مجلة العلوم السياسيّة

اسم المقال: استشكاف آثار لغة مشروطية الاتحاد الأوربي على حوار حقوق الإنسان في المنطقة الأوربية المتوسطية
اسم الكاتب: إسلام حلمي ريحان
رابط ثابت: https://political-encyclopedia.org/index.php/library/6152
تاريخ الاسترداد: 2026/11/03 13:25 +03

الموسوعة السياسيّة هي مبادرة أكاديمية غير هادفة للربح، تساعد الباحثين والطلاب على الوصول واستخدام وبناء مجموعات أوسع من المحتوى العلمي العربي في مجال علم السياسة واستخدامها في الأرشيف الرقمي الموثوق به لإغناء المحتوى العربي على الإنترنت.
لمزيد من المعلومات حول الموسوعة السياسيّة - Encyclopedia Political، يرجى التواصل على info@political-encyclopedia.org

استخدامكم لأرشيف مكتبة الموسوعة السياسيّة - Encyclopedia Political يعني موافقتك على شروط وأحكام الاستخدام المتاحة على الموقع https://political-encyclopedia.org/terms-of-use

تم الحصول على هذا المقال من موقع مجلة العلوم السياسيّة جامعة بغداد ورفده في مكتبة الموسوعة السياسيّة مستوفياً شروط حقوق الملكية الفكريّة ومتطلبات رخصة المشاع الإبداعي التي ينضوي المقال تحتها.

Political Sciences Journal – Exploring the Effects of European Union Conditionality Language on European Mediterranean Human Rights Dialogue **Issue** (66) **December** (2023) **ISSN:** 1815-5561 **E-ISSN:** 2521-912X

Exploring the Effects of European Union Conditionality Language on European Mediterranean Human Rights Dialogue

Islam Helmy Rihan(*)
islam.helmy.rihan@gmail.com

Receipt date: 4/9/2023 Accepted date:1/10/2023 Publication date:1/12/2023

https://doi.org/10.30907/jcopolicy.vi66.673

Copyrights: © 2023 by the author.

The article is an open access article distributed under the terms and condition of the (CC By) license

Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

Since more than a decade, human rights dialogue in the European Mediterranean Region has been marked by a number of tensions. Although a number of factors contribute to such disputes, the effect of human rights conditionality, which ties EU economic cooperation progression with partner countries human rights advancement, on the dialogue has not been studied. Understanding the aspects, impacts, and effects of conditionality on Euro-Med relations is crucial for furthering dialogue. Yet this variable has been almost entirely neglected in academic and policy research. The research concludes several direct and indirect impacts of conditionality on human rights dialogue using a mixed methodology approach. Direct effects are reflected in the widespread rejection of the language of conditionality used by EU institutions, exposing EU's normative identity to intense scrutiny from its southern neighbors. Indirect effects include skepticism and perceptions that the EU politicizes human rights for its own benefit.

Key words: European-Mediterranean dialogue, Human rights, Conditionality, Normative identity, Perception, Discourse analysis.

(*) Ph.D. Candidate/ Faculty of Economic and Political Science/ Cairo University/ Egypt.

العدد (٦٦) كانون الأول (٢٠٢٣) **E-ISSN: 2521-912X** **ISSN: 1815-5561**

استكشاف آثار لغة مشروطية الاتحاد الأوربي على حوار حقوق الإنسان في المنطقة الأوربية المتوسطية

إسلام حلمي ريحان(*)
islam.helmy.rihan@gmail.com

تاريخ الاستلام: ٢٠٢٣/٩/٤ تاريخ قبول النشر: ٢٠٢٣/١٠/١ تاريخ النشر: ٢٠٢٣/١٢/١

المستخلص:

منذ أكثر من عقد من الزمان، اتسم حوار حقوق الإنسان في المنطقة الأوربية المتوسطية بعدد من التوترات. وعلى الرغم من أن عددا من العوامل تساهم في هذه المنازعات، فإن أثر مشروطية حقوق الإنسان– التي تربط تقدم التعاون الاقتصادي للاتحاد الأوربي بالبلدان الشريكة في النهوض بحقوق الإنسان– على الحوار لم تدرس بعد، ولذا فان فهم جوانب وآثار المشروطية على العلاقات الأوربية المتوسطة أمرًا بالغ الأهمية لتعزيز الحوار خاصة وان هذا المتغير بالكامل لم يتم تناوله في الأبحاث الأكاديمية. ويخلص البحث إلى عدة آثار مباشرة وغير مباشرة للمشروطية على الحوار بشأن حقوق الإنسان باستعمال نهج منهجي مختلط، وتنعكس الآثار المباشرة في الرفض الواسع النطاق للغة المشروطية التي تستعملها مؤسسات الاتحاد الأوربي، مما يعرض الهوية المعيارية للاتحاد الأوربي لتدقيق مكثف من جيرانه الجنوبيين، وتشمل الآثار غير المباشرة الشكوك والتصورات بأن الاتحاد الأوربي يسيّس حقوق الإنسان لمصلحته الخاصة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحوار الأوربي المتوسطي، حقوق الإنسان، المشروطية، الهوية المعيارية، الإدراك، تحليل الخطاب.

Introduction:

Since the Treaty of the European Union (TEU), the EU has sought to identify itself as an exporter of normative values. This is consistent with the European Union's aspiration to become a global power by virtue of norms rather than being classified within the realms of hard and soft powers. Utilizing various platforms, treaty

---

(*) باحث دكتوراه/ كلية الاقتصاد والعلوم السياسية/ جامعة القاهرة/ مصر.

formulation, institutional support, organizational establishments, and policy implementations, it focused on expanding its reach for human rights as part of the norms it fostered. As this normative approach evolved as the foundation of the EU's external relations, the South Mediterranean region became a priority and a direct target of EU conditional practices.

In spite of this, the EU's imposition of its identity as a normative force has been severely criticized in light of its claim to be the international and regional protector of human rights. The EU has pursued a "normative value model" defined by human rights-related conditionality provisions and linked it to its trade agreements. Conditionality has been present in numerous political, economic, and social domains. As a concept, it is defined as the practice of providing financial aid contingent on the implementation of particular policies. International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) loans to member applicants provide the most prominent examples of conditionality applications. The World Bank defines conditionality as "the set of conditions that must be met before the Bank may issue a disbursement in a development policy operation" (The World Bank 2005). Bani Salameh contends that the World Bank's use of conditionality in financing Least Developing Countries (LDCs) is largely meant to establish and perpetuate Western dominance and control over these countries rather than to encourage development (2017). The Western-dominated conditionality philosophy that underpins the lending practices of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank has been significantly extended to the field of human rights cooperation by the European Union's human rights conditionality clauses. Human Rights Clauses (HRCs) are required by the EU to regulate all of its international trade and cooperation. This concept has been embraced by EU member states as a guide for the implementation of various EU-appropriate measures. It allows for the adoption of measures in international relations in the event of violations of human rights and democratic principles, serving a dual

purpose. First, it enhances the international influence of EU institutions. Second, it adds a layer of human rights portfolio review above and beyond bilateral state discussions. In this context, Lannon defines conditionality as a political instrument that helps to influence the internal and external policies of a third country. This is reflected in instances in the 'Copenhagen Criteria' for EU enlargement and the 'convergence criteria' for prospective states applying for membership in the Union and joining the Euro Zone, respectively. (2001, 97-138).

The problem with this "normative values" approach is the Euro-Med region's disparate levels of development and progress. It provides the EU with the moral conviction of the necessity to monitor the human rights of its southern neighbors. The problem occurs when the EU, through its different institutions, decides to practice its dominance by using or threatening to use conditional clauses in its relations with South Mediterranean countries. To this end, human rights conditionality becomes an independent variable that impacts European-Mediterranean political dialogues. The phenomenon of human rights conditionality for the promotion of regional development, as well as the effects of EU normative model imposition, have been studied exclusively from a European perspective. Such as in the works of Helle Malmvig, which focuses on the EU's competing conceptions of security in relation to the promotion of democracy and human rights in the Middle East (2006, 343), and Lorensa Sosa and Alexander Timmer, which seeks to identify the conceptual obstacles the EU faces in promoting human rights action abroad Sosa and Timmer (2020, 62).

Furthermore, the literature reveals internal inconsistencies in the EU member states' external policies regarding human rights. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Johanne Saltnes, who also observed that even when theory is explicitly employed, alternative hypotheses based on human rights concerns are seldom considered. Among numerous scholars, Richard Young observes that diplomats, particularly those from France and Spain,

find the concept of conditionality to be unsettling in practice. Instead, they are opposed to the notion of attaching aid allocation to progress in democratization. (Young, 2006). Charles Grant concurs with this assessment, further asserting that the European Union, under pressure from France, Italy, and Spain, diminished the significance of human rights when addressing Mediterranean nations. The primary rationale behind this abstention pertains to the external dangers posed by illegal immigration and terrorism. (Grant, 2011).

Yet academic literature disregards the perspectives of southern Mediterranean states on the human rights records of their northern EU neighbors. Instead, literature, such as Michelle Pace's work, concentrates on Arab perceptions of the European Union's role in promoting democracy in the Middle East (Peace 2010, 611). While some aspects of European advocacy of human rights in the Middle East have been investigated and described in vast literature, the effects of the conditionality approach on dialogues have not. Consequently, the primary research question is how the human rights conditionality element of EU foreign policy is impacting human rights dialogue with South Mediterranean countries.

Design / Methodology/ approach

A structured approach has been applied to describe and comprehend the effects of conditionality on human rights dialogue in the Mediterranean Region using a mixed research methodology. First, the foundations of human rights conditionality were examined, which was accomplished by applying legal and historical lenses to its origins. This introduction to the conditionality clause is essential for grasping the intent behind the human rights clause as a principle and instrument.

On the basis of this foundation, an outlook on how the South Mediterranean perceives the EU's human rights portfolio is required for deducing and deriving the reasons why EU conditionality would create conflicting sources and tensions in EU-Med relations. To

extract the required positions, a descriptive analysis of official observation in the South Med was conducted. This has been accompanied by extracting and analysing data from UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review cycles, which provide in a peer format state to state peer recommendations for improving human rights (Frederick, 2018: pg164-184). The evaluated recommendations were extracted from an open-source database developed by the "UPR Info Project." UPR Info Database is a platform developed in collaboration with HURIDOCS for a completely searchable online database (www.upr-info.org, access date: September 8, 2022). UPR Info has incorporated into its database all official recommendations from UPR WG reports. In addition, the database has its own set of predetermined categories and topics to which the imported recommendations would apply for the benefit of search efficiency. 90938 suggestions were incorporated from the 196 state reports for the three cycles. Using the available criteria, only the recommendations EU Member States received from the specified Arab countries were extracted from the database. Thus, the total number of compiled Arab countries recommendations in the South Mediterranean region was 941 across 48 subjects. The data retrieved represents 8% of all submissions submitted by UN Members to EU Member countries. Moreover, the recommendation derived from the countries of Study accounts for 71% of all Arab government submissions across the three cycles of 1,317 recommendations imported into the Database. The EU's "Southern Mediterranean" regional cooperation encompasses a number of countries that extend into the Middle East and North Africa. The UPR database query extracted observations submitted by Arab Southern Mediterranean countries to all EU member states over the span of three cycles (2008-2012), (2012-2016), and (2017-2021). The concentration has been on eight Arab states from the Euro-Med Partnership region, including five countries from the Middle East (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia) that routinely submit

human rights recommendations and observations to EU member states. Libya is excluded from the database query because its participation has been suspended since 2012.

Discourse analysis was used to narrowly focus on how South Med countries perceived the EU's use of conditionality as a tool of hard power within its external normative identity image. The main findings in the perception of EU human rights practice directly support the observation deduced. Primary and secondary sources such as government statements, reports, records, press releases, televised presidential speeches, and conference talks were used for the assessment.

An impact assessment of the policy of conditionality on the European-Mediterranean Human Rights Dialogue is detailed in the results and findings, allowing discussion of how these disputes affect current politics and foreseen potential impacts.

Results and Discussions

Human Rights Conditionality in the frame Of the South Mediterranean region

Since its founding, the EU has developed a set of external regulations and policies to assure internal and external consistency. As a result of this regulation, human rights conditionality clauses were included as a prerequisite for the continued application of the bilateral treaty. These human rights principles have evolved into two categories of Articles, namely essential and non-execution clauses. These clauses arose from the need to suspend cooperation with third parties when necessary, i.e, enabling the EU to suspend its obligation to make aid payments in the event of grave violations of human rights. A problem that Uganda once encountered in the 1970s but the EU was unable to take action on. (BARTELS 2014, 6). In the Fourth Lomé Convention signed in December 1989, the first human rights clause between the Community and non-member states was stipulated. It was signed by 68 African, Caribbean, and Pacific nations as well as 12 members of the EU. In 1998, the Commission sent a communication to the Council and European

Parliament explaining how the community interprets the revised Fourth Lomé Convention concerning human rights, democracy, and the rule of law for the ACP countries that are parties to the convention (ibid). This communication was sent in accordance with the interpretation of the human rights clause. The content of this document is significant because it implicitly establishes the framework that will guide the EU when drafting comparable agreements with non-member states. It asserts the four fundamentals of universality, indivisibility, and interdependence (Eur1998, 1) which are:

- Supporting democratization as a long-term process involving developing civil society, institutional reforms, and the consolidation of change;
- Promoting and strengthening the rule of law;
- Supporting local and regional institutions;
- Promotion of pluralist civil society in a context of sustainable social and human development.

During the Arab Spring, the EU exerted considerable effort to capitalize on the Middle Eastern social movements, uprisings, and revolutions. As part of its efforts to revisit the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and reaffirm universal values, the EU sought to strengthen its policy and protection of human rights in this context. Regarding the conditionality clause, the revision and implementation of the ENP policy have produced diverse outcomes.

The EU's "Southern Mediterranean" regional cooperation covers a number of countries between the Middle East and North Africa. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (also known as the Barcelona Process) is an intergovernmental framework created in 1995 to promote political, economic, and cultural cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Southern Mediterranean countries. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is comprised of 27 EU member states and 11 partner countries from North Africa and the Middle East, including Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya,

Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, and Mauritania. In addition, the Union for the Mediterranean, a distinct organization established in 2008 as an offshoot of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, consists of 27 EU member states and 16 partner nations from the Mediterranean region. The frameworks of cooperation between Euro-Med countries are governed by a variety of legal structures, including:

- The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP): This is a policy framework that aims to promote stability, security, and prosperity in the EU's neighbouring regions, including the South Mediterranean.
- The Revised ENP: is an updated foreign policy emphasizes a differentiated approach,
- Association Agreements: These are formal agreements between the EU and individual countries in the South Mediterranean region that establish a framework for political, economic, and social cooperation.
- Trade agreements: The EU has signed a number of trade agreements with countries in the South Mediterranean in order to promote economic growth and development in the region.
- Strategic dialogues: These are regular meetings between the EU and individual countries in the South Mediterranean region to discuss regional issues of mutual concern, including security, political stability, and economic development.
- Financial assistance: The EU provides financial assistance to support various development initiatives in the South Mediterranean region, including projects related to economic and social development, education, and democracy.

All of these formats contain both explicit and implicit conditionality principles. The Association Agreement is most explicit where a human rights clause is a prerequisite for further cooperation advancement. Whereas in the revised ENP, the concepts of shared values and profound democracy were introduced

with ambiguous explanations but would be indirectly added to the grounds for which conditionality clauses would be inclusive.

The EU has only fully applied the conditionality principle in the Middle East and South Mediterranean region in the case of Libya. EU-Libya framework agreement trade and all technical cooperation negotiations were suspended on February 22, 2011. Nonetheless, the EU remains the largest provider of economic, social, and political reform assistance to Libya. According to the EU's External Relations Service, Libya has received 700 million in financial assistance as of 2022. EEAS2021).

Despite the fact that conditionality resulting in suspension of trade has not been used except in the last instance, the problem persists in the repeated call for the use of the clause in various dialogues. This is the actual issue. European literature consistently blames the EU's ineffectiveness and inability to apply conditionality. While the countries of the South Mediterranean accuse the EU of using double standards and politicizing human rights. The Egyptian Parliament rejected in an official statement on November 26, 2022, the European Parliament's resolution condemning Egypt's human rights record (Essam al-din 2022). The press release was part of an official outcry against interference in internal affairs that was conveyed through various channels of communication. This is not the first time the European Parliament has passed such a resolution, and Egyptian officials have already expressed their opposition. In 2018 and 2016, the European Parliament urged that the European Commission take action and use the conditionality clauses to suspend aid.

Consequently, Official Euro-Med partnerships in the field of human rights dialogue are explicitly fractured. Egypt and the European Union suspended the high-level meetings of the Egyptian European Partnership Council in 2013. The seventh conference of the Egyptian European Partnership Council occurred in 2017, seven years after the previous meeting (Reda, 2017.). Despite the fact that numerous variables contribute to this delay, it is reasonable to

assume, based on a content analysis, that after 2013 the Egyptian perception of EU's interaction was tinged with skepticism, and the disapproval of the EUs approach has been a major cause. The meeting held pinpointed positions and actions that the EU must revise on its end, as the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sameh Shokry, emphasized the need to establish a relationship based on mutual respect and appreciation. He rejected the EU's criticisms of Egypt's internal situation on the basis of misinformation. In addition, an indirect message rejected the imposition of normative Europe by asserting that no entity has the authority to condemn other nations. Shokry went on to criticize the EU for its negative stance in addressing the threats of terrorism and extremism, claiming that it turns a blind eye to the practices of some states and regional entities that explicitly support terrorist organizations through the provision of funding, arms, shelter, propaganda, and promotion. In another instance according to a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' spokesperson, the Minister of Foreign Affairs denounced the rise in islamophobia and hate crimes in Europe and criticized the EU's insistence on approving a cooperation program for managing water resources in the Nile basin in partnership with the Nile Basin Initiative, in which Egypt has suspended its participation.

The statements of Shokry plainly reflect an official Egyptian perspective that has been established as a result of EU actions and positions. Although the meeting was successful in resuming the association partnership agreements, it nonetheless conveyed to the EU Egypt's position and objections in an unambiguous manner. It implicitly disapproved of European Normative Identity and explicitly criticized the European Union for violating its own ideal normative standards. In addition, it objected to EU actions and stances that have a direct negative impact on regional security.

Contemporary impacts

The insensitivity of the EU to its southern neighbors' perceptions of its imposition is the root cause of the persistent conflicts in the

area of human rights dialogue. While the European Union attempts to exert influence over its southern neighbors as the superior and defender of human rights, this is unofficial. High-level official speeches and the UN Periodic Reports are two important sources for such perceptions, considering that collective memory is one of many factors that affect EU perceptions in the South Mediterranean. The information deduced from the UPR value depends on its support for an official observation of a human rights violation. In addition, the formulation of recommendations submitted to the UPR process by state actors is largely based on observations derived from an extensive official dialogue with diplomatic representations, civil society organizations, and key stakeholders. States conducting UPRs are becoming increasingly cognizant of the importance of the recommendations, which Subhas identifies as the "primary currency" of the process (Gujadhur and Limon, 2016)

Even though EU interactions with study countries contribute the most to foreign human rights support programs for South Mediterranean Countries, this does not necessarily translate into enhanced official perspectives on the EU's normative portfolio. Cooperation with regard to human rights not only advances promotion and promotion and protection efforts, but also fosters regional and international cooperation that remedies the colonization-related effects of past aggression. *Conditionality* is the hidden keyword. Although the human rights conditionality is mutually reinforcing, it is perceived and discussed in the literature as an exclusive EU instrument. Through literature and official statements, it gave the EU the upper hand in employing all conceivable critique models to criticize the human rights portfolio of its southern neighbors. The direct and indirect effects on the human rights dialogue are described. Regional Organizations may have attempted to reconcile these contradictory viewpoints through diverse forms of cooperation in less obvious areas of human rights. The Union for the Mediterranean has concentrated its efforts on all

shared-interest development initiatives. This liberal institutional approach would foster cooperation through a strategy of common ownership. Nonetheless, this may not yet have had an impact on the human rights dialogue and tone adjustment. Europeans deem insufficient the progressive approach adopted by Southern Mediterranean nations in all human rights disciplines. The continued use of the language of conditionality by EU institutions has had an effect on the political relationship between South-Med Countries and the EU. The discourse analysis of official dialogues revealed their political discontent with the EU's human rights norm diffusion and conditional approach, despite their enjoyment of expanding economic, cultural, technological, and development relationships. The study has demonstrated that despite the fact that all partners embrace international human rights principles in full, there is a distinction between accepting international principles and European norms.

This political contention has been primarily a result of the conditionality approach taken by the EU institutions. Shifting and developing new partners to decrease the reliance on the EU has had a direct impact on the conditional approach. The continuous calls for the implementation of human rights clauses by the EU embark on political dissatisfaction from South-med partners has been thus far only widening a gap in areas of political dialogues. Further to the fact that officials of South-Med have been constantly denouncing the EU's acting upon information received from untrusted sources without any response from the EU. This comes in addition to the double-standard approach of the EU in its human rights selection with full disregard for most Israel human rights violations and humanitarian crimes. (BADIL Resource Center 2022).

Recalling collective memory

The human rights conditionality is perceived by the Southern Mediterranean as merely a tool for persuasion and pressure. Through the discourse analysis, the EU is not only perceived as a supranational organization attempting to impose European values

in external relations; but furthermore, as an attempt at external governance imposition. The impact of the continual call on conditionality implementation has led to the revising of South-Med officials to the whole ideal of EU normative application, leading to the recalling of the collective memory of past European colonizers and affecting on EU human rights record.

In approaching EU-Med relations perceptions toward conditionality policy, it is necessary to consider the historical, political, and economic contexts through the lens of collective memory. EU med relations are based on a complex set of shared interests, vital resources, and mutual security, which collective memory influences this intricate set of relationships. Conditionality is perceived by officials in South Mediterranean countries as means of pressuring and threatening to EU use for pragmatic purposes. This is communicated by the elites and public officials, who view conditionality as an instrument requested without proper grounds and for the sole purpose of exerting pressure. In addition, the elites' perception of conditionality devalues its concept in light of the double standards applied to the EU's foreign policy, such as in the refugee crises; application of international law in terms migration policies, and racial discriminations reported. In a previous interview by the author with Mr. Mohamed Fayek, former President of the Egyptian National Council for Human Rights, this notion was articulated in detail (Rihan ,2020). According to him, it is necessary to consider the following points in relation to the fundamental theme of conditionality:

- The imposition of sanctions brings to memory the idea of colonialism, in which the colonized countries witnessed the most violations of human rights by European countries
- In dealing with the countries of the South-Med, we must take into consideration that those countries are still in the reform process to become fully integrated democratic countries. So for example, the UN Special Rapporteur on Housing asking about why government

not taking the opinions of citizens on the issues of housing development shows that it is an illogical question.

- The blaming and shaming method has proven ineffective, and has a very negative effect, and loses credibility. and the Trump model is an example. The utilization of the blaming and shaming approach has demonstrated its ineffectiveness, resulting in adverse consequences and a loss of credibility. The Trump model serves as an illustrative case, wherein President Trump's tenure was characterized by a contentious approach to both domestic and global affairs. The tactic of assigning blame and shaming was employed not only on a global scale, as exemplified by the China human rights crisis, but also in the formulation of contentious policies like the construction of a wall along the US-Mexico border,
- What is required is assistance within the framework of capacity building, because reform must be from within
- We must work within the framework of the law and respect for institutions, therefore statements that non-professional prisoners must be released although convicted is not an approach of a human rights defender.
- More for more policy is the politicization of human rights, and we (middle east region) rejects the link between aid and human rights, and the model that happened to Iraq with such a policy was nothing but a punishment for the Iraqi people, and conditionality contradicts the pride of nations, especially those who came out of colonial rule and worked on their independence Similarly, the official Moroccan perspective on the EU's conditionality approach can be precisely extracted from King Mohammed VI's address at the fifth AU-EU summit in Abidjan. The King's speech contains clear and concise messages that expressly convey the official perspective of Morocco. The King has shifted the focus of his speech to the concept of the collective memory of European colonialism by stating*: "It is essential that the courageous, responsible dialogue between former colonizer nations and former colonized countries remain frank and direct. Today, fresh impetus*

needs to be injected into it" (Embassy of Kingdom of Morocco in Vietnam, 2020). By using the phrases "colonizer" and "colonized" explicitly, King Muhammed VI implies the EU's developmental responsibility towards the African Region. The remark implies considering the core reasons of the surge for migration from Africa to Europe as a result of the negative impact and ramifications of EU colonization.

In his speech, King Mohammed also explicitly criticizes the concept of conditionality. In his speech, he argues eloquently that Europe imposes untenable conditions on African nations, demanding that they perform as the EU does despite their unequal levels of social and economic advancement. He opposes this, emphasizing the fact that some African nations only achieved independence in recent decades. King Mohammed expressly declares:

To that end, there should be a shift in the EU-Africa Partnership towards a new bicontinental Pact. Both Africa and Europe must rise, together, to inevitable challenges through shared competitiveness, co-localization of productive businesses, regulated human mobility and fruitful cultural exchanges. ..At the same time, the conditionality of the debt must be reconsidered: indeed, Western countries expect some African countries – which gained independence less than half a century ago – to perform in politics and the economy as optimally as they themselves do, and they therefore impose impossible conditions on them.

A comprehensive extraction of Moroccan arguments against EU egocentrism supports a second remark. According to King Mohammed, solidarity between Europe and Africa is neither an abstract concept nor a relationship founded on unilateral altruism; rather, it is based on shared responsibility and mutual dependence. According to him, a genuine horizontal partnership can now replace the logic of a vertical assistance pattern. He argues that the structure of the relationship must be based on the principle of equal dependence, which eliminates the European perspective of

superiority. Additionally, it is necessary to assert shared responsibilities and equal standing in the face of challenges and opportunities.

An interview by the author with the former director of the League of Arab States' Human Rights Department reveals a distinct historical perspective on the normative role of the EU in promoting human rights, highlighting the persistence of collective memory in comprehending the overall relationship. The subsequent analysis has been obtained.

We must take into consideration that since the French revolution of 1789 establishing the pillars of presidential form of government took more than a century until France has been able to develop the human rights values and systems it embeds now days. In addition to the fact that France achieved its economic and social development establishing its economic standards today due to the absorption of African People and their wealth leading to the economic, social and scientific advancement. Whereas the cases of Egypt changing its form of governance from monarchy to presidential system only took place in 1952 which means only history of 70 years of developing a presidential democratic system. This was not in the early beginning met with better chances due to engagement into battels that Egypt was drawn into, such as the tripart aggression By France, Great Britain and Israel (Suez Crises) and its aftermath effect stretching the limits of our limited resources; taken into consideration the falling behind in social and economic fields. Such lagging behind had its roots due to the colonization and its impact on the social foundations. The colonization for instance was responsible to one of the cruelest slaveries and forced labor in modern era practiced by European countries for the sake of their own wealth and interest at the time i.e. the digging of the Suez Canal. This slavery was responsible the loss of the lives of tens of thousands of Egyptians, buried on spot under the soil of the canal. These crimes have indeed has been reflected with dire effects on the establishment of the economic and

social basis. We will need time to advance human rights which is tied to the advancement in the economic and social fields, and to which European Countries have a responsibility towards third world countries by supporting the Economic and social development. (Rihan, 2020)

Through this analysis, it was possible to deduce one of the principal official perspectives of the South Med countries. Colonization posed a significant barrier to the advancement of human rights in South-Med countries, which could not have been protected under these circumstances. Considering Algeria's "one million martyrs" in its war for independence from France, Morocco's Tirailleurs Massacre, and Egypt's Suez Canal forced labor and slavery; not only did these atrocities harm the people of that generation, but they also had long-lasting effects and repercussions. This discussion reveals three inferences that enable the storage of images in the collective memory. The enrichment of North-Mediterranean wealth at the expense of nations in the South; Grave atrocities perpetrated by European nations that disregard their previous actions; the obligation to aid in development.

In the vast literature on European-Mediterranean relations, the degree to which this cooperation has been effective has been the subject of much debate. It is recognized that ownership has been a central theme, suggesting that many Mediterranean countries felt Euro-Med was perceived by Europeans as an exclusively European policy, necessitating a review of the Union for the Mediterranean's role. The discourse itself highlights the views from the European narrative that the EU has a role in democratizing the Southern Mediterranean, i.e, ethnocentrism; a narrative that necessitates an answer to the question: how do the countries of the Southern Mediterranean perceive the EU? This matter has received little consideration in the vast literature on Euro-Mediterranean relations. The perspective of non-EU nations and their citizens remains essentially unexamined. The theme of the 2018 Euro-Misco Annual Conference, Changing Euro-Mediterranean Lenses, was an attempt

to address the question; it introduces key points to the Euro-Med public debate regarding perceptions. Three primary points extracted from the conference's discussions are crucial and closely related to the current investigation:

- Too often, in the European public debate, the Southern part of the Mediterranean is portrayed as the source of problems facing the European Union.
- Healthy and balanced Euro-Mediterranean relations require a serious effort of introspection on the European side. A number of developments in the European Union also have an impact on the southern Mediterranean and ultimately Euro-Mediterranean relations.
- The emergence of populism in certain member states, such as Italy and France, has resulted in the securitization of the European Union's approach, the violation of foundational values such as solidarity and human rights, and the re-nationalization of EU foreign policy. These developments have significant implications not only for the process of European integration, but also for the Southern Mediterranean region. They impact the perception of the EU in this region, the credibility of its actions, and the overall partnership between the EU and the Euro-Mediterranean countries. These perceptions reveal the self-constructed images that South-Med citizens have of how North-Med citizens perceive them. Being portrayed as the source of problems would involve a full image conflict with their collective memory of the consequences of South-Med colonization. Images in international relations, according to Boulding, are always a product of previous messages, but they are highly structured pieces of information that depend on their inputs and outputs. (1959, 120-131)). According to this explanation, it is primarily dependent on the dissemination of images of European norms versus the conflict zone in the South Mediterranean. Despite the fact that cooperation should be defined within a larger context, this is evident in decision-making in this regard. As a result, numerous factors influenced the planning and

formation of Euro-Med relations. Two of these primary variables, irregular migration and terrorism, have been at the top of the cooperation agenda.

Negative shared perceptions.

In analyzing the South Med human rights perceptions of EU member states, a pattern of negative shared perceptions has been observed. The consequences of this negative perception have two impacts. A direct impact within the current Euro-Med relation paradigm of human rights diplomacy, and an indirect impact on the conditionality language. The negative perceptions diminish and dismantle the normative human rights identity of the EU in the eyes of the South-Med Countries. Whereas, grounds of skepticism that are observed through discourse analysis of high-level official speeches illustrate the disapproval of the human rights conditionality language.

In this descriptive analysis of the extracted data, a shift in official South Mediterranean countries' perceptions toward the EU's human rights portfolio is evident. Equality & Non-Discrimination has received the most recommendations and observations. 33% of all recommendations submitted by South Med countries of study in the UPR third cycle recommendations fell into the Equality & Nondiscrimination category, compared to 24% in the First Cycle. This increase of 17% in the total number of suggestions received by EU members is indicative of the Arab states' growing dissatisfaction with EU member states' human rights progress within this field. Equality and non-discrimination observations mirror the extent of concerns for minorities in EU Member States. Observations concerning discrimination against minorities accounted for 27.4% of all recommendation.

A more specified theme, 'racial discrimination,' amounted to a quarter of the recommendations in the third cycle (Table 4 of the dataset). The official stance called on ending ethnic profiling, tackling the root causes of racial discrimination, and combating intolerance. At the EU Members' country level, Austria, Germany,

Netherlands, Sweden, and Malta received their highest number of recommendations for combatting racial discrimination in C3 (Table 6 of the dataset). Bulgaria had its highest recommendations equally in the fields of 'combatting racial discrimination and 'combatting discrimination against minorities. Czechia and Finland have had their highest recommendations received equally distributed between all themes of the category 'Equality and non-discrimination (Table 6 of the dataset). While France had an equal number of its highest recommendations received in the field of combatting 'hate Speech against Muslims and minorities and Combating racial discrimination', Italy, Portugal, and Slovenia have received their highest number of recommendations in the area of exerting efforts in 'combating hate speech against Muslims and minorities with the latter provided with specific recommendations against 'combatting human trafficking (Table 6 of the dataset).

Discrimination, with all its subthemes is the primary concern recorded compared to the different themes of the study. The study categorized discrimination, focusing on minorities, racial discrimination, and hate speech. The purpose is to distinguish between discrimination encompassing racism as the motivation for the violations or due to gender basis. For instance, discrimination against people with disabilities, women, and children is all subcategorized under social and economic rights, given the linkage between discrimination and equality in the workforce and labor. The theme of discrimination from this standpoint articulates the first negative perception of EU normative identity. This given result coincides with the observations of European Commission President Von der Leyen, in which she raised several questions before the European Parliament questioning why racism and discrimination are enduring in European societies. Combined with the illustrated results, the theme of discrimination is evident as the central gap in EU member states' human rights portfolios. The EU Parliament adopted a resolution noting the lack of effective tools in monitoring respect for minorities, calling on all Member States to sign, ratify,

and enforce a series of legal documents namely" The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities; Protocol No 12 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

The recommendations submitted in the field of discrimination by Arab South-Med are all consistent with the report of the UN special rapporteur on minorities. The UN report warns that while the media can have enormous potential to foster acceptance of diversity, it nonetheless can be misused as a forum for stigmatization, discrimination, exclusion, and incitement to hatred. Furthermore, the statistics in the study deduced that combating hate speech against Muslims and minorities, combating racism and racial discrimination have been areas of most concern, mainly related to the phenomenon of islamophobia and xenophobia. Tracing the increase of islamophobia in Europe is vivid during the C2 time frame, including many incidents such as the attacks on 'Charles Hebdo'. Due to the increasing phenomenon of islamophobia, the European Commission announced the start of the annual publication of the Report. (Bayraklı and Hafez, 2022).
The results further correspond with a survey result developed by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights; asking respondents if they felt discriminated against in the past 12 months. The survey results have placed Luxembourg, Austria, and Finland with the highest percentages of respondents from target groups feeling discriminated in 10 areas of life due to their skin color, ethnic origin, or region (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2017).
The theme of 'Social and Economic Rights' has been accorded a high level of priority by the official Arab South-Med Countries toward the member states of the EU. The recommendations that emerged out of the UPR cycles on this topic included the urgent necessity of combating discrimination against women, following up on efforts to eliminate discrimination in employment, empowering women to achieve equality, and protecting them from violence. Ten

percent of the total number of recommendations in this category were geared specifically at the topic of women's rights. In addition, the recommendations concentrated particularly on activities designed to end instances of domestic abuse against women. In addition, "enhancing gender equality" was assigned 17% of the recommendations that were submitted. Equally, ten percent of the suggestions called for an end to discrimination against persons who have some kind of disability. In addition, "child rights protection has attracted a great amount of attention," as evidenced by the nearly 35 percent of submissions that fall under this category. The recommendations focused on the need to change the minimum age for criminal culpability, defend equity rights to education, protect against sexual exploitation, halt rates of dropping out of education, and ratify international accords relating to these issues (Table 6.) submitted across the three cycles. The most pressing issues shown by these recommendations include explicit hate speech directed at 'Muslim Communities," minorities,' and 'Romas.'. Hate speech constitutes 24% of recommendations of recommendations in Third Cycle (Table 4); recommendations called out for raising awareness, introducing legislation and reviewing the mass media's regulatory frameworks to end hate speech.

On a collective and individual country level, the results demonstrate that social and economic rights have been viewed as having serious infringements and setbacks. The increasing numbers of observations over the different cycles indicate Arab countries' contribution to the revision discontent. Discrimination and social and economic rights categories combined accounted for half of the observations on both a collective and individual member state level.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of the conditionality clause on the dialogue between the Southern Mediterranean region and the EU regarding human rights. As a result of the investigation, the following conclusion can be reached:

1- The EU parliament's persistent push for the application of human rights clauses has fueled South-Med countries' hidden skepticism and mistrust.

2- There is an urgent need to address human rights issues in the European Medit6erranean region through the prisms of national and local institutions in order to meet actual needs.

3- The blaming and shaming approach does not promote the development of positive perceptions of mutual identities.

Furthermore, the statistical analysis raised several questions that require further investigation. Why have developed countries such as Sweden, Austria, and the United Kingdom been unable to halt the spread of discrimination? Which EU common policies must be revised in order to promote and protect human rights at the European level?.

List of references:

BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights.2022. "EU Commissioners Reward Israeli Human Rights Violations and Crimes". April 1,2022. https://www.badil.org/press-releases/13026.html

Bani Salameh, Mohammed. ٢٠١٧ "The World Bank and International Monetary Fund as Mechanisms of Western Domination: Historical and Contemporary Analysis." *The Arab Journal of Arts* 14, no. 2 (October): 923-944.

Charles Grant, "A new neighborhood policy for the EU" , Center for European Reform, Policy brief 2011, 4, https://www.cer.eu/publications/archive/policy-brief/2011/new-neighbourhood-policy-eu

Bayraklı, Enes and Farid Hafez. 2022. *European Islamophobia Report*. Turkey: Leopold Weiss Institute

Boulding, K. E. 1959. "National Images and International Systems." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 3, no. 2 (June): 120–131. http://www.jstor.org/stable/173107.

Embassy of Kingdom of Morocco in Vietnam. 2020. "Full Text of His Majesty King Mohammed VI's Speech at the 5th AU-EU Summit in Abidjan.". August 14, 2020. https://moroccoembassy.vn/en/news/full-text-of-his-majesty-king-mohammed-vi%E2%80%99s-speech-at-the-5th-au-eu-summit-in-abidjan.html

Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. 1998."Démocratisation, the rule of law, respect for human rights and good governance: the challenges of the partnership between the European Union and the ACP States". Commission of the European Commubities. Brussels.

Luxembourg. 12March,1998.https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:1998:0146:FIN:EN:PDF

BARTELS, Lorand. 2014. *THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT's ROLE IN RELATION TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN TRADE AND INVESTMENT AGREEMENTS.* Belgium: European Union press.

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. 2017. "Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey". December 5 2017 https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2017-eu-midis-ii-main-results_en.pdf

Essam al-din, Gamal. 2022. "Egypt's parliament slams EP resolution on human rights as 'arrogant, politicised'". Ahram Online. November26, 2022. https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/1234/480487/Egypt/Foreign-Affairs/Egypt%E2%80%99s-parliament-slams-EP-resolution-on-human-ri.aspx

Cairo.Gujadhur, Subhas, and Marc Limon. 2016. *TOWARDS THE THIRD CYCLE OF THE UPR: STICK OR TWIST?* Switzerland: Universal Rights Group.

Lannon, Erwan , Kirstyn M. Inglis , and Tom Haenebalcke, 2001. The Many Faces of EU Conditionality in Pan-Euro-Mediterranean Relations. In: *The EU's Enlargement and Mediterranean Strategies, edited by Marce Maresceau and Erwan Lannon* . London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Malmvig, Helle. 2006 "Caught between Cooperation and Democratization: The Barcelona Process and the EU's Double-Discursive Approach." *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9, no. 4 (December): 343–370. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jird.1800106.

Pace, Michelle. ٢٠١٠. "Interrogating the European Union's Democracy Promotion Agenda: Discursive Configurations of 'Democracy' from the Middle East." *European Foreign Affairs Review* 15, no. 5 (December): 611–28. DOI:10.54648/EERR2010044.

Redah, Mohammad. "٢٠١٧ is the year of the Egyptian-European partnership.. The participation council between Egypt and the Union is held after a 7-year hiatus.. Sisi's visits enhance rapprochement. The fight against terrorism and illegal immigration is the most prominent cooperation file.. and 11 billion euros in financial support to Cairo". the seventh day. Sunday, December 31, 2017.https://www.youm7.com/story/2017/12/31/2017-%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B9%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-

%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1/3578605

Richard Young, Europe's flawed approach to Arab democracy, Center for European Reform, Essays, 2006, 3. https://www.cer.eu/publications/archive/essay/2006/europes-flawed-approach-arab-democracy

Rihan, Islam. Interview with Mohamed Fayek, President of the National Council for Human Rights. Cairo, Egypt, October 15, 2020

Rihan, Islam. Interview with Mokhles Kotb, former Director of Human Rights Department in League of Arab States. Cairo, Egypt, November 3, 2020.

Sosa, Lorena, and Alexandra Timmer. 2020. "*Conceptual Underpinnings of the EU's Commitment to Human Rights, in Jan Wouters, and others (eds)".England:* Oxford University Press.

The World Bank. 2005. "Review of World Bank Conditionality and Policy and Country Services" (September 2005): https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/228751468134390047/pdf/428690WP0Condi10Box327331B01PUBLIC1.pdf