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## How New is the EU's New Agenda for the Mediterranean?

*By Ambassador James Moran, former EU's Ambassador to Egypt, senior fellow at the Centre for European Policy Studies in Brussels, and a member of the BUE Board of Trustees*

### A post pandemic economic recovery?

The EU's joint communication from the EEAS and Commission on a 'renewed partnership with the southern neighbourhood', issued in early February, attempts to inject new dynamism into its relations with the region.

Many on both sides of the Mediterranean argue that the initiative is badly needed, given the economic and health effects of the pandemic and simmering conflicts in Syria, Libya, Israel/Palestine and elsewhere. In addition to their human cost, ongoing wars and their aggravation of extremism and illegal immigration represent a constant threat to both north and south.

A top priority is a 'new economic and investment plan', which, working with IFI's and the private sector, will mobilise up to €7 billion and, it is claimed, spur additional public and private investments of up to €30 billion. This should contribute to what the communication terms a "green, digital, resilient and just recovery".

Regarding health and vaccines, apart from support for COVAX, the Commission is ready to set up a vaccine-sharing mechanism, giving broader access to some of the 2.3 billion available doses to the southern neighbourhood, among other areas.

Particular emphasis is placed on providing opportunities for young people through employment and education support programmes,



with a welcome focus on boosting financial inclusion for SMEs, by far the most important employers in the region, through the use of new financial instruments such as venture capital, business angels, and impact finance.

There is a nod to the southern neighbourhood's potential as a location for the restructuring of EU firms' global value chains in the wake of the pandemic, and how this might be supported by EU programmes. However, it is not at all clear that the region will be able to compete with well-established European supply chains elsewhere, especially in China, which recently overtook the US to become the EU's leading partner for trade in goods.

Digital transformation and the green economy feature prominently, the latter with the EU Green Deal's external dimension in mind, although a recent survey of the region indicates that there is much work to be done on raising public awareness of the importance of both of these issues.

New trade initiatives receive only a cursory mention, perhaps reflecting the lack of success with the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) process, negotiations for which have been taken up only by Morocco and Tunisia and have made limited progress. One major

constraint has been the lack of new EU offers on market access, particularly on agriculture, and the communication is non-committal on prospects for any new departures there.

## Reforms are key

Improving the overall business climate is recognised as a sine qua non for the recovery and regulatory frameworks in the MENA region are naturally a key element in all of this. In fact, with one or two exceptions (for example in Jordan), these remain rather weak and outdated (MENA economies generally have a low rank in international comparisons).

It also makes clear the link between the level of EU funding and the degree of partners' real commitment to economic and governance reforms, including anti-corruption measures. A 'policy first' quid pro quo should be formalised upfront in a set of priorities to be jointly agreed with all partners.

All well and good, but these reforms will not be easy to achieve in a number of countries, particularly where protectionist-oriented vested interests, often involving non-economic factors such as the military establishment, are deeply entrenched.

## Values still matter

Promotion of respect for human rights, the rule of law and democratic values, will be "stepped up" according to the paper, alongside policy dialogue with "all relevant stakeholders". Among others, this includes support for legislative, judicial and institutional reform, the empowerment of women and youth, labour standards, as well as capacity

*Strengthening cooperation on counter terrorism, police cooperation and cyber resilience also features, albeit with full respect for human rights and civil liberties, and includes an offer, 'where mutually beneficial', of participation in CSDP missions and operations.*

building for civil society and data protection frameworks. Once again, the 'policy first' principle will apply to the level of financial support on offer. The compromises reached have often resulted rather weak joint commitments and there is little reason to think it will be any easier this time.

The paper claims that the new pact on migration and asylum brings a 'step change' in the EU's engagement on migration and mobility issues. However, the basic approach followed for some time now remains the lynchpin, namely a promise of easing restrictions on legal migration in return for better performance on controlling the illegal variety through more effective return and readmission arrangements.

## No development without security

Last, but by no means least, on peace and security the paper makes pleas for: a renewal of efforts to revive the moribund Middle East peace process ('building on' Israel's normalisation agreements with Arab States); support for UN-led peace-making in Syria, Libya, and the Western Sahara; and for a multilateral conference to help solve the territorial disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Strengthening cooperation on counter terrorism, police cooperation and cyber resilience also features, albeit with full respect for human rights and civil liberties, and includes an offer, 'where mutually beneficial', of participation in CSDP missions and operations.

The elephant in the room for so much of this is of course the need for the EU to speak – and act – as one. Indeed, the joint communication admits

honestly that ‘unity and solidarity’ between member states is a precondition for the successful implementation of its entire agenda, especially for building trust, reducing tensions and solving conflicts.

The record on solidarity suggests considerable room for improvement, the fractured EU approach to the Libyan crisis providing perhaps the most obvious example.

In all, the paper is a fairly comprehensive attempt to revitalise the many different aspects of relations between the two sides. In its desire to count all of the trees however, it sometimes loses sight of the wood. For all the talk of the potential for a post-pandemic recovery, the jury remains out on whether the southern neighbourhood is seen primarily by the EU as a threat or an opportunity. A central new element seems to be the economic and investment plan, which puts more funds on the table, but will there be an appetite in the South for the reforms needed to effectively mobilise them?

The EU has some leverage to spur reforms, but its clout is limited and the degree of change being

proposed will need a high degree of solidarity with member states and other likeminded partners. The new US administration might be prepared to make some common cause here, notably on rights and freedoms (recent developments in US-Saudi relations are a case in point) but it remains to be seen whether it has the will – and capacity – to follow through on President Biden’s pronouncements about putting this at the heart of US foreign policy in the wider region.

As the old mantra has it, there is no development without security. Absent a new push on resolving the many conflicts that plague the region, including robust engagement with other players such as Turkey and Russia, a number of the laudable proposals included in the communication risk remaining on paper. At a time when Europe is understandably pre-occupied with its own health and economic crises, one is bound to wonder whether there will be sufficient political energy within the institutions and member states to make this ‘new agenda’ a reality.

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# Towards a Regional Approach to Missiles in the Middle East

By Mr. Marc Finaud, head of 'Arms Proliferation' and 'Diplomatic Tradecraft' Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP)

*The highly controversial missile problem in the Middle East can – and should – be constructively tackled on a regional basis in a triangle that includes from the beginning not only the missiles of Iran but also those of Saudi Arabia and Israel, starting with modest confidence-building steps among the three major powers that may over time be expanded to a more comprehensive control regime.*



## I. Addressing Missiles in the Middle East: Prerequisites and Challenges

Although means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including missiles, have been explicitly part of the mandate of the WMD-free Zone free in the Middle East agreed upon in 1995 within the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the focus of discussions so far has been more on the weapons themselves. This approach made sense: once the WMD are eliminated, their means of delivery become useless or at least less dangerous. However, the issue resurfaced in the context of negotiations about Iran's nuclear programme. The 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal (JCPOA) does not include provisions on Iran's ballistic missile programme because negotiators agreed that the priority was to reach an arrangement to prevent Iran from developing nuclear warheads. However, because UN Security Council resolutions that had imposed sanctions on Iran contained restrictions on its missile programme, this aspect was dealt with in the resolution that endorsed the JCPOA. UN Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015) contains an eight-year restriction (until 2023) on Iranian nuclear-capable ballistic missile activities and a five-year ban (until 2020) on conventional arms transfers to Iran. Annex B of the resolution calls upon Iran "not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology." The resolution also grants the Security Council the authority to review and deny on a case-by-case basis any transfer to Iran of materials, equipment, goods, or technology that could contribute to nuclear weapons delivery systems.<sup>1</sup>

But of course, Iran is not the only possessor of ballistic and cruise missiles in the region. While Iran's arsenal includes operational missiles ranging from 40 km to 3,000 km,<sup>2</sup> two other regional missile-armed powers, Saudi Arabia and Israel, also possess ballistic and cruise missiles ranging respectively from 35

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<sup>1</sup> Greg Thielman, "Addressing Iran's Ballistic Missiles in the JCPOA and UNSC Resolution", *Arms Control Today*, Volume 7, Issue 8, 27 July 2015 (<https://www.armscontrol.org/issue-briefs/2015-07/addressing-iran%E2%80%99s-ballistic-missiles-jcpoa-unscc-resolution>).

<sup>2</sup> CSIS Missile Defense Project, "Missiles of Iran" (<https://missilethreat.csis.org/country/iran/>).

km to 4,000 km,<sup>3</sup> and from 35 to 6,500 km.<sup>4</sup> As a reminder, the common classification of missiles according to their range is specified in the table below.<sup>5</sup>

Category	Minimum Range (in km)	Maximum Range (in km)
Tactical or Artillery Rocket	Less than 300	300
Short-range	Less than 1,000	1,000
Medium range	1,000	3,000
Intermediate range	3,000	5,500
Intercontinental range	5,500	Over 5,500

Until now, key actors have demonstrated a clear reluctance to start discussing the missile issue at all in the Middle East. In the case of Iran, Tehran insists that it complies with the UN Security Council restrictions on nuclear-capable missiles and that the other categories of missiles, because of their short or medium range, only provide the country with conventional defensive weapons against external threats.<sup>6</sup> In order to convince Iran and the other regional powers to initiate negotiations on their missile programmes, some prerequisites appear indispensable:

- 1) Although the ultimate goal of regional talks would be a prohibition regime on intermediate and intercontinental-range missiles because of their capacity to deliver WMD, paradoxically the initial focus should not be Iranian nuclear-capable missiles as per UN Security Council resolution 2231 because this would mean putting Israel's nuclear-tipped missiles on the table, an unlikely scenario at this stage.
- 2) The initial focus should not be on the total ballistic and cruise missile arsenals to expect reductions or freeze, but on what the French authorities have called “destabilizing ballistic activities”, meaning development, testing and possession of medium-range and intermediate-range missiles (2,000-3,000 km) capable of carrying multiple warheads.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> NTI, Saudi Arabia, “Missile” (<https://www.nti.org/learn/countries/saudi-arabia/delivery-systems/>).

<sup>4</sup> CSIS Missile Defense Project, “Missiles of Israel” (<https://missilethreat.csis.org/country/israel/>).

<sup>5</sup> Arms Control Association, “Worldwide Ballistic Missile Inventory”, December 2017 (<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/missiles>).

<sup>6</sup> Reuters, “Iran says Missiles Tests Defensive, Need No One's Permission”, 29 July 2019 (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-missiles/iran-says-missile-tests-defensive-needs-no-ones-permission-idUSKCN1UM0D7>).

<sup>7</sup> Reuters, “Iran Tests New Missile After U.S. Criticizes Arms Program”, 23 September 2017 (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-military-missiles/iran-tests-new-missile-after-u-s-criticizes-arms-program-idUSKCN1BY07B>).



- 3) The successful principles of reciprocity and incrementalism that have made the JCPOA possible should be applied, and what President Macron has proposed for Iran (putting it “under surveillance over its ballistic missiles”<sup>8</sup>) should be extended to the whole region. A consultation process initiated by the European Union with the key regional states could include dialogue on missiles as a confidence- and security-building measure (CSBM).
- 4) Such a consultation process could allow each relevant state to express its security concerns, strategic interests, and threat perceptions that may be reconciled to the extent of allowing a mutually beneficial regional agreement on prohibiting the most destabilizing missile activities.

## II. Focusing on medium- and intermediate range ballistic missiles

As the preferred means of delivering a nuclear payload, ballistic missiles are often considered to be an integral part of a weapon system. But not all ballistic missiles are capable to deliver nuclear weapons, particularly not the heavy warheads common to new nuclear aspirants. Therefore, not all missiles need be restricted and, in any case, a comprehensive ban of all missiles seems unrealistic in the short term.

Regional missile control limits might apply to missile systems that exceed a certain range (e.g., 2,000 km) or that were clearly designed to carry nuclear weapons (e.g., systems imported from countries such as North Korea that developed them for this purpose). The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) threshold of any missile of a range over 300 km with a 500 kg-warhead is not the only relevant criterion. Space-launched vehicles that clearly are for civilian use, for example, may be exempted from a ban based on range limits. Indeed, if space launch activities can provide experience for ballistic missile programmes, their results have limited applications for ballistic missiles that in any case require extensive testing before becoming operational.<sup>9</sup> Iranian officials have declared that they applied to their ballistic missiles a 2,000 km-range limit because it includes their potential targets.<sup>10</sup>

Transparency measures should accompany such limits. They could include modest measures such as transparent information, communication measures, and declarations. This can involve: the exchange of information on ongoing or planned missile projects

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<sup>8</sup> Michael Rose, “France says Iran’s missile program must be put ‘under surveillance’”, Reuters, 14 February 2018 (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-france/france-says-irans-missile-program-must-be-put-under-surveillance-idUSKCN1FY24L>).

<sup>9</sup> Michael Elleman, “Banning Long-range Missiles in the Middle East: A First Step for Regional Arms Control”, *Arms Control Today*, May 2012 (<https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2012-05/banning-long-range-missiles-middle-east-first-step-regional-arms-control>).

<sup>10</sup> Kelsey Davenport, “Iran’s Leader Sets Missile Range Limit”, Arms Control Association, December 2017 (<https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2017-12/news/iran%E2%80%99s-leader-sets-missile-range-limit>).

and related activities, especially in crisis situations, through hotlines and data exchange centres; regular reporting on missile-related activities; pre-notification of flight tests and space rocket launches for civilian purposes (e.g., launching satellites); and, finally, declarations on the no-first-use of delivery vehicles. More far-reaching measures include the de-targeting and de-alerting of missiles; limiting the range of tested missiles; moratoriums or bans on flight tests; re-deployment and/or non-deployment; and restraints/moratoriums/bans on missile-related transfers. The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) does provide for some of these transparency measures. A symbolic but powerful confidence-building measure would be simultaneous (or coordinated) accession by Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia to HCoC, which already has 143 Subscribing States, including nine from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.<sup>11</sup> This could be achieved with the help of the main ally of each country (the United States for Israel and Saudi Arabia, and Russia for Iran). During its rotating HCoC presidency in June 2020-June 2021, Switzerland exerted specific outreach efforts to MENA countries and received expressions of growing interest. Although HCoC was developed outside the United Nations, over the years it received endorsement in the form of nine UN General Assembly Resolutions.<sup>12</sup>

“ ***A symbolic but powerful confidence-building measure would be simultaneous (or coordinated) accession by Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia to HCoC, which already has 143 subscribing states, including nine from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.*** ”

A ban on transfers from external players or transfers of missiles within the region would be of immediate importance given the threat to civilian aviation by missiles fired by non-state actors in Yemen. Concern about ballistic missile proliferation in the Middle East is often focused exclusively on Iran’s ongoing development of an arsenal that now includes 13 different systems, with others potentially to follow. Yet seven states in the Middle East possess ballistic missiles with a range of at least 300 km (Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE, Yemen)<sup>13</sup> while Hezbollah reportedly has 100,000 or more rockets of various ranges up to 250 km or possibly more.<sup>14</sup> Additional complexities derive from the potential dual nature of such missiles, that can be presented as defensive but perceived as offensive by others. In addition, the ballistic and cruise missile capabilities of several countries are now regionally augmented by the increasing production and export of uninhabited air vehicles, mainly armed drones.<sup>15</sup> In any case, it is highly

<sup>11</sup> Comoros, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, and Tunisia [as members of the League of Arab States considered eligible for a WMD-free Zone in the Middle East along with Iran and Israel]. See the full list at:

[https://www.hcoc.at/?tab=subscribing\\_states&page=subscribing\\_states](https://www.hcoc.at/?tab=subscribing_states&page=subscribing_states).

<sup>12</sup> Hague Code of Conduct (HCoC), “UN General Assembly Resolutions”, December 2020 (<https://www.hcoc.at/background-documents/un-general-assembly-resolutions.html>).

<sup>13</sup> Arms Control Association, “Worldwide Ballistic Missile Inventory”, op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Mark Fitzpatrick, “Steps en route to a WMD-free Zone in the Middle East,” IISS, 15 May 2019 (<https://www.iiss.org/blogs/survival-blog/2019/05/wmd-free-zone-middle-east>).

<sup>15</sup> RUSI, “Armed Drones in the Middle East”, accessed 15 October 2021 (<https://drones.rusi.org/>). See also: M. Finaud and Ch. Orozobekova, “Regulating and Limiting the Proliferation of Armed Drones: Norms and Challenges”, GCSP Geneva Paper, 10 August 2020 (<https://www.gcsp.ch/publications/regulating-and-limiting-proliferation-armed-drones-norms-and-challenges>).



improbable that Iran would accept any limits on its missile programme unless in a regional context that also applied to its neighbours. This could also be an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the MTCR in preventing or limiting actual missile and drone proliferation in the MENA region as well as its flaws that are exploited by such exporters as China<sup>16</sup> or Israel.<sup>17</sup>

### III. Conclusion

Tehran's missile arsenal is part of the wider regional dynamics. Therefore, it can only be discussed in a constructive way by establishing a negotiation format that includes Saudi Arabia and Israel, which also possess missile arsenals. This approach does not exclude dealing with the specific factors that drive missile production or procurement in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Israel. Substantive incentives could be offered in a way that makes use of the give-and-take criteria that made the JCPOA successful. Our concrete proposals have centred on communication meetings of the relevant players to address mutual concerns and listen to the concerns of others, and on modest CSBMs that currently constitute the highest possible common denominator that will not impinge on their national security.

The crucial question remains whether the JCPOA can survive the 2018 US withdrawal crisis and current efforts to ensure both US and Iranian return to full compliance can succeed. Obviously, making Iran's acceptance of new constraints on its missile programme a condition of such revival is bound to fail. However, promoting a regional approach to missile proliferation once the JCPOA is revived can offer a mutually beneficial solution. The annual November Conference at the United Nations General Assembly on a WMD-free Zone in the Middle East<sup>18</sup> could offer a framework for testing some of these ideas.



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During his 36-year career as a diplomat (from 1977 to 2013), he served in several bilateral postings (in the Soviet Union, Poland, Israel, Australia) as well as in multilateral missions (to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations). He holds Master's degrees in International Law and Political Science. He was also Senior Resident Fellow (WMD Programme) at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) between 2013 and 2015. He is now also a Swiss citizen.

List of publications: <https://www.gcsp.ch/marc-finauds-publication>

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<sup>16</sup> Alvite Ningthoujam, "The Middle East: An Emerging Market for Chinese Arms Exports", *The Diplomat*, 25 June 2021 (<https://thediplomat.com/2021/06/the-middle-east-an-emerging-market-for-chinese-arms-exports/>).

<sup>17</sup> Arie Egozi, "Israeli Industry Pushing Jerusalem to Drop MTCR Drone Export Restrictions", *Breaking Defense*, 27 September 2021 (<https://breakingdefense.com/2021/09/israeli-industry-pushing-jerusalem-to-drop-mtcr-drone-export-restrictions/>).

<sup>18</sup> Tomisha Bino, "A Middle Eastern WMD-free Zone: Are We Any Closer Now?", Arms Control Association, September 2020 (<https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2020-09/features/middle-eastern-wmd-free-zone-we-any-closer-now>).

## Certain Aspects of the Oldest Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (the Newest WMD-Free Zone?) in the Making: the Middle East

By Dr. Erzsébet N. Rózsa

The Middle Eastern nuclear weapon-free zone (NWFZ) was first proposed at the UN General Assembly in 1974 by Egypt, supported by Iran. As an established nuclear non-proliferation “tool” by that time – the first NWFZ was established by the Tlatelolco Treaty in 1967, with other proposals, e. g. a NWFZ for Central Europe – it came to belong to the thematic of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty’s (NPT’s) review conferences, providing a separate resolution on the Middle East in 1995 at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. Yet, the fact that Israel has not been and is not a party to the treaty, practically prevented the realization of any relevant proposals regarding the NWFZ. Although the 2010 Review Conference seemed to achieve a breakthrough when deciding on a conference to be held in 2012 and even assigned Ambassador Jaakko Lajaava as the facilitator of the conference,<sup>19</sup> finally the issue of the ME NWFZ was referred to the UN Secretary General. Since, there were two conferences held (2019, 2021) on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction – with the aim to form a legally binding treaty to establish the zone. By bringing the idea of the Middle Eastern zone under the UN Secretary General not only made it



possible to “include” Israel, but also to absorb the idea presented by Egyptian President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak to expand the zone to include/ban all weapons of mass destruction.

Since there have been more than one definition of the eventual zone,<sup>20</sup> it should be noted that the Arab states, Israel and Iran would by all definitions be included. Yet, since Israel has so far stayed out of the nuclear non-proliferation

<sup>19</sup> In support of Lajaava’s efforts the Academic Peace Orchestra Middle East project was launched producing a series of policy briefs on topics related to the ME NWFZ/WMDFFZ. <http://academicpeaceorchestra.com/>

<sup>20</sup> There have been several efforts at delineating the territory of the zone. See e. g. Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East. Old Dominion University Model United Nations Society, ODUMUNC 2020 Issue Brief, <https://www.odu.edu/content/dam/odu/offices/mun/docs/ib-1st-menwzf-1.pdf>

regime, no wonder that the Arab states – all parties to the NPT - have formulated a joint position on the nuclear weapon-free zone. All the more so, as deeply rooted in the Arab-Israeli conflict, this one of the joint Arab positions represented consequentially in the international fora was the demand of the elimination of the Israeli (military) nuclear capability. (The Iranian nuclear program and the sanctions regime related to it came on the international agenda only in 2002, and while in some Arab countries' perception it is a direct threat, others seem relatively disinterested.)

In the efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone Egypt has had a leading role:<sup>21</sup> on the one hand, Egypt was the initiator of the idea of the ME NWFZ in 1974, and it was Egyptian President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak who proposed the expansion of the zone to include/ban all weapons of mass destruction. On the other hand, Egyptian diplomats – both on the international level, and in regional circles<sup>22</sup> – have played a leading and supporting role not only in the representation of the joint Arab position, but also in the education of new generations of Arab “non-proliferator” diplomats, and in the establishment and operation of regional centres working on the different aspects of the ME NWFZ/WMDFZ.<sup>23</sup>

While the expansion of the zone to include all weapons of mass destruction adds a kind of “vertical” dimension to the zone, we claim that it

also adds in “horizontality”, as besides the “usual” actors in arms control and non-proliferation, namely the states (and some international organizations), WMD – more specifically chemical and biological weapons – may bring in non-state actors, armed and/or terrorist groups and organizations.<sup>24</sup> (Despite the commonly held view that nuclear weapons are easy to get access to – “you can read it on the internet” -, such weapons and their mid- to wide-range carriers, missiles, are practically impossible to reach for non-state actors.)

The – relative – good news is that adherence to the main WMD treaties is almost universal across the region. However, the very few who are staying out pose a serious threat to the universality principle of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, which should be remedied. And to this end, the establishment of the ME zone is of vital importance, with a significance reaching well over the region itself.

While it can be maintained that there is still a joint-Arab support behind the ME NWFZ/WMDFZ proposal, in the past few years there have been two nuclear-related issues relevant for the whole of the region which may have an impact on the realization thereof: the Abraham Accords between Israel and (so far) four Arab states, and the ups and downs of the Iranian nuclear deal, the JCPOA.

<sup>21</sup> see Mahmoud Karem: *A Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East: Problems and Prospects*, New York, Greenwood, 1988

<sup>22</sup> The late Amb. Mohamed Shaker was globally considered as the doyen of Arab non-proliferation diplomacy, but several other Egyptian personalities have played decisive roles: Amb. Mahmoud Karem, Amb. Sameh Abou Enein, Amb. Nabil Fahmy, former League of Arab States Secretary General Amr Moussa and former Director of the

International Atomic Energy Agency Mohamed el-Baradei. The list is far from complete.

<sup>23</sup> The Egyptian Council on Foreign Affairs (ECFA), the Jordan-hosted Arab Forum for Disarmament and Development conferences organized by the Arab Institute for Security Studies (ACSS), and the Gulf Research Center as the most outstanding centres to elaborate concrete proposals.

<sup>24</sup> The best known terrorist attack was performed by the Japanese Aum Shinrikyo Sect in the Tokyo metro in 1995.

The Abraham Accords between Israel on the one hand, and the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco on the other, were concluded between September-December 2020. Although these were announced to reflect “the facts on the ground” and were mostly about the recognition of the State of Israel and economic relations, politically its relevance from the point of view of “breaking” the Arab unity over Israel cannot be underestimated. While the Abraham Accord parties emphasized that “we have tried war, now we try peace”, others interpreted it as giving up the underlying condition to the general acknowledgement of the State of Israel, namely the withdrawal to the pre-1967 ceasefire lines, as stipulated in the 2002 Arab peace initiative. And it is exactly this political momentum which may have an impact on an eventual joint-Arab push for the Middle Eastern zone: The Arab states lying on the African continent are already covered by the Pelindaba Treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone over the whole of the continent.<sup>25</sup> And the specific, and even more imminent threats – migration from sub-Saharan Africa as well as terrorism – draw away the Maghreb’s attention from nuclear threats arising in the Mashreq (Israel, and even more so Iran) and make them turn towards the south. Thus, while it can be expected that they would support an Arab position on the zone, “universality”, i. e. all-Arab support would be crucial. While the question could be asked how the Abraham Accord signatory Arab states would behave if Israel vehemently opposed the zone, it has to be stated that neither Egypt, nor Jordan have stayed away from joint-Arab initiatives in spite of their peace treaties with Israel.

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<sup>25</sup> It should be noted, however, that Egypt, Morocco, Somalia and Sudan signed, but have not yet ratified the treaty.



The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was signed by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council + Germany and Iran. The aim was to put in place a regime which makes sure that Iran would not develop nuclear weapons, in return for lifting the nuclear-related sanctions on Iran. In 2018, however, US President Donald Trump withdrew from the JCPOA. After observing a year of “strategic patience” (with no result for Iran), Iran gradually stepped away from its commitments (always announcing it well before and always adding that these steps are reversible). In a parallel strategy, Iran started low-scale actions in the Persian Gulf, which were usually answered by parallel attacks. Following the entering into office of US President Joe Biden, however, and the election of the new Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, the negotiations on the eventual return of the US to the deal (a campaign promise of Biden) and the

return of Iran to its commitments under the deal have started in earnest from late 2021 onwards. While the talks are still ongoing, these raise some urgent issues for the Arab states in the region and for the whole community of the Arab states.

One of the greatest concerns of the Gulf Arab states (and Israel) from the beginning of the nuclear-related negotiations with Iran was that they, the direct neighbours of Iran were not included. The same concern and even demand related to the Vienna talks was again raised. However, it seems that some Arab states (Saudi Arabia, the UAE) have been engaged in direct negotiations with Iran over security matters in the closer neighbourhood (Yemen, Iraq, etc), to which, however, the recent Iranian missile developments yet again added a more pronounced element. But although the appointment of an Israeli military officer to Bahrain may seem a further step of united Israeli-

Bahraini “alliance” against Iran, should the idea of the ME NWFZ/WMDfZ be seriously pursued, the relevance of this connection may be very low. Especially, if Iran came out in support of the zone, which – depending on the many factors in play – could still be one feasible scenario. The news on the new emergence of the idea of a regional security architecture in the Persian Gulf, including Iran, point to this direction. Which, in the end, could result in two, complementing frameworks: a revived JCPOA or a JCPOA 2.0 parallelly with a regional security arrangement in the Persian Gulf, the starting point of which may be a NWFZ/WMDfZ in the Persian Gulf,<sup>26</sup> and expanded later on to cover the whole of the Middle East and North Africa.



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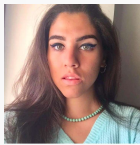
<sup>26</sup> The idea that a NWFZ should/could be started with some participants and then gradually expanded (snowball effect)

is not new. This was also one of the underlying arguments in the proposal for a NWFZ in the Persian Gulf.



## Student Research Paper

### US 2003 invasion of Iraq, an outcome of the bargaining process in the BPM lens



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#### Introduction:

According to various resources/studies such as Maurice East (1973), Graham Allison (1971), Daniel Drezner (2000), Chris Alden and Amnon Aran (2012), Mintz, Alex and Karl DeRouen (2010) state bureaucracies are argued to have clout over foreign policy. The 'Bureaucratic Politics' model of decision-making postulates that foreign policy decisions of invading Iraq in 2003 are not a product of intellectual, mass and consistent decision-making. Rather, decisions are a result of conflicts, bargains, and negotiations between members of bureaucratic institutions (East, 1973). Bureaucrats enter conflicts with specific agendas in mind, and their success is determined by their ability to persuade others with their cause (Drezner, 2000). The United States' justification for its foreign policy decision to invade Iraq in 2003 was based on the allegation that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMD) (Smith, & Hadfield, & Dunne, 2008). However, in actuality, the decision of invasion was an outcome of the bargaining process between different bureaucratic actors within the executive branch including the pentagon, state department, Intelligence Services, National security, and Vice President (Smith, & Hadfield, & Dunne, 2008). That being said, a combination of multiple actors with different orientations and visions took part in the decision-making process, not only the policymakers. They do not act in harmony as they have competing interests and preferences (Mintz, & DeRouen, 2010, p.47&48).

The purpose of this paper is to critically analyse the US foreign policy verdict to invade Iraq in 2003 using the 'bureaucratic politics' model of decision-making by exploring the bargaining process that was between the bureaucratic actors. Notably, their lobbying and informational constraints and how they were in favour of different diplomatic strategies to view the present interplay and interactions between the multiple bureaucratic actors using the Bureaucratic politics model lens to understand the foreign policy decision-making process while considering that the US foreign policy rhetoric was based on analogies, for instance, they considered Saddam Hussein as an imminent danger and threat (Gershkoff, & Kushner, 2005).

The research question addressed in this paper is: To what extent does the Bureaucratic politics model give a fair assessment to the US foreign policy decision to invade Iraq in 2003? Accordingly, this paper will argue that, overall, the Bureaucratic Politics Model (BPM) provides a sufficient evaluation of the role of bureaucracy in the making of US foreign policy. Particularly, in the resolution of the 2003 Iraqi invasion, because it highlights the interplay of the several members of the military-industrial complex and the bargaining process that took place in US foreign policy decisions.

This paper will be divided into two key segments. The first discusses the bureaucratic politics model as the theoretical framework of the paper. The second segment is the US foreign policy exploring how the integrated actors were involved in the Iraqi war decision and will conclude with the sufficiency of the Bureaucratic politics model to the US policy decision to invade Iraq in 2003.

### **Theoretical Framework: The Bureaucratic Politics Model Approach:**

The conceptual framework utilized in this paper is the “Bureaucratic Politics Approach” that was developed by Graham Allison as BPM and other scholars reposing on the previous works that were done by Charles Lindblom, Neustadt, Huntington, and Herbert Simon who applied the BPM on several case studies (Alden, & Aran, 2012). BPM has two central conceptions when studying foreign policy. BPM reinforces the entire domestic politics approach; and opposes the views of neorealism and geopolitics (Hill, 2016, p.103). “BPM portrays the decision-making process as contrary to the rational actor approach” (Alden, & Aran, 2012, p.32). The main assumptions of bureaucratic politics firmly insist that the merits of the problem are that the policymakers’ rational decisions head for the supplantation of the resultants of the interplay of the bargaining and maneuvering processes that take place within the governmental actors to achieve their interests (Hill, 2016, p.104). By “bargaining” bureaucratic units cut deals on strategic tactics while maintaining and protecting their interests and core policies (Alden, & Aran, 2012, p.33&34). In the sense that outcomes will not harmonize with the initial preference orderings of any specific actor (Smith, & Hadfield, & Dunne, 2008). Furthermore, the assumptions of bureaucratic politics theory, in the calculations of Allison about the place of rationality where he called it “the players; men in jobs” (Hill, 2016, p.104). The bureaucratic politics model assumes multiple, hierarchical, bureaucratic organisations and not a single actor each with competing interests and trying to maximize their agendas and positions (Alden, & Aran, 2012, p.33,38, &41). Whereby, they jealously safeguard their reign and area of expertise by controlling the policy. Therefore, the foreign policy decisions surface out of abstract political space as a substitute for formal decision procedure (Hill, 2016). Another key assumption of the theory highlights the role of socialization, which denotes the given capability of the organisational context to socialize with its staff towards their values not to mention the apparent superordinate concerns equally to official policy, and national interest (Hill, 2016, p.105). Hence, foreign policy decision-makers keep track of divergent concerns than the military ones, which is driven by interservice rivalry (Mintz, & DeRouen, 2010).

The bureaucratic politics theory has wider conceptions towards politics, along with the roles of the formal bureaucratic actors and policymakers. Through their embodiment of the capacity to manifest commitments and compromises, they could reach with other leaders. Lastly, the head of government can change the rule of the bureaucracy and start the game again with divergent scope (Christensen, & Redd, 2004). However,

this happened in the “United States with every change of president” (Hill,2016, p.107). This takes us to the following section which is US foreign policy.

## **Section II US Foreign Policy:**

“The US system is a massive, competitive and designed to serve as the world only remaining superpower” (Hill,2016, p.107). The “business of war” and how economic colonialism aims to spread free markets played a crucial role in shaping US foreign policy. Knowing that the US was the largest consumer of fossil fuels and the sustainment of profit. The US policy was dominated by the idea of military supremacy “around three million and a half men and women were involved in defence” (Why we fight,2005). Although, joining the military was not defending the United States it was helping certain policymakers’ imperial agenda.

The defence spending and the military-industrial complex influenced the US foreign policy which was created with three main forces: The Pentagon, Congress, and military-industrial cooperation (Lake, 2010). Further, the indirect connection of the 50-year involvement with wars since 1953 led to the decision of the US to invade Iraq in 2003 and they lied by blurring lines between 9/11 and Iraq War.

The decision of the US to invade Iraq was an outcome of the bargaining defence process between the multiple bureaucratic powers who didn’t proceed with the same orientation working with no harmony in the context of a zero-sum perspective, there was no win-win situation. They had corrupting, competing interests and different preferences all under the umbrella of national security. The Bureaucratic politics model displays the interplay between the organizational actors there was no hierarchy in the process, it is a power politics game based on bargaining between the actors involved in the military-industrial complex, the intelligence source in the US and UK reporting that they knew that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons. Public opinion played a crucial role in the US (Rushkoff, & Kushner, 2005). It was manipulated with fallacies to bring fear in people so policymakers can have their war and lobbying in terms of the US and Israel dividing the world (Hill,2016). US Bureaucrats ignored the UN inspectors’ reports that reported there was no found evidence of WMD in Iraq (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010,41&42). This is since this evidence contradicted the U.S administration’s preferences, diplomatic strategies, agenda, and plans for Iraq's invasion (Smith, & Hadfield, & Dunne,2008, p.252). Therefore, the US foreign policy rhetoric was based on analogies that were prominent controversy presented in the group rationalization of his administration (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010,41&42), towards Saddam Hussein and perceiving him as a danger and threat as they linked it to the 9/11 attack (Hamilton,2004).

Further, the Pentagon administrative bureaucrats dominated all debates because some political actors gave the information obscured because they didn’t want the world to see what they are doing by limiting access and information to cover the bad sides (Holland,1999). They worked extremely hard since Vietnam to shape the news, and this is how they manipulated the strategic features of decision making (filtering of information, recommendations, and implementation) (Hermann,2001). They maintained relations and intertwined with the adventurous military forces. On the other hand, Congress tried to maintain popularity, but they failed miserably to ask questions or hold count to the policymaker and that’s because a million causes hold to the military-industrial complex (Why we fight,2005). Whereby, the demonstrative wars paved the way for ethnic

groups who don't understand the architecture of the situation there was a disconnection between US foreign policy and the United States citizens.

Gore Vidal elaborated within the historical context of the military force strategy of fighting as a nation in terms of their interests. It was a war against communism, that shifted after the attacks on the Vietnam war, Pearl Harbor and 9/11 and clearly, capitalism won (Why we fight,2005).

After the revealing of the truth that weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were absent in Iraq (Hill,2016). Scholars curiously investigated the reason behind the Bush administration insistence on the invasion (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010, P.40& 41&42). Some argued that the decisions relied on historical analogies bias and wholistic search that stemmed from the 1991 Gulf War perceiving Iraq as not a "friendly" area (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010, P.17).

The relevant Bureaucratic agencies of the decision-making group consisted of President Bush and his key consultants, Vice President Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, VP Chief Lewis Libby, NSC Advisor Rice, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, Secretary of State Powell, Undersecretary of Defense Policy Douglas Feith, Robert Gates, Condoleezza Rice, Stephen Hadley and CIA Director Tenet. They cut deals on strategic tactics to protect their interests and core policies (Gompert, Binnendijk, & Lin, 2014). They did not proceed with the same orientation and there was no harmony among them.

According to Charles Herman's (Hermann,2001, p.57) classification of decision units, this is a coalition decision unit that doesn't proceed in harmony (HOSMER,2007). Whereby each member in the decision making from a different social group for example Israel Lobbies that had a prominent key role in the invasion of Iraq (Mearsheimer, Stephen,2006). However, the decision environment too, was ambiguous and full of information constraints scholars of FPDM argued that Iraq verdict to invade Iraq in 2003 is a "One shot" single decision (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010, pp.15&26&27).

The U.S. administration adhered to the wishful thinking bias as they expected Iraq to turn into a democracy as stated in 2004 CIA's report (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010, Pp.38&40& 41). The dynamics of Bush's inner circle "did not favour a serious evaluation of different options for dealing with Iraq" (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010, P. 42). The groupthink bias was doing its job within the Bush administration (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010, P.40). On the other hand, there were members within the administration reluctant to voice serious objections. For instance, the Secretary of State Colin Powell had his say of vocal discontent on the policies of the Iraq War (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010, P. 42), by his opposition to the invasion of Iraq as a response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Hamilton,2004). Therefore, Powell was cautiously excluded from the decision-making process and after the Bush presidency first term ended, Powell resigned (Smith, & Hadfield, & Dunne,2008).

Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz was all set to persecute Saddam Hussein executed by the view of U.S. military planners and hawkish groups were dominated they claimed it was a potential opportunity (Gompert, Binnendijk, & Lin, 2014, p.165). While others were very conservative when it comes to the decision-making policy (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010, P. 42). George Bush and Cheney were off the hook, they

ignored the importance of other interests, particularly oil (Dionne,2014). The US foreign policy adopted a One percent doctrine; In this doctrine, the US will not tolerate a one percent chance that anything can possibly be a threat to the US (Khong, 2016, p.325). Whereby, it's their duty and obligation to eliminate any threats (Smith, & Hadfield, & Dunne,2008, p.261). On one hand, Israel's defenders in the lobby took the issue more furiously (Mearsheimer, Stephen,2006). The hawks were consistent together by sharing the neoconservative ideology (Gompert, Binnendijk, & Lin, 2014, pp.165&166). These neoconservatives, were the domestic source of US foreign policy, had an important role in influencing Bush decision of launching the preventive war of Iraq and they were anticommunists (Khong, 2016, p.318). Neoconservatives had direct and plain goals of governmental changes in the Middle East (Smith, & Hadfield, & Dunne, 2008). Due to the group lobbying, scholars argued that the 9/11 attack was because they were on Saudi's sacred soil and repressed the Iraqis and supported Israel. The US decision to invade Iraq in 2003 was articulated that it was not their interest, further it was fought as a proxy for Israel. The 9/11 along with their ideas exacerbated an excuse for the invasion and domination of Iraq (Mearsheimer, Stephen,2006). On the other hand, John J. Duncan the republican representative out of tennessee outlined why traditional conservatives in contrast are against the war in Iraq, as well as the policies of the Bush Administration in general. In his speech to the House of Representatives, he claimed no traditional conservative would ever advocate preemptive warfare, massive deficit spending, or being the "policeman of the world" (Collins,2017).

## **Conclusion:**

To conclude, the paper investigated the interplay between the actors. By viewing the clear biases, decision pathologies, dynamics that have affected U.S decision making vis-a`-vis Iraq. The paper reached its argument that the BPM is a sufficient model that enriched our understanding of the bargaining process within the US decision making process with a fair assessment to a great extent. There were some fundamental miscalculations from both sides in this case that were made in 2001-2003 which are conclusive to this paper's analysis (Hosmer, 2007). Firstly, the public declaration that Iraq owns a great number of WMDs and how the Bush administration claimed that they knew that Hussein was devoted to acquiring nuclear weapons and the hidden intentions of the military industrial complex (Gershkoff, & Kushner, 2005). Although it was proven to be wrong shortly after the invasion which shows the ambiguity of the information (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010, pp.40-43). The cognitive model also gives a fair assessment of the beliefs and perceptions of the Bush Administration (Lake, 2010, p.9). Significantly, when referring to another miscalculation; when President Bush coped with his mental limitations using the mental strategies particularly, the heuristic device using the analogies (Mintz, & DeRouen,2010). The rhetoric of US in Iraq was based on the claim that Saddam Hussein: an imminent threat to US security and isolationism (Hill,2016).In Brief, the bargaining process that took place within the actors of the US decision making was fairly displayed and aligned with the Bureaucratic politics model assumptions that offered a beneficial framework to a higher understanding of the convoluted workings that lead to the invasion of Iraq (Drezner,2000).The Bush administration, proceeded in a wrong way (Lake, 2010). Through applying the Bureaucratic politics model and the cognitive model too together, this essay analysed the US invasion of Iraq in 2003(Mintz, & DeRouen,2010).



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