



## **The Spanish Presidency of The Council of The European Union 2002 and the Relaunching of the Barcelona Process**

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CONFERENCE

**The Spanish Presidency of the European Union**

Supported by the Real Instituto Elcano, UACES (University Association for Contemporary European Studies), EWC (Europe in the World Centre) and the Instituto Cervantes

Foresight Centre, University of Liverpool, 12 October 2002

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## **I. - INTRODUCTION.**

Has the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first semester of the 2002 reached its objective to relaunch the Barcelona Process (BP) and to articulate a political impulse to bring its objectives nearer from the paper to the reality?. Is the Valencia Action Plan (VAP) the chart for this trip?. What has it meant for the evolution of the Process and the configuration of the international system in the Mediterranean?.

To respond to such questions implies the consideration of the implications and possibilities of the exercise of the Presidency of the Council of the EU by Spain regarding the evolution of the BP, question that is necessary to contemplate in the triple dimension of the evolution of the Process as such as well as structuring framework of the international order in the Mediterranean; of the conduction of the relationships of the EU with its Southern Mediterranean partners; and of the evolution of the position of Spain in it.

In short, to respond to such questions from those multiple dimensions invites us to travel an intellectual trip in the following stages:

- The consideration
- Of the Mediterranean as such, its problems and international order and agenda.
- Of the BP as structuring framework of the international system in the Mediterranean and of Euromediterranean relationships.
- Of the Mediterranean as a challenge and strategic priority of Spanish Foreign Policy.
- Of the Mediterranean as scenario and objective of the external construction of Europe.
- Of the BP and the external relationships and the international insertion of Southern Mediterranean countries.
- Spain's approach and objectives as EU Presidency regarding the BP.
- Spain's strategy and tactics.
- The analysis and evaluation of the Action Plan approved in the Euromediterranean Ministerial Conference held in Valencia.
- The future and its challenges.

Let us begin our trip.

## **II. - THE POINT OF DEPARTURE.**

### **II.1. - The Mediterranean: elements for a diagnosis.**

Why and for what reason does it care, do we care the Mediterranean?. The answer to such question will depend no doubt on who responds and from where or from what perspective. Many and important are the reasons to care about the Mediterranean, among which the following.

In the first place, the configuration of the Mediterranean like the strategic frontier of the European Union, in a triple sense:

- After its enlargement, the Mediterranean is to become the great strategic border of the Union, vital for its interests and test of its ability to build a positive international environment.
- After September 11, the Mediterranean becomes the decisive scenario for the dialogue and cooperation among civilizations, globally and especially for the European Union, constituting the only scenario in which the European is the civilization in dialogue or confrontation.
- The Mediterranean as outstanding scenario of European construction. Since it is carried inwards as well as outwards, and hardly Europe will be built inwards it was if it is not built in the Mediterranean.

In second place, the situation of unstable balance and uncertain viability that defines globally the Mediterranean; characterized, in its Southern riverside, by the challenge of development and demographic growth as well as the necessity of political change, and, globally, not only by the enormous imbalances between North and South, but also by the tendency to their growth and consequently of the potentiality of the problem they stand for. Tendency reflected, among other questions, in the increase of income differences, already the biggest (of 15 to 1) between areas or border blocks; in that of the demographic breach that evolves however in complementary senses, outlining the necessity to contemplate the migratory phenomena as reflection of a shared demographic problem; in the growing irruption of differences between cultures and civilizations as structuring axis of International Relations, and the Mediterranean as privileged scenario for their canalization through dialogue cooperation; or

in the negative evolution of European Union's aid per capita, both in absolute and in relative, especially compared with Eastern Europe.

Lastly, the Mediterranean is at the same time a sea of encounter and cooperation a sea of confrontation, scenario of conflicts not to be ignored when approaching the international order in it and Euromediterranean relationships. I refer, in the first place, to the situation in the Middle East as a priority and conditioning factor of the global international agenda and of the stability in the area, and of a BP – the only international forum shared by Arabs and Israelis - conceived in a moment of hope of positive evolution of the MEPP, whose relationship and interaction with it should not be ignored. Without forgetting the tension of the relationships between Algeria and Morocco, who share one of the few closed borders in this globalized world, or between Greece and Turkey, reflected in a Cyprus at the EU doors.

## **II.2. - The Barcelona Process, structuring framework of the international system in the Mediterranean and of Euromediterranean relationships.**

The Process born in Barcelona in 1995 is built on the previous existence of privileged Euromediterranean relationships, reflected in the Treaty of Rome and approached and developed globally in the Mediterranean Global Policy launched in 1972, substituted by the Renovated Mediterranean Policy in 1990. However, the Barcelona Declaration and the Process it begins stands for a qualitative jump, a conceptual and paradigmatic change from the previous relationship approaches, in the form as well as in the substance: because of it being subscribed jointly by the 27 partners of the Process, changing from a policy of the North towards the South to a partnership, a common project, a Euromediterranean social contract; because its own conception as a Process; because of its globality, so much geographical - option for an approach of Euromediterranean relationships as a whole, in front of possible subregional alternatives - as thematic - inclusion in its three chapters political and security, economic, commercial and financial and cultural, social and human of all possible elements of relationship with the objective of making the Mediterranean an area of peace and stability, development and shared prosperity and dialogue and cooperation between cultures and civilizations -; because of its teleologic nature; because of its potentiality to promote the construction of the Euromediterranean space in a dynamic of positive evolution in all fields.

Thus, in its own existence, the BP's conception is already in itself a great asset and marks in historical perspective an inflection point in the evolution of the International System in the Mediterranean: if it didn't exist it should be invented. However, its conception and existence is a necessary, but not sufficient condition: when returning the view behind, it cannot be denied that the Process has thrown important fruits, as the conclusion of practically all the association agreements with the third Mediterranean countries, the creation of different programs or an important dedication of MEDA funds and EIB loans to the development of the region, but the general problems confronted by the region have not improved substantially. The Process has advanced generally excessively conditioned by the Mediterranean priority of each EU Presidency. Besides projects and tangible initiatives that allow to advance more in the attainment of their objectives, it needs to deepen and to develop the construction of those intangible characteristics able to allow its development in all its potentiality, as its bigger automatism and structuration, its visibility, its capillarity, its institutionalization, its concretion and its efficiency. The construction of a Euromediterranean space that guarantees the viability of the Southern partners in the economic, political and social field and the conformation of a Euromediterranean space of peace, stability, prosperity and shared interests in a dynamics of positive feedback demands a new political impulse through a group of initiatives that take from paper to reality the overcoming of the situation with all its conflict potentiality.

## **II.3. - The Mediterranean in the construction of democratic Spain Foreign Policy.**

'But what potentiates and facilitates Spanish action is its geographical situation, which makes it an essential piece for a balance of regional power with immediate repercussion in the global balance is the Mediterranean. Because of its key situation in the Mediterranean its weight gravitates in the general situation. Out of it some of the dilemmas for the formulation and execution of its Foreign Policy and, as compensation, its importance and possibilities' (Morán, 1980:20)<sup>1</sup>.

The Mediterranean is and has been, historical, geopolitical and structurally, one of the great priorities and areas of projection of the Spanish Foreign Policy – as Fernando Morán

pointed out in a work of reference on Spanish Foreign Policy after the democratic transition, at the same time decisive asset of its global position -, without which Spain would not be internationally all it is and it can be; as well as scenario for the realization of its national interest, while constituting the main challenge for its security. A national interest that, in this strategic perspective of security and international stability, is at stake in the Mediterranean in a different way than anywhere else.

A Mediterranean structural priority of Spanish Foreign Policy, scenario of its construction in the time of the external transition that makes possible its interior transition. Because the transition to democracy that Spain lives after General Franco's death stands for the opportunity and possibility to go from a substitutory Foreign Policy – which leaves however as inheritance the development of privileged relationships with the Arab world – which had to confront the vital objective of guaranteeing the survival of the regime internationally, to that of a regime resulting from a process of democratic transition erected in example - in itself external asset – which faces, after a first stage of international homologation and access to the forums, the construction of Spain as a middle power, with schemes of privileged relationships and a special influence in Europe, the Mediterranean and Latin America.

Triple ambition carried out chronologically in two stages: first, the European integration; later, already from inside, those schemes of privileged relationship with Latin America and the Mediterranean. Because for the generation and the political class who makes the transition to democracy in Spain a democratic Spain means Spain in Europe: European integration has a meaning that goes far beyond Foreign Policy, of approval and even of guarantee of non reversion of the own democratic process. What explains that Spain's European integration was approached essentially in political terms and that, beyond a political declaration annexed to the adhesion treaties of Spain and Portugal affirming that with it the then Community incorporated to its external projection a special historical relationship with Latin America, they don't suppose - contrary to what supposed the adhesion of the United Kingdom regarding the relationships of the Community with Commonwealth countries - a reconfiguration of the Union's external relationships.

External relationships that, although contemplating the Mediterranean as a priority, include Latin America among the non associated countries, far from dedicating to it the means, resources and attention that would require the privileged character of the relationship Spain ambitions with the region. A Spain who, from its European integration, counts on a double track, bilateral and European, for the attainment of its Foreign Policy objectives, and who faces the challenge of developing it promoting synergies and dynamics of positive feedback.

A Spain who faces the symbolic and forced appointment of the celebration of the Fifth Centennial of America's discovery in 1992, and the question whether its European integration has meant the postponement or the renouncement to its Latin American ambition. Thus, after the adhesion – while bilaterally developing its privileged relationship with the Mediterranean - the great strategic objective of Spanish Foreign policy will be the construction of a scheme of privileged relationship with Latin America through the double way of developing intensely and on new basis bilateral relationships - fundamentally in the diplomatic, economic and cooperation fields – as well as a vision of its own of the EU – Latin America relationships to impel its realization. To that end, the first Spanish Presidency of the Council of the Union, during the first semester of 1989, will constitute a decisive instrument and occasion. This way, when in 1991 the process of the Ibero-American Summits is born in Guadalajara - incarnation of the Ibero-American Community of Nations Spain considers as the global framework of its relationship with the region - it can be considered that Spain confronts its 1992 appointment with the fulfilled mission of a privileged scheme of relationship with Latin America and of the impulse of a qualitative jump of the relationships of the EU with the region.

Special mention deserves in this context the Spanish Presidency of 1989 not only in relation to its decisive role for the conformation of a Spanish vision of EU-Latin America relationships and the establishment of the basis for its construction, but also to its contribution to the construction and development of Spanish Foreign Policy. Indeed, for a country like Spain - that should try not only to promote the conformation of the external projection from a Community which it has joined late according to its external interests, but meanwhile to learn, to acquire experience and credibility, to develop its vision and action regarding the process of European construction and its external projection -, the exercise of the Presidency of the Council of the Union presents a unique opportunity to win that credibility as well as to acquire that knowledge and to impel that transformation of the external projection of the Union according to its Foreign Policy interests. For that it will carry out a wide reflection and previous

preparation work, that beyond the definition of concrete objectives, will guide the active participation in the debate, initiatives, positions and actions defended by Spain beyond the exercise of the Presidency, while this is seen as a window of opportunity to acquire, vis a vis partners and relevant actors, the credibility and accumulation of political capital in an area of special interest for its Foreign Policy, what strengthens its relative weight and actorness after the Presidency.

Such is the case of the 1989 Presidency regarding the vision and action, positions and objectives of Spain - many of which will be carried out time later - regarding EU-Latin America relationships. And such is also the case of the following Presidency during the second semester 1995, regarding Euromediterranean relationships, besides the gestation of the transatlantic agenda its great legacy to the external projection of the European construction.

Indeed, having overcome with success the 92 challenge and the construction of a scheme of privileged relationship with Latin America, the construction of a global scheme of relationship with the Mediterranean becomes the great pending challenge of Spanish external transition. To face it turns much more urgent as the fall of the Berlin wall necessarily impels the projection of the Union towards the East, rising the necessity of reequilibrium towards the South.

As a structural priority of its Foreign Policy the Mediterranean has been all these years object of special attention by Spain, who has developed, bilaterally and through the European Union, important initiatives in the region, as the invigoration of the relationships with the Maghreb, especially with Morocco, the celebration in 1991 in Madrid of the Middle East Peace Conference, the creation of Euromediterranean relationship forums, as the Mediterranean Forum or the 5+5 for the Western Mediterranean or the reequilibrium of the 1991-1995 financial perspectives of the EU towards the region. But, after the failure of the initiative impelled with Italy in 1989 of the celebration of a Conference on the Security and the Cooperation in the Mediterranean inspired in the CSCE, Spain and the EU lack a forum or global framework of relationship with the Southern Mediterranean countries, and neither do these among themselves. The strategy and the action of the Spanish Presidency which in 1995 will give place to the Barcelona Declaration and the Process it develops responds to the vision and the ambition of geographical and thematic globality.

With it Spain can consider fulfilled its ambition of building a scheme of privileged relationship with the Mediterranean, and its construction as a middle power and its external transition somehow culminated. Vision, position and scheme of global relationship it carries out however through the EU, as it could not be neither politically nor conceptually otherwise. But that however marks a difference regarding its scheme of relationships with Latin America: while with this Spain has a forum of global relationship not shared with the rest of the EU - the Ibero-American Summits and the Ibero-American Community of Nations - besides the EU- Latin America and Caribbean Summits and the agreements and mechanisms that sustain their relationships, facing the challenge to promote a positive feedback between both and the reinforcement of its relative position in both through that simultaneous participation, in the Mediterranean its only possible and desirable scheme is through the EU, for that its failure is the one of its strategic priority of Mediterranean global relationship towards peace and security, development and shared prosperity and cooperation and dialogue of cultures and civilizations. Thus what is at stake for the national interest of Spain with the advance and evolution of the BP.

Thus also the special relative position of Spain within the BP, which conjugates its foundational *autoritas* and its privileged bilateral relationships with Southern partners, a special credibility in the EU and in the South regarding the Euromediterranean relationships with a special responsibility in its construction and advance, and an extreme position in favor of the Process' advance, with the conscience that the necessary balances of forces will give an intermediate point as a result. Thus its political impulse as an strategic priority of its 2002 Presidency.

#### **II.4. - The Mediterranean and the external construction of Europe.**

Not Identified Political Object, political entity and collective project in construction, the European Union is fruit and object of a process of European construction carried out inwards and outwards. Outwards, because hardly could it serve its purposes if Europe only existed for the Europeans and not for the world: to build Europe can be to build a NIPO, but in any case it is also to build an international actor. Outwards, and especially towards the Mediterranean, since hardly will Europe exist in the world if it doesn't exist in the Mediterranean, its external

border, decisive scenario for its external construction at the crossroads defined by its amplification, its constituent process and the new international situation after S-11.

A Europe whose external projection is channeled through different policies and instruments, with different processes of decision and degrees of coexistence with member States national policies, as the Common Commercial Policy, the Development Cooperation Policy, the Common Security and Foreign Policy and the European Security and Defense Policy or the so called third pillar (Justice and Home Affairs); whose configuration is the outcome of the strategies and interactions of its institutions and member States. What takes us to the question of the Mediterranean as object of their national interests and their foreign policies. In this sense, Barbé and Johansson (2001)<sup>ii</sup> in a recent study on the FSCP in the Mediterranean, reveal a coincidence among the Fifteen in the following horizontal topics considered of national interest: security, stability and peace in the European and international environment; stability in the Mediterranean (including the MEPP); to strengthen democratic values, the rule of Law and human rights; multilateral frameworks for crisis and security management. While the majority consider the EU as the most suitable and main framework for the satisfaction of such national interests.

In short, the Mediterranean is perceived, specially in the perspective of the enlargement, as the external border of the EU, its near neighbourhood, decisive scenario where to give answer to its external construction, to its global horizontal objectives and its own stability and security, as well as to the challenges of the dialogue and cooperation between cultures and civilizations, in definitive the three great ideas which impel and impels the BP, configured this way as a decisive framework for the external construction of Europe, for the satisfaction of the national interest of the Union and its member States and for its consolidation as a first power in an international system in transformation.

## **II.5. - The Barcelona Process and the external relationships and International Relations of the Southern Mediterranean countries.**

With the problems and challenges of political change and socioeconomic transformation already referred, the conflicts and tensions that characterize some bilateral relationships and geographical situations, the conflict of civilizations that underlies to that of the Middle East and others, and a relationship with the EU of decisive weight in their external relationships... for the Southern Mediterranean countries the BP is the framework to channel that strategic, decisive relationship with the EU, but also for their global international insertion and their relationships with the other partners of the South, while an incentive to unchain processes or to overcome situations that hardly would be faced without the dynamics created by the BP. This way, hardly would the Agadir Process – through which Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan advance toward the liberalization of exchanges among them - have been launched without the objective of a Euromediterranean free trade area and its North-South advance through the Association Agreements of the BP. In the same way, the coordination of the eight Arab countries of the South to negotiate with the EU has a projection potentially beyond, creating dynamics of interrelation and cooperation in the South with the potentiality of substantially transforming the global international dynamics in the region.

Without forgetting that the BP was conceived under the influence of the Oslo Agreements and on the hope of peace in the Middle East. Conceived for peace, for its construction, bet of global framework of the possible Mediterranean after it, only structured and stable international forum where Palestinian and Israelis coincide. And without forgetting also that that hope, distant today, too many dead sooner or later will be reborn to build a peace whose content is known from the beginning. And then the BP will be there, developed despite its absence, to welcome and build it, to develop itself and the Mediterranean in all their potentiality, to offer to the countries of the South a framework of international insertion where to build their own History towards a better future.

## **III. - THE GOAL (WHAT AND WHAT FOR): MEDITERRANEAN APPROACH AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SPANISH PRESIDENCY 2002. THE THOUGHT.**

As in the Spanish Presidency of 95 the strategic objective for the Mediterranean was the birth of the Process of Barcelona, in that of 2002 it has been that of the articulation of its political impulse taking into account th situation diagnosed. How? Through the thought and the

action, the definition of a vision and a project, of a strategy for its realization, through bilateral action and the Presidency.

Thought that implies the analysis of the departure situation as well as the formulation of qualitative or methodological approaches and of ideas or concrete proposals.

For the formulation of such analysis, and in general for the design of the project, a process was carried out, based on diverse diagnosis studies and proposals and on inward and outward reflection, within the Administration and with relevant actors.

On the other hand, the following principles that should guide the evolution of the Process were defined:

- Co-ownership of the Process between North and South and its 27 partners that should be translated into the evolution from a policy of the North for the South to a jointly defined and developed project.
- Capillarity: the Process should not only be a Process between Governments, but also between all the significant actors of the States and the societies of the 27 susceptible of international and Mediterranean projection. The construction of the Euromediterranean space should be extended this way to the parliaments and other instances of the State, to the cities and regions, universities, managerial associations and social organizations and in definitive to the citizenship and the public opinion.
- Structuring. The advance of the Process has depended up to now excessively of the international and mediterranean joint and of the degree of priority granted to its advance by the acting European Presidency. So that its nature of structural priority is reflected in the reality it needs to be endowed of mechanisms, structures and institutions that facilitate or make increase the automaticity and continuity of the political impulse of the Process and its development in a dynamic of its own independent of the situation and the evolution of the balance among the political wills of the 27.
- Visibility. It is not enough that the Process advances and has results: it is necessary that it is known. And that it is known by all. The construction of the Euromediterranean space for all the relevant actors will be possible to the extend that the Process, its actions, programs, projects, fruits and results are known and appreciated; to the extend that it is visible.
- Concretion. So that the principles and objectives of the Process pass from paper to reality it is indispensable their concretion in programs, projects, mechanisms and initiatives that are part of the reality and transform it.
- Efficiency. The consolidation and advance of the Process doesn't depend only on what is made, but on how it is made as well. Data like the low degree of execution of MEDA I commit its image and credibility decisively. And that how it is made it cannot be, among other things, but effective and efficiently.
- Credibility. As principle and final objective, as well as parameter through which to value initiatives and actions.

Finally, the ideas and proposals dedicated to embody that impulse ambitioned for the Process, refer as much to the form as to the bottom.

In the form, Spain's strategic goal is the adoption by the Euromediterranean Ministerial Conference of its Presidency of an Action Plan, what implies a conception of the decisions and initiatives to adopt as a package as well as the adoption of this Plan by consensus of the 27 partners of the Process, which - keeping in mind that from the Barcelona Declaration the documents adopted by the ministerial conferences have been conclusions of the acting European Presidency - has the potentiality in itself of granting to the Action Plan a special political force, to transform it together with the Barcelona Declaration into the foundational pillar of the Process. An Action Plan, as its name indicates, definer of actions and initiatives susceptible as a whole of embodying that political impulse for the Process, of bringing Barcelona nearer from paper to reality. If the Barcelona Declaration defines the Itaca towards which we want to sail in the Mediterranean, the Valencia Action Plan is the sailing charter to arrive to it.

Between the form and the substance, Spain's idea of using its Presidency to make the Process advance qualitatively towards a lower dependence degree on of the acting European Presidency, to promote its automatism and transformation in the sense of the stated principles, always to the extend facilitated by a correlation of forces in which Spain holds an extreme position bilaterally.

In the substance, the Plan is to contain a series of programs and initiatives in each chapter of the Process, some of whose with entity to constitute supporting columns of the

ambitioned qualitative jump, so that as a whole they conform the critical mass that makes it the incarnation of the pursued political impulse of the Process. Initiatives designed from the ambition, with the conscience that, in spite of the political cost eventual failures can suppose, the Process will advance more when proposing 100 and getting 40 than when proposing 50 and getting 30. Among them it is necessary to highlight, the creation of a Euromediterranean Development Bank, a Euromediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, a Euromediterranean Foundation for the dialogue of cultures and civilizations, or the beginning of the cooperation in the fields of Justice and Interior or interuniversities.

Positions and objectives for whose definition is not only important the what, but also the how, the interaction, consciousness and perception of Spain's proposals by the rest of the relevant actors. And that, from the perspective of Spain's Foreign Policy and national interest, can be object of a double consideration: that of the strategic objective of the VAP as sailing charter for the political impulse of the BP; and that of the intangible objective of the improvement of Spain's relative position, prestige and Mediterranean *autoritas* and its bilateral relationships, especially with Southern partners, perspective from which the effort and the ambition of Spain, even if ended in failure or defeat, can be anyway profitable.

#### **IV. - THE ROAD (THE HOW): STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE SPANISH PRESIDENCY. THE ACTION.**

To explain the how of Spain's action as Presidency remits us to a double previous consideration:

- On one hand, the belief on the practical advantages of theory, about the convenience of developing its own analysis, vision and proposal on the Mediterranean and the long term evolution of the BP, beyond what can be developed in the temporary term of the Presidency, on proposal capacity as a decisive factor for actorness. With such purpose the already referred policy planning process was carried out.
- On the other, the human team and the administrative structure responsible for the impulse and execution of Spain's project as Presidency in relation to the BP, of which would be necessary to highlight three fundamental elements: the assumption directly by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the direction of this team and of the political interlocution outwards, exercising a role of motor and political instigator of the project - as much in its design as in its political promotion in front of the relevant actors, with the support of his Cabinet as executioner and center of political design and elaboration of initiatives - and making of the BP object of high-priority dedication during the Presidency; the Ambassador in Special Mission for Mediterranean Affairs, Spain's representative at the High Officials Committee and the Euromed Committee of the BP and their president during the Spanish Presidency, Spanish "Mister Mediterranean", negotiator of the proposals and initiatives in this instances and roving Ambassador and salesperson of these in the whole Mediterranean; a team of diplomats dedicated in the central services, at partial or full time but with clear priority, to cover all the specialized aspects of the Process, and the Counsellor Spain's EU Permanent Representation in Brussels in charge of the Mediterranean as indispensable counterpart, without forgetting the support and dedication of the diplomatic missions before the other 26 partners of the Process. What conforms within the MFA a hard core, characterized so much by the high political level of its direction as by the width of the human team for the standards of the Spanish Foreign Policy Administration, whose work is supplemented by the contribution of other relevant ministries, from which highlight those of Economy and Science and Technology, responsible for the preparation and presidency, respectively, of the Euromediterranean Conferences of Ministers of Trade and of Industry, which took place in Toledo and Málaga previously to that of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Valencia. Without forgetting the implication of the Presidency of the Government and its International and Security Department in the achievement of this strategic goal.

Together and after the inwards process, the outwards process, in a double direction:

- Within the EU, in turn in a triple direction:
- The Commission, with which a working group was settled down for the preparation of the Presidency during the previous semester and stayed along it, giving place to an exchange of positions, agreement on objectives and proposals and dynamics of combined action and work together, decisive for the final result. Somehow, the Commission assumed the political will and initiative of the Spanish Presidency as a window of opportunity for the

impulse of the BP, putting to its service its technical capacity and conforming a fundamental strategic alliance for its articulation.

- The European Parliament, before which Spain appeared as Presidency, to explain the approaches and objectives regarding the BP as well as the results of Valencia; also staying in close contact with their members in the process of elaboration of their Report in connection with the preparation of the Valencia Conference and of creation of the Euromediterranean Parliamentary Assembly.
- The other member States, promoting, on one hand, a special agreement with those of more Mediterranean commitment, and, on the other, an intense political-diplomatic campaign in front of all, specially the most reticent, in favor of the adoption of a new financial instrument.
- With the partners of the South, at a triple level: introduction of the BP as a high-priority issue in the bilateral contacts at all levels; realization of specific tours, so much in the preparation phase as during the Presidency, by the Ambassador in Special Mission, among which it is necessary to highlight those carried out accompanied by the Commission to the Maghreb and the Mashrek before Valencia, supplemented by trips and punctual demarches at higher level; the narrow coordination with Tunisia as coordinator of the Arab group, quality in which it played a decisive role for the conformation of positions and consents. Apart from the symbolic importance of the visits as proof of the will of counting on them, the presentation of the proposals of the Presidency as open to their contributions for their definitive conformation turned out decisive. All which contributed, besides the content, to the perception in the South not only of commitment in the substance, but of will in the form, of deepening in the coownership of the Process, creating a relationship of trust and complicity with the Presidency which constitutes one of the explanatory keys of the results of Valencia.

This informal work of interaction and promotion of the project in front of the relevant actors constitute the basis of their progressive adoption in the formal instances of the Process: on one hand, the meetings of High Officials and the Euromed Committee at 27 and the preparatory meetings at 15, of the Coreper or of the Council; on the other, the adoption of the different documents which mark the road to Valencia<sup>iii</sup>, that of some papers that give place to other papers that give place to the VAP.

Of the way traveled the following considerations should be made:

- That of the previous documents, which, in some cases, open doors and in others close them.
- That of the time factor. Taking place in April, Spain only counts for the preparation of Valencia with little more than half of its Presidency, what forces it to an intense effort of previous preparation and prioritization of the Mediterranean agenda in all decision instances in this period.
- That of the interrelation with the MEPP. In front of a situation of deterioration on the ground and worsening of the crisis, Spain adopts a triple line of action: presentation of a proposal of peace for the region in the informal Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting held in Cáceres at the beginning of its Presidency, which although not adopted centers the debate and reinforces its credibility; conformation of an unique and agreed EU position which reinforces its actorness; EU participation in the initiatives to promote a negotiated solution, consecrated with the constitution of the so-called 'quartet' in Madrid. Policy whose detailed analysis surpasses the purpose of this work and which, besides the perspective of adoption of the VAP and the expectation created by it as much in the substance as in the form, makes possible Valencia's celebration and its adoption in the worst possible circumstances in the Middle East. What, without denying their narrow interrelation, demonstrates and consolidates the relative autonomy, the dynamics and characteristic value of the BP in front of the MEPP.

Well it is certain that, despite diplomatic efforts carried out until the last moment by Spain, Syria and Lebanon were not present in Valencia because of the situation in the Middle East, that the Spanish Presidency considered seriously the suspension and postponement of its celebration, that this monopolized good part of the ministers' debates and of the media covering of the conference, and that the retreat of the Arab ministers - remaining the rest of their delegations - when Israel's representative spoke symbolized, inside and outdoors, the graveness of the situation as well as the unavoidable necessity that, as forum of presence of many of the relevant actors of the crisis, Valencia made of it main object of its attention. But also that, in spite of it, Valencia stands and achieves its objective of articulating the political impulse of the BP; that contacts maintained in the

previous days reveal a clear will of the South to go to Valencia in spite of the circumstances, convinced that they cannot give up the perspective of approval of the VAP, that in the GAC of the previous week the Fifteen approve the Guidelines for Valencia and commit the attendance from almost all at ministerial level, that despite the absence of Syria and Lebanon they don't question the approval of the VAP, that in addition to the MEPP ministers speak in Valencia of the content of the VAP, exalt with enthusiasm their main initiatives and approve it by consensus.

- As it is equally true that the VAP is approved by the ministers because it arrives to their table already preapproved, agreed by the high officials that represent them in the negotiations in the previous days to the Ministerial Conference. Negotiations in which the negotiators' will for consensus and commitment within their respective mandates plays a decisive role, as well as their conviction of the window of opportunity open for the advance of the Process to which they dedicate their professional efforts and the consciousness of the risk of leaving open for the ministers' negotiation essential aspects of the VAP in a meeting where the MEPP was inevitably to monopolize good part of their attention, the trust created by the Presidency in the partners of the South and the flexibility and its negotiating ability, coordinating the maintenance of its national positions in favor of the maximum advances with the creativity in the proposal of alternatives and the capacity and prioritization of the articulation of consents, adapting to positions and proposals but without giving up any vital national interest in the result reached.

- Toledo and Málaga in the preparation of Valencia. The meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers Barcelona V in Valencia constitutes the summit of the effort of political impulse of the Process carried out by the Spanish Presidency and the scenario where it should crystallize. But in turn the previous meetings of ministers of Trade (Toledo, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2002) and of Industry (Málaga, 9 and 10<sup>th</sup> April 2002) contribute to consolidate its possibilities of success, reflecting the will to advance and to approve important proposals in their respective fields, which will be picked up later on in the VAP.

- The negotiations for the creation of the Euromediterranean Bank as test case of the possibilities and limits of advance of the Process. Limits, fundamentally, within the own EU, in the national positions of some of its member States who, while sharing the speech on the Mediterranean as strategic border of the Union and the objectives of the Process, trace a red line regarding the contribution of new funds, specially of their national budgets, and the creation of new institutions. And however the proposal 'has case', the analysis of the departure situation and the foundation of the necessity of flows of private investment, as well as the technical development and political arguments deployed by the Spanish Presidency in its defense are difficult to counterargument. Spain pulls out all the stops on the proposal, so much in terms of technical capacity as of political will, and gets important successes in its campaign in its favor, as the alignment in favor of key commissioners and a proposal of the Commission to the Council that maintains the possibility of creation of a Euromediterranean Development Bank, or its acceptance by the EIB provided it stays as its subsidiary. However, precisely because of its character of test case, of its implications and significance, although the creation of some type of financial instrument for the development of private investment in the South of the Mediterranean goes opening its way, its concretion makes necessary to elevate the negotiation and decision taking at the maximum political level. The creation of the Euromediterranean Investment Facility constitutes the only initiative adopted by the European Council in relation to the BP during the Spanish Presidency. The negotiating impasse at the ECOFIN takes Vice-President and Minister of Economy Rato to its extraordinary convocation the eve of the European Council of Barcelona, arriving to a consensus formula that gives satisfaction to both concretion alternatives in discussion, committing up to two billion of EIB loans and capital risk until 2006 for BP Southern partners - what almost supposes to double the ammount dedicated so far -, establishing a reinforced Euromediterranean Investment Facility within the EIB, supplemented by a Euromediterranean Partnership Agreement for its establishment and a EIB representative office located in the area for its administration; as well as the possibility to decide, on the basis of the evaluation of its performance after a year of operation, and keeping in mind the result of the consultations in this respect with the partners of the South, its transformation into a EIB majority owned subsidiary.

## **V. - THE POINT OF ARRIVAL: THE VALENCIA ACTION PLAN.**

## V.1. - The content.

Besides the Action Plan, in Valencia are approved as complementary documents the *Regional program of cooperation in the field of justice, the fight against drug, organized crime and terrorism, as well as of cooperation on questions related with the social integration of the immigrants, the migration and the circulation of people* - long title to facilitate the consent on the know as JHA regional program - and the *Action Plan for the dialogue between cultures and civilizations* which, fruit of an initiative by Sweden and Spain, picks up the different initiatives, national of the 27 and of the EU, foreseen in this field. Equally, as in other Euromediterranean Ministerial Conferences, the Presidency makes public a document of Conclusions of the Presidency that picks up the points it considers more important of those approved and debated by the Ministers, constituting the documental framework where to reflect the debates on the MEPP.

The analysis and detailed explanation of the VAP and its complementary documents goes beyond the approach and sense of the present work whose reading would be advisable to accompany by that of the VAP. However it would be incomplete without standing out its most significant points in each chapter.

- The VAP begins with an introduction which constitutes its political bond with the Barcelona Declaration, reiterating its objectives and principles and presenting it as instrument for their attainment, with the conviction that 'after six years of partnership, the Barcelona Process should reach new levels of Euromediterranean integration thus generating a new impulse in their relations and to foster a more balanced approach of the common objectives', outlining the necessity of 'a global reassessment and a new commitment on the part of all the participants to facilitate the reactivation of the Process', and affirming some of the principles outlined as those of coownership and visibility.
- The chapter dedicated to the political and security partnership settles down the elements on which should be centered the political dialogue, the axes for dialogue and cooperation in the field of terrorism, a more structured dialogue of the High Officials on human rights and different Partnership Building Measures.
- In the one dedicated to the economic and financial partnership a wide group of measures and initiatives are included in relation to the the association agreements conclusion and coming into force; to South-South integration and the support to the Agadir Process; to the development of the free trade of services; to the improvement of the access to the European market of the agricultural products of the South, asking the Commission to elaborate a study on the impact of an eventual liberalization of exchanges in the EU and the Southern partners; to the financial cooperation, picking up the conclusions of the European Council of Barcelona on the creation of the euromediterranean Investment Facility and its possible transformation; to the improvement of the administration of Meda; to infrastructure investments and interconnection, including different initiatives on transport, energy and telecommunications, among whose cooperation regarding the satellite GALILEO is to be highlighted; to the Internal Market Program and the harmonization of policies and regulations; to fostering of innovation and the access to technologies; to the reinforcement of the paper of the private sector; to environment protection; to tourism; and to the Reinforced Economic Dialogue.
- In the one dedicated to the social, cultural and human partnership the Conference approves the mentioned framework document of the JHA regional program - objective attempted without success by the Swedish and Belgian previous presidencies -; foresees the celebration in 2003 of a Ministerial Conference on Migration and Social Integration of Emigrants, as well as the establishment of a Euromediterranean Observatory for the Employment and the Formation; agrees 'the principle of creating a Euromediterranean Foundation to promote the dialogue between cultures and civilizations and to increase the visibility of the Barcelona Process through intellectual, cultural and civil society exchanges', approves the mentioned Action Plan for the Dialogue of Cultures and Civilizations, directed to the youth, the education and the media and extends Tempus higher education Programme for enlargement candidates to the non-candidate Mediterranean partners, as well as other programs in the educational field; agrees to study the proposal of Euromed Pact for the cooperation among Euromediterranean cities and agrees to define the best way to support and to develop a bigger implication of the civil society in the partnership as soon as possible.

- In the chapter on institutional provisions, the Conference agrees 'to recommend the strengthening of the Parliamentary dimension through the creation of a Euromediterranean Parliamentary Assembly'; the holding of ad hoc meetings of Senior Officials with the participation of the competent Directors of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and other measures and principles to improve the functioning and the coownership of the institutions of the Process; the celebration of like-minded exercises, establishing a working group to such effect; and commits itself to examine different proposals to give to the Partners more responsibility and participation in the elaboration and preparation of actions, programs and initiatives through a better structured dialogue.
- Lastly, in the chapter on the follow-up - whose existence already has in itself a political value and constitutes a guarantee for the credibility and execution of the Plan -, it settles down that the VAP will be object of a first evaluation in Barcelona VI (under Italian Presidency in the second semester of 2003) and mandates the Euromed Committee to examine adequate follow-up and implementation mechanisms for the Action Plan.

## V.2. - The balance.

The analysis of the VAP takes us to affirm its importance and potentiality so much in the form as in the substance. In the form, because of the political value in itself of constituting the only document of the Process from the Barcelona Declaration adopted by consensus of all its members as well as of embodying in its different proposals and initiatives a substantial advance toward the validity of the proposed principles of coownership, structuring, automatism, visibility, capillarity, concretion, efficiency and credibility, reflected among other aspects in the new functioning measures, the new institutions and mechanisms, the opening of the Process to the universities, the cities and other social actors, or the Plan's own subjection to follow-up and evaluation. In the substance, we are before a combination of concrete measures and great initiatives in each chapter which conform the critical mass and the pillars able to sustain the qualitative jump ambitioned for the Process, globally and in each field.

Fulfilled mission?. Fundamentally yes. As everything, Valencia can be contemplated in absolute and relative terms. Globally and in absolute terms, the VAP embodies the referred qualitative jump, constitutes the sailing charter looked for to bring the spirit and the objectives of the Barcelona Declaration nearer from paper to reality. Sailing charter however still to be navigated, because Valencia is at the time arrival and departure point.

In relative terms, different are the perspectives from whose Valencia can be object of valuation:

- From that of the circumstances and the international joint it takes place, it is necessary to contemplate Valencia as the emancipation of the BP in relation to the MEPP.
- In relation to the expectations and the actors' objectives
- Within the EU
- For Spain as Presidency, although it cannot be denied that in some partial dossiers that gotten is not all it ambitioned, it proceeds also to affirm that in none the door has been completely closed, in none has it had to give up the essence of its position; and, mainly, its global success. What confirms the adaptation of its approach and ambition and the strategy developed for its execution, as much in its preparation as in its content and negotiation, in the what and in the how. From the perspective of its Foreign Policy and national interest, Valencia becomes an intangible and an asset for the invigoration of the bilateral relationships with the partners of the South, of Spain's Mediterranean policy, of its global weight in the EU and of its external projection as a whole.
- Commission's political bet the for the window of opportunity for the Process' advance offered by the Spanish Presidency. Strategic alliance Presidency-Commission as motor and basis of this advance.
- Differences among member States, and existence for some non-Mediterranean ones of red lines in front of some initiatives because of their instrumental and financial implications.
- Among the partners of the South, the effect on the how, the advance in the coownership perception, the feeling and expectation generated of protagonism and appropriation of the Process are to be specially pointed out as intangible result of Valencia; as well as its consolidation as the framework par excellence for their insertion in the international system, what is of special strategic value for the EU, since the Process is not only the framework of relationship with it as main international partner, but also makes possible the development

of dynamics of cooperation, integration and bilateral relationship among them that hardly would otherwise be possible.

- In relation to the objectives outlined in the different preparatory documents it is necessary to point out their translation substantially in the VAP.

Lastly, Valencia also presents in its outcome as an intangible result the penetration of the outlined vision, speech and project on the Mediterranean and the Process of Barcelona within the EU and the partners of the South, in Spain itself and its public opinion, in other relevant international actors and in the international public opinion.

## VI. - THE FUTURE AND ITS CHALLENGES.

The PAV is fruit of consensus and negotiation, of the correlation of forces and the *momentum* of the hour of the truth, result of a transaction among some actors who wanted to go beyond and others who wanted to go nearer. After the negotiation, the tension among them doesn't disappear, but rather moves to the execution, to the negotiation of the execution, the interpretation of that negotiated. Its trip from paper to reality can be object of several possible scenarios and concretions.

What does that trip imply?. Several are the scenarios and directions in which it could and should take place.

- The implementation of approved programs and mechanisms, as the JHA regional program or the EIB Investment Facility, for which the Commission and the EIB constitute decisive actors.
- The creation of new institutions, as the Euromediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, the Euromediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures and Civilizations and would it be the case of the Euromediterranean Bank as EIB subsidiary. What implies in all the cases negotiation processes, where the positions, alliances and the different implied actors' negotiating strategies will be decisive of their final concretion, and of their adaptation to the spirit, approach and political intention with which their creation was decided in Valencia.
- The execution of the how, or the how of the execution, the maintenance and advance in it of the outlined principles and the form and spirit in which the negotiation was carried out, the consolidation of the intangible of Valencia and its expectations. Because not only what is executed matters, but also how and by whom.
- The setting of the follow-up and implementation mechanism, with all its potentiality for the impulse of the execution and the coownership and automaticity in it. Such mechanism can be object of several possible concretions – for instance in a formula that should combine a reduced but representative number of partners of the Process to be operative, among them the holders of the European Presidency between Barcelona V and Barcelona VI, the Commission, the coordinator of the Arab group and other representative partners of the South -, as well as of variable geometry case of assuming, as it would be advisable, a role in the processes of creation of the referred institutions, incorporating in each case relevant actors.
- The consideration of the time factor, because Barcelona VI constitutes no doubt the the port of destination fixed by the sailing charter of the VAP. But it also can and should be the departure point for the configuration of a new strategic relationship from a EU at the doors of its enlargement, for which the Mediterranean becomes its immediate neighbourhood. Of the rethinking and long term vision of the future of the BP, beyond the execution of Valencia and from the new EU.

In short, the advance of the BP is as that of the bicycle: if you don't pedal it falls. It is necessary to continue pedaling, thinking, proposing and carrying out the BP, whose objectives will perhaps never be completely fulfilled, but hardly could they be other, with the consciousness that utopias have never been carried out in History, but never the less they have moved it.

Besides the global considerations of the future, those of each actor from its particular perspective. The purpose of this work transcends to approach those of others. But I would like to conclude it approaching that of Spain, who, in my view, confronts, starting from Valencia the great challenge of - while defining and it pursuing its objectives for the realization of its national interest in the Mediterranean - consolidating its capacity and *autoritas* as its thinker, as international actor who in this vital area doesn't only play the game, but rather thinks it and contributes to its evolution. And thinks it in terms of positive peace, of cooperation for democracy, sustainable development and dialogue between cultures and civilizations. When making stop on the way, it is difficult not to contemplate with satisfaction the long way traveled

from that Spain who faced the challenge of building itself as a middle power with a special projection towards the Mediterranean. But also not to look before us the challenge of national maturity Spain confronts. From the State and from the society. Of assuming the *Mare Nostrum* as our home and vital environment, in the consciousness of all the relevant actors of the Spanish State and the society and its public opinion. And of appropriately using the accumulated international capital.

Globally, the great challenge that Valencia outlines us to the future is not only that of the assumption of the VAP concrete actions and initiatives, but also of that global vision of the Mediterranean identified with positive peace by all its actors and the International Society as a whole. Of the victory not only of the actions but of the ideas which inspire them, with all their global transcendancy and potentiality. If, as Foucault said, the jail it is in oneself, the Mediterranean whose construction pursues the Barcelona Process can be in ourselves as well.

***Manuel Montobbio***

September 2002

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<sup>i</sup> Morán, Fernando, *Una Política Exterior para España*, Madrid, Planeta, 1980.

<sup>ii</sup> Barbé, Esther and Elisabeth Johanson, *Las nuevas fronteras de la PESC: un estudio sobre el papel internacional de la Europa ampliada. Informe I. La frontera sur de la UE: el Mediterráneo*, Instituto Universitario de Estudios Europeos/Observatorio de Política Exterior Europea, Autonomous University of Barcelona, 2001.

<sup>iii</sup> Priorities of the Spanish Presidency for the execution of the Common Mediterranean Strategy (18<sup>th</sup> January 2002), Communication of the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament in relation to the preparation of the Valencia Euromediterranean Ministerial Conference (18<sup>th</sup> January 2002), Commission's Report to the Council on the creation of a Euromediterranean Bank, Conclusions of ECOFIN and the European Council of Barcelona (march 2002) on the creation of a Euromediterranean Investment Facility, European Parliament's Report on the Commission's Communication (21<sup>st</sup> March 2002), EU guidelines for the Euromed Ministerial Conference (GAC 15<sup>th</sup> April 2002).