

THE SECURITY POLICIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TOWARDS THE MIDDLE EAST*

Avrupa Birliđi'nin Ortadođu'ya Yönelik Güvenlik Politikaları

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Abstract

This study will focus on the bilateral relations between the European Union and the Middle East region, especially in recent years, which are evolving with policies such as "The Neighborhood Policy" and "Union for the Mediterranean", and the EU's security policies towards the region will be explained. In this context, the foreign and security policy-making of the European Union will be explained, the security policies of the European Union towards the Middle East will be elaborated, the relations of these policies with the Arab Spring will be examined and the European Union's success in these policies will be emphasized, respectively.

Keywords: *Hard Power, Soft Power, Security, European Union, Arab Spring.*

Öz

Bu çalışmada özellikle son yıllarda "Komşuluk Politikası" ve "Akdeniz için Birlik" gibi politikalarla canlanan Avrupa Birliđi (AB) ile Ortadođu'nun ikili ilişkileri üzerinde durulacak ve AB'nin bölgeye yönelik güvenlik politikaları anlatılacaktır. Temelinde güvenlik olgusu olan Birlik'in bölgeye yönelik politikaları açıklanırken 2010 yılının sonunda başlayan ve tüm bölgeyi etkisi altına alan Arap Baharı süreci ve bu sürecin arka planı aydınlatılacaktır. Arap Baharı'nın önemi ise bu süreç sonrası Birlik'in bölgeye yönelik politikalarının tamamen deđişmesidir. Bu bağlamda sırasıyla AB'nin yapılanması anlatılacak, söz konusu örgütün Ortadođu'ya yönelik güvenlik politikaları detaylandırılacak, bu politikaların Arap Baharı'yla ilişkisi irdelenecek ve AB'nin bahsi geçen politikalarda ne derece başarılı olduđu üzerinde durulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Sert Güç, Yumuşak Güç, Güvenlik, Avrupa Birliđi, Arap Baharı.*

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Introduction

Security is vital for human beings as well as human made structures. Since the European Union is one of these structures, the importance is attached to this concept and the Union determines many policies related to it.

The Middle East is a region where heavy conflicts are experienced and is an important place for religions; and attracts the attention of both regional and global powers due to its geopolitical position, surface and underground resources, notably the oil. For all these reasons, the European Union attaches a special importance to the Middle East region.

The European Union is set up with the aim of uniting the economy and has gradually moved toward integration in foreign policy and security fields in the course of time. The Union signed the Treaty of Lisbon together with the common external and security policies that emerged after the Cold War, and with this Treaty, entered a new phase in security policies. The European Union has attached importance to concepts such as democracy and human rights and has striven to spread these concepts both inside and outside. It has done this implementing the soft power and hard power policies which we would discuss in detail later.

The security policies of the European Union towards the Middle East can be examined under 2 main headings; Pre-Arab Spring and Post-Arab Spring. The public movements, which started in Tunisia, 2010, and spread to the region in a short time, destroyed the system that has been running in the region for a long time, and therefore, European Union changed its security policies accordingly. One of the reasons of these political changes is the fact that the European Union and the Arab Spring are actually linked to each other.

1. European Union

1.1. The Creation and History of European Union

Although the European Union was founded in the second half of the 20th century, the idea of forming a union in Europe has always existed. From time to time, this thought has been put forward by clergymen and philosophers as well as by the statesmen. There are 2 reasons for this idea of the Unity. First, the best way to solve the problems between European Christian states is the thought of unification of European Christian states. The second is that the best way to eliminate the threats to Christianity, the common religion of Europe and the European states is the idea of unification of European states.¹

According to the Schuman plan which Robert Schuman (Minister of Foreign Affairs of France) put forward on May 9, 1950, France and Germany had to put an end to the long-lasting conflict between them for the sake of European peace and European unity. In addition, the states in Europe had to transfer their powers on coal and steel production to an independent, transnational institution. This institution would be open to all European states wishing to participate.²

The foundation of the European Union is the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community which were originally established as three separate international organizations. Over time, these institutions were combined through various agreements.³ First, the European Coal and Steel Community was established with the Paris Treaty in 1952. Founding countries are France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Belgium and Netherlands. With the Treaties of Rome, The European Economic Community

1 Haydar Çakmak, *Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri*, Barış Kitabevi, 4th Edition, Ankara 2014, p. 11.

2 Jaap de Zwaan et al., *Governance and Security Issues of the European Union: Challenges Ahead*, Springer 2016, p. 11.

3 Matthew J. Gabel, "European Union", *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 26 December 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/European-Union>, (Date of Accession: 21.02.2018).

was founded in 1957 and the European Atomic Energy Community in 1958. With the Merger Treaty signed in 1965, it was decided to establish a single council and commission for these three institutions and these three institutions were referred to as the European Communities. As a result of the collapse of USSR, the international system has changed. In parallel with this, the Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1992 and the European Community was renewed and named the European Union.⁴

Members of the European Union agree not only on European Union agreements, legislation and norms but also common concepts based on democracy, human rights and social justice in this membership process.⁵ The European Union is a group of 28 members of which as of 2018, more than 500 million people live.⁶

1.2. Security Dimension of European Union

Security is defined as the absence of threat or the capability to deter threat. According to this definition there was no security in Europe before the European Union. As mentioned earlier, endless wars between the European states have been influential in the founding of the European Union. These states, which do not trust each other, have eventually decided to establish a superior institution to ensure the peace. In this regard, the security concept is the basis of EU.⁷

Members of the European Union think that the security of Europe must be maintained by Europeans. As we will discuss in more detail later, this factor also attracts the attention in the Union's security policies. This reason lies behind why the Union want to see itself independent from NATO. NATO was established

4 Iain Mclver, "The European Union: A Brief History", *The Scottish Parliament*, Spice Briefing, 2011, http://www.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S4/SB_11-44.pdf, (Date of Accession: 03.03.2018).

5 Michelle Cini et al., *European Union Politics*, Oxford University Press, Fifth Edition, Oxford 2016, p. 3.

6 "Size and Population", *Official Website of the European Union*, 24 February 2018, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/figures/living_en, (Date of Accession: 24.02.2018).

7 Heinz Gärtner-Adrian Hyde-Price, "Introduction", Heinz Gärtner et al., ed., *Europe's New Security Challenges*, Lynne Reinner Publishers, London 2001, p. 2.

in 1949 to protect Europe from the Soviet threat.⁸ However, NATO also includes non-European states such as USA and Canada, so NATO is not as much a European institution as the Union itself.⁹ Moreover, NATO depends on the power of the United States. According to European states, this situation is dangerous in terms of their sovereignty.¹⁰

If we look at the European Union's security policies, then we can categorize these policies under two groups; Pre-Cold War and Post-Cold War. The EU's security perception was traditional security during the Cold War; there was a certain enemy (USSR) and the European Economic Community produced various security policies against this enemy. In this period, the EU's self-defense idea was not brought to the agenda yet. The period after the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 is called as the post-Cold War era. In this period, the enemy is now uncertain, and the EU needs to maintain its own security. This led to the revision of the European Union's security policies.¹¹

During the Cold War, European states searched for common security and formed various structures accordingly. Some of these structures are Western European Union (WEU), European Defense Community (EDC) and European Political Community (EPC). Nevertheless, in the European Union, the first important steps were taken regarding the security in terms of institutional and legal grounds with the Maastricht Treaty in 1991. With this agreement, the structure with three pillars emerged. These pillars are European Communities, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters (PJCC). The military aspect of security became the part of CFSP through this agreement.¹²

8 Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era*, Columbia University Press, New York 2002, p. XV.

9 Haydar Çakmak, *Avrupa Güvenliği*, Platin Yayınları, 2th Edition, Ankara January 2007, p. 182.

10 Murat Gül, "From its Establishment to 21st Century: Continuity and Transformation in NATO in the 1990s", *Journal of Academic Inquiries*, Vol: 10, No: 1, 2015, p. 255.

11 Bilal Karabulut, *Uluslararası Örgütlerin Güvenlik Boyutu*, Barış Kitabevi, Ankara 2014, p. 74.

12 Levent Yiğittepe, "Security Policies of the European Union", *International Journal of*

Another development regarding the security dimension of the European Union was Petersberg Declaration which was adopted in 1992. With this declaration, it was confirmed the creation of a new French-German army brigade that would join the European Union military personnel, the sole military board of the European Union.¹³ The Petersberg Tasks in this document are the most important part of the document. Another important part of this declaration is that the Union can use force if necessary within the scope of Petersberg's mandate and that the EU membership is a prerequisite for the membership of WEU. 1994 NATO Summit in Brussels is also important regarding the security dimension of the EU. At this summit, the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) was established, and it was allowed EU to use NATO facilities through WEU.¹⁴

St. Malo Summit has an important place in the security dimension of the Union. The summit between France and the United Kingdom in 1998 in Saint-Malo was solved by the consensus reached at the summit on the military dimension of defense, security and integration that constitutes a problem in the European Union's integration process. This summit is the most important development that paves the way for the creation of security and defense dimension of the EU which is called the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP).¹⁵

The EU's first security strategy document is called, "A Secure Europe in a Better World" also known as "European Security Strategy" published in December 2003. According to this document new security threats should be struggled effectively and multilaterally. It also emphasizes the necessity of international organizations such as United Nations in order to maintain the stability and peace worldwide. This document is a result of policies aiming to improve the global effectiveness of EU. Finally, the Lisbon Treaty, signed in 2007 and came into force in 2009, was combined

Social and Educational Sciences(IJOSES), Vol: 4, No: 7, 2017, p. 15.

13 Ralph H. Folsom, *European Union Law in a Nutshell*, 8th Edition, West Academic, 2014, p. 48.

14 Karabulut, *op. cit.*, p. 80-82.

15 Stephan Keukeleire, *European Security and Defence Policy: From Taboo to a Spearhead of EU Foreign Policy?*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington D.C. 2009, p. 56.

with the structure with three-pillars created with Maastricht Treaty under a single roof. With this agreement, the scope of the Petersberg tasks has been expanded and the provisions relating to the European Security and Defense Policy have been included in EU agreements for the first time and various institutional arrangements have been made. In addition, the name Common Foreign and Security Policy has been changed to Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP).¹⁶

Although EU had no army, EU members signed an EU army agreement in November 2017 which would create a European Defense Fund. Denmark and England didn't become the parties of agreement signed by 23-member states, while Ireland, Malta and Portugal announced their decision on this issue later.¹⁷

The European Union is an economic organization that has a certain place in the world economy and is growing stronger. According to the experts, even though the united and expanding European Union has become a big power over time, the Union doesn't have this achievement in political and military fields. According to them it is the cause; The unification of the European Union does not put in an effort to develop a common defense and military policy and to improve its military capacity. The failure of European Union in this regard prevents the Union from taking an active role in world politics in the political and military sense.¹⁸

2. Power Types and Security Policies of the European Union Towards Middle East

Power types are categorized generally under two groups: Soft Power and Hard Power. Soft Power concept was used, for the

¹⁶ Karabulut, *op. cit.*, p. 85-89.

¹⁷ Tim Sculthorpe, "EU Army Moves a Step Closer as 23 Countries Sign Up to 'Historic' Pledge to Pool Resources Despite Warnings it Could Undermine Nato", *Daily Mail*, 13 November 2017, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5078157/EU-army-moves-step-closer-23-nations-sign-pact.html>, (Date of Accession: 01.12.2017).

¹⁸ Ertan Efeğil-Neziha Musaoğlu, "A Critique on the Concerns About Structure of International System After the Cold War Era", *Gazi Akademik Bakış*, Vol: 2, No: 4, Summer 2009, p. 13.

first time, by Joseph Nye his book “Bound to Lead” in 1990.¹⁹ Hard Power essentially consists of force, compulsion, and power politics. In this regard, the hard power is associated with realism in international relations. In one sense, the hard power is the oldest power form: Countries depend upon an anarchic, non-regulated international system idea that they do not recognize any superior authorization. It is result of rivalry for order, power and wars. Concepts such as force, threat or inducement are not used, when the soft power is implemented on the contrary of the hard power.²⁰ Soft power makes factors such as appeal, persuasion, admiration become prominent. According to this concept, a country admires another country’s assets, life order, welfare or culture and it wants to become just like in other country.²¹ Nowadays, Hollywood movie industry works in this direction. People, who watch Hollywood movies, aspire to live just like people in US. European countries “generally” attribute their policies to soft power, whereas some countries attribute their policies to hard power as being in Russia. The US occupation of Iraq is an example of hard power.

The most important reason why various obstacles occur in EU’s mutual security and defense policies is that EU countries have different history than each other. For instance, because Germany was affected substantially by world wars, they did not want to consider war option, and instead, advocated the factors such as trade power. France, the country that was occupied in the Second World War advocated increasing military capacity towards protecting their own interests. Because England was at the center of allied powers, they promoted armament of the Union. In this regard, Germany and the countries, supporting Germany, tend to consider the Union as a soft power organ, while the countries such as England and France advocate that the Union needs to improve in military sense.²²

19 Edward Lock, “Soft Power and Strategy: Developing a ‘Strategic’ Concept of Power”, *University of the West England*, 2009, p. 1.

20 Matteo Pallaver, *Power and Its Forms: Hard Soft Smart*, The London School of Economics and Political Science, 2011, (Published Doctoral Thesis), p. 3.

21 Bilal Karabulut, *Uluslararası İlişkiler Kavramlar-Teoriler-Kurumlar*, Barış Kitabevi, Ankara 2016, p. 381.

22 Adrian Hyde-Price, “European Security Strategic Culture and the Use of Forces”, *European Security*, Vol: 13, No: 4, 2004, p. 325-326.

If we consider the EU's Middle East policies, the region should, primarily, be pictured. After 16th century, the Western countries, especially UK, sought the ways in order to exploit India & China and they realized that the shortest way was passing through Ottoman land. After the opening of Suez Canal, region became more important since it halved the duration of a trip between England and India. For this reason, England occupied the region and called this region as Middle East.²³ It is contradictive where Middle East region exactly spans. In the end, this term was not entitled by people who lives in concerned region. Even though, the Middle East term is criticized because region was entitled by external powers, it is most common used term in our days. The region, where is implied by Middle East term, is bordered by Turkey in the North, Iran in the East, Egypt in the West and Arabian Peninsula in the South.²⁴ The countries, where region spans, are Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon.²⁵ The first person, who used Middle East term, is Alfred Thayer Mahan who is also known with Sea Power Theory.²⁶

This region is known as Arab World because of both Arab nationalism in the 20. century and outnumbering of countries where include mostly Arab population. The region is also called as Muslim World and Islam World due to high Muslim population and Ottoman dominance in history.²⁷

Middle East region is always important for EU because of political, economic, strategic reasons. This situation has come out top especially by effect of the Arab Spring. Under the circumstances,

23 Türel Yılmaz Şahin, *Uluslararası Politikada Orta Doğu*, Barış Kitabevi, 4th Edition, Ankara 2016, p. 11.

24 Kadir Ertaç Çelik, "İslam Devrimi Sonrasında İran'da Kimlik ve Dış Politika: Konstrüktivist Bir Bakış", *Bölgesel Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol: 1, No: 1, Summer 2016, p. 261.

25 Michele Penner Angrist, *Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East*, 2nd Edition, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Colorado 2013, p. 2.

26 Karl E. Meyer, "Editorial Notebook: How the Middle East Was Invented", *The New York Times*, 13 March 1991, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/03/13/opinion/editorial-notebook-how-the-middle-east-was-invented.html>, (Date of Accession: 21.02.2018).

27 Greta Scharnweber, "What and Where is the Middle East?", *Middle East Policy Council*, https://csme.indiana.edu/documents/cirricula/MEPolicyCouncil_What-WhereMiddleEast.pdf, (Date of Accession: 03.03.2018).

the Union had to look over their security policy toward the Middle East. Therefore, we will examine EU's security policy toward the Middle East as Pre-Arab Spring and Post-Arab Spring.

2.1. EU's Pre-Arab Spring Security Policies in the Middle East

The European Economic Community attaches great importance to the Middle East region for the aforementioned reasons and has implemented various regional policies. In the 1950s, European countries increased their use of oil through their own oil companies. When oil companies tried to prevent the price increase of oil, oil producing countries reacted to this situation and set up OPEC. In the 1970s, oil-producing countries bought some of the shares of European oil companies and thus had a say in oil prices. In short, they have nationalized oil companies. In this case, it caused oil crises. With these emerging oil crises, petroleum producing countries and Western European countries got closer and the Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD) between the Arab League and the European Economic Community started. This dialogue, which started in 1974, agricultural reform, industrialization, trade, finance, science and technology, as well as cultural and social communication. The energy problem has not been taken up in the agenda of this dialogue. Dialogue is mainly aimed at establishing economic and cultural ties between Europe and Arab countries, thus improving relations. However, this initiative is troubled by the Arab-Israeli question and the Palestinian issue.²⁸

The Euro-Arab Dialogue came to a halt in 1978 when Camp David negotiations between Israel and Egypt were conducted and the negotiations ended with Egypt issuing from the Arab League.²⁹ This dialogue comes back later, but with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the US's entry into Iraq, the dialogue has completely collapsed.³⁰

28 Stephen J. Artner, "The Middle East: A Chance for Europe?", *International Affairs*, Vol: 56, No: 3, Summer 1980, p. 420-431.

29 Elena Aoun, "European Foreign Policy and the Arab-Israeli Dispute: Much Ado About Nothing?", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol: 8, 2003, p. 291-292.

30 Jacques Waardenburg, *Muslims and Others: Relations in Context*, De Gruyter, Berlin-New

When it came to 1995, the “Barcelona Process” also known as Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED) initiated by the EU pioneer and the bilateral relations with the countries in the Mediterranean region became a regional, institutional and qualified structure. With this process, the EU aimed to solve the problems in the region. The new process did not only promise a common area of peace, stability and common prosperity but also with this process the European Union would become a greater political actor in the Middle East. In the new process; business associations, free trade, free and civilian people came forward. By using these concepts, the EU has tried to make the Middle East a more democratic, peaceful and prosperous region.³¹

There are various reasons for the EU to turn to the Mediterranean countries. One of these reasons is the economy. For example; In 1994, total exports of the European Union to the Central and Eastern European countries amounted to 31 billion ECUs. The export of the European Union to the Maghreb (North West Africa) and the Middle East countries in the same year amounts to 50 billion ECU. Another reason is that France, Italy and Spain are afraid that the economic stagnation in these countries will return to them as mass migrations. The union’s desire to benefit from the cheap labor force in the region, the tourism opportunities in the region, and the business cooperation and prevent drug trafficking are the other reasons why the EU wants to improve its relations with the Mediterranean countries. Another reason is that the Union does not want to lose the Mediterranean market to America.³²

The foundation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is based on the Paris Summit in 1972. In 1972, the European Communities put into practice the “Global Mediterranean Policy” (GMP) aiming at the development of economic relations with the countries in the region. Trade agreements have been used in the realization of this policy. In this context, the Community signed five-year commercial business agreements with all the Mediterranean countries in

York 2003, p. 278-281.

31 Timo Behr, “Enduring Differences? France Germany and Europe’s Middle East Dilemma”, *Journal of European Integration*, Vol: 30, No: 1, 2008, p. 80-81.

32 Bilal Karabulut, “European Union-Israel Relations”, *Gazi Akademik Bakış*, Vol: 1, No: 2, Summer 2008, p. 3-4.

1975, 1976 and 1977. Nevertheless, these policies failed to show the desired efficiency. For this reason, the EU has put in place a “Renewed Mediterranean Policy (RMP)” to revitalize relations with the Mediterranean countries. With this policy, financial support to the Mediterranean countries has been increased by 50%.³³

The aim of the EUROMED is that Middle East and North Africa region is socially open to the outside world through human interaction, dialogue, commercial and economic relations, and adopts Western values over time and articulates to Europe. In this process, instead of democracy and political reforms, the economy was emphasized. The EU had assumed that authoritarian governments would limit the power of their proposed economic reforms. But economic changes did not reflect politics as expected; the authoritarian regimes in the region strengthened. The EU interests have treated the countries in the region differently. The Gulf region was the clearest place for this policy of the EU. For the Union, which developed a wholesale policy towards the Gulf countries, stability was more important than political reforms. The Union did not care about the politics of repression and intimidation by the authoritarian regimes in the region for the Islamic movements.³⁴ The EU’s security policies for the region have changed with a new security approach emerging in the West after the September 11 attacks. According to this approach; there was a strong link between democracy and security, and the lack of democracy in the Middle East region was a security threat to the West.³⁵

Another reason for the changing policies of the Union is that 10 new members in 2004 joined the EU. The 10 new members also mean new neighbors and in this case the question of how much the EU will grow.³⁶

33 Karabulut, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

34 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, “Tehditler-Fırsatlar İkileminde Uluslararası Sistemde Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci ve İslam Dünyasında Birlik Arayışları”, *21. Uluslararası Müslüman Topluluklar Birliği Kongresi, Ekonomik ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Merkezi (ESAM)*, İstanbul, 27-28 May 2012.

35 Müjge Küçükkeleş, “AB’nin Ortadoğu Politikası ve Arap Baharına Bakışı”, *SETA Analiz*, No: 63, January 2013, p. 5-7.

36 Karen E. Smith, “The Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy”, *International Affairs*, Vol: 81, No: 4, 2005, p. 757.

European Neighbourhood Policy - Strategy paper adopted by the Union in 2004 constituted the basis for the new period regional policy of the Union. With this document, emphasis has been placed on democracy and human rights in accordance with the new security concept. The Neighborhood Policy used different means with the same aim as the EUROMED. Contrary to the multilateralism in EUROMED, the New Neighborhood policy was a policy that observed differences between bilateral relations and regional countries. Despite all this, the Union's Neighborhood policy has not caused radical change. The Union has not seen democracy as a goal but as a tool for fighting radical Islam. This policy has benefited from authoritarian regimes in the region. The battles of Afghanistan and Iraq have strengthened radical groups, escalating the instability in the region. Political change is replaced by economic change over time. In 2008, The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) was established under the leadership of France. Turkey is a member of this Union. Though 15 years after the founding of the EUROMED, the countries of the region have undergone a significant transformation process under the influence of globalization, but this process of change has not reflected to the public. While the economic reforms implemented increased unemployment and poverty, they also increased inequality in income distribution. While the political field is apparently regulated, these regulations have only strengthened authoritarian regimes in the region. As a result; The support given to the regimes of the region against the Union's struggle with political Islam has brought more instability to the region. All this process triggered the Arab Spring.³⁷

2.2. Arab Spring

Popular movements known as Arab Spring are the names given to the rebellion and change demands that started in North Africa (Tunisia) on 18 December 2010 and spread to the region. The wave of protest that has been going on since then shook the whole Arab world. All the regimes affected by the Arab Spring tried to suppress the demonstrators violently, and the protesters again

³⁷ Küçükkeleş, *op. cit.*, p. 7-9.

responded violently to this edition.³⁸ In Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen, regimes were overturned one after the other. The popular uprisings in Syria were brutally repressed by soldiers, and this led to a series of conundrum.³⁹ Popular movements under the name of Arab Spring are found in countries in North Africa and the Middle East. The total population in these countries is about 300 million. Because the majority of the population in these countries is Arab, the revolts that took place were called Arab Spring.⁴⁰ People's movements in the region are also called Arabic Awakening, Islamist Spring apart from Arab Spring.⁴¹

The Arab Spring is the name given to the entire movement of the people in the region. For example; The popular movement in Tunisia is called the Jasmine Revolution, and the popular movement in Egypt is called the Lotus Revolution. It is thought that the choice of these names is not random. There are various interpretations in this regard. According to one of these interpretations; The Arab Spring term was inspired by the Prague Spring, the name given to anti-Soviet anti-Soviet uprisings in Czechoslovakia in 1968. According to another interpretation; the spring has been chosen, especially in the meanings of revival, awakening because of the positive approach of the western states to the process. However, despite the years passed by these popular movements, the fact that a still democratic structure can not be built up in the Middle East and North Africa leads to comments that the Arab Spring period has returned to the Arab Winter.⁴²

Although the popular movements of the people in the countries of the region erupted with the demands of "democracy",

38 Abdul Qadir Mushtaq-Muhammad Afzal, "Arab Spring: Its Causes And Consequences", *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society (JPUHS)*, Vol: 30, No: 1, January-June 2017, p. 1.

39 Ufiem Maurice Ogonnaya, "Arab Spring in Tunisia Egypt and Libya: A Comparative Analysis of Causes and Determinants", *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Vol: 12, No: 3, Fall 2013, p. 1.

40 Carlo Panara, "Preface", Carlo Panara-Gary Wilson, ed., *The Arab Spring: New Patterns for Democracy and International Law*, Vol: 82, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2013, p. IX-X.

41 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, "Kanlı Bahar: 'Darbeler Suikastlar ve Katliamlar!'", *Milli Gazete*, 31 July 2013, <http://www.milligazete.com.tr/makale/861170/prof-dr-mseyfettin-erol/kanli-bahar-darbeler-suikastlar-ve-katliamlar>, (Date of Accession: 24.02.2018).

42 Karabulut, *op. cit.*, p. 15-16.

“transformation” and “freedom”, there are many reasons behind it. The causes of this rebellion are ethnic, religious, and sectarian problems that are created or can not be resolved in the region; non-democratic regimes in the region and the political and economic demands of the people. In addition, with the technology, young people who see how people live in developed countries cause desperation for the great powers who have interests in the region with the request of democracy, causing confusion in the region.⁴³ In the Arab Spring, authoritarian regimes were destroyed one behind the other, so Arab Spring created a “Domino Effect”. Normally the leaders remain in power until death, but this time the regimes in the region are destroyed by the people.⁴⁴

Looking at all these developments, we can see what a big effect Arab Spring has made. It is also noteworthy that the link between these popular movements and the security policies of the European Union towards the Middle East region is also remarkable. The European Union is indirectly behind the Arab Spring, supporting local authorities as dictators against radical Islam. The Arab Spring; the people in the region have begun to rebel against the demands of the region, such as democracy, human rights and freedom. One of the reasons why these concepts do not exist in the region is the policy of the European Union to the region mentioned earlier. In other words, although the Arab Spring is against the monarchical rulings of the forefront, the background is against the European Union, which supports these rulings.

2.3. Libyan Crisis; EU's First Test After the Lisbon Treaty

Libya is a country in the north of Africa, the 4th largest country in the continent, with a population of about 7 million in 2011. The economy of the country is largely based on oil and natural gas. Muammer Gaddafi, who succeeded the military coup in 1969, saw

43 Sertif Demir, “Tarihsel Gerçekler Bağlamında Arap Yarımadası ve Kuzey Afrika'daki Gelişmelerin Analizi”, Mehmet Seyfettin Erol-Ertan Efeğil, ed., *Türk Dış Politikasında Güvenlik Arayışları: “Temel Faktörler, Kavramlar, Aktörler, Süreç ve Gelişmeler”*, Barış Kitabevi, İstanbul-Ankara October 2012, p. 265-267.

44 Clement Henry-Jang Ji-Hyang, *The Arab Spring Will It Lead to Democratic Transitions?*, Springer, 2013, p. 16.

the oil in his country as a “weapon” against the United States and the European Union in order to realize his policies. Gaddafi followed nationalist policies; deported the Italian population of 85000 people living in Libya by the decision of the Libyan Revolutionary Command Council of 1970. He joined the oil embargo in 1973. His desire to have nuclear weapons and his interest in the production of other mass destruction weapons further aggravated his image in the West. This affected EU’s decisions towards the region and Libya was excluded from the EU’s trade initiatives in the Mediterranean and in the Barcelona Process. However, the EU was Libya’s major foreign trade partner. Libya pursues 70% of its foreign trade with EU member states. Another important reason why the EU is interested in Libya is that the country is on a transit route that can prevent illegal immigration.⁴⁵

Bilateral relations of the European Union and Libya are at the lowest level until 2000s. The main reason for this is that Western countries see Libya as a country that supports terrorism and develops weapons of mass destruction. After Libya announced the end of its nuclear programs in 2003, the United Nations and the European Union lifted the sanctions imposed on Libya. Depending on these developments, bilateral relations between the EU and Libya have begun to improve. As of 2011, a popular uprising against Muammer Gaddafi began with the effect of the Arab Spring and Muammer Gaddafi was killed on 20 October 2011. On March 2011, Western powers organized a military offensive against Libya under NATO leadership. The EU member states decision to initiate a rapid military operation in Libya under NATO leadership, as previously mentioned, is based on EU’s economic and strategic relations with Libya.⁴⁶ Two key factors underlying the EU’s Libyan policy are: economic benefits and energy security. However, EU’s intervention decision was not an easy one. Members of the Union conflicted with each other for the decision. For example; while Britain and France defended the use of military force within CSDP,

45 Cenk Özgen, “The First Crack in the European Union Common Security and Defence Policy: Libyan Crises”, *Social Sciences Research Journal*, No: 15, July 2016, p. 159-164.

46 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol-Oğuz Şafak, “NATO ve Kriz Yöntemi”, Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, ed., *Değişim Sürecinde Yeni NATO – Yeni Türkiye*, Barış kitap, Ankara, Ekim 2012, p. 156.

another group led by Germany opposed it. Germany's reason for this policy based on the economic relations with Libya.⁴⁷

This crisis was a test for the European Union, which changed the security dimension with the Lisbon Treaty. The EU failed in this test. It could not set a common policy; members focused on their own country interests. If we look at how close the Libyan crisis is, it is now clear that the EU has not been able to overcome the problems it has had in joint decision-making.

2.4. EU's Pro-Arab Spring Security Policies in the Middle East

Expecting the protests would come to a halt, EU remained indifferent to Arab spring for the beginning. After this short period of ignorance, the EU realized that the people living in the region were not just on a "bread riot" but much more.⁴⁸ The EU's problem in common decision-making persisted also in this period; the individual interests of the EU member countries prevailed causing the EU to display a passive image. The Union countries, which believed that they could control the popular movements in the region, supported the regimes in countries where their economic and political interests were focused. Thus, they expected the protests could be suppressed, but witnessing the end of Mubarak's 30 year of reign in Egypt ending in only 18 days, EU realized this rebellion was not just temporary. After this development, EU countries have changed their policies towards the region while trying not to let protests to harm EU's economic and political interests in the region.⁴⁹ Its first serious political step towards the Arab Spring was the "A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean" published on 8 March 2011. The document based the Union's regional policy in onto three basic elements: democratic transformation, civil society partnership and sustainable economic development. In addition, this document adopts an incentive-based approach that considers

47 Abdurrahim Sıradağ, "Avrupa Birliği'nin Libya Politikası: Realizm veya İdealizm", *Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM)*, Vol: 7, No: 70, September-October 2015, p. 76.

48 Bichara Khader, *The European Union and the Arab World: from the Rome Treaty to the Arab Spring*, IEMed, 2013, p. 34.

49 Küçükkeleş, *op. cit.*, p. 9-10.

the differences between the countries in the region. Accordingly, while the EU offers more incentives to more reformist countries while reducing to the others. Fair and free elections have been declared a prerequisite to cooperate with the EU. Nevertheless, the EU's approach to the region, which came with this document, has led to worries about the security of the region in front of its democracy.⁵⁰

On May 25, 2011, the EU Commission issued a document entitled "A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood". This document declares that the EU is adopting a new approach to the countries in the region, in accordance with its humanitarian responsibilities, universal human rights, law and democracy. This document mainly focuses on the economy. Accordingly, the Union will provide financial assistance to the countries in the Middle East and North Africa regions.⁵¹ The areas in which benefits are mostly transferred are economic development programs. The Union actively helps the region and promotes the investment opportunities that may help the region to develop economically. However, the amount of these financial assistance is very limited when the needs of the countries of the region are taken into consideration. The Union aims to improve the economic conditions of the region in the short run through this assistance. In the long run, the Union aims to remove the commercial provisions within the context of "broader market access" that hinder the access of the Middle East and North African countries to the EU market and ultimately it aims to add the region to the EU market. The EU gave the signs that it can lift visa obligations with the region in the long run. Although the security policies of the Union changed for the Middle East with Arab Spring, its general vision of the region did not change. Union's security policies for the region were demand-oriented and were aimed at countries that wanted to establish relations with the EU.⁵²

50 Ahmed Driss, "EU Response: A Show of Ambivalence", Riccardo Alcaro et al., ed., *Rethinking Western Policies in Light of the Arab Uprising*, Edizioni Nuova Cultura, Roma 2012, p. 104.

51 Ann-Kristin Jonasson, *The EU's Democracy Promotion and the Mediterranean Neighbours: Orientation, Ownership and Dialogue in Jordan and Turkey*, Routledge, New York 2013, p. 182.

52 Küçükkeleş, *op. cit.*, p. 11-12.

Syria is a critical country where the Arab Spring process is locked. Regional and international actors in Syria take their share of this impasse.⁵³ One of these international actors is the European Union. We can see that the problems that the EU has experienced persists looking at the EU's security policies in Syria crisis. The Union tried to manage the crisis by producing new policies when it first started in Syria in March 2011. It firstly called the Assad regime to stop the violence, and then imposed sanctions in various fields.⁵⁴ The first sanction was applied to the Syrian authorities under the Assad regime. Later, EU countries were banned from exporting oil and investing in Syria, and after a while arms embargoes were imposed. The civil war in Syria gave rise to refugee problem. The access of Syrian refugees to EU countries has made the issue an internal problem. The EU, which had problems to produce a common foreign and security policy had the same problem in the Syrian civil war. Disagreements between France, Germany and Britain in particular have shaped EU policies in this crisis.⁵⁵

Conclusion

Looking at the European Union's security policies towards the Middle East, we can see that it generally applies soft power politics towards the region, even though it gets harder from time to time, as in the case of Libya. The Union implements soft power policy through foreign aid for the development of the region. In addition, the Union forces the countries of the region to recognize and adopt concepts such as "democracy", "human rights" and "freedom of expression"; in other words, to force the countries of the region to be "like themselves". The Union represents itself as a "role model" for the countries of that region. Also, the EU's desire to develop

53 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, "Mülteciler İstihbaratçılar ve Amerikalı Paşa...", *Ankara Kriz ve Siyaset Araştırmalar Merkezi (ANKASAM)*, 31 December 2016, <https://ankasam.org/multeciler-istihbaratcilar-ve-amerikal-pasa/>, (Date of Accession: 21.02.2018).

54 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, "Suriye Krizinde Türkiye: Sebepler ve Olası Gelişmeler", *Müslüman Doğuda Devlet, Toplum ve Uluslararası İlişkiler, Rusya Bilimler Akademisi*, Moscow 2014, p. 406.

55 Burak Çalışkan, "Küresel Bilek Güreşi: Uluslararası Güçlerin Suriye Politikası", *IHH Humanitarian and Social Research Center (İNSAMER)*, 29 November 2016, http://insamer.com/tr/kuresel-bilek-guresi-uluslararasi-guclerin-suriye-politikasi_431.html, (Date of Accession: 03.03.2018).

trading affairs with the countries in the Middle East region and work towards it is a result of soft power politics. As a result, the more intense trade network EU has with the Middle East, the stronger economic sanctions it will impose.

The general vision of the European Union towards the region did never really changed but only went through some transformation although bilateral relations improved slightly with the “Barcelona Process”. This is an obstacle to the realization of the EU’s security policies for the region.

Another characteristic of the Union’s policies towards the region is that it cannot take a common decision in the context of the Union’s security policies. However, it is hard to say that the European Union normally acts with a common security policy in any other issue. Countries that pursue their personal interests are the biggest obstacles in the Union’s common policy. The relationship of European Union security policies with Arab Spring is also based on the same reasons. Countries pursuing personal interests did not care about the leaders as long as they have good trade affairs and supported the ruling dictators. In a way, the Arab Spring is against these dictators supported by the Union, which stands out with concepts as peace, freedom and democracy. Therefore, the Arab Spring is against the European Union.

Incoherence problem occurs not only among the members of the Union, but also within the security policies of the members themselves. As governments determine security policies, this process includes factors such as national forces and agencies, private sector, transgovernmental agents, regional and local authorities, civil society and this slows down the decision-making process. Another problem with the EU’s security policies is that these policies are based on deterrence and defense, shaped during the cold war period. These methods are insufficient for current threats, for today’s terrorism is changed and developed, so should the related security policies.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Karabulut, *op. cit.*, p. 102-104.

The Union has been unsuccessful in producing a common policy, and this failure created internal arguments. The future of the Union is full of questions in this sense. Union members struggle to form an EU army even though they cannot produce a common defense and security policy, so it is debatable how successful the army could be in case it's settled.

As a result, despite all its efforts, EU has been unsuccessful to put common security and defense policies together under one roof. This is evident in its security policies towards the Middle East. If the Union wishes to overcome the Arab Spring successfully, it must firstly digest its own values and then approach to the states in the region sincerely.

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