

# **Euro-Mediterranean relations at a crossroads: What can we learn from the past and from structural foreign policy?**

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## **Abstract**

In the light of the 'Arab Spring' of 2011, this thesis investigates how the European Mediterranean Policy can be reformed to respond to the new political situation in North Africa. Using Stephan Keukeleire's concept of Structural Foreign Policy, it examines 1.) What lessons we can learn from the past experiences of the Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation; and 2.) How the European proposal for a Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity, issued on 8 March 2011, responds to these challenges from the past. It concludes that the proposal does address some of the main challenges and does make use of some of the possibilities that new regimes in North Africa could offer to a more successful European Structural Foreign Policy in the region. However, it also concludes that not all the propositions are realistic and that several of the challenges from the past are not effectively addressed. In particular, the proposal does not establish better links between the bilateral and regional cooperation and does not address the problems of the Union for the Mediterranean. Furthermore, the proposal does not specify how it attempts to differentiate more between the partner countries and how it will focus more on improving the livelihood of the people living in the region.