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# PRESENTATION

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Last year, the Survey was marked by the important moment of implementing the Union for the Mediterranean. Fifteen years after the creation of the Barcelona Process, it meant the beginning of a new stage involving the launching of a new institutional framework and new instruments which were to reinvigorate the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

This second Survey, along with continuing to monitor the 2009 assessment, includes a section devoted to assessing the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area (EMFTA) in the year planned for its implementation in the 1995 Barcelona Declaration.

For years we have been witnessing the long and complex process of establishing free trade agreements between the EU and the Mediterranean Partner Countries and we have also recognised the long path ahead for South-South regional integration. The global economic crisis has added to these difficulties, altering the classical coordinates of international trade.

In this field, we have made special efforts to bring together and assess the challenges, opportunities and difficulties of this liberalisation process which, along with the aforementioned current global crisis, has also been influenced by the consolidation of new world economic actors during the last decade.

It has been especially interesting to analyse the impact of the EMFTA on the economies of the Mediterranean Partner Countries in terms of growth and competitiveness, society, SMEs or the fiscal system, given that these can be important indicators of the success of trade liberalisation as well as reforms and changes involved in this process in the state economies.

It is worth noting that the data collected during the fieldwork in November and December 2010 cannot reflect the consequences of the profound changes, many still underway, of the uprisings in the Arab world which, of course, go beyond the analysis and interpretation of the Survey's results.

In fact, the different processes of democratic transition we are witnessing are opening a fundamental dual reflection which should challenge all of us involved in this regional integration process. On the one hand, and closely linked to this exercise and its objectives, the impossibility of grasping the current dissatisfaction which, on the other, has enabled the success of the revolts. In other words, as indicated in this report, the results of the questions put to experts and policy-makers which seek to detect the difficulties and problems affecting the region in the short and long term, asked before the revolutions, denote a resigned acceptance of the status quo, given that in no case do the answers suggest the possibility of a scenario of instability.

Secondly, in relation to Euro-Mediterranean dialogue itself, we seem to be facing a change of era in the Arab world; while Europe, which has seen how for years its soft power applied to the region has effectively guided its economic evolution but has not managed to introduce political change, must be more active and decisively support the processes of democratic transition underway.

A period has begun of rethinking the European strategy for the promotion of democracy, based until now on the encouragement of ordered and gradual policy reform through political dialogue and financial instruments. These uprisings show the unfeasibility of a political dialogue limited to the elites of the southern countries and the absolute need to accompany the economic modernisation with social cohesion mechanisms and processes of democratic transition.

Undoubtedly, a new opportunity has emerged for Euro-Mediterranean regional integration, so that the association agreements stimulate both the political and economic objectives. An opportunity to pick up and renew some of the main contributions of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership that could never be satisfactorily developed: demand for democracy, respect for human rights and strengthening the role of civil society.