Basic information

2020/2113(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Promoting regional stability and security in the broader Middle East region **Subject** 6.40.05.06 Relations with the countries of the Middle East	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	PINEDA Manu (GUE/NGL)	02/04/2020
	Shadow rapporteur DANJEAN Arnaud (EPP) MIKSER Sven (S&D) YENBOU Salima (Renew) SOLÉ Jordi (Greens/EFA) MARIANI Thierry (ID)	

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
European External Action Service	BORRELL FONTELLES Josep

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
17/09/2020	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
13/10/2022	Vote in committee		
21/10/2022	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0256/2022	Summary
22/11/2022	Debate in Parliament		
23/11/2022	Decision by Parliament	T9-0408/2022	Summary
23/11/2022	Results of vote in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2020/2113(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/9/03571

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE730.177	13/04/2022	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE734.094	23/06/2022	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0256/2022	21/10/2022	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0408/2022	23/11/2022	Summary

Promoting regional stability and security in the broader Middle East region

2020/2113(INI) - 21/10/2022 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Manu PINEDA (GUE/NGL, ES) on promoting regional stability and security in the broader Middle East region.

Current state of play

The countries in the broader Middle East region, which encompasses the area between the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf, are very diverse but strategic for the EU given its geographical position and common ties and requires a long-term approach and coordinated policy. The influence and role of different EU Member States in the region is also very unequal, owing to their specific historic, cultural and socioeconomic ties. These differences hamper a more coherent and effective approach by the EU. There are many state, ethnic and religious rivalries in the Persian Gulf that risk not only perpetuating current crises, such as that in Yemen, but also spreading instability throughout the region. The unresolved conflicts in Libya and Syria are of great concern and hamper the stability of the whole region. Third party actors such as Iran, Russia and Turkey are present in these countries and military and paramilitary groups are involved in these conflicts, such as the Russian Wagner group.

Members highlighted that the current situation in the broader Middle East region is characterised by the persistence of **ongoing conflicts**, including crippling proxy ones with a regional dimension and crises with multiple sources, which makes the development of a global European strategy particularly complex, as any contribution has to be multidimensional and adapted to the specificities of each situation, while maintaining a coherent regional and international dimension.

The report stressed that the EU promotes a peace and stability agenda and is ready to cooperate closely and share **conflict prevention, mediation and counterterrorism methods, experiences and best practices**, both at a bilateral and regional level.

Stressing that EU security is interdependent with security in the Middle East, Members make it clear that **EU funding instruments**, such as the European Peace Facility and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, and humanitarian aid and operations directed at the region should make an important contribution to the stability and prosperity of the region.

Instability in the region

The region has undergone historical changes since the Arab Spring in 2011. Members stressed, however, that the instability that has followed has been caused, *inter alia*, by the decision of certain authoritarian regimes to use violence against peaceful protests and criticism. The EU is called on to foster multilateralism and regional integration in the broader Middle East through the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council institutional partnership and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, including strong inter-parliamentary relations.

More specifically, the report underlined that a stable, secure, united, and prosperous **Libya** is a priority for the EU. As for **Yemen**, the EU should suspend the export of arms that are used in the war in Yemen, given the serious risk of violations of international humanitarian law or humanitarian law.

Members recalled that peace talks between **Israel** and the **Palestinian Authority** on a definitive settlement of the conflict based on a solution enabling both countries to live side-by-side in peace and security is a perquisite for regional stability. They called for the lifting of all restrictive measures on the movement of people and goods imposed by Israel on the territory, but which are having a devastating impact on the population.

Moreover, the EU should pay special attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict due to its exceptional length and to current perspectives that do not allow for a realistic path towards stability across the Middle East.

Stability and security options

Members highlighted that any form of cooperation must be based on a **human security approach and respect for international law**, a rules-based world order and the shared objectives of promoting human rights and democracy. Members deplored the fact that neighbouring countries interfere too often in each other's internal crises and that such interference – whether political or even military in nature – is harmful, causes long-term damage to inter-state relations in the region and prevents conflicts from being resolved. Third countries are called on to **refrain from exporting arms** to countries affected by internal conflicts. They also condemned Iran's recent use of **ballistic missiles and drone attacks** against the Iraqi Kurdistan Region as an unjustified violation of Iraqi sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The report welcomed the EU's commitment to establishing a **weapons of mass destruction–free zone** in the Middle East.

While noting the strategic dimension of **energy cooperation** with the Middle East region, Members underlined the need to diversify the EU's sources of energy. They called on the EU to increase its engagement with the countries of the broader Middle East on the European Green Deal.

On **terrorism**, the EU and its Member States should make a firm commitment to legitimate governments fighting against jihadist networks.

Citizens and human rights

The report noted that peopletopeople contacts and cooperation in fields such as trade education, science and culture play an important role in the region and can make a key contribution to regional stability and the bridging of divides both with the EU and among the different states. Members welcomed the proposal presented by the Commission for **visa exemptions** for citizens of Kuwait and Qatar.

The EU is called on to increase diplomatic and political relations for democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as demanded by peaceful popular movements across the Middle East and North Africa region. In addition, highlighting the gravity of violence against women in the region, Members called for the EU and its Member States to urge all parties to conflict in the region to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict.

Promoting regional stability and security in the broader Middle East region

2020/2113(INI) - 23/11/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 469 votes to 67, with 104 abstentions, a legislative resolution on promoting regional stability and security in the broader Middle East region.

Current state of play

The countries in the broader Middle East region, which encompasses the area between the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf, are very diverse but strategic for the EU given its geographical position and common ties and requires a long-term approach and coordinated policy. The influence and role of different EU Member States in the region is also very unequal, owing to their specific historic, cultural and socioeconomic ties. These differences hamper a more coherent and effective approach by the EU. There are many state, ethnic and religious rivalries in the Persian Gulf that risk not only perpetuating current crises, such as that in Yemen, but also spreading instability throughout the region. The unresolved conflicts in Libya and Syria are of great concern and hamper the stability of the whole region. Third party actors such as Iran, Russia and Turkey are present in these countries and military and paramilitary groups are involved in these conflicts, such as the Russian Wagner group.

Members highlighted that the current situation in the broader Middle East region is characterised by the persistence of ongoing conflicts, including crippling proxy ones with a regional dimension and crises with multiple sources, which makes the development of a global European strategy particularly complex, as any contribution has to be multidimensional and adapted to the specificities of each situation, while maintaining a coherent regional and international dimension.

The resolution stressed that the EU promotes a peace and stability agenda and is ready to cooperate closely and share conflict prevention, mediation and counterterrorism methods, experiences and best practices, both at a bilateral and regional level.

Stressing that EU security is interdependent with security in the Middle East, Members make it clear that EU funding instruments, such as the European Peace Facility and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, and humanitarian aid and operations directed at the region should make an important contribution to the stability and prosperity of the region.

Instability in the region

The region has undergone historical changes since the Arab Spring in 2011. Parliament stressed, however, that the instability that has followed has been caused, *inter alia*, by the decision of certain authoritarian regimes to use violence against peaceful protests and criticism. The EU is called on to foster multilateralism and regional integration in the broader Middle East through the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council institutional partnership and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, including strong inter-parliamentary relations.

More specifically, the resolution underlined that a stable, secure, united, and prosperous Libya is a priority for the EU. As for Yemen, the EU should suspend the export of arms that are used in the war in Yemen, given the serious risk of violations of international humanitarian law or humanitarian law.

Members recalled that peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority on a definitive settlement of the conflict based on a solution enabling both countries to live side-by-side in peace and security is a perquisite for regional stability. They called for the lifting of all restrictive measures on the movement of people and goods imposed by Israel on the territory, but which are having a devastating impact on the population.

Moreover, the EU should pay special attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict due to its exceptional length and to current perspectives that do not allow for a realistic path towards stability across the Middle East.

Stability and security options

Parliament highlighted that any form of cooperation must be based on a human security approach and respect for international law, a rules-based world order and the shared objectives of promoting human rights and democracy.

The resolution welcomed the EU's commitment to establishing a weapons of mass destruction–free zone in the Middle East.

Underlining the need to diversify the EU's sources of energy, Parliament called on the EEAS and the Commission to conduct an assessment of the implications in the field of security of any agreement to import oil, gas or hydrogen into the EU.

Parliament deplored that the United Arab Emirates has provided a safe haven for Russian oligarchs avoiding EU sanctions on Russia. The EU and its Member States should make a firm commitment to legitimate governments fighting against jihadist networks.

Citizens and human rights

Parliament noted that peopletopeople contacts and cooperation in fields such as trade education, science and culture play an important role in the region and can make a key contribution to regional stability and the bridging of divides both with the EU and among the different states. It welcomed the proposal presented by the Commission for **visa exemptions** for citizens of Kuwait and Qatar.

The EU is called on to increase diplomatic and political relations for democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as demanded by peaceful popular movements across the Middle East and North Africa region. Parliament stressed that rule of law and human rights, good governance and anti-corruption bring benefits to people and foster stability in the region. The prospect of being arbitrarily detained and tortured constitutes an unacceptable form of insecurity for all the citizens of the region and causes more social unrest, mistrust and resentment towards national institutions.

The resolution also called on the authorities in the region to uphold the ban on torture under all circumstances, as enshrined in particular in the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which most of the countries in the region have signed and ratified. It also called for the abolition of the death penalty throughout the region.

Lastly, highlighting the gravity of violence against women in the region, Members called for the EU and its Member States to urge all parties to conflict in the region to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict.