of the European Union: Lessons for the Arab Region," *FEMISE Research*, No. FEM22-07, November 2005, <http://www.femise.org/PDF/ao22/FEM2207.pdf>.

¹⁶ There are two types of corruption, namely grand and petty. Grand corruption refers to taking large sums of money away from the public purse and is strongly associated with crony capitalism. Petty corruption refers to low-level, small-scale corrupt practices, including grease money paid to customs officials, police, and public servants to get certain things done, such as avoiding fines or facilitating the issuing of public documents.

Figure 1 – Deterioration of International Reserves between 2010 and 2012 in Selected SEMCs



Source: IMF, *Arab Countries in Transition Economic Developments and Fund Engagement*, Presentation at the Luxembourg Group Meeting, January 24, 2013.

social demands and limited resources in a period of domestic, regional, and global economic recession.

The fiscal difficulties faced by the United States, as well as the anticipated worldwide increase in oil and food prices are likely to add to the negative short-term prospects facing SEMCs. In this regard, all SEMCs seem to be facing a difficult economic adjustment period, in which painful and urgent adjustments on the economic front will have to be undertaken (even Jordan and Morocco have asked for IMF assistance, which has already been provided), while trying to satisfy social demands in a more prudent way. Jordan and Morocco have found themselves with limited room for maneuver as a result of these rising social demands.¹⁷ The Moroccan government had to increase fuel prices by 15-20 percent in June 2012 to deal with the increasing budget deficit and reform the

inefficient untargeted fuel subsidy system.¹⁸ Syria, when the political situation is settled, will have a major economic challenge, given the amount of devastation to its economy and infrastructure. Libya's economy and infrastructure were also heavily negatively affected, but not to the extent of Syria. Algeria's economy, on the other hand, has benefited in the aftermath of Arab Spring from the increase in oil and natural gas prices and in its volume of exports, but the government has also had to accommodate the rising social demands by increasing social spending. The Egyptian and Tunisian economies were the least affected by the revolutions, which were largely peaceful, but the economic and political management of the transitional period has failed to sustain the economic conditions, and macroeconomic indicators have worsened on all fronts. The budget

¹⁷ World Bank, "Investing for Growth and Jobs," *MENA Economic Developments and Prospects Reports*, September 2011, <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/12434>.

¹⁸ L. Achy, "Are Rising Fuel Prices in Morocco True Reform, or Just Tinkering?," *Al Monitor*, June 12, 2012, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/business/2012/06/rise-of-fuel-prices-in-morocco-r.html>.

deficit in Egypt has reached unprecedented levels, rising to 10.7 percent of GDP in 2011-12;¹⁹ the balance of payments has turned from a surplus in 2009-10 to a deficit in 2010-11 and 2011-12,²⁰ and international reserves have been depleted from US\$35 billion in January 2011 to \$15 billion at the end of December 2012.²¹ The significant decline in international reserves is a phenomenon that has been observed in the majority of SEMCs between 2010 and 2012 (Figure 1). Tourism receipts and foreign direct investments have also declined significantly in Egypt and Tunisia due to political instability. In 2011, FDI inflows to Egypt, which was formerly one of the major recipients of foreign investments in Africa, came to a halt. In Tunisia, tourism receipts and FDI inflows fell by 33 percent and 26 percent, respectively, in 2011 compared to 2010.²²

The economic challenges are enormous and the ability of the new SEMC governments to meet them while addressing social needs and maintaining political stability is relatively weak, making the economic management process a daunting, if not impossible, task.²³ Among the most important structural reforms needed to overcome this macroeconomic imbalance is the reform of fuel subsidies. It remains the most important economic

and social challenge facing SEMCs in the coming decade. The urgency of tackling fuel subsidies has been increasing after the revolutions due to the drying up of several internal and external resources that enabled the old regimes to maintain the subsidies. Yet, any reform of fuel subsidies will imply increasing inflation rates, which, when accompanied by other pressures on domestic currencies (lack of foreign exchange from tourism and foreign direct investment) and depleted foreign reserves, will certainly push poverty rates up. This will significantly threaten the political stability. When such a situation is accompanied by unfavorable economic and financial conditions in the United States and the EU, as well as political frictions between the new regimes and the regimes of the Arab Gulf countries, then the short-term economic picture becomes gloomier.

Furthermore, diminishing foreign exchange is also affecting the ability of some SEMCs to finance food imports. A recent International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) report has highlighted the Arab countries' food security challenge given their high dependency on food imports and thus vulnerability to volatile food prices.²⁴

After this brief review of the political and economic conditions prevailing in the SEMCs, some observations can be made that will answer the question of whether the Arab Spring will alter the trade and investment patterns in the SEMCs and in what way:

¹⁹ Egypt Ministry of Finance, *Summary of Government Fiscal Operations*, <http://www.mof.gov.eg/English/Pages/Fiscal%20Deficit.aspx>.

²⁰ Central Bank of Egypt, *Egypt's Balance of Payments*, <http://www.cbe.org.eg/English/Economic+Research/Time+Series>.

²¹ Central Bank of Egypt, *International Reserves*, <http://www.cbe.org.eg/SDDS/InternationalReserves.htm>.

²² IMF, "Tunisia Faces Economic, Social Challenges amid Historic Transformation," *IMF Survey Magazine*, September 5, 2012, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2012/car090512a.htm>.

²³ For a similar argument about the magnitude of economic challenges after the Arab Spring, see S. Maloney, "The Economic Dimension: The Price of Freedom," in K.M. Pollack et al., *The Arab Awakening. America and the Transformation of the Middle East*, Washington, Brookings Institution Press, 2011, p. 66-75.

²⁴ Breisinger et al, "Beyond the Arab Awakening: Policies and Investments for Poverty Reduction and Food Security," *Food Policy Reports*, No. 25, February 2012, <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/beyond-arab-awakening>.

- The Islamists are liberal in their economic thinking.²⁵ Hence, despite the socialist clouds that appeared during the revolutions, which were generally a reaction to the crony capitalism and lack of social equity of the previous decade, it is unlikely that there will be any real change in the economic orientation of the new governing regimes. In fact, there is significant emphasis on the part of the Islamist parties in Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, and Egypt on an outward orientation and cooperation with the outside world, although their agendas in this regard are not clearly defined.²⁶ Yet, the current situation differs from the past in two respects, which are not however likely to significantly affect the trade and investment patterns. The first difference concerns putting emphasis on social aspects (equality and distribution), but it is so far unclear how the Islamists will tackle these, as they have not submitted any proposals or even declared a consistent vision on how to do this. The second regards the nature of economic activities, in that Islamists focus more on trading activities than manufacturing.
- The desire for diversification will increase for political and economic reasons. The political reasons are that the governing regimes will show enthusiasm to change whatever pattern used to exist, mainly moving more toward the East and South than the West. The economic reasons are largely associated with the breaking up of the rentier state model and the social contract, and the push toward more economic diversification,

and being part of the global value chain (a missed opportunity for SEMCs so far).

- A distinction has to be made between desires and means. Given the worsening economic conditions facing SEMCs and the unstable political environment, it is very unlikely that trade and investment patterns will change in the short-medium run. The reason is that a change in patterns requires drastic structural changes on the political and economic fronts, which are not likely to be achieved by governments in a period of transition with the aforementioned constraints; not to mention the weak business environment in SEMCs, as discussed before.²⁷ Moreover, the desire is constrained by the interests of powers like the United States and the EU, which might limit the SEMCs' diversification toward the East if they see that as a threat to their interests and strategic role in the region.²⁸ At the same time, there are experts who believe that there is no serious move toward diversification, be it toward the South in general or toward the BRICS in specific.²⁹
- The framework that governs the trade and investment relationship between the United States and the EU, on one hand, and the SEMCs, on the other, through the PTAs and bilateral investment agreements remains of the traditional type. The United States also signed what are called Trade and Investment Framework Agreements (TIFA) with a number of SEMCs (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Syria, Morocco, and Tunisia, among

²⁵ For a similar argument, see Y. Sayigh, "No Islamic Club of the Southern Mediterranean," *Al-Hayat*, October, 18, 2012, <http://carnegie-mec.org/publications/?fa=49725>. Using his own words, "The mainstream Islamist parties now in government — 'centrist,' as they label themselves — all espouse neoliberal social and economic agendas."

²⁶ I. Saif and M. Abu Rumman, "The Economic Agendas of the Islamist Parties," *Carnegie Papers*, May 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/05/29/economic-agenda-of-islamist-parties/b0fh>.

²⁷ World Bank, *Doing Business database*, <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

²⁸ For a similar argument see P. Salem, "Morsi Moves to Rebuild Egypt's Mideast Leadership Role," *Al Monitor*, October 5, 2012, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2012/al-monitor/morsi-egypt-regional-role.html>.

²⁹ Y. Sayigh, "No Islamic Club of the Southern Mediterranean," *cit.*

others) during the G.W. Bush administration as a step toward FTAs, which however never materialized. All such endeavors did not add much to trade and investment relations, but did maintain the levels of trade and investment reached, preserved the rights of U.S. and European investors, and ensured the opening up of SEMCs markets. The Deauville Initiative announced by the G8 in May 2011³⁰ could represent a platform for trade and investment relations. Yet, the initiative, despite its emphasis on trade and investment, has not provided the modalities of how to enhance them and remains general in its objectives.

- Even in a country like Libya where financial resources for rebuilding the nation do not seem to be the prime concern, challenges associated with managing the economic file and building institutions remain major issues to be tackled.³¹
- Integration in the world economy and with trading partners in PTAs is expected to remain shallow, and will not lead to a deep type of integration.³² The reason is that deepness implies a loss of national sovereignty in several fields through the harmonization of laws and standards, which is a sensitive issue in this period of transition. However, given

the stressful economic and social conditions, opening up might increase and become more widespread as a way to attract investments of any sort to alleviate the current hardships.

- Being net food importers decreases the elasticity of changing import patterns and partners to a large extent, not only in food products, but also in other products, since strategic aspects as well as political considerations need to be factored in, especially with the anticipated rise in world food prices.
- Regional and global players are likely to adopt a “wait and see” approach given the high level of uncertainty prevailing.³³ Hence, a more conservative approach will be adopted by foreign politicians and investors in dealing with the SEMCs. This is likely to result in not engaging in new investments, while not canceling existing ones, until the scene is clearer. More generally, the major trading partners, namely the EU and the United States, have to urgently revisit their trade and investment relations with the SEMCs. Linking trade to promotion of democracy and human rights does not seem to have been effective with the old regimes. Moreover, given the huge differences that prevail between the SEMCs, the EU and United States need to find the right balance between treating them as one bloc, and hence adopting regional policies toward them, on one hand, and dealing with them on a bilateral basis on the other. So far, both partners have failed to strike this balance, and hence it would be advisable for them to rethink their trade and investment approach with the SEMCs during this “wait and see” period.

³⁰ The partners of Deauville include Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and the United States. Those partners have committed themselves to helping Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia, and Libya in their economic and political transformation. See J.-P. Chauffour, “From Political to Economic Awakening in the Arab World...,” *cit.*

³¹ P. Salem and A. Kadlec, “Libya’s Troubled Transition,” *Carnegie Papers*, June 14, 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/14/libya-s-troubled-transition/bzw4>.

³² Shallow integration is the type of integration that deals with border issues only (mainly tariffs), whereas deep integration deals with what is behind the border issues. The terms shallow and deep integration were coined by Robert Lawrence. Deepness can extend to non-economic and trade-related issues. See R.Z. Lawrence, *Regionalism, Multilateralism, and Deeper Integration*, Washington, Brookings Institution Press, 1996.

³³ As stated by the Institute of International Finance (IIF) in its latest update, “foreign investors still need more clarity on the economic policy direction of the new governments in the region.” See IIF, “MENA: At the Threshold of Change, Uncertainties Mount,” *IIF Regional Overview*, December 10, 2012.

- The prospects for intraregional trade between Arab countries remain modest in the short to medium run. The political instability accompanied by economic hardships is not likely to enhance intraregional trade. Yet, in the long run, all will depend on political will, which is likely to have changed in the new regimes. However, the increasing political frictions between the Gulf countries and the new regimes over the role of the Islamist parties throw doubts on this front as well. Even among Agadir countries, frictions regarding the new regimes' support for the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan and Morocco have started to appear.³⁴

Conclusions

The Arab Spring has brought about major changes in the economic and political landscape of the SEMCs, and is expected to shape them into new societies and economies. However, their final configuration is still difficult to predict. The level of uncertainty associated with the transitional period, the worsening economic and social conditions, and the lack of political experience of the new governments imply that trade and investment patterns are unlikely to change in the short to medium run. Regional and global partners could help SEMCs economies to diversify, once the political scene is clearer. The aim of regional and international partners should be to help the SEMCs build democratic societies with more diversified economies to ensure an equitable sharing of economic gains. The EU and the United States should aim at helping the SEMCs capitalize on their respective comparative advantages while maintaining social cohesion. Hence, the industries and sectors that deserve more attention are those that not only enjoy a competitive edge in trade, but also create employment. More is needed to

enhance the productivity of labor in SEMCs. This requires serious vocational training programs, and where countries like Italy and Germany have vast experience, this could be shared with the SEMCs. Moreover, finding the means to enhance the movement of labor from the SEMCs to the EU should be given priority attention. A fresh look must be taken at the stumbling block of governing migration in order to find an equitable solution that relaxes labor market pressures on the SEMCs side and solves the problems of declining population growth and labor supply in the EU.

The EU should seriously consider renegotiating the liberalization of the agricultural sector between the EU and the SEMCs that Egypt, for example, concluded with the EU in 2008, in terms of liberalizing the majority of agricultural products, with few exceptions on both sides. Yet, liberalization should include not only tariffs and/or seasonal quotas, but also all non-tariff measures (e.g., abuse of sanitary and phytosanitary measures). It is worth emphasizing that what matters is not slogans or new initiatives such as Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements or Advanced Status that the EU is offering some SEMCs as a new framework for trade relations, but the modalities involved, mainly the removal of non-tariff measures to enhance the market access of the SEMCs' exports to the EU.

Trade in services, which can be considered in its infancy, can play the role of a catalyst for growth in the SEMCs. However, in order for it to do this, the institutional and regulatory framework in the SEMCs should be further developed to ensure that liberalization entails positive results for the whole economy by preserving competition and ensuring access to the markets.³⁵

³⁴ K. Al Sayed, "Arab Spring in Gulf Region," *The Peninsula*, November 9, 2012, <http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/editor-in-chief/213626-arab-spring-in-gulf-region.html>.

³⁵ A.F. Ghoneim, "Liberalisation of Trade in Services in Four Arab South Mediterranean Countries: An Unutilised Vehicle for Intra-regional Trade Integration," *Mediterranean Yearbook 2009*, pp. 242-246, <http://www.iemed.org/anuari/2009/aarticles/a242.pdf>.

Finally, the EU and the United States should aim at helping the SEMCs build their institutional environment and governance structure, which either did not exist previously, or suffered from weaknesses in terms of not tackling social cohesion

or fighting corruption. The support of regional partners can be provided only when the gloomy political picture and the high level of uncertainty prevailing are lessened.

2

THE ARAB SPRING AND POPULATION MOVEMENTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION IBRAHIM AWAD

Introduction

The sudden outbreak of popular protests in Arab countries around the Mediterranean Basin that started in Tunisia in December 2010 and then spread to Egypt, Libya, and Syria in 2011 marked an awakening that was too long in coming. Political and socio-economic justifications for the uprisings and the revolutionary changes in these countries have abounded. Turmoil and instability were immediately assumed to generate migration and refugee flows. The intermediate factors expected between turmoil and instability and migration and refugee flows were of two sorts: first, a slowdown in economic activity and the loss of tourism revenues; and second, an increased atmosphere of civil strife. The first factor would be responsible for unemployment and poverty, which would push workers to seek employment abroad. The second would generate migration flows of a different nature and composition, primarily of people seeking safety in neighboring countries.

Migration and refugee flows were indeed generated. However, they did not necessarily respond to assumptions that were made about their volumes and directions. Geographic, economic, and policy factors determined the volumes and directions of these flows as well as the responses to their humanitarian and political dimensions. In Europe, the region closest to the Arab Spring countries, fears were expressed about flows of migrants and refugees that would flood the continent. But the European Union (EU) policies and those of concerned Mediterranean member states, in spite of their dismal economic situations, were successful in preventing population overflows into Europe from North Africa. Potential migrants remained in their home countries. Those migrants and refugees fleeing for their lives took the direction of bordering and neighboring countries in the Arab region. When they crossed borders, it was only to enter territories in the region, such as Turkey and the Sahel countries. By and large, population

movements resulting from the Arab Spring remained within the region.³⁶ It may safely be said that the Arab Spring confirmed the existence of regional refugee flows, which had taken shape over several decades.

Three situations, each with its own population dynamics, may be identified. The first is the situation in Tunisia and Egypt, the first countries that rose up against and toppled their rulers. These two countries were potential sources of migrants. The second situation is that of Libya, where mixed flows brought together, and blurred, the differences between migrants and refugees. The Syrian civil war is the third situation. Here flows are also mixed, but in the sense that they not only comprise Syrians fleeing violence in their country but also Palestinians and Iraqis who had sought refuge in Syria in the past.

This analysis of migration and refugee movements resulting from the Arab Spring will deal with the three situations successively.³⁷ Under each section, the responses to each situation and the policies of concerned foreign powers, particularly EU member states, and international organizations will be addressed.

³⁶ As pointed out by de Haas, there is a “myth that the ‘Arab Spring’ has led to large-scale migration to Europe” but “the Arab Spring had much more significant implications for migration and mobility in the region itself.” See H. de Haas, “The Arab Spring and Migration,” *Migration blog*, March 21, 2012, <http://heindehaas.blogspot.it/2012/03/arab-spring-and-migration.html>. According to Elmas, “statistics regarding travel from Africa to Europe show that the journey to the shores of Europe was not worth its cost, but that it also did not reach levels which would justify the anxieties of European politicians and their constituents.” See F.Y. Elmas, “The Migration Balance Sheet during the First Year of the Arab Spring,” *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, June 3, 2012, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/columnist/3633>.

³⁷ This analysis only discusses trans-border population movements. The most important question of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Syria deserves a separate analysis. According to UN estimates, their number reached 2.5 million by mid-January 2013.

Tunisia and Egypt as Potential Sources of Migration

Tunisia and Egypt are the two countries that were expected to generate large outflows of migrants. Indeed, both countries experienced a significant economic slowdown. World Bank figures show growth rates in Tunisia falling from 3 percent in 2009 and 2010 to a negative rate of -2 percent in 2011, with an estimated recovery of 2.4 in 2012. The Bank's figures for Egypt indicate growth rates of 4.7 percent in 2009 and 5.1 percent in 2010, dropping to 1.9 percent in 2011, with an estimated recovery to 2.3 percent in 2012.³⁸

The two countries are also heavily dependent on revenues from tourism, which fell sharply in 2011 and 2012. In Tunisia, revenues in the first three months of 2012, higher than in the corresponding period in 2011, were still 20 percent lower than those generated in the first quarter of 2010. In Egypt, 9.8 million tourists visited in 2011, down from 14.7 million in 2010.³⁹

Nevertheless, the large outflows from these two countries did not materialize. Europe was only marginally affected. Its economic crisis kept it from attracting migrants, and its policies made sure that they stayed away.

In the spring of 2011, 25,000 Tunisian migrants crossed the Mediterranean to Italy. Uproar ensued

and fears of migration flows of biblical proportions were expressed.⁴⁰ Compared with the number of irregular migrants in Europe, 25,000 Tunisians was not an insignificant figure.⁴¹ However, the Tunisian flows were short-lived and the biblical fears never materialized.

Three explanations can be advanced for this course of events. First, the global economic crisis that hit European countries on the northern shore of the Mediterranean with particular severity may have made the likely return on the financial and human investment in migration seem very unpromising to potential migrants. Second, concerned countries in the EU increased the patrolling of Mediterranean waters considerably. An operation led by Italy, and supported by France, Germany, Malta, the Netherlands, and Spain, brought together experts from 11 member states and introduced new naval and aerial equipment. Action focused primarily on "detecting and preventing illegitimate border crossings to the Pelagic Islands, Sicily, and the Italian mainland."⁴² It also encompassed the pre-screening of intercepted migrants by FRONTEX, an EU agency whose budget was increased by €30 million in April 2011.⁴³ Third, Italy signed an agreement with Tunisia in April 2011 that included measures for technical cooperation to counter irregular migration, for strengthening police collaboration, and for the repatriation of

³⁸ For Tunisia's growth rates, see World Bank, *Tunisia Overview*, updated April 2013, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tunisia/overview>. For Egypt, see "Egypt GDP grows 1.9 pct in 10/11, 2.4 pct growth predicted for 11/12: Govt official," *Ahram Online*, February 13, 2012, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/34440/Business/Economy/Egypt-GDP-grows--pct-in--pct-growth-predicted-fo.aspx>.

³⁹ On tourism in Tunisia, see AFP, "Tunisia tourism revenues up 36 pct in first quarter," *Ahram Online*, July 21, 2012, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/48297/Business/Economy/Tunisia-tourism-revenues-up--pct-in-first-quarter-.aspx>. On Egypt, see A. Feteiha, "Egypt: A revolutionary year in numbers," *Ahram Online*, January 25, 2012, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/32523/Business/Economy/Egypt-A-revolutionary-year-in-numbers.aspx>.

⁴⁰ P. Fargues and C. Fandrich, "Migration after the Arab Spring," *Migration Policy Centre Research Report*, No. 2012/09, <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/23504>.

⁴¹ D. Vogel, "Size and Development of Irregular Migration to the EU," *Clandestino Project Comparative Policy Briefs*, October 2009, <http://clandestino.eliampe.gr/comparative-policy-briefs/#more-1068>.

⁴² Frontex, *Hermes 2011 running*, February 21, 2011, <http://www.frontex.europa.eu/news/hermes-2011-running-T7bJgL>.

⁴³ S. Carrera, L. den Hertog, and J. Parkin, "EU Migration Policy in the wake of the Arab Spring: What prospects for EU-Southern Mediterranean Relations?," *MEDPRO Technical Reports*, No. 15, August 2012, p. 5, <http://www.ceps.eu/node/7215>.

irregular migrants.⁴⁴ Italy made a €200 million grant to Tunisia to help it in the implementation of the agreement.⁴⁵ Cooperation between the two countries in controlling irregular flows was reinforced in 2012.⁴⁶

Egypt is the Arab country with the largest population of migrant workers who travel to seek employment elsewhere in the region and abroad. The economic slowdown that followed the Egyptian revolution could have been expected to generate large migration flows. However, in the first months after the toppling of the former president and his top leadership, confidence in the present and future ran high. Rather than producing larger flows of migrants than usual, Egypt received returning migrants wishing to partake in building what seemed an exciting future. When confrontations multiplied and the economy did not recover, migration flows should have increased. Instead, despite unemployment rising to 12.3 percent in October 2012 and poverty reaching 25 percent, they did not. Unlike Tunisia, the major destinations of Egyptian migrants are not European countries, but rather Saudi Arabia and the other countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), even though these countries have long since ceased to receive large numbers of Egyptian migrants. Substitution flows just keep Egyptian stocks at known volumes, which are especially large in Saudi Arabia. But Saudi Arabia and, to a larger extent, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have taken reserved attitudes

toward the political changes in Egypt. It is fair to underline, though, that reported threats of mass repatriations never materialized.

Two observations may be made in respect of Egyptian migration to the GCC. First, tense relations between the Muslim Brotherhood, now in power in Egypt, and the UAE have unavoidably cast a shadow on the future of Egyptian migration to that country. The second observation relates to the political consequences of migration for foreign policy even after regime change: Egyptian migration to the GCC as a whole seems to have contributed to restraining any changes that the new government in Egypt might have wished to introduce in its policy toward Iran.⁴⁷

The first two factors mentioned above, that is the economic crisis and the increased patrolling of Mediterranean waters, which helped explain the small volumes of migration flows from Tunisia to Europe, also apply to the marginal Egyptian flows to European countries. Thus, excess supply of labor was kept in Egypt, with the resulting increase in unemployment and poverty and their serious consequences for political stability and the transition process.

It must be emphasized that little specific assistance from industrialized countries to Tunisia and Egypt, in response to the underlying causes of migration, has materialized. General financial assistance to help with political and economic transitions has

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

⁴⁵ H. de Haas and N. Sigona, "Migration and Revolution," *Forced Migration Review*, No. 39, June 2012, pp. 4-5, <http://www.fmreview.org/north-africa/dehaas-sigona.html>.

⁴⁶ See E. Paoletti, "Migration Agreements between Italy and North Africa: Domestic Imperatives versus International Norms," *MEI Analysis*, December 19, 2012, <http://www.mei.edu/content/migration-agreements-between-italy-and-north-africa-domestic-imperatives-versus>. See also European Commission, *EU's response to the Arab Spring: The State-of-Play after Two Years*, February 8, 2013, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-81_en.htm.

⁴⁷ "Islamists ask Mursi to delegate Al Tayyib to defuse crisis with the UAE" (in Arabic), *Al Masry Al Youm*, February 8, 2013, <http://today.almasryalyoum.com/article2.aspx?ArticleID=370369>. The UAE considers that improved Iranian-Egyptian relations would be detrimental to its interests. The implicit assumption that derives from this consideration, and which is generally accepted, is that Egyptian migration to the UAE could be affected by formalized improved Iranian-Egyptian relations.

been promised.⁴⁸ Admittedly, this assistance could go, indirectly, to addressing some of the deep causes of potential migration, such as the economic slowdown and negative growth. Indeed, visiting Cairo in the second week of January 2013, Herman Van Rompuy, president of the EU, announced that the Union would extend €5 billion to Egypt in the form of grants and concessionary and other loans for the period 2012-13.⁴⁹

In sum, the two emblematic precursors of the Arab Spring, Tunisia and Egypt, did not generate large population movements. They were also largely left to their own devices to face their unemployment and poverty challenges. The two countries harbor high hopes that Libya will be able to help absorb large numbers of their workers to make up for its labor shortage and to contribute to its reconstruction. Prolonged instability in Libya, however, has prevented these hopes from materializing.

Mixed Migration Flows Resulting from the Libyan Crisis

Several estimates of the volume of labor migration in Libya exist. According to official statistics, the number of regular migrant workers before the civil war amounted to 600,000, with irregulars varying between 750,000 and 1.2 million. In 2011, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated the number of migrant workers before the crisis at 2.5 million, representing 25 percent

of the total population.⁵⁰ Libya had also become an important transit country for essentially sub-Saharan African migration flows, first made up of workers and then of entire families, seeking to reach Europe.⁵¹ It was a particularly significant transit migration post for those migrants trying to get to Malta and the Italian island of Lampedusa.⁵²

The protracted Libyan uprising produced flows of migrants fleeing civil strife. The near paralysis of economic activity during the height of the conflict caused outflows of migrants from the country. Libya's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contracted by more than 60 percent in 2011, compared to 2010.⁵³ Migrants took the direction of Tunisia and Egypt, which maintained open border policies. Among them were Tunisian and Egyptian workers returning home, but also other migrants fleeing to safety and trying to reach their own countries.⁵⁴ In total, IOM recognized 120 nationalities of third-country nationals fleeing Libya following the civil war. Among these were citizens of Arab countries, including Sudanese who benefitted "from a regime of free movement with Egypt,"⁵⁵ but also nationals from Chad, Nigeria, Niger, Mali, Senegal, Ghana, and Burkina Faso.⁵⁶ In addition to the conflict and the economic causes for flight, unsubstantiated

⁴⁸ European Commission, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean* (COM(2011) 200 final), Brussels, March 8, 2011, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52011dc0200:en:not>.

⁴⁹ European Council, *Remarks by President Herman Van Rompuy after his meeting with president of Egypt Mohamed Morsi*, Cairo, January 13, 2013, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/134655.pdf.

⁵⁰ IOM, *Libyan Crisis. One Month into IOM's Response*, March 28, 2011, <http://iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/media/docs/reports/MENA-One-Month-Report.pdf>.

⁵¹ C. Aghazarm, P. Quesada, and S. Tishler, *Migrants Caught in Crisis: The IOM Experience in Libya*, Geneva, IOM, 2012, http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=785.

⁵² A. Di Bartolomeo, T. Jaulin, and D. Perrin, "Lybia," *CARIM Migration Profiles*, June 2011, <http://www.carim.org/index.php?callContent=502>.

⁵³ See World Bank, *Libya Overview*, updated April 2013, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/libya/overview>.

⁵⁴ C. Aghazarm, P. Quesada, and S. Tishler, *Migrants Caught in Crisis...*, cit.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 13.

accusations of fighting in the ranks of the falling regime, leveled at migrants of sub-Saharan origin, forced a number of them to head south toward the Sahel region, returning to or transiting countries such as Chad and Niger. They were alleged to be mercenaries hired by Gaddafi prior to the uprising. As a result of such accusations, many were held in detention camps where female-specific violations, such as mass rapes, were reported to have occurred. The identity of the perpetrators remains unknown to this day, although many believe that such operations were carried out by National Transition Council (NTC) sympathizers and affiliates.⁵⁷ By contrast, in Europe, Italy, presumably the most exposed European country, sought to protect itself against unwanted migrants escaping the Libyan conflict. In June 2011, Italy signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Libya that provided for the training of Libyan police forces and supplied them with the technical tools for controlling their borders.⁵⁸ The MOU also envisaged the opening of a detention center for irregular migrants in Kufra. Italy sought support from the European Commission to finance the facility.⁵⁹

Tunisia received large flows of migrants fleeing Libya. By January 2012, returning Tunisians had amounted to 137,000,⁶⁰ who came to inflate the ranks of the unemployed. The unemployment rate rose to 17 percent in September 2012,⁶¹ with youth

unemployment at 35.6 percent in May 2012⁶² and the poverty rate at 24.7 percent in May 2011.⁶³ The number of third-country nationals arriving in Tunisia reached 280,000 by the end of June 2011.⁶⁴ The flows included Libyans, among them officials of the Gaddafi regime. Taken up in its own political turmoil, Tunisia needed support to cope with the humanitarian and economic consequences of the flows. International organizations such as IOM, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) stepped in to provide support, which may be considered as helping Tunisia, but also as relieving potential refugee pressures on European countries.

Egypt received its migrants returning from Libya and flows of other countries' nationals on their way home. By the end of June 2011, the numbers of Egyptians and third-country nationals at the country's borders with Libya were 174,000 and 90,000, respectively.⁶⁵ Acute humanitarian situations arose. The concurrence of migrants and refugees is eloquently expressed in the Egyptian policy to manage these flows. In fact, Egypt applies its long-standing policy on refugees, which is not to allow camps on its territory to transit migrants.⁶⁶ Both before and after the uprising, Egypt's policy toward migrants and refugees

⁵⁷ E. Hill, "Migrants in Libya Camp Claim Rape," *Al Jazeera*, August 29, 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/08/201182921437789463.html>.

⁵⁸ "Memorandum of Understanding Between Italy and Libyan NTC," *Migrants at Sea*, June 20, 2011, <http://migrant-satsea.wordpress.com/2011/06/20/memorandum-of-understanding-between-italy-and-libyan-nct>.

⁵⁹ S. Carrera, L. den Hertog, and J. Parkin, "EU Migration Policy in the wake of the Arab Spring...", *cit.*

⁶⁰ Migrants Caught in Crisis: The IOM Experience in Libya, *op. cit.*

⁶¹ See <http://www.ins.nat.tn/indexfr.php>

⁶² See <http://www.tunisienumerique.com/le-taux-de-chomage-enregistre-une-legere-baisse-au-cours-du-premier-trimestre-2012/125298>

⁶³ See <http://www.tunisienumerique.com/247-de-la-population-tunisienne-vit-en-dessous-du-seuil-de-pauvrete/39281>

⁶⁴ C. Aghazarm, P. Quesada, and S. Tishler, *Migrants Caught in Crisis...*, *cit.*, p. 12.

⁶⁵ See IOM, "International Migration Annual Review 2010/2011," in *World Migration Report 2011*, http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=product_info&&products_id=752.

⁶⁶ H. Hafez and A. Ghaly, "The Arab Spring and Migration in Egypt. One Year On: Impacts, Perceptions and Attitudes," *Migration Policy Centre Research Reports*, No. 2012/05, October 2012, p. 2, <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/23501>.

has remained constant. Despite its status of signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention (and its 1967 additional Protocol), as well as to the 1969 African Union Convention, the Egyptian government continues to oppose the opening of refugee camps on its territory. Instead, assistance to migrants (most commonly transit migrants) and refugees is carried out by the UNHCR, which works “in close collaboration with government, UN, and NGO partners to provide humanitarian and onward transportation assistance to those arriving.”⁶⁷ To cope with the humanitarian crisis of transit migrants, Egypt received assistance from international organizations as Tunisia had.⁶⁸ UNHCR’s imperatives amid the social and political unrest in Arab Spring countries included “refugee status determination, resettlement, and psycho-social counselling.”⁶⁹ In all cases, assistance was provided on the material (financial), social, and psychological levels. First and foremost, evacuation from conflict zones was made possible by international organizations (primarily IOM and UNHCR). Also, in Egypt, much effort was invested in the resettlement of displaced populations. Arriving migrants saw their return home facilitated through international organizations’ support. Moreover, immigration procedures were made available to those in need. The United States, Sweden, and Canada were among the countries welcoming escapees of the Libyan conflict in particular.⁷⁰

In addition, attention was drawn by governments to preventive measures. Such is the case of the European Union and its “self-interest response to

⁶⁷ Ibidem.

⁶⁸ See UNHCR, *UNHCR works to improve conditions for hundreds at Egyptian border*, March 22, 2012, <http://www.unhcr.org/4f6b6f956.html>.

⁶⁹ Ibidem.

⁷⁰ H. Hafez and A. Ghaly, “The Arab Spring and Migration in Egypt...,” *cit.*

[the] unrest in North Africa.”⁷¹ Following the Arab Spring, the European Union encouraged “Member States to assist refugees with humanitarian aid and asylum,” on one hand, while opting for migration-policing measures, on the other.⁷² Humanitarian assistance materialized through donations offered by the EU in return for democratic reforms within the countries. In addition, part of these countries’ security personnel received training and new instructions on border control policing.

Nevertheless, the crisis has had consequences. According to UNHCR’s Egypt country profile, some 1,700 third-country nationals were still stranded at the Libyan-Egyptian border in 2012.⁷³ Allegations were also made that some foreign migrant workers fleeing Libya had found their ways to informal employment and irregular status in the manufacturing industry, especially textiles, in Lower Egypt. Returnees and the cost of the migration opportunities lost due to the extended instability in Libya are undoubtedly causing rising unemployment and poverty in Egypt. Politically significant is also the fact that prominent figures of the Gaddafi regime and their families took refuge in Egypt. This has created a problem between the new rulers in Libya and Egypt, the former asking the latter for these persons to be delivered to them. Future relations between the two countries, including migration opportunities, may be at stake.

According to IOM calculations, of the 790,000 migrants who fled Libya, only 3.9 percent, amounting to 27,465, reached Italy and Malta.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Y. Maccanico, “The EU’s Self-Interested Response to Unrest in North Africa,” *Statewatch Analyses*, Vol. 14, No. 1, January 2012, <http://www.statewatch.org/analyses/no-165-eu-north-africa.pdf>.

⁷² P. Fargues and C. Fandrich, “Migration after the Arab Spring,” *cit.*, p. 10.

⁷³ See UNHCR, *2013 UNHCR country operations profile - Egypt*, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486356>.

⁷⁴ C. Aghazarm, P. Quesada, and S. Tishler, *Migrants Caught in Crisis...*, *cit.*, p. 15.

For the IOM, “despite much anticipation around migrants seeking refuge in Europe, it has remained largely unaffected with the exception of Lampedusa (Italy) and Malta, where large numbers of migrants arrived in boats. Rapid large-scale evacuations from Libya and neighboring countries have likely reduced incentives to flee to Europe.”⁷⁵

To carry out its activities, essentially evacuation and transportation of migrants to their home countries, IOM received financial contributions totaling \$107 million, 64 percent of which came from the United States (\$28 million), the European Commission (\$27 million) and Bangladesh (\$12 million). The World Bank gave Bangladesh a \$40 million loan to help it reimburse the IOM for the repatriation of 10,000 Bangladeshi workers and to cope with the consequences of the migrants’ emergency return.⁷⁶ Beyond the support to the IOM, the EU was reported to have provided more than \$155 million in humanitarian assistance and to have mobilized civil protection teams and assets to alleviate the plight of civilians both in Libya and at its borders.⁷⁷ Among EU members, Italy was one of the first countries to deliver humanitarian aid to Tunisia to help absorb and feed refugees on its borders with Libya.

In sum, the population movements engendered by the Libyan revolution and ensuing civil war remained in the Arab region, specifically in Tunisia and Egypt, with the only significant overflow occurring in the Sahel countries to the south. In a second stage, fleeing migrant workers were flown back to their home countries, mostly in Asia. In

addition to the initial impact of the arrival in their territories of hundreds of thousands of fleeing migrants of all nationalities, Tunisia and Egypt are still living with the consequences of the return of their own workers. Member states of the EU have only been very marginally affected by the population movements arising from the Libyan revolution. The work of international organizations in evacuating migrants out of Libya, in providing for their needs, and in repatriating those who came from far away countries protected Europe from the predicted migration consequences of the Libyan crisis. Together, bilateral arrangements, patrolling, and financing were thus all policy measures that proved their effectiveness.

The Syrian Refugee Crisis

The Syrian refugee crisis is the largest and most politically significant population movement situation arising from the Arab Spring. At first sight, it may appear comparable to the Libyan crisis. In fact, it is not, for a number of different reasons. First, the Syrian crisis is of much longer duration than the Libyan one. It has also turned into a more militarized conflict than the Libyan strife. The geographic environments in the two countries are also dissimilar. Libya is a vast and sparsely populated country; the large stretches of desert provide a sort of relative protection to the population concentrated on the Mediterranean coast. In contrast, Syria has a much higher population density scattered over practically the entire territory of the country. Importantly, the population that had to flee Libya was mostly foreign, while the people escaping Syria are essentially Syrian. And yet, a major similarity brings the two cases together: fleeing populations in both contexts benefited from the open border policies of bordering countries. With regard to the population movements generated by the Libyan crisis, Tunisia, and Egypt, as well as Sudan, Chad, Niger, and Algeria, opened their borders to their

⁷⁵ Ibidem, p. 19.

⁷⁶ B. Kelly and A.J. Wadud, “Asian Labour Migrants and Humanitarian Crisis in Libya,” *IOM-MPI Issue in Brief*, No. 3, July 2012, p. 4, http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=815.

⁷⁷ See EuropeAid, *EU response to the Arab Spring. Overview*, October 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighborhood/regional-cooperation/enpi-south/documents/eu_response_to_the_arab_spring_en.pdf

own returning nationals as well as to Libyans and third-country nationals. Similarly, the borders of Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey, as well as Egypt are open to Syrian refugees. Restrictions have neither been put in place nor are envisaged. This contrasts with the precautions against any opening of the closed borders on the other (European) shore of the Mediterranean. Flows to still insecure Iraq, comprised of Iraqis who had previously found refuge in Syria, have also resumed. Flows to Lebanon have included a secondary migration of Palestinian refugees who had been living in Syria since they had to quit their lands.

The number of Syrian refugees keeps rising by the day. Registered refugees combined with those pending registration with the UNHCR exceeded 1.6 million at the end of May 2013 (511,418 in Lebanon; 472,631 in Jordan; 376,640 in Turkey; 155,139 in Iraq; and 77,169 in Egypt).⁷⁸ These numbers do not include those Syrians who have found refuge in bordering countries and Egypt without seeking help from UNHCR. Still, in December 2012, Jordan estimated that it had 100,000 unregistered Syrian refugees. Turkey and Egypt estimated they had 70,000 each. Lebanon estimated that tens of thousands have not come forward yet to be registered.⁷⁹ Depending on their financial means and social links, unregistered Syrian refugees live in private homes or with families, especially in Lebanon.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ UNHCR, *Syria Regional Refugee Response*, <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

⁷⁹ UNHCR, "Number of Syrian refugees registered in region tops 500,000 mark," December 11, 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/50c70ca36.html>

⁸⁰ It is interesting to note the comment of one Syrian refugee in Lebanon: "We took care of our Lebanese brothers when they came to us in 2006, and today they are reciprocating this kindness." See M. Zaatari, "Hezbollah offers health care to Syrian refugees," *The Daily Star*, December 16, 2012, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/2012/Oct-01/189714-hezbollah-offers-health-care-to-syrian-refugees.ashx>

Open borders, unfettered movement, and unregistered refugees trying to blend in with the populations of bordering and neighboring countries again signal the existence of an Arab region, for refugee purposes, with an extension that includes the bordering Turkish territory, where Syrian population movements are concentrated. It is also indicative of an Arab refugee system, but one functioning without formal rules.

And yet, tensions exist in this region between the nation states situated in it and that are now affected by the consequences of the Syrian crisis. Fault lines in the region have increasingly taken on a communitarian and sectarian nature, thereby, debilitating already fragile states. It is not a surprise, therefore, that Lebanon is the state most affected by the consequences of the Syrian refugee crisis. The reactions by Lebanese communities to the refugee flows are as different as their attitudes toward the Syrian conflict and the various parties involved in the fighting. Christian and Shi'a communities were reported to be concerned about the arrival of Syrian refugees who, being mostly Sunni, may affect the communitarian balance in their own country. Racist discourse has been used against the new refugees.⁸¹ In contrast, Sunnis have welcomed the fleeing Syrians. The result has been a hesitant and insufficient response to the crisis by the government, which has refrained from opening camps for the new refugees. Memories of the Palestinian refugee camps, which survived for over 60 years, must have weighed on this passive decision by the government. Sunni political formations have found in this insufficient response and inaction another reason to assail the Lebanese authorities, charging them with supporting the Syrian regime.

⁸¹ On the racist discourse against Syrian refugees arriving in Lebanon, see, for example, H. Saghie, "Beyond Raising the Issue of Racism," *Al Hayat*, January 12, 2013, <http://alhayat.com/Details/472143>.

In fact, the Syrian political conflict and refugee crisis feed on each other. The evolution in Turkey's attitude supplies evidence for this contention. Having received and built camps for Syrian refugees, Turkey found itself justified to openly take sides in the Syria strife and to call for regime change. When the Syrian governmental forces pounded border areas, an armed conflict was about to be sparked between the two countries and, in a way, NATO was dragged into the crisis following the deployment of Patriot missiles along the Turkish border.

In Lebanon and the other countries hosting them, Syrian refugees have needs for protection, security, education, health, water, sanitation, and shelter.⁸² Shelters and the conditions in which refugees live became critical in the particularly harsh and snowy winter of early 2013. Education needs have again brought out the tensions between the regional system of population movements and the needs of the nation states. A number of Syrian refugees and their children have found it difficult to adapt to the curricula and the environment in Lebanese or Egyptian public schools. Some parents have preferred to return to Syria, despite the violence raging there, so as not to lose a school year. They may also have wanted to spare their children from bullying in the classrooms, cases of which have been reported.

The capacities of host countries are far from adequate to meet the needs of Syrian refugees. These countries have economic problems of their own. Lebanon has to live with its intractable communitarian challenges as pointed out above. Its population suffers from insufficient services and economic problems. Jordan is already host to large

Palestinian refugee camps. It also accommodates Iraqi refugees. The Syrians are thus an additional burden at a time when the country is experiencing increased protests and discontent, of both an economic and political nature, associated with the Arab Spring. Egypt also is in economic distress. Its employment and poverty rates have already been discussed. It suffers from huge budget and balance of payments deficits. Syrian refugees are an addition to the pool of refugees/migrants from South Sudan and the Horn of Africa that it already hosts.

In Lebanon, national responses are coming from civil society organizations, such as the Lebanese Red Cross and from Sunni NGOs benefiting from financial support from the Gulf countries. Hezbollah, the militant Shi'a politico-military formation, is also providing support and relief to refugees fleeing its Syrian ally.⁸³ This response to refugee needs by such organizations as the Lebanese Red Cross and Hezbollah have probably contributed to preventing a complete realignment of populations along communitarian affiliations.

Interventions by international intergovernmental organizations, such as UNHCR, UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Programme (WFP), and IOM, have been crucial in responding to refugee needs, especially in Lebanon, which has received the largest flows. International NGOs, such as the Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children, the Danish Refugee Council, the Qatari and UAE Red Crescents, and Caritas have complemented the works of international organizations and brought their own funds. Donations to address the needs

⁸² The question of camps for Syrian refugees is sensitive. In addition to Lebanon, Egypt, as previously mentioned, is opposed in principle to setting up camps for any refugees. Almost half of the refugees in Jordan are not in camps. In contrast, Turkey opened 14 camps for the Syrian refugees, which do not host them all, nevertheless.

⁸³ One Hezbollah official was reported to have declared: "we don't look to see if refugees back the Free Syrian Army"; one female refugee was reported to say, "she was not concerned about Hezbollah's political positions — she simply wanted for her three kids to get treatment." See M. Zaatari, "Hezbollah offers health care to Syrian refugees," cit. This inter-community solidarity did not prevent instances of racist discourse, as pointed out above.

of Syrian refugees, especially in Lebanon and Jordan, have included public funds from the European Commission, ECHO, a number of EU member states such as Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Donors also include Australia, Brazil, Korea, Croatia, Switzerland, and the United States. Donations have been directed to concerned governments, NGOs, and INGOs active in the support of refugees. EU and U.S. government donations have amounted respectively to €100 million and €114 million, respectively.⁸⁴ At the Arab level, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE have also made donations.

Nevertheless, financial support has fallen far short of the actual needs. To remedy the shortage, on the occasion of the emergency meeting of Foreign Ministers of the League of the Arab States (LAS) in January 2013, Kuwait convened a donors pledging conference for the end of the month. The LAS resolutions included sending a mission to Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq to assess their needs for assistance. Additionally, the council of Arab Foreign Ministers agreed to provide aid to victims of the conflict remaining within Syria, in cooperation with the UNHCR, and to further invest efforts in the peace process. At the Kuwait conference, pledges were reported to have exceeded the UNHCR target of \$1.5 billion but most of them have not actually materialized. In addition to EU and U.S. donations, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE pledged €221 million each.⁸⁵ The pledging conference is an indication of the incapacity of Arab states to deal with the Syrian refugee question on their own.

⁸⁴ "Donations for Syria aid exceed UN target," *Euronews*, January 30, 2013, <http://www.euronews.com/2013/01/30/donations-for-syria-aid-exceed-un-target>.

⁸⁵ "Arab League Held Meeting on Syria," *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, January 14, 2013, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/146418/arab-league-held-meeting-on-syria.html>.

The Syrian refugee crisis resulted from the militarization of the political conflict in the country. But it has interacted with other problems of Syria, Lebanon, and the region. It has brought out the limited capacity of regional states to meet the needs of the moving populations independently. The interaction has again revealed the fragility of these states and their vulnerability, especially of Lebanon. These states have, at the same time, different communities and antagonism between them, as well as transnational solidarity across borders. The silver lining is that the solidarity within the communities is positive for the moving populations. It has been made possible by the states opening their borders to Syrian refugees. This solidarity will be all the more positive in two cases. First, when it extends to inter-community relations and when racist discourse is curbed. Second, when solidarity is extended in the absence of strong feelings of community identification, as in Jordan. In all instances, solidarity across the open borders of these fragile states is indicative of the existence of a region in a humanitarian and political sense. This is brought out all the more clearly by the closure of other countries to foreign populations. Unfortunately, this region functions without norms and rules to regulate the interactions taking place within it.

Conclusions

Migrant and refugee populations have not flooded the Arab region, except in some immediately bordering areas, as a result of the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria. Small flows originated in Tunisia for a very limited time and then stopped. Egypt did not generate flows that exceeded those of normal times. These two countries are now left with addressing their excess labor supply and the poverty that were among the causes of their awakening in the first place. Difficult times await them. The population movements expected out of Libya did take place, but took the

direction of bordering countries and then were rather quickly exhausted. They were also relatively efficiently managed. Nonetheless, some migrants fell through the nets of the evacuating agencies and remain stranded at the Libyan-Egyptian borders. Migrant workers can be expected to take the direction of Libya in the future, to contribute to the functioning of the labor market and the recovery of the economy. But this requires that the country recover stability in order to secure the revenues that can be generated by the formidable Libyan oil reserves. When this happens, laws and regulations should be put in place to protect migrant workers and ensure decent working conditions for them.

Syrian refugees constitute the largest population movement spawned by the Arab Spring. They too did not overflow other regions. This movement has however raised political questions in the largest host country, Lebanon. If it continues over time, it is likely to produce political consequences for states in the region, for their demographic configurations, and for the relations between them.

Neighboring regions, including Europe, have not been affected in terms of population movements by the Arab Spring, contrary to the apprehensions expressed early on. Along with other countries, the EU and its member states have provided financial assistance to Arab Spring countries and the international organizations supporting them. Total assistance is, however, far from sufficient, as made explicit in the successive warnings put forth by international organizations dealing with Syrian refugees.

That populations movements have not been overwhelming should not be taken to mean, however, that neighboring regions, such as Europe, have been definitively spared the consequences of the socio-economic and political problems besetting the Arab region. Unemployment, underemployment, and poverty, rather than being

on their way to solution, have for the moment been compounded by the turbulence of transitions, an issue that is extensively addressed in the paper by Ghoneim in this report. Political problems are evolving around the democratic format and substance of the new systems being put in place in Arab Spring countries. Industrialized countries in North America and especially the EU, because of geographic proximity, have a stake in preventing the protracted instability that will necessarily derive from the absence of solutions to these problems. If one European policy objective is to stave off migratory flows that unsolved socio-economic and political problems may generate, migration policy can only partly contribute to achieving it. More and more predictable regular migration opportunities could reduce pressure on labor markets and enable migrants to acquire skills useful for them and for development in their countries when they return. However, no migration opportunities will ever be sufficient for the 700,000 annual new entrants to the labor market in Egypt. Deepened and expanded international cooperation policies by the EU and its member states and by the United States will be necessary. These countries can also exert their power to influence the approaches of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and adapt them to the problems, needs, and conditions of the Arab Spring populations. A mix of these interventions may be the most realistic option at present. Most European countries, especially those bordering the Mediterranean, are experiencing serious economic crises and employment problems that do not allow them to provide the necessary cooperation. As for political problems, their solutions will have to emanate from within the Arab Spring countries themselves. The EU and the United States can only help by contributing to observing elections to ensure that they are free and fair and by encouraging convergence among conflicting parties.

The EU and the United States have a stake in contributing to tackling the region's political and economic problems. Solving them is essential for Arab countries to stabilize, democratize, and

embark on equitable economic growth that meets the needs of their populations. But Arab growth is also crucial for European recovery and a reformed global economy.

3

A NEW TRANSATLANTIC APPROACH TO MEDITERRANEAN ENERGY COOPERATION: JOINT EFFORTS AND NEW SYNERGIES AFTER THE ARAB SPRING

MANFRED HAFNER AND SIMONE TAGLIAPIETRA

Introduction

The Arab Spring has opened up a new era of uncertainty for the Mediterranean region. The uprisings have generated a number of new challenges for the countries in the area, but they have also provided new opportunities for cooperation. The disruption of the established geopolitical equilibrium in the area has brought to light the elements of unsustainability of the socio-economic model that was pursued over the last decades, and has made it clear that, in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries (SEMCs) urgently need to find a new path toward strong and sustainable socio-economic development.

The Mediterranean oil and gas export sector has developed without particular difficulties over the last decades, as it is based on strong complementarities between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean: a capital- and technology-rich but energy-hungry North and a resource-rich but capital- and technology-poor South. A solid oil and gas infrastructure system has been developed, physically linking the Mediterranean's two shores. This feature is crucially important as it strongly enhances the interdependence between the north and the south of the Mediterranean.⁸⁶

With regard to the western Mediterranean, the oil and gas infrastructure system has been developed in a bilateral way between individual countries in Europe and North Africa. It is only since November 1995, with the Barcelona Declaration, that an EU-wide Mediterranean policy has progressively been incremented. This has led to the Euro-Mediterranean energy partnership focused on trans-European networks and institutional regulatory support aimed at eventually creating

a Euro-Mediterranean energy market. However, a transatlantic dimension is completely absent in this Euro-Mediterranean energy partnership. In the Eastern Mediterranean, the situation has evolved differently. In fact, there have always been strong U.S. and EU interests for these countries and their regional energy dimension, but a structured transatlantic cooperation scheme has never emerged in this area either.

The Arab Spring has come to reshape the geopolitical equilibrium of the Mediterranean region, opening a number of new challenges and opportunities. A combined transatlantic approach to the new realities that have emerged in the aftermath of the Arab Spring will surely be more successful than individual approaches.

Energy is an essential commodity enabling socio-economic development, so a joint cooperation effort of the EU and the United States in the Mediterranean region could target this field. In particular, two key levels of action can be outlined: a) enhancing hydrocarbon cooperation and b) supporting a sustainable energy transition in the region. Such a cooperation scheme would contribute to increasing welfare and prosperity in the region, opening markets, ensuring access to resources, increasing exports and investments, and promoting sustainable global growth. It would also contribute to the establishment of a wider area of stability and peace.

This chapter puts forward some proposals for concrete joint cooperation strategies for the transatlantic partners toward the Mediterranean in the field of energy. With regard to enhanced hydrocarbon cooperation, the identified strategies include favoring oil and gas flows through Turkey, oil flows from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, and the development of the newly discovered gas reserves in the offshore Levant Basin. Concerning support for a sustainable

⁸⁶ For a comprehensive overview on the Mediterranean oil and gas sector, see M. Hafner, S. Tagliapietra, and E.H. El Elandalousi, "Outlook for Oil and Gas in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries," *MedPro Technical Reports*, No. 18, October 2012, <http://www.ceps.eu/node/7447>.

energy transition in the region, the identified strategies include promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as of an innovative financial cooperation scheme including SEMCs, the transatlantic partners, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). In conclusion, this chapter proposes establishing a new U.S./EU Med-Energy Partnership Initiative to make the implementation of proposed transatlantic energy cooperation regarding the Mediterranean more concrete.

Mediterranean Energy Cooperation before the Arab Spring

A large number of oil and gas interconnections linking the two shores of the Mediterranean have been developed over the last decades. The capacity of the existing international infrastructure for natural gas exports in SEMCs is nearly 160 billion cubic meters (bcm)/year, of which 116 bcm/year relate to ten international pipelines and 44 bcm/year to seven liquefied natural gas (LNG) plants located on the Mediterranean coast. The majority of this overall 160-bcm/year export capacity is concentrated in North African countries (nearly 110 bcm/year): Algeria, with 77 bcm/year (three export pipelines and four LNG plants); Egypt, with 38 bcm/year (two export pipelines and two LNG plants); and Libya, with 12 bcm/year (one export pipeline and one LNG plant).

In the Mediterranean region, nine gas pipelines are in operation:

- Enrico Mattei Pipeline (Algeria-Italy, via Tunisia), 1983, 30 bcm/year;
- Pedro Duran Farell Pipeline (Algeria-Spain, via Morocco), 1997, 12 bcm/year;
- Medgaz (Algeria-Spain, direct submarine pipeline), 2010, 8 bcm/year;
- Greenstream Pipeline (Libya-Italy, direct submarine), 2004, 11 bcm/year;

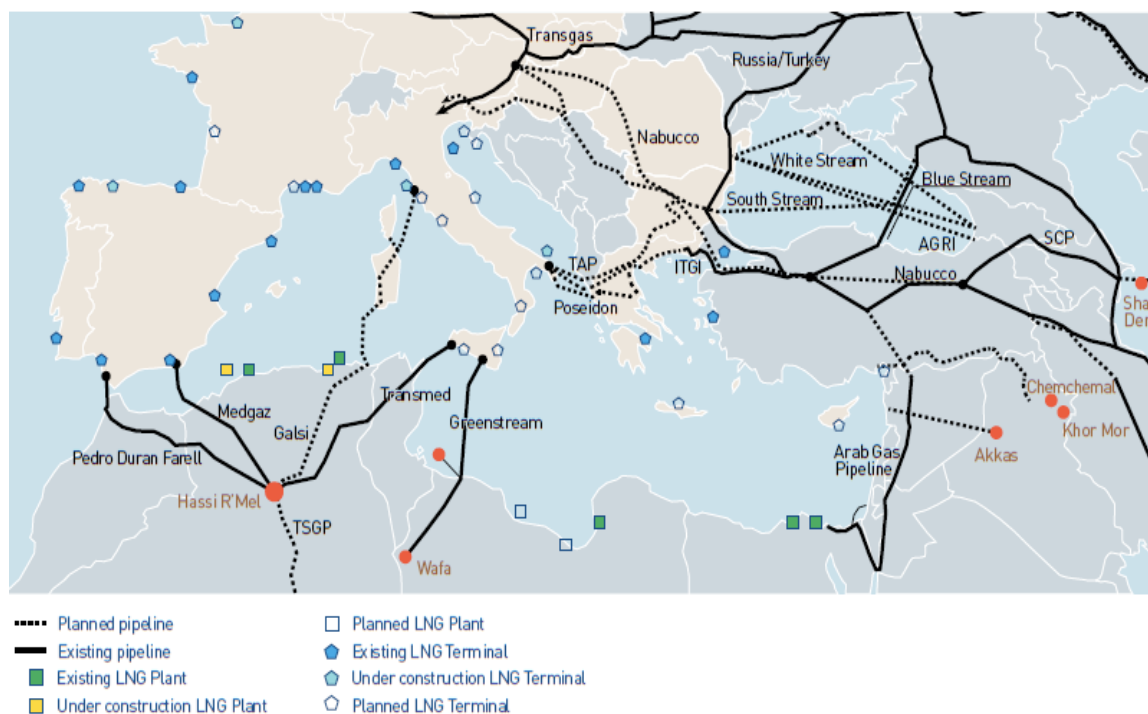
- Arab Gas Pipeline (Egypt-Jordan-Lebanon-Syria), 2003, 10 bcm/year;
- Russia-Turkey (first onshore pipeline to Turkey), 1987, 14 bcm/year;
- Blue Stream (Russia-Turkey, direct submarine), 2004, 16 bcm/year;
- South Caucasus Gas Pipeline (Azerbaijan-Turkey), 2007, 7 bcm/year; and
- Egypt-Israel Pipeline (Arish-Ashkelon, submarine), 2008, 9 bcm/year.

There are also seven LNG plants in the SEMCs, for a total capacity of more than 44 bcm/year (more than 13 percent of the world's installed capacity). Four LNG plants are located in Algeria, another two in Egypt, and one in Libya.

Several different, international oil pipelines connect the Mediterranean region with neighboring countries and regions. Two international oil pipelines are located in the Northern Mediterranean area (the Transalpine Pipeline from Trieste to Germany crossing Austria, and the South Europe Pipeline from Marseille to Germany), one in the southeast (in Egypt: Suez-Mediterranean or SUMED Pipeline), two in the northeast (in Turkey: the Iraq-Turkey Pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline), and finally two in the Eastern Mediterranean (the Trans-Arabian Crude Oil Pipeline (TAP) from the Arabian Gulf across Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, and the Iraq-Syria pipeline), both of which have not been in operation for several decades for geopolitical reasons.

The Arab Spring has not affected oil and gas cooperation in the Mediterranean, as the new governments that emerged from the political uprisings have kept their export and transit

Figure 2 – The natural gas infrastructure in the Mediterranean region



Source: Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Énergie.

commitments and contracts.⁸⁷ The only exception to this trend is Egypt. In 2011, after the January 25 revolution, many Egyptians called for a stop to gas exports to Israel. This unilateral halt effectively materialized in 2012. With this decision, Israeli-Egyptian relations reached their lowest level since the 1979 peace treaty.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ H. Darbouche and B. Fattouh, "The Implications of the Arab Uprisings for Oil and Gas Markets," *Oxford Institute for Energy Studies Working Papers*, No. MEP 2, September 2011, <http://www.oxfordenergy.org/2011/09/the-implications-of-the-arab-uprisings-for-oil-and-gas-markets>.

⁸⁸ For a critical discussion of the natural gas developments in Egypt after the Arab Spring, see S. Tagliapietra, "Towards a New Eastern Mediterranean Energy Corridor? Natural Gas Developments Between Market Opportunities and Geopolitical Risks," *FEEM Nota di Lavoro*, No. 12.2013, February 2013, <http://www.feem.it/getpage.aspx?id=5321>.

Transatlantic Cooperation in the Mediterranean After the Arab Spring Enhancing Hydrocarbon Cooperation

The Potential Role of Turkey as Energy Hub

The Mediterranean region is strategically located at the crossroads of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. This makes it an important transit corridor for global energy markets. In particular, Turkey is the country best placed of all the SEMCs in terms of energy transit, as it is located at the centre of 68 percent of the world's oil reserves and 75 percent of the world's natural gas reserves.⁸⁹

A web of pipelines already crosses Turkey, carrying hydrocarbons along east–west and north–south

⁸⁹ British Petroleum (BP), *Statistical Review of World Energy* 2013, June 2013, http://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/pdf/statistical-review/statistical_review_of_world_energy_2013.pdf.

Figure 3 – Oil pipelines in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf



Source: U.S. Department of Energy.

energy corridors. Two international oil pipelines link Iraq and the Caspian Basin (Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan) to the energy hub of Ceyhan: the Kirkuk–Ceyhan pipeline and the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline. In addition, the Samsun–Ceyhan oil pipeline project seeks to decrease the tanker traffic through the Turkish Straits, where navigation is particularly difficult at the narrowest point and where an accident, if it were to occur,

would have enormous environmental consequences for the megacity of Istanbul. The Kirkuk–Ceyhan pipeline is presently strongly underutilized due to political problems between the Federal Iraqi Government in Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional Government in Erbil. The transatlantic partners could play an important role in ensuring

the proper exit of Iraqi oil and the implementation of a bypass route for the Turkish Straits.⁹⁰

Turkey could also become a natural gas transit country, and potentially even a hub at the Eastern Mediterranean energy crossroads.⁹¹ The transatlantic partners should focus attention on this prospect, as natural gas imports will continue to play an increasingly important role in the European energy scene in the coming decades.⁹²

In 2008, the European Commission formally launched the idea of the Southern Gas Corridor, an initiative aimed to develop natural gas transit from Caspian and Middle Eastern gas-rich regions to Europe, in order to decrease the dependency on natural gas imported from the Russian Federation.⁹³ This natural gas corridor is currently being designed, and includes a number of different infrastructure projects on the table. However, even if these various pipeline projects differ in their paths, they will all transit throughout Turkey. This, combined with the fact that Russia intends to reduce Ukraine's role in transit through bypass pipelines (Nordstream and South Stream for Europe and Bluestream for Turkey), will contribute to shifting the "center of gravity" of regional gas transit from the North to the South of the Black

Sea. This prospect will allow Turkey potentially to become a significant transit country in the future European gas market, a pivotal element in the architecture for security of supply of European gas.⁹⁴

The potential role of Turkey as the regional natural gas hub becomes even more relevant when considering that an important geological reassessment of the hydrocarbon reserves of the Eastern Mediterranean area is presently ongoing. This could change the geopolitical scenario of an area in which Turkey, also because of the still open question of Cyprus, is active and influential. Moreover, Turkey is the country best placed to deal with Iran and Iraq. After years of under-exploitation, the gas reserves of these countries would represent an enormous and unprecedented opportunity for European and U.S. energy companies and for Turkey itself, as it would see a further increase in its geostrategic importance as a regional natural gas hub. Considering the composition of Turkey's natural gas imports and the aforementioned prospects related to the development of the Southern Gas Corridor, it is clear that Turkey's relations with gas-producing countries such as Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Iran, and Iraq will be critical for the country's and the EU's future energy security.

For all these reasons, the transatlantic partners should enhance their cooperation with Turkey in the energy sector, notably establishing a new cooperation scheme on gas. This could address the framework for the transport of natural gas through Turkey to the EU. Full extension and implementation of EU regulations to Turkey, promotion of direct contracts, and development of dedicated infrastructure would be important in this respect. It would be of mutual interest

⁹⁰ For a comprehensive discussion of the various issues related to restrictions of passage, accidents, and their impact on oil supply security, also with a particular focus on the Turkish Straits, see G. Luciani, *Security of Oil Supplies: Issues and Remedies*, Deventer, Claeys & Casteels, 2013 (European Energy Studies No. 4).

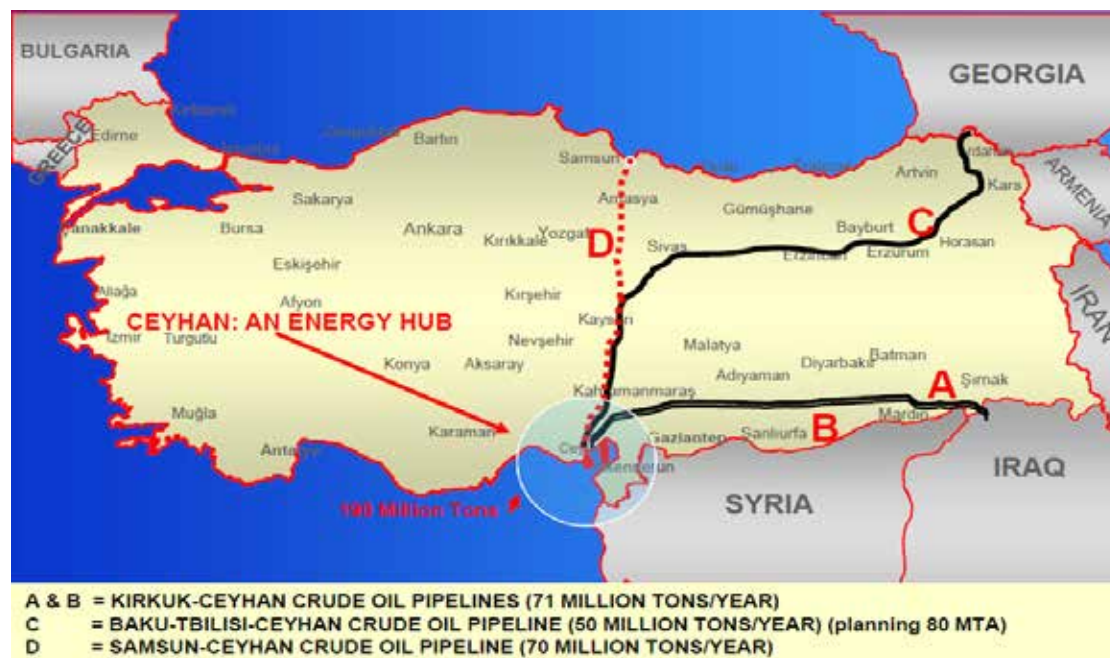
⁹¹ S. Tagliapietra, "The Rise of Turkey and the New Mediterranean: Challenges and Opportunities for Energy Cooperation in a Region in Transition," *FEEM Nota di Lavoro*, No. 66.2012, September 2012, <http://www.feem.it/getpage.aspx?id=5048>.

⁹² European Commission, *Energy Roadmap 2050* (COM(2011) 885 final), December 15, 2011, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52011dc0885:en:not>.

⁹³ European Commission, *Second Strategic Energy Review. An EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan* (COM(2008) 781 final), November 13, 2008, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52008dc0781:en:not>.

⁹⁴ J.-M. Glachant et al., *A New Architecture for EU Gas Security of Supply*, Deventer, Claeys & Casteels, 2012 (European Energy Studies No. 1).

Figure 4 – Oil pipelines across Turkey (existing and planned)



Source: Botas.

to ensure that the Anatolian routes included in the Southern Gas Corridor will be sufficiently large to accommodate future increased volumes of gas. Cooperation in developing the necessary infrastructure for the purposes of bi-directional flows and in constructing LNG terminals and relevant storage facilities will be central to enhancing diversification of routes and sources and developing Turkey as a regional natural gas hub.

The Potential Role of Syria and Other Southeast Mediterranean Countries for Oil Transit

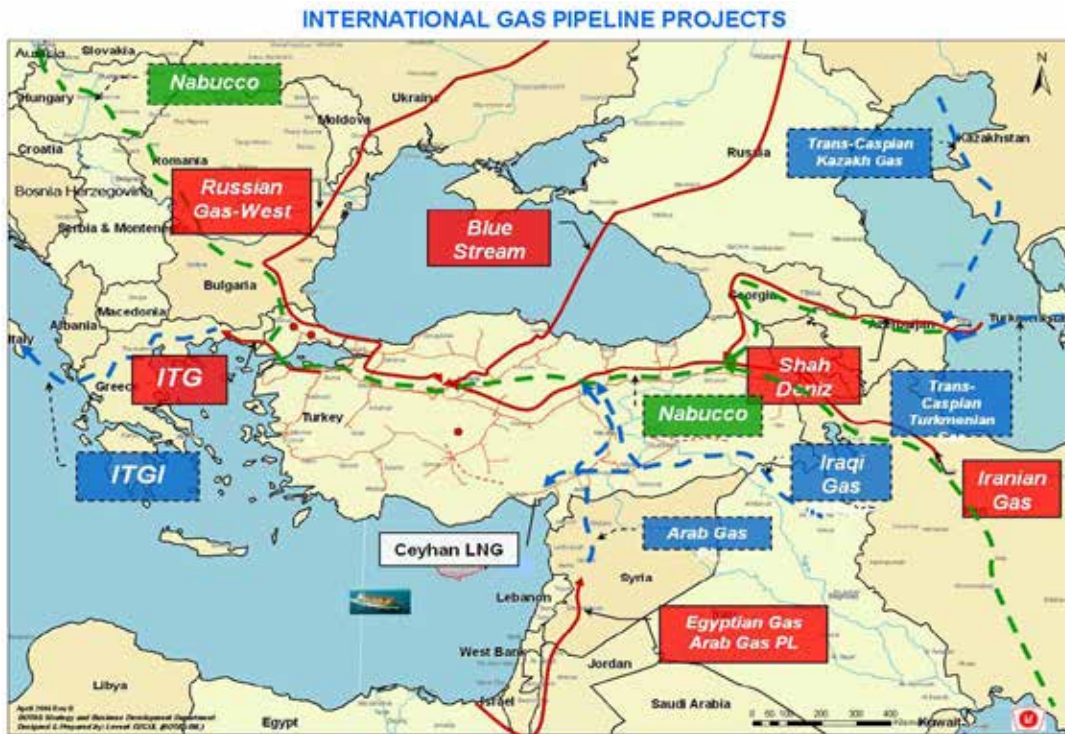
Syria could play an important role in terms of energy transit, as it is also geographically located at the crossroads of the regional energy routes. Two international pipelines already cross Syria. They are designed to carry hydrocarbons from the Middle East to the East Mediterranean: the Trans-Arabian Crude Oil Pipeline (TAP) and the

Iraq-Syria pipeline.⁹⁵ However, for political reasons neither has been operational for decades. And given the ongoing civil war, it is difficult to imagine new cooperation in the country anytime soon. Yet, this situation could rapidly evolve were there a regime change in the country following the ongoing political unrest. Therefore, the transatlantic partners should keep this opportunity in mind, in that it could change the energy transit map of the entire region and diversify the Gulf region's oil export routes toward the Mediterranean.

Trans-Arabian Crude Oil Pipeline. Currently not operational, this pipeline — inaugurated in 1950 — transported Saudi Arabian oil from the Gulf fields to the Lebanese oil terminal in Zahrani, south of Sidon. From there, it was shipped to markets in

⁹⁵ M. Hafner, S. Tagliapietra, and E.H. El Elandalousi, "Outlook for Oil and Gas in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries," *cit.*

Figure 5 – Gas pipelines across Turkey (existing and planned)



Source: Botas.

Europe and the eastern United States seaboard. (The pipeline's route was designed to circumvent Palestine and thus went through Jordan, over the Golan Heights in Syria to Sidon in Lebanon.) At the peak of its operations, the pipeline transported nearly 30 percent of Saudi Aramco's oil production. After years of continual bickering between Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Lebanon over transit fees and pipeline breakdowns, and with the emergence of oil supertankers, the section of the line beyond Jordan ceased operation in 1976. The remainder of the line between Saudi Arabia and Jordan continued to transport modest amounts of oil until 1990, when Saudi Arabia cut off the pipeline in response to Jordan's support of Iraq during the first Gulf War.

Iraq-Syria or Kirkuk-Baniyas Pipeline. This 800 km crude oil pipeline runs from the Kirkuk oil

field in Iraq to the port of Baniyas in Syria and has a capacity of 300,000 barrels per day. The pipeline, operative since 1952, was damaged during the U.S. air strikes of 2003 and has remained out of operation since then. In 2007, Syria and Iraq agreed to restore the pipeline, however, Stroytransgaz — a Russian engineering and construction company in the field of oil and gas — failed to start the restoration and the contract was nullified in 2009. As restoration of the existing pipeline would, in the end, be more costly than building a new one, in September 2010, Iraq and Syria agreed to build two new Kirkuk-Baniyas pipelines. One, with a capacity of 1.5 million barrels per day (bbl/d), is to carry heavier crude oil, while the other pipeline, with a capacity of 1.25 million bbl/d, is to carry lighter crude oil. But these export pipelines have now been put on hold because of the situation in Syria.

In the meantime, with the Iraqi Federal Government in Baghdad's disputes with the Kurdistan Regional Government in Erbil and the strong decline in exports from Kirkuk to Turkey, Iraq is highly dependent on expansion of the Southern Basra export pipeline, planned with the Iraq Crude Oil Export Expansion Project leading to the Fao Terminal on the Persian Gulf. Moreover, Iraq has recently proposed building a pipeline across Jordan to the Red Sea port of Aqaba. Currently, not insignificant quantities of Iraqi oil are already being transported through Jordan by truck. Another solution the Iraqi government is pursuing is a renegotiation of the "Yanbu" pipeline crossing the Saudi Arabian Peninsula from the Arabian Gulf to the Red Sea, which was closed by Saudi Arabia in 1991 after the first Iraqi war.

According to the International Energy Agency, Iraqi oil exports are expected to triple over the next two decades, making Iraq one of the most important oil exporters in the world. Thus it is important to develop diversified and secure export routes to world markets. Transatlantic cooperation could be crucial in ensuring that new and secure oil export routes also materialize toward the Mediterranean, which has always been the oil entry point for the Atlantic Basin economies.

The Suez Canal. Egypt plays a strategic role in regional oil transit, notably because of two important structures: the Suez Canal and the SUMED oil pipeline (which, if combined, are responsible for over 3 million bbl/d of crude oil flows into the Mediterranean). The Suez Canal (owned and managed by the Suez Canal Authority) is an important transit route for oil from the Middle East to Europe. The Suez Canal is a 193-km one-lane waterway in Egypt, connecting Port Said on the Mediterranean Sea with Port Toufiq on the Red Sea. LNG volumes transported via the Suez Canal have increased considerably over the last years: southbound LNG originating in Algeria and

Egypt, destined for Asian markets, and northbound transit, mostly from Qatar and Oman, destined for European and North American markets. The rapid growth in LNG flows is due to the start-up of five LNG trains in Qatar in 2009-10. The only alternate route for LNG tankers would be around Africa, as there is no pipeline infrastructure to offset any Suez Canal disruptions. Countries such as the U.K., Belgium, and Italy receive most of their LNG imports via the Suez Canal.

The SUMED oil pipeline. this oil pipeline crosses Egypt parallel to the Suez Canal from the Ain al-Sokhna terminal on the Gulf of Suez to the Sidi Kerir terminal on the Mediterranean coast, West of Alexandria. The pipeline allows large tankers to unload their cargoes fully or partially into the pipeline at Ain al-Sokhna, to navigate the Suez Canal in ballast or partly laden, and to reload the cargoes to full capacity at Sidi Kerir. Alternatively, supertankers can unload oil into the pipeline at Ain al-Sokhna and other vessels can then transport the oil from Sidi Kerir to Europe or other destinations. Throughputs of the SUMED pipeline are expected to increase as European countries import more oil from the Middle East. Transatlantic cooperation could focus on making sure that no supply disruptions occur in Egypt in the aftermath of the Arab Spring.

Natural Gas Developments in the Eastern Mediterranean

Several natural gas findings in the Eastern Mediterranean are reshaping the regional energy map and rapidly turning the Levant Basin into a world-class natural gas province.⁹⁶ The turning point in terms of natural gas discoveries in the area came in 2009, when Noble Energy announced the discovery of the Tamar field (250 bcm) offshore Israel. After this first major discovery, Noble

⁹⁶ For a comprehensive analysis of this issue, see S. Tagliapietra, "Towards a New Eastern Mediterranean Energy Corridor? ...," *cit.*

Energy announced two more major findings in the Levant Basin: the Leviathan field (476 bcm) offshore Israel (2010) and the Aphrodite field (140-220 bcm) offshore Cyprus (2011). Other natural gas reserves are likely to be discovered in offshore Lebanon, Gaza, and Greece.

In November 2012, Israel, Cyprus, and Greece signed an agreement to set up working groups to discuss an Eastern Mediterranean Energy Corridor meant to enable gas exports from Israel and Cyprus to Greece. There are three main options on the table, but none of them front runners as yet: a) a joint Israel-Cyprus LNG plant at Vassilikos, Cyprus; b) an LNG plant in Israel; and c) an East Med pipeline that could carry Cypriot and Israeli gas to Europe. Another proposal on the table is the construction of an EuroAsia Electricity Interconnector from Israel and Cyprus to Greece.

The emergent energy axis between Israel, Cyprus, and Greece represents a new factor in the Mediterranean geopolitical landscape. It could be an element of potential destabilization in the region as well as a source of new tensions with Turkey. Most recently, as the prospects of a new LNG liquefier facility in Cyprus faded away, those of an Israeli-Turkish pipeline seem to have gained steam, thus triggering a rapprochement between Tel Aviv and Ankara.⁹⁷

The EU has a primary interest in Eastern Mediterranean natural gas prospects, as natural gas will continue to play an important and increasing role in the European energy mix in the coming decades. The European Commission recently stated in its Energy Roadmap 2050⁹⁸ that natural gas will be critical for the transformation of the

energy system, foreseeing that medium-term European gas demand will stay high, especially in the power generation sector. In 2010, about 80 percent of EU gas imports came from only three suppliers: the Russian Federation, Norway, and Algeria. This heavy dependence on so few suppliers persuaded the European Commission to make diversification a cornerstone of its energy policy. Because of the strong geopolitical issues related to gas infrastructure, this has been interpreted broadly to include both diversification of suppliers and diversification of transit countries. To that end, a new Eastern Mediterranean Energy Corridor would be of prime importance for the EU and its energy outlook.

The United States has an interest in maximizing the gains and minimizing the risks associated with natural gas developments in the Eastern Mediterranean. Key elements of the U.S. foreign policy in the region are:

- to support Israel's security;
- to provide an incentive for political reconciliation among states in the region; and
- to promote European energy security through supply diversification.

The increasingly tense relationship between Israel and Turkey has in recent years become one of Washington's most delicate and unwelcome foreign policy challenges. It is thus possible to expect that the United States will try to ensure that energy rivalry does not spark a crisis that complicates its efforts to promote an eventual reconciliation. Furthermore, the United States has another reason to ensure stability in the area: the natural gas development activity in the Levant Basin is led by a U.S. company, Noble Energy.

⁹⁷ D. Huber and N. Tocci, "Behind the Scenes of the Turkish-Israeli Breakthrough," *IAI Working Papers*, No. 1315, April 2013, <http://www.iai.it/content.asp?langid=2&contentid=911>.

⁹⁸ European Commission, *Energy Roadmap 2050* (COM(2011) 885 final), *cit.*

Supporting a Sustainable Energy Transition in the Region

The current energy situation in the SEMCs is characterized by a rapid increase in energy demand, low energy efficiency, and low domestic energy prices due to extensive subsidy schemes. All countries' finances are squeezed between strong pressure for increased investments in new energy facilities and the financing of these costly energy subsidies. For example, in 2010, Egyptian energy subsidies accounted for 12 percent of GDP.⁹⁹ At the same time, rapid population growth, urbanization, and economic growth, as well as low energy efficiency, are all adding to rising energy demand, putting pressure on existing infrastructure and necessitating large new investments in electricity and oil and gas. In short, the current energy situation does not appear sustainable and poses several risks to the prospects of socio-economic development in the region.

The SEMCs are endowed with a huge energy efficiency and renewable energy potential and, thanks to ongoing technological and institutional changes, they could make use of this huge potential. The SEMCs should be supported on this new sustainable energy path in several ways: from technical assistance to technological know-how transfer, from institutional support to financial assistance. This is why a new transatlantic approach to Mediterranean energy cooperation in this field could be focused on two key targets: energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Enforcing Energy Efficiency Measures in the Mediterranean Region

Overall, the level of energy efficiency in the SEMCs is very low. Without additional efforts toward energy efficiency, the final energy consumption of

the SEMCs will likely more than double by 2030.¹⁰⁰ Energy efficiency measures are cost effective if they do not need to compete with subsidized energy prices, but even when they are cost competitive, the investment — however minor — often has to be carried out at the household level. The problem is that households often lack the needed information, advice and the needed initial capital to undertake the investment.

The transatlantic partners could play an important role in supporting the development of energy efficiency measures in the SEMCs. Technical assistance programs could easily transfer best practices on energy efficiency, especially for standards and labeling. Financing of small-scale projects and the creation of domestic funds dedicated to supporting households and the investment of small and medium-sized enterprises in energy efficiency would make it easier for the SEMCs to improve their energy efficiency. An example of this has already been provided by the facilities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in Bulgaria and Turkey (the Turkish Sustainable Energy Finance Facility and the Mid-Size Sustainable Energy Financing Facility) and are now under study for several SEMCs.¹⁰¹

Unlocking the Huge Renewable Energy Potential of the Mediterranean Region

While only hydropower potential was exploited in the past (mainly in Turkey, Egypt, and Morocco), presently all countries are developing plans to use other renewable sources, such as sun, wind, and biomass. All the SEMCs have introduced policies related to a more sustainable development of the energy sector, also developing national

⁹⁹ E. Bergasse et al., "The Relationship between Energy and Socio-Economic Development in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean," *MedPro Technical Reports*, No. 27, February 2013, <http://www.ceps.eu/node/7706>.

¹⁰⁰ F. Blanc, "Energy Efficiency: Trends and Perspectives in the Southern Mediterranean," *MedPro Technical Reports*, No. 21, December 2012, <http://www.ceps.eu/node/7537>.

¹⁰¹ EBRD, *Sustainable Energy Financing Facilities*, <http://www.ebrd.com/pages/sector/energyefficiency/sei/financing.shtml>.

targets on renewable energy.¹⁰² Renewable energy can be developed for both domestic and export markets. Renewable energy projects could initially be devoted primarily to diversifying the energy mix, still largely dominated by fossil fuels, thereby contributing to satisfying the rapidly increasing domestic energy demand. This would free up natural gas, now alternatively used in domestic power generation, for export to Europe. Considering that an important but partly underutilized gas infrastructure connecting North Africa with Europe is already in place, this choice would produce immediate, significant economic returns for the SEMCs simply because of the growth in export value of gas stocks.¹⁰³

Considering the SEMCs' announced and committed projects and targets on renewable energy, the region could obtain 31.5 gigawatts (GW) of additional renewable energy capacity by 2020, thus reaching an installed capacity of 54 GW (29 GW hydro and 25 GW of other renewable energy systems excluding hydro). By 2030, the SEMCs can be expected to have approximately 36 GW of hydro and 58 GW of other renewable energy sources. The total renewable energy installed would thus reach 94 GW. In absolute terms, Turkey, Algeria, Egypt, and Morocco are planning the largest increases in renewable energy capacity. Renewable energy excluding hydro is expected to increase by some 21 GW in Turkey, 12 GW in Algeria, 8 GW in Egypt, and 4 GW in Morocco by 2030. All countries focus mainly on wind and solar energy.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Paving the Way for the Mediterranean Solar Plan, *Power System 2020. Infrastructure*, http://www.pavingtheway-msp.eu/index.php?option=com_downloads&task=category&cid=12&Itemid=56.

¹⁰³ For a comprehensive analysis of these issues, see M. Hafner, S. Tagliapietra, and E.H. El Eandaloussi, "Outlook for Electricity and Renewable Energy in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries," *MedPro Technical Reports*, No. 16, October 2012, <http://www.ceps.eu/node/7356>.

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem.

Renewable energy projects could develop significant new industry and service sectors (e.g., installers) leading to local job creation and manufacturing developments.¹⁰⁵ By sharing manufacturing facilities and therefore exploiting larger economies of scale, South-South cooperation could be promoted. This is particularly important in a region that presently has a low level of intra-regional trade.¹⁰⁶ For these programs to be successful, it is important to undertake socio-economic reforms backed by solid strategies, improve governance, rationalize energy pricing structures and subsidy systems, combine energy supply policies with strong energy efficiency policies, find new and original financing instruments to address both centralized and decentralized renewable energy developments, and implement energy efficiency measures. But the core challenge to the production and trade of renewable energy in the SEMCs remains the financing of these projects. For this reason, innovative cooperation schemes aimed at developing new financing methods are needed.

Toward a Future Development Triangle: EU/U.S. - SEMCs - GCC

The transatlantic partners could greatly contribute to increasing energy cooperation in the broader Mediterranean region by facilitating investments from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to SEMCs. In fact, a strong complementarity exists between these regions in the field of renewable energy. The wide availability of capital in the GCC, the enormous renewable energy potential of the SEMCs, with the possibility — considering their geographical proximity — of exporting some of it to Europe, and the political and institutional support

¹⁰⁵ International Renewable Energy Agency, "Renewable Energy Jobs: Status, Prospects & Policies," *IRENA Working Paper*, 2011, <http://www.irena.org/menu/index.aspx?mnu=Subcat&PriMenuID=36&CatID=141&SubcatID=242>.

¹⁰⁶ World Bank, *World Development Indicators database*, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator>.

of the transatlantic partners could represent the three main pillars of a new development triangle.

In the aftermath of the global financial crisis, sovereign wealth funds (SWFs) are among the investors best equipped to navigate financial markets. Besides their traditional activity in financial services and real estate, SWFs have recently shifted their attention to natural resources and associated industries. In particular, funds from the GCC are primarily focused on renewable energy, with the aim of leading the transition from a 20th century carbon-based economy to a 21st century sustainable economy, transforming oil wealth into a global renewable energy leadership.¹⁰⁷ Part of the investment could be directed to the SEMCs, which have among the highest solar energy potentials in the world and are already promoting several large-scale renewable energy projects. The installed power generation capacity from renewable energy in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean area could rise from a level of about 25 GW today to about 100 GW by 2030. This great potential has given rise to two large-scale renewable energy initiatives: the Mediterranean Solar Plan and Desertec. The Mediterranean Solar Plan was launched in 2008 within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean with the primary objective of providing 20 GW of installed capacity from renewable sources by 2020. Desertec is an industrial initiative aimed at generating 50 GW of installed concentrated solar power (CSP) capacity by 2050.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ For a comprehensive analysis of this issue, see S. Tagliapietra, *The Geoeconomics of Sovereign Wealth Funds and Renewable Energy. Towards a New Energy Paradigm in the Euro-Mediterranean Region*, Deventer, Claeys & Casteels, 2012 (European Energy Studies No. 3).

¹⁰⁸ European Commission, *Mediterranean Solar Plan experts' group - strategy paper*, February 10, 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/energy/policies/southern-neighbourhood/msp_en.htm.

However, a number of barriers concerning regulation and policy context, technology transfer, and finance have to be overcome in order to enable the implementation of large-scale renewable energy projects. The policy and regulatory context is also a critical factor in investment decisions and it is central for attracting external sources of finance to renewable energy in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean area. The transatlantic partners could provide an institutional backup and a common regulatory framework able to provide investors such as SWFs with the long-term and stable regulatory context they need. Moreover, the transatlantic partners can also support SWF investments in large-scale renewable energy projects in the SEMCs through their financial facilities devoted to the region such as the EBRD.

The development of large-scale renewable energy projects in the SEMCs could trigger a process of economic and social integration in the broader Mediterranean area. SWFs from the GCC could provide the capital required to fully implement these large-scale renewable energy projects, while the transatlantic partners could deliver the institutional backup, public finance support, and technological expertise required.

Indeed the GCC, the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean area, and the transatlantic partners could well represent the three vertices of a triangle of growth that, if triggered, could foster the economic and social development of the broader Mediterranean region. Moreover, considering that there is a close relationship between large-scale economic interactions and a stable political order, such dynamics could ultimately promote an enlarged area of stability and peace.

Moving Forward: A New “U.S./EU-Med Energy Partnership Initiative”

Efforts for enhanced hydrocarbon cooperation and for more sustainable energy development

Table 2 - SEMCs national targets on renewable energy

Country	National targets
Algeria	15 percent of total electricity will be generated from renewable energy sources (RES) by 2020. This share shall increase to 40 percent by 2030.
Egypt	20 percent of total electricity shall be generated from RES by 2020.
Israel	In 2009, a 10 percent target was established for total electricity generated from RES by 2020. In 2011, a progressive 5 percent target by 2014 was established. The targets are not legally binding.
Jordan	7 percent share of primary energy shall be generated from RES by 2015 and 10 percent by 2020. In order to achieve this target, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR) expects to develop 600 MW wind power, 600 MW solar power, and 30 - 50 MW waste power.
Lebanon	12 percent of electricity and thermal energy will be produced from RES by 2020. The target was reconfirmed in the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan developed by the Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation (LCEC) and approved by the Lebanese Government in 2011 as the main road map for energy efficiency and renewable energy for the years 2011–15.
Morocco	According to the National Energy Strategic Plan, 42 percent of total installed capacity shall be generated from RES by 2020. Targets are defined per RES source: 12 percent of energy efficiency (EE) by 2020 mainly in the building, industry, and transportation sector; 1.7 million msq of solar water heaters (SWH) by 2020.
Syria	Two scenarios are considered. In the alternative scenario, the share of the installed renewable energy will reach 15 percent in 2030 as compared to 1 percent in the reference scenario.
Tunisia	16 percent of total power generation capacity shall be from RES by 2016 and 40 percent by 2030. Defined targets are not binding. Specific targets have been defined for different RES sources.

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

in the SEMCs could be a key element of a new transatlantic energy policy toward the countries emerging from the Arab Spring. This policy could provide important dividends both to the transatlantic partners and to the SEMCs, as far as energy security, sustainable development, economic growth, and job creation are concerned. Obviously, this is an essential matter for the EU but it is also a very important issue for the United States. In fact, the United States' foreign policy in the enlarged

Mediterranean region includes the following objectives:

- to promote political stability in a region that plays a crucial role for the stability of the world economy through its energy supplies;
- to promote European energy security through supply diversification;
- to counter terrorism; and

Figure 6 – A vision for a future MED11-GCC-EU development triangle



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

- to secure the free flow of commerce.

The recent Arab uprisings thus provide the transatlantic partners with the opportunity to play a more meaningful role in the region by working together on the implementation of an integrated regional energy cooperation scheme designed to function as a catalyst for the reinforcement of Euro-Mediterranean economic, political, and social cooperation.

In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, U.S. President Barack Obama presented the idea of establishing a Trade and Investment Partnership Initiative in the Middle East and North Africa in order to work with the EU to facilitate more trade within the region, build on existing agreements to promote integration with U.S. and European markets, and open the door for those countries that adopt high standards of reform and trade liberalization to enter into a regional trade arrangement.¹⁰⁹ This idea, which recognized the urgent need for a joint

U.S.-EU effort in the Mediterranean region, could be implemented by the transatlantic partners with a specific focus first on the energy sector. A new U.S./EU-Med Energy Partnership Initiative could be established with a clear mandate to support the SEMCs in the fields of hydrocarbon infrastructure, energy efficiency, and renewable energy.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) would be the institution best suited to serve as a secretariat for this new initiative. The EBRD is the world's only transition bank and it seeks to finance operations that are both commercially viable and that assist development of the countries involved. It was established in 1991 in response to major changes in the political and economic climate in Central and Eastern Europe, to support the development of market economies in the region. However, in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, with the United States' and EU's strong backing, EBRD shareholders gave unanimous backing to the expansion of the Bank's mandate, allowing future activities in the SEMCs as well. In particular, the Bank is considering investments in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia. So far,

¹⁰⁹ White House, *Factsheet: Economic Support for the Middle East and North Africa*, May 18, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/18/factsheet-economic-support-middle-east-and-north-africa>.

over €59 million in donor funds has been made available for EBRD action in the SEMCs, and the EU has also signed agreements with the bank to provide €20 million under the Neighbourhood Investment Facility.¹¹⁰ These funds will also be directed at the SEMCs' renewable energy sector, as it has been listed among EBRD priorities in the area. The funds presently committed are very small compared to the needs, but considering the experience of the EBRD in regions in transition and the new developments that have intervened

¹¹⁰ EBRD, *The EBRD's Activities in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Region*, December 2012, <http://www.ebrd.com/downloads/research/factsheets/semmed.pdf>.

after the Arab Spring, the EBRD may be expected to play an increasingly important role in the SEMCs in the near future. The transatlantic partners, being the main shareholders of the EBRD, can surely be instrumental in achieving this.

To conclude, it should be underlined that such a new U.S./EU-Med Energy Partnership Initiative could contribute greatly not only to the economic development and environmental performance, but also to the social and political stability of the entire Euro-Mediterranean region. In fact, historical evidence suggests that large-scale economic dynamics and a stable political order are closely linked.

4

NEW REGIONAL DYNAMICS AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

LEILA NACHAWATI

Introduction

In the uprisings that started in Tunisia and spread to the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries (SEMCs), citizens broke years of state monopoly over every form of expression and organization. Until that time, throughout most of the region, from Egypt to Syria, civil society initiatives that did not fall under the umbrella of the official administrations were persecuted by regimes that considered them a threat. New communication technologies have been instrumental in creating a sense of consciousness and empowerment that has led to the awakening that spread throughout the SEMCs and beyond. They have provided citizens, especially the youth, with more informal spaces and ways to meet, communicate, and organize than traditional spaces, where civil society organizations were closely surveilled and censored.

This chapter argues that the new communication dynamics are strongly connected with the idea of revolution from below, as opposed to the revolutions from above that took place in the region in the 1960s. The regional consciousness connected to the idea of pan-Arabism implemented from above has been replaced by a spontaneous decentralized sense of belonging, not controlled by any hierarchical organization and with youth and women playing a crucial role. Horizontal connectivity and participation goes hand-in-hand with the emergence of an awareness of similar challenges, threats, and aspirations across the SEMCs. Given the absence of open media and independent civil society organizations, digital tools and platforms were used to schedule, coordinate, and broadcast the protests, and, as the revolutionary processes evolved, to share and exchange information, strategies, and lessons learned. This included tips on how to protect oneself during demonstrations and one's identity from governmental persecution, ways to improve video-activism, and countless non-violence and civil disobedience tactics. However, the challenges

to this emerging integrationist consciousness based on similar global aspirations for freedom, justice, and accountability are many: the difficulties each country faces and the different nature of each transition, the difficulty in developing a regional political alliance, and the increasing sophistication of surveillance and harassment through new forms of communication.

Integration from Above

Integration was at the core of pan-Arabism and the post-colonial rhetoric of the Baath parties in Syria and Iraq. Gamal Abdel Nasser's Arab nationalist movement in Egypt and others across the Arab countries.¹¹¹ These parties focused on the idea that unification of Arab countries would come naturally after gaining independence from European colonizers. With Islam and the Arab language as references, they pointed at the unity of Arabs as a project sabotaged, again and again, by imperialist forces coming from the outside. These are historically known as the "revolutions from above," which were in fact military coups that had mass popular support.¹¹²

Within these "revolutions from above," there was an inherent contradiction between the idea of integration and the slogans used by the leaders of the different countries: "Egypt first," the famous slogan popularized by Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat; "Jordan first,"¹¹³ used by the Hashemite monarchy; and "Syria first," implemented on the ground by the Assad regime. These "sultanistic" dictators, as Goldstone calls them, worked to expand their personal power at the expense of

¹¹¹ Y.M. Choueiri, *Arab Nationalism: A History. Nation and State in the Arab World*, Oxford and Malden, Blackwell, 2000.

¹¹² R.A. Hinnebusch, *Syria. Revolution from Above*, London and New York, Routledge, 2001.

¹¹³ C.R. Ryan, "'Jordan First': Jordan's Inter-Arab Relations and Foreign Policy under King Abdullah II," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 3, Summer 2004, pp. 43-62, <http://libres.uncg.edu/ir/asu/listing.aspx?id=6802>.

formal institutions, and made every effort to keep the masses depoliticized and unorganized by weakening the electoral systems and political infrastructures.¹¹⁴ Inter-Arab politics, as Maddy-Weitzman argues, has generally been characterized by a higher degree of conflict than cooperation.¹¹⁵

The closest the region came to political integration was the Egyptian-Syrian United Arab Republic, which lasted from 1958 until 1961. The Union involved subordinating to one leader, which met with both governments' resistance. The inability to find a suitable political system for the new regime and the fact that other countries, such as Jordan and Iraq, felt threatened by this alliance, contributed to burying the hope for a regional union, which was never really a priority for the governments involved anyway. It was clear that the leaders of the Gulf states, such as Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, also had little interest in giving up any of their oil wealth and power to contribute to a common project. The Arab League, founded in 1945 under the umbrella of a common linguistic and religious heritage, has remained a strictly intergovernmental organization, with no mechanisms for creating supranational legislation or for taking binding decisions. Focused on their own interests and with most of their energy and resources dedicated to maintaining control of their citizens, the self-imposed governments of the region never showed any real will to invest in a common regional project.

¹¹⁴ J.A. Goldstone, "Understanding the Revolutions of 2011," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 90, No. 3, May/June 2011, pp. 8-16.

¹¹⁵ B. Maddy-Weitzman, "The Arab Regional System and the Arab Spring," in S. Calleya and M. Wohlfeld (eds.), *Change and Opportunities in the Emerging Mediterranean*, Malta, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, 2012, pp. 82-94, http://www.um.edu.mt/medac/publications/book_publications.

As Halim Barakat observed, pan-Arab regimes practiced a peculiar brand of Arabism.¹¹⁶ They controlled mass media and education to promote their own legitimacy under the umbrella of a regional project. They altered the vocabulary of Arabism to accommodate ideas and concepts designed to highlight personal worship, regional differences, and local particularities.

Integration from Below

Unlike the official rhetoric espoused by the pan-Arabist parties, the integration potential resulting from the 2011 uprisings is based on an increased consciousness from below, emerging from the movement of the people in a revolutionary manner through shared experiences, narratives, and common goals.

The idea of an Arab community — which was theorized as a political ideology by authoritarian regimes from above for so long — has for the first time in recent history come together in a spontaneous decentralized manner. The Tunisian uprising and the rapid fall of the regime inspired its neighbors, who shared similar problems and demands, and the changes that followed gave further hope to the rest. No government employee, no general, no leader ordered people to take to the streets. In the words of Moroccan activist and director of the Global Voices Advocacy, Hisham Almiraat:

This sense of belonging to that mass of protesters is the most fulfilling and uniting feeling. During the upheavals in Tunisia, Cairo, Benghazi, Sanaa, Damascus, people across the region were stuck to their TV sets for a reason. They felt that the story unfolding before their eyes was theirs as well, even if they were

¹¹⁶ H. Barakat, "Arab Identity: E Pluribus Unum," in H. Barakat, *The Arab World. Society, Culture and State*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993, pp. 32-47, <http://www.teachmideast.org/essays/36-people/44-arab-identity>.

living in as an eccentric a place as El Jadida, Morocco.¹¹⁷

Despite the importance of local aspects and the differences between countries, the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa are part of a regional movement, strongly connected to a sense of belonging that had a significant physical manifestation in the peaceful demonstrations that spread throughout the region. As a Yemeni citizen quoted in “Days of a Syrian in Yemen” said, “the revolution unveils people’s tragedy and makes them stand closer to one another.”¹¹⁸

It is within this framework that the participation of both youth and women in the uprisings should be understood.¹¹⁹ Under the repressive regimes of the region, political and civil rights were severely restricted, and the agendas of women and young people were excluded. The uprisings offered women a space to engage, hand-in-hand with men, in the protests and the logistics behind them.¹²⁰ They participated in all forms of civil activism, from recording and disseminating information to civil disobedience initiatives. They have been a consistent voice in the demands and agendas for democracy, as exemplified by the Coalition of Women’s NGOs in Egypt, the importance of female

¹¹⁷ Interview with the author, January 11, 2012.

¹¹⁸ M. Al Attar, “Days of a Syrian in Yemen” (in Arabic), *An-Nahar*, February 16, 2013.

¹¹⁹ Almost two-thirds of the population of the Arab world is now under 30 years of age. At the same time, the Arab unemployment rate has reached 14.4 percent, more than double the world average (6.3 percent). P. Caridi, “Civil Society, Youth, and the Internet,” in S. Colombo, P. Caridi, J. Kinninmont, “New Socio-Political Actors in North Africa: A Transatlantic Perspective,” *Mediterranean Paper Series*, February 2012, pp. 1-8, <http://www.gmfus.org/archives/new-socio-political-actors-in-north-africa-a-transatlantic-perspective>.

¹²⁰ C. Regan, “Women, Citizenship and Change: The Role of the Women’s Movement in the Arab World,” in S. Calleya and M. Wohlfeld (eds.), *Change and Opportunities in the Emerging Mediterranean*, Malta, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, 2012, pp. 234-251, http://www.um.edu.mt/medac/publications/book_publications.

activist Tawakul Karman in Yemen, and the pivotal political role of women within the Syrian struggle against the Assad regime.¹²¹

Within this framework, the emergence of a non-violent civil disobedience movement led by young men and women questioning traditional patriarchal societies is a powerful expression of people’s mistrust of traditional power structures. The engagement of citizens in civil disobedience and peaceful resistance tactics, influencing others in and outside the region, has contributed to a sense of belonging in the face of traditional power structures that do not represent them.

Non-Violence and the Integrationist Consciousness

While the non-violence movement in the SEMCs has influenced mobilizations in Europe and the United States, it has also been inspired by the Palestinian peaceful resistance, which has remained a reference for the struggle against injustice. For decades, Palestine was the focus of protests in the region. It constituted an outlet for frustration that served repressive regimes, but it was also the vehicle for mobilization and a training ground for political organization that became useful for activists. On the other hand, there is now a sort of role reversal, as researcher Nour Joudah notes:

The Arab uprisings across the region are serving Palestinian youth in much the same way solidarity with past Palestinian intifadas served activists and populations in Arab countries. Nowadays, it is Palestinians who have been projecting their own frustrations through solidarity protests.¹²²

¹²¹ R. Allaf, “Syrian Women, Backbone of the Revolution,” *Bitterlemons*, Vol. 10, No. 2, January 12, 2012, <http://www.bitterlemons-international.org/inside.php?id=1483>.

¹²² N. Joudah, “Who Says Palestinian Resistance is Dead?” *Electronic Intifada*, February 3, 2012, <http://electronicintifada.net/content/who-says-palestinian-resistance-dead/10891>.

Regarding the role of emotional connections and the imagery of popular uprisings, Joudah adds:

No one watching the coverage of the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, and other countries could help but recall images of the first Palestinian intifada — young boys standing in front of armored vehicles, unarmed and defiant.

Examples of non-violent initiatives can be found all over the region, from Egypt to Morocco, where the February 20 youth movement brought thousands to the streets. The most significant case is probably Syria, where activists have faced the most serious crackdown. The Daraya Youth Group, born in 1998 in Damascus, was known for handing flowers and bottles of water to soldiers sent to crack down on protesters.¹²³

Within the civil resistance movements, integrationist consciousness has manifested itself through endless emotional connections and cultural and artistic expressions. If the revolutions that took place in the region in the 1950s led to a renaissance of theater in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Palestine, the events of the Arab Spring have provoked a resurgence of creativity in music, literature, theater, and all forms of art and culture, transcending local differences.

One example of that renaissance is the wave of graffiti that has spread throughout the Middle East and North Africa. From Tunisia¹²⁴ to Syria,¹²⁵ graffiti and street art have emerged as powerful

forms of expression connected to grassroots movements and activism. Such art forms, which can fall under the label of civil disobedience and peaceful expression movements, are the most immediate means the people have to express ownership of their countries, identities, and values.¹²⁶ They are full of references to the region's struggle and foster a dialogue that was not possible under the old authoritarian systems.

The common references range from the chants that were first pronounced in Tunisia and then spread to every country to the slogans written on walls all over the region. "The people want to overthrow the regime," a motto for Tunisians and Egyptians, was later used by Syrians, including children who painted it on their school wall in Daraa and were arrested by regime forces, marking the beginning of the Syrian uprising. The same songs were repeated over and over such as "Yalla ir7al ya Bashar" ("Come on, leave Bashar") popularized by Ibrahim Kashoush, who was killed by regime forces when his lyrics became an anthem for the Syrian uprising. But the song has survived the singer, and citizens from countries such as Morocco continue to sing it with slight differences to adjust it to their own context. The slogans, songs, and references that have spread throughout the region were taboo for decades, and their expression through diverse artistic and creative forms highlights the historic nature of these movements, which question governments that were unquestionable until very recently.

Despite the increasing militarization of the uprisings, the non-violence narrative remains at the heart of the movements, as a force that counters and threatens the core of inherently violent systems. Within this narrative, women have played a crucial role, from Maryam Alkhawaja in Bahrain, to Razan

¹²³ M. Kahf, "Water Bottles and Roses," *Mashallah News*, November 21, 2011, <http://mashallahnews.com/?p=5938>.

¹²⁴ A. Abrougui, "Two Tunisian Graffiti Artists to Face Trial," *Global Voices*, November 20, 2012, <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2012/11/20/two-tunisian-artists-to-face-trial-for-drawing-graffiti>.

¹²⁵ R. Alhames, "Graffiti War on Syrian Walls," *Global Voices*, January 13, 2013, <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2013/01/13/graffiti-war-on-syrian-walls>.

¹²⁶ S. Zunes, "Nonviolent Revolution in the Middle East," *Peace Review*, Vol. 23, No. 3, September 2011, pp. 396-403.

Figure 7 — Defend yourself like Tunisians do



Source: “Defend yourself like Tunisians do,” by the Syrian artist group The Syrian people know their way, <https://secure.flickr.com/photos/3aref/6796749117/in/photostream>

Figure 8 — Defend yourself like Palestinians do



Source: “Defend yourself like Palestinians do,” by the Syrian artist group The Syrian people know their way, <https://secure.flickr.com/photos/3aref/6796732235/in/photostream>

Figure 9 — Defend yourself like Greeks do



Source: “Defend yourself like Greeks do,” by the Syrian artist group The Syrian people know their way, <https://secure.flickr.com/photos/3aref/6796733945/in/photostream>

Zaytouna and the “Brides of Peace” in Syria.¹²⁷ One of the most recent examples is the “The Uprising of Women in the Arab World”¹²⁸ initiative, which

¹²⁷ Rima Dali, Rowa Jafar, and sisters Kinda and Lobna Zaour were arrested for dressing in bridal gowns and veils, carrying red banners with white lettering that said “Stop all military operations in Syria.” M. Kahf, “In the Middle of Madness, Four Women March for Nonviolence in Syria,” *Fellowship of Reconciliation*, November 25, 2012, <http://forusa.org/blogs/mohja-kahf/middle-madness-four-women-march-for-nonviolence-syria/11408>.

¹²⁸ Facebook group page: <https://www.facebook.com/intifadat.almar2a>.

has attracted regional and worldwide solidarity. The administrators of the Facebook group, who started a page to create synchronized events, have worked on making the virtual uprising physical, thanks to a photo campaign launched in October 2012. Thousands of women from across the SEMCs, especially from Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria, have taken part in this initiative, which is connected to an increase in both citizen empowerment and regional consciousness.

In the administrators’ own words, “the most incredible thing about the Arab Spring is not only the fall of the dictators but it’s this global solidarity created between the citizens, which doesn’t exist at all at a state level. The governments never support each other — the Arab League is a joke.”¹²⁹

Web-Enabled Transfers Challenge Old Media Outlets

Connectivity and web-enabled transfer have been instrumental to citizen empowerment in the face of authoritarian regimes, which have engaged in promoting their isolation for decades. In the words

¹²⁹ I. Stoughton, “Arab Women’s Virtual Uprising Goes Physical,” *Waging Nonviolence*, February 11, 2013, <http://wagingnonviolence.org/2013/02/arab-womens-virtual-uprising-goes-physical>.

of Goldstone, regimes in the SEMCs developed “an interlocking system of restrictive laws and several security apparatuses that monitor and pervade every aspect of social life to keep all potential opposition forces weak and fragmented.”¹³⁰ This included the imposition of strict surveillance, media control¹³¹ and harassment to ensure that citizens stayed disconnected, isolated from one another and passive.

Due to governmental pressure against organized dissent, young people were pushed to find more informal, less surveilled ways to gather and build a political community.¹³² By the time the uprisings started, citizens had been working and sharing strategies and experiences through very efficient use of Internet tools and platforms for years. Online spaces like the Tunisian collective blog Nawaat.org,¹³³ Facebook pages like “We are all Khaled Said,”¹³⁴ and countless others, were instrumental in denouncing human rights abuses in the region and inspired similar projects. New media and online spaces gave activists the possibility to engage in discussion, organization, and innovation in a way that was not possible in physical spaces within

¹³⁰ M. Zaki, *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World. Annual Report 2007*, Cairo, Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies, 2007, p. 15.

¹³¹ J. Khazen, “Censorship and State Control of the Press in the Arab World,” *The Harvard International Journal of Press Politics*, Vol. 4 No. 3, June 1999, pp. 87-92, https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/harvard_international_journal_of_press_politics/v004/4.3khazen.html.

¹³² See P. Caridi, “Civil Society, Youth and the Internet,” *cit.* In this paper, Caridi elaborates on the role of the virtual agora as a space for dissents, who suffered enormous pressure and surveillance.

¹³³ Nawaat.org is an award-winning collective blog created in April 2004 and blocked in Tunisia until January 2011.

¹³⁴ The “We are all Khaled Said” Facebook page served as a vent for the outrage ignited by the murder of young Egyptian blogger Khaled Said. See J. Preston, “Movement Began With Outrage and a Facebook Page That Gave It an Outlet,” *The New York Times*, February 5, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/06/world/middleeast/06face.html>.

a context of crackdown against more traditional forms of communication.

According to the 2012 Arab Spring Social Media Report, the region has seen both continued growth in the number of social media users and an evolution in the types of usage that has built on the political empowerment brought about by social media in the region.¹³⁵ In 2012 alone, Facebook grew by 29 percent in the SEMCs, adding over 10 million new users and reaching 50 million. Youth between the ages of 15 and 29 make up around 70 percent. Twitter, with 70 million tweets a day in Arabic, reached 2 million users in 2012. The video-sharing platform, Youtube, with 167 million video views a day in the region, has become the primary social networking platform establishing strong convergence between traditional broadcast media and social media in the SEMCs.

Within this scenario, citizen journalism emerged as a civil society institution challenging traditional structures. With international journalists banned, and traditional domestic media under state control, citizens used cameras and mobile phones to document the situation in their countries and turned to the Internet and social media to share their recordings.¹³⁶

This emerging civil society institution clashed with governmental institutions and testified to the increasing divide between traditional power structures and citizens’ demands throughout the region. Events such as the 40th conference of the

¹³⁵ For further information on the impact of social media on freedom of expression and media consumption behaviors, on the empowerment of youth and women, and its role in popular civic movements, see Fadi Salem and Racha Mourtada, “Social Media in the Arab World: Influencing Societal and Cultural Change?,” *Arab Social Media Report*, No. 4, July 2012, <http://www.dsg.ae/en/publication/Description.aspx?PubID=306>.

¹³⁶ N. Jurgenson, “When Atoms Meet Bits: Social Media, the Mobile Web, and Augmented Revolution,” *Future Internet*, Vol. 4, No. 1, March 2012, p. 83-91, <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/fi4010083>.

Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA), held in Bahrain in December 2012, were manifestations of this divide. FANA, which consists of what many Arab Internet users refer to as “media dinosaurs,” represents an archaic media system that speaks with an authoritative tone and a lack of credibility. According to journalist Brian Whitaker:

Their main task is to produce unreadable (but sometimes unintentionally entertaining) reports on matters of little or no interest to anyone except the governments they represent (... and) to denounce more interesting stories that appear in other news media. Such stories, as they constantly remind the public, are fabrications with “no basis in fact” circulated by “foreign hands” that seek to undermine the country’s “security, stability and social unity”.¹³⁷

In a context of increasingly decentralized information, centralized narratives — a characteristic of authoritarian regimes — have become exposed as echoes of an official governmental voice that hardly anyone trusts. At the same time, this has not prevented regimes from investing in increasing surveillance through online spaces and anticipating their populations’ reactions by looking at neighboring countries. If activists learned from each other, governments have done so too. Several SEMCs have headed the “Enemies of the Internet” list that Reporters without Borders (RSF) publish every year, by systematically keeping the international media away during protests, harassing human rights activists and bloggers, and disrupting communications.¹³⁸ However, governments had

never gone as far as to completely shut down the Internet. Mubarak in January 2011,¹³⁹ and more recently Assad in Syria,¹⁴⁰ virtually cut off all communications to isolate citizens and prevent them from organizing and communicating protests. In a reference to governments’ mutual influence on surveillance and censorship, Arab Internet users have mockingly referred to the act of shutting down communications as “pulling a Mubarak.”¹⁴¹

Tunisia and Egypt were dropped from the “Enemies of the Internet” list in 2011, following regime change, while Syria was named a “cemetery for news providers”¹⁴² by RSF, and listed as the third most censored country in the world by the Committee to Protect Journalists in 2012.¹⁴³ This trend evidences the different path each country has taken and the increasing distance between the societies engaging in post-revolutionary processes, such as Egypt and Tunisia, and those still dealing with regime change, such as Syria.

Communication Dynamics and the Evolution of Regional (Cyber) Activism

Over the last two years, we have witnessed an evolution in citizen journalism that is directly related to new communication dynamics and

¹³⁷ B. Whitaker, “Arab Media Dinosaurs Meet in Bahrain,” *Brian Whitaker’s blog*, December 27, 2012, <http://www.al-bab.com/blog/2012/blog1212b.htm>.

¹³⁸ Reporters without Borders, *Internet Enemies Report 2012*, March 12, 2012, http://en.rsfor.org/IMG/pdf/rapport-internet2012_ang.pdf.

¹³⁹ J. Glanz and J. Markoff, “Egypt Leaders Found ‘Off’ Switch for Internet,” *The New York Times*, February 15, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/16/technology/16internet.html>.

¹⁴⁰ H. Almiraat, “Syria Plunges Into Total Info Darkness,” *Global Voices*, November 29, 2012, <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2012/11/29/syria-plunged-into-total-info-darkness>.

¹⁴¹ Defined by the *Urban Dictionary* as “to shut down the Internet in an attempt to restore order and regain control. Coined from Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak’s attempt to silence the Egyptian people during the 2011 Egyptian riots”: <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Pull%20a%20Mubarak>.

¹⁴² Reporters without Borders, *News providers decimated in 2012*, December 19, 2012, <http://en.rsfor.org/2012-journalists-netizens-decimated-19-12-2012,43806.html>.

¹⁴³ Committee to Protect Journalists, *10 Most Censored Countries*, May 2, 2012, <http://cpj.org/reports/2012/05/10-most-censored-countries.php>.

the way activists have learned from one other's successes and failures. An increase in visual anonymity is one of the results of that evolution. As the regime crackdowns increased, activists developed new tactics to avoid being identified and tracked down, such as recording from behind, angling coverage in such a way that it clearly shows the clashes but not the faces of those protesting, and blurring them with editing tools.¹⁴⁴ Their struggle inspired activists from other countries to contribute to the global defense of freedom by developing technology to protect privacy and anonymity as well. The visual privacy application developed by Witness.org and The Guardian Project¹⁴⁵ — which gives users the power to protect the identity of those captured in their images better — is an example of this increasing interaction between online activist communities.

As a result of web-enabled interaction, activism continued to evolve after 2011. More than a year into the Arab Spring, Kuwaitis had learned the effects of using social media to organize and communicate from events in the Southern Mediterranean. They also anticipated governmental crackdowns on protestors. Without waiting for any reaction, a group of Kuwaiti activists from a collective called Karamatwatan decided to demand protection from communication enabling companies. Among the measures they took was this open letter sent to Wordpress:

We the people of Kuwait ask you to protect the privacy of our account details of karametwatan.wordpress.com from any officials seeking information of the owners and/or IP addresses of the persons using and posting from the mentioned account. We are responsible for

¹⁴⁴ Rafeeq, "The Camera in Homs: A Double-Edged Sword," *Al Jazeera Blogs*, June 28, 2012, <http://blogs.aljazeera.com/blog/under-siege-syrian-diary/camera-homs-double-edged-sword>.

¹⁴⁵ See The Guardian Project, *Obscuracam: Secure Smart Camera*, 2012, <https://guardianproject.info/apps/obscuracam>.

the organization of a march called "Dignity of a Nation" in Kuwait, the largest march in the history of Kuwait calling for democracy, human rights, and fight against corruption.¹⁴⁶

Increasing connectivity and regional consciousness have also materialized in several initiatives that aim to address the misconceptions of the other between SEMCs. One recent example is "Bil3afya," a blog co-authored by two female writers, Moroccan Sami Errazzouki and Kuwaiti Mona Alkareem, who have started a lively discussion on the relationship between North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula and their common grounds.¹⁴⁷

Threats to Regional Consciousness

Despite the integrationist consciousness awakened by the uprisings, several factors threaten to counter this trend and contribute to fragmentation within the region. One of these factors is the issue of minorities within an Arab majority region. Throughout the SEMCs, ethnic groups such as Kurds¹⁴⁸ or Berbers,¹⁴⁹ who do not identify with the Arab label, have distanced themselves from the "Arab Spring" and "Arab revolutions" categories. According to Syrian Kurdish activist Zinar Alaa, revolutions in these countries "should uproot not only repressive regimes, but also Arab chauvinism that ignores the legitimate rights of other peoples, like Kurdish and Amazigh."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ See "@KarametWatan," *TwitLonger*, October 24, 2012, <http://tl.gd/joku5a>.

¹⁴⁷ See their blog *Bil3afya*, <http://bil3afya.blogspot.com.es>.

¹⁴⁸ Many Kurds in Syria have distanced themselves from an uprising that they consider non-inclusive of their own ethnic group.

¹⁴⁹ During the World Summit of Indignant, Dissident, and Insurgent in Mexico in December 2012, two Moroccan activists insisted that their movement was a "Berber Spring" and not part of the so-called Arab Spring.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with the author, January 11, 2013. Zinar Alaa is a Kurdish Syrian activist who took part in demonstrations against the Syrian government in Spain.

The fact that each country is facing a different set of economic and political challenges is also dividing the region's populations. According to Tunisian activist Ahmed Median in an interview for this paper, Tunisian media rarely mention the events in other SEMCs:

Tunisians grow careless unless it is the Palestinian rhetoric. I don't think we believe that we share the same experience as Egypt as they constitute now the worst example that we could turn to. Even the ruling Islamic party makes special efforts to disassociate itself from the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

It can be argued that Islam is the most powerful integrationist force in the region. It is in fact viewed as a universalist religion by many of its practitioners, who disregard national borders and consider one another brothers. However, political Islam can also contribute to fragmentation. More specifically, the tendency to view the uprisings from an Islamist/secular divide poses the biggest threat to the emerging integrationist consciousness and to the revolutionary processes as a whole. This divide is not new to Arab consciousness, since it has been used by the authoritarian regimes to their advantage for decades: with either "sultanistic," mostly secular dictators or dominant political Islam presented as the only two options.

In both the revolutionary and counter revolutionary forces, we can find secular and Islamist segments of society and organizations. However, the binary opposition between Islamist and secular is coming to dominate paradigms of action and interpretation. This trend has manifested itself in emerging alliances, such as the one between Egyptian Nasserist leader Hamdeen Sabahi with remnants of the Mubarak regime in the name of countering Islamists. According to Syrian activist Sara Ajlyakin, "this tendency fosters

a chauvinism that is either Islamic or national. And this is a historic mistake."¹⁵¹

Europe, the United States, and the SEMCs

Regional consciousness and interaction have not been limited to the south and east of the Mediterranean. As mobilizations that started in North Africa spread to Spain,¹⁵² Greece, and other countries, the north of the Mediterranean looked down to the South for inspiration, and the south looked back in solidarity.

After decades of media projections associating Arabs with violence, radicalism, and sectarianism,¹⁵³ for the first time the North of the Mediterranean, Europe, and the West viewed citizens from the SEMCs as promoters of peaceful demonstrations, non-violence, civil disobedience, citizen creativity, and art. The north of the Mediterranean found inspiration in the struggle of their neighbors, who voiced demands for freedom, justice, and dignity that they could relate to, through horizontal forms of participation that they could engage in. This shift is directly connected with the new communication dynamics and the fact that, for the first time, citizens were representing themselves, narrating their own historic events, while the world listened.

The repressive regimes that ruled countries in the Middle East and North Africa with iron fists for decades are not comparable to the governments of European countries, but civil societies from northern countries identified themselves with many of the challenges and threats that Egyptians, Tunisians, Libyans, or Syrians were facing. They

¹⁵¹ Interview with the author, February 13, 2012.

¹⁵² C. Taibo, "The Spanish Indignados: A Movement with Two Souls," *European, Urban, and Regional Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1, January 2013pp. 155-158.

¹⁵³ For an account of stereotypes associated with Arabs, see the 2006 documentary "Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People."

voiced similar concerns, adapting them to their own contexts, and were inspired by their initiatives and the way they organized and communicated through new media.

Amid the biggest economic crisis in decades, Spanish citizens took to the streets in May 2011 to protest against corruption, unemployment, and a political structure that favored a two-party system. It was symbolically named the “Spanish revolution,” connecting it to a global awakening that transcended the Spanish context. Demonstrators in Spain, and later in the United States through the Occupy Wall Street movement,¹⁵⁴ chanted slogans such as “They do not represent us” and “The people demand true democracy,” inspired by the Tunisian and Egyptian protests. They camped out and established citizens’ committees to coordinate demonstrations, communications, food, cleaning, and legal issues, much like citizens in North Africa were doing. They also shared the same distrust of traditional media and turned to the Internet and social networking to organize and communicate without intermediaries, like activists in the SEMCs had done.

The inspiration at the civil society level has worked both ways. As Caridi argues, there is a link between the non-violence experimented with in the SEMCs and the practices in environmental and transnational issues from the end of the 1990s until now.¹⁵⁵ With the 2011 uprisings, citizens in the SEMCs transcended local differences and challenged the widespread misconceptions that portrayed them as anti-Western, together with the previously mentioned stereotypes projected for decades through media. Mutual influence and inspiration, connected to new communication

¹⁵⁴ M. Hardt and A. Negri, “The Fight for ‘Real Democracy’ at the Heart of Occupy Wall Street,” *Foreign Affairs Snapshot*, October 11, 2011, <http://bypasses.wordpress.com/2011/11/04/the-fight-for-real-democracy-at-the-heart-of-occupy-wall-street>.

¹⁵⁵ P. Caridi, “Civil Society, Youth, and the Internet,” *cit.*

dynamics, have contributed to a regional awareness that was not visible before and can help pave the way for European-Mediterranean integration.

The sense of belonging to a movement that transcends the local has, however, come up against each country’s own agenda and geostrategic interests, which have conditioned political stances and mainstream media coverage. On one hand, Europe and the United States have diverse interests in the different countries of the region, which have conditioned their support for some uprisings while turning their back on others. A clear example is the difference in the international reaction to the mobilizations against Gaddafi, with whom Europe and the United States have had a controversial relationship for decades, and the lack of support for the uprising in Bahrain, whose monarchy is one of the staunchest Western allies in the region. After decades of the transatlantic partners providing authoritarian regimes with legitimacy, citizens in the SEMCs had grown used to this double standard,¹⁵⁶ which was heightened following the 9/11 attacks and the 2006 Hamas-won Gaza elections.¹⁵⁷

On the other hand, it is important to keep in mind that the movements that emerged in the SEMCs and spread to the north of the Mediterranean and the rest of the world threaten the core of traditional power structures. These movements place the divide not between North and South, or East and West, but between traditional systems and power structures (media, political, economic) and the need for new forms of representation and

¹⁵⁶ R. Halaseh, “Civil society, Youth, and the Arab Spring,” in S. Calleya and M. Wohlfeld (eds.), *Change and Opportunities in the Emerging Mediterranean*, Malta, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, 2012, p. 256, http://www.um.edu.mt/medac/publications/book_publications.

¹⁵⁷ For which Palestinians were punished by the international community and which evidenced the lack of commitment to what democracy can yield in the south of the Mediterranean.

participation, mainly driven by young men and women through new communication dynamics.

In the realm of communications, surveillance technology exports to the SEMCs' totalitarian regimes has increased Arab populations' mistrust of European and U.S. intentions. A large portion of the surveillance technology used by regimes in the SEMCs is produced by U.S. and European companies.¹⁵⁸ This has disastrous effects on both freedom of expression and civil society building, as well as the transatlantic partners' legitimacy as promoters of universal values in the region. In the words of researcher Evgeny Mozorov:

Left uncontrolled, Western surveillance tools could undermine the "Internet freedom" agenda in the same way arms exports undermine Western-led peace initiatives. How many activists, finding themselves confronted with information collected using Western technology, would trust the pronouncements of Western governments again?¹⁵⁹

Some steps have been taken, such as the new EU regulation on surveillance exports to countries under authoritarian regimes,¹⁶⁰ and the initiatives to promote transregional cultural cooperation.¹⁶¹ However, these are not enough to be considered part of a real shift in the transatlantic position

toward the countries of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean.

Conclusions

In the south and the east of the Mediterranean, integration is not limited only to communication connectivity around the Internet and social networking, but also involves recognition of the power of regional mass revolutionary alliances — even if they have yet to materialize. Each country, isolated in its own revolutionary process, would have a much bleaker picture regarding both the potential victory of the revolution in the short term, and the progress and radicalization of the revolutionary dynamic in the long run were it not for this. Without looking at the political experience of their neighbors, much insight would be lost. A regional initiative, whether a demonstration, a strike or any other tactic, is more effective as a political tool in the people's struggle than a national or a local one. An alliance of revolutionary forces through independent organizations — political, trade union, or economic — something which is still missing, would pave the way for meaningful regional integration.

Recognition of the renewed regional consciousness the uprisings have awakened is also necessary for any partner wanting to promote strong civil societies in the SEMCs. The struggle against oppression, regardless of the local differences, is based on shared values and demands and cannot be tackled on a country basis alone. The transatlantic partners should avoid the double standards that citizens in the region have seen as characterizing the Western approach to their countries and should support regional alliances with concrete actions that are inclusive of youth networks, women, informal groups, and actors. Through greater investment in fostering open-channel discussion and ensuring that no restrictions on the right to free expression and assembly are put in place, Western aid and infrastructure could contribute to

¹⁵⁸ J.C. York, "Government Internet Surveillance Starts With Eyes Built in the West," *Electronic Frontier Foundation*, September 2, 2011, <https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2011/09/government-internet-surveillance-starts-eyes-built>.

¹⁵⁹ E. Mozorov, "Political Repression 2.0," *The New York Times*, September 1, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/02/opinion/political-repression-2-0.html>.

¹⁶⁰ L. Nachawati, "EU to Tighten Rules on Surveillance Technology Exports," *Global Voices*, October 31, 2012, <http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/2012/11/01/eu-to-tighten-the-rules-on-surveillance-technology-exports>.

¹⁶¹ A good example can be found in the EU Cultural Foundation collaboration grants, <http://www.culturalfoundation.eu/grants/collaboration-grants>.

turning the potential on the ground into a political force. For many years, only the regimes' views were effectively taken into consideration by Europe and the United States. Now, more than ever, there is a need for mechanisms to directly engage in a regional dialogue that is already taking place with or without the transatlantic partners. None of this can be done, however, unless the partners reach out to the social movements that the Arab Spring has inspired in each of the countries and that can pave the way to a real, much desired regional integration.

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