

Democratization through Public Diplomacy: An Analysis of the European Parliament's Reaction to the Arab Spring

By Michael Reinprecht & Henrietta Levin



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Democratization through Public Diplomacy: An Analysis of the European Parliament's Reaction to the Arab Spring

The European Union's (EU) emergence as an independent diplomatic actor has encouraged practitioners and scholars of international relations to fundamentally reconsider the role of the state and that of the post-state in foreign affairs. In 2009, the Lisbon Treaty provided the EU with a legal personality, a foreign service, and a de facto foreign minister. For the first time, a regional organization was empowered to conduct independent diplomatic negotiations and programming.¹

This new foreign policy capacity was starkly tested in late 2010 with the eruption of the Arab Spring, a regionally unprecedented series of pro-democracy uprisings that began in Tunisia and rapidly spread through the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

These uprisings served as the EU's gateway into high-stakes foreign policy and presented "a serious test for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy and Neighborhood Policy."² EU institutions were compelled to manage the security situation by constraining the uprisings' ability to foment terrorism in Europe's southern neighborhood, while also promoting normative priorities, such as civil liberties, gender rights, and freedoms of press, religion, and thought. Several weeks after pro-democracy protests began in Tunisia, the Arab Spring had been identified by EU officials as a preeminent foreign policy priority.

The MENA revolutions were considered no less important by the EU's member-states and allies, but each approached the crisis from distinct perspectives. Regional and national interests and practices are generally nonaligned; strategically, the state is more concerned with traditional geopolitical issues of security and internal maintenance of the status quo, while regional organizations, as definitionally post-statist polities, tend to emphasize principles over borders. They focus on transnational value-promotion as a path to long-term stability, as opposed to the statist reversal in which

stability is considered a prerequisite for the cultivation of positive values. These assumptions are clearly manifested in the European case; the legacy of the EU as a defender of social and political liberties in transitioning states is deeply integrated into Brussels' strategic culture. The governments of many of its member-states, alternatively, have actively distanced themselves from this culture of normative conditionality and inclusivity, for fear of negative security ramifications. Thus, when the Arab Spring began, the EU had the potential to offer a unique added value in the foreign policy space through value-driven public diplomacy and other instruments of soft power. This is most true of its parliament, which had outspokenly established itself as the beating heart of European values.

In this paper, we will analyze the European Parliament's (EP) first major attempt at soft intervention. We hypothesize that by directing resources and strategic attention towards innovative public diplomacy programs that drew on the EP's institutional and cultural strengths, while relying on nation-states and other institutions to fill resulting capacity gaps, the EP and its partners were able to influence and reinforce some dimensions of the Arab Spring. While many of these processes did eventually backslide as domestic will waned and Europe rebalanced its priorities, public diplomacy as executed by the EP may have nonetheless sustained these revolutions longer than would otherwise have been possible. However, we also expect to find significant weaknesses in the EP approach to the Arab Spring, both because of its lack of institutional experience with public diplomacy, and because of the EP's dogmatic commitment to particular cultural principles.

More broadly, we expect that of the major practices of public diplomacy—legislative diplomacy, listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, international exchange, and international broadcasting—certain components will be better suited to various institutions and polity types, and that the EP, as a unique political entity, will be able to successfully execute certain public diplomacy programs that would evade traditional diplomatic actors. It is critical that both regional organizations and traditional nation-states understand the

nature of this added value so that future interventions can be better coordinated to the benefit of both parties' interests, or at the very least, to better understand each other's actions, and perhaps mitigate damaging contradictions or wasteful redundancies.

As regional integration accelerates around the world, with ASEAN, the African Union, and Mercosur beginning to adopt independent diplomatic personalities on the EU model, it is increasingly critical to understand the relationships between regionalism, public diplomacy, and global influence, and we seek to offer insights into this relationship by exploring the case of the European Parliament and the Arab Spring.

This study draws on the lived experience of co-author Michael Reinprecht and that of his colleagues in the EP and other EU institutions, as well as affiliated consultative bodies such as the Parliamentary Assembly (PA) of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), an international organization tasked with advancing regional integration through specific development projects. Secondary literature, such as government documents, media reports, and academic analyses, are also central to the study. The piece concludes with brief recommendations regarding the conduct of parliamentary and public diplomacy in a multilateral context.

Taxonomy of EP Public Diplomacy

Within weeks of its initiation, the Arab Spring had become the fundamental foreign policy priority for the European Parliament. The EP's rhetorical support for protestors was immediate and uncompromising. EP President Jerzy Buzek expressed unequivocal empathy for the new movements and advocated for European action as early as January 11, 2011: "Europeans are particularly sensitive to the legitimate calls of the people: calls for social justice, equal opportunities, freedom of expression, democratic participation and true pluralism in shaping a political destiny. That is why we will not remain indifferent. We call for the changes to remain peaceful, but they must equally lead to justice and to the primacy of the rule

of law.”⁷³ Buzek grew more outspoken over time. A month later, he expressed hopes that Egyptian protestors prevailed: “Tonight, I am with the Egyptian people in the streets on Tahrir Square and beyond. The expectations of the citizens are legitimate and the transformations cannot wait.”⁷⁴ At this stage in the revolutions, such uncompromising solidarity was unique among European leaders, both in Brussels and in national capitals.

As the only directly elected institution of the EU, the EP felt compelled to live up to its self-image as the democratic conscience of Europe. It considered defense and promotion of European values, including democracy, rule of law, freedom of expression, respect for human rights, women’s rights, good governance and above all, parliamentary democracy, to be of the utmost importance. Accordingly, support for Arab protestors was deemed to be pressingly necessary. Traditional legislative tools could not fulfill this unprecedented mission; innovative parliamentary and public diplomacy programming would fill the gap.

To rigorously evaluate this multifaceted intervention, we employ Nicholas Cull’s public diplomacy taxonomy, which includes listening, advocacy, international broadcasting, cultural diplomacy, and exchange, in combination with Weisglas and Boer’s framework for parliamentary diplomacy.^{5&6} Through this discrete system of analysis, we hypothesize that it will become discernable where the EP excelled, where it failed, and which mechanisms require adaptation before future deployment.

Parliamentary Legislation as Diplomacy

As formal representatives of constituent publics, a great deal of parliaments’ external activities can be considered public diplomacy. This is not only a rhetorical arrangement, as explained by Boer and Weisglas, but also a very significant opportunity for powerful engagement. Because “parliaments are relatively weak actors in the international arena when compared to governments,”⁷⁷ parliamentarians are permitted to speak more straightforwardly.

They wield less power and are therefore more flexible; they can make sweeping demands without diminishing the stability of interstate relations. This is especially true of the EP, which has few formal foreign policy powers. Furthermore, parliamentary diplomacy is especially effective at “taking away misconceptions” due to members’ ability to speak more candidly than their executive and diplomatic counterparts. This is most relevant when members travel abroad to meet with counterparts, but it remains pertinent in a legislative environment.

As the Arab Spring expanded, it became clear to the EP that the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) demanded drastic revision. The EU executive institutions were not proactively undertaking such reform, and a disappointed EP was determined to leverage parliamentary diplomacy to force action.

Under the standing ENP regime, the EU offered financial assistance and market access on a bilateral basis to third countries in its near abroad. By treaty, this support was conditional upon respect of human rights and democracy, but these stipulations were rarely implemented. Driven by a desire for stable partnerships and a focus on hard interests, such as controlling migration, fighting terrorism, and ensuring access to energy supplies, the Commission and EEAS were not willing to pressure partner countries’ governments to undergo liberal reforms. As described by Rosemary Hollis, the ENP “consistently prioritized European security (including migration control) interests over ‘shared prosperity’ and democracy promotion in the Mediterranean.” The resulting “securitized relationships” marginalized “[European] normative principles and aspirations for Arab reform.”⁸

Following the uprisings, MEPs were no longer content to support this interest-led approach. Exchanges of views with local stakeholders, civil society, NGOs, emerging political figures, and experts led the EP to conclude that the normative portions of bilateral affiliation treaties must be innovatively adapted to facilitate consistent enforcement. To this end, the Foreign Affairs Committee

(AFET) drafted two reports in March 2011 regarding ENP reforms. In a world where autocracy no longer provided stability nor security, the EP advocated for unrestricted support for European values abroad through an ENP that fought alongside protestors to advance “the desire among the people for genuine change.” European lawmakers expressed regret that “since its launch in 2004 the ENP has proven ineffective in meeting its human rights and democracy objectives” and consequentially urged the EU to “revise its democracy and human rights support policy so as to create an *implementation mechanism* for the human rights clause.” In practice, AFET envisioned this mechanism as predefined human rights triggers that would suspend any agreement with third countries in the event of serious violations. Furthermore, countries avoiding these triggers and welcoming rule of law reforms would earn greater support. On April 7, 2011 the EP plenary formally endorsed these policies through a nonbinding resolution “on the Review of the ENP-Southern dimension.”⁹

On May 20, 2011, when the Commission published its own communication entitled “A New Response to a Changing Neighborhood,” the implementation mechanisms proposed by AFET and the EP were formally adopted EU-wide as the “more-for-more-principle.” Also described in a “Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean,”¹⁰ the more-for-more principle committed the EU to offering enhanced financial assistance to countries that rapidly implemented democratic reforms. These procedures largely reflected the April EP resolutions’ recommendations.

The new ENP now focused on three main goals, all tightly aligned with the EP’s long-standing normative priorities:

- Promoting deep democracy, including developing true parliamentary democracy, fair elections, institution building, respect for the rule of law and human rights;
- Encouraging civil society, female empowerment, and direct contact between people, for example, by opening the Erasmus Mundus educational exchange program to more Southern Mediterranean participants;

- Facilitating economic growth, development, and job creation.

While the decision to amend the ENP ultimately lay with the Commission and the EEAS, these bodies were constrained by restrictive diplomatic norms and geopolitical exigencies. It is likely that they would not have been able to justify the zealous investigation that the Parliament conducted regarding value-based reforms while managing wider stability concerns; the bureaucratic bandwidth was simply not available. But by leaning on AFET's conclusions, the ENP was reshaped to uphold human rights clauses far more rigorously than may have been possible in the absence of EP research, adamancy, and steadfast inter-institutional advocacy.

Listening

Listening, Cull's first dimension of public diplomacy, is defined as "both the collection and analysis of data or information or opinion from the target foreign public by an international actor."¹¹ Understanding public knowledge, desires, and opinions can allow an actor to address issues precisely and efficiently and can improve the efficacy of other public diplomacy activities. Listening is a natural strength of the EP, whose principles and actions are intentionally designed to reflect its position as the only directly elected organ of the EU. Listening intently to people who aspire to achieve such elections was a natural outgrowth of the EP's dedication to democratic accountability and to liberal universalism. More concretely, the EP drew on interparliamentary delegations with MENA parliaments, joint parliamentary committees, and the multilateral framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly. These structures were augmented by ad hoc and standing delegations' travel to the region. The president, political groups, individual MEPs, and committee members all organized trips to the transitioning capitals.

It is a standard practice for legislators to occasionally travel domestically or abroad in order to gain deeper understanding of

pressing issues, with the ultimate goal of drafting better reactive legislation. The EP's approach to travel delegations, however, has been particularly robust. Whereas most of the democratic world's legislatures, including internationally active chambers such as the U.S. Congress and UK House of Commons, frequently send ad hoc groups of legislators abroad, the EP is unique in that it maintains 44 standing delegations to countries, regions, and international organizations of strategic interest.¹² While it is common for standing committees to organize trips in other national legislatures, most of these committees have thematic rather than regional mandates, and where regional committees do exist, such as the American Senate's Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, their mandate is generally far less precise than that of EP delegations, which divided the MENA region into eight distinct groups of consistent membership. This allows for MEPs to specialize, becoming experts in their given country, region, or organization. In addition, because MEPs know that they will almost certainly encounter opportunities to travel to their delegation's area, they can realistically expect that the development of a specialty will bear fruit and be of use in the near future, a strong incentive to cultivate expertise. Greater expertise allows for more effective listening, as knowledgeable legislators can better interpret local trends and cultural signals while abroad.

The EP deployed many delegations to the MENA region during the Arab Spring; the first was dispatched to Tunisia on February 3, 2011 and the next to Egypt the following month.¹³ Though these delegations were ad hoc, both were composed primarily of MEPs who had served as members of relevant standing delegations, including AFET, the Human Rights Sub-Committee (DROI), as well as the Delegations for Relations with the Maghreb Countries and the Mashreq Countries. In Tunisia, MEPs' primary goal was to experience the "wide range of institutional, political, economic and social difficulties faced by the Transitional Government."¹⁴ This was achieved through meetings with legislators, executive officials, NGOs, and trade unions. MEPs' resulting understanding was especially critical at a time when the EP was a key participant in long-term reforms of EU normative conditionality frameworks.

These delegations also gave revolutionary countries an opportunity to listen to Europe. Participating MEPs repeatedly emphasized their “commitment to mobilize all relevant instruments,” pledging “that precise EU measures would be taken in support of the Tunisian people, of the democratic transition, of civil society actors and of the necessary reforms.”¹⁵ These statements of solidarity served a dual purpose; the Tunisian people were reassured that Europe continued to support their democratization efforts, while new Tunisian leaders were implicitly informed that they were being held accountable by external forces. If they allowed democratic backsliding to occur, the outside world would know, care, and act to reverse such developments.

Furthermore, to ensure that EP strategy was informed by an accurate understanding of the hopes, capabilities, and political realities of transitioning MENA countries, and to facilitate the creation of a comprehensive, continuous, and coordinated response, a Monitoring Group on the Situation in the Southern Mediterranean was established under AFET. The Monitoring Group was tasked with oversight of EU financial assistance to the Southern Mediterranean, close monitoring and evaluation of EU measures intended to facilitate democratic transitions in the region, and liaising with the EP’s election observers and evaluators. Internally, these tasks required exchanges of views with senior Commission and EEAS officials, the EEAS Task Force on the Southern Mediterranean,¹⁶ the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Venice Commission,¹⁷ heads of EU delegations in relevant countries, the EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean,¹⁸ and a number of stakeholders in the MENA region, including human rights organizations and networks, think tanks, and academia. By liaising with this broad array of EU and MENA institutions, the Monitoring Group sought to diffuse the invaluable understanding gained through its on the ground listening activities throughout the EU foreign policy machine, thereby achieving disproportionate policy impact. The Group was also called upon to advise AFET and other EP bodies on the evolution of the revolutions in order to craft responses which were timely, relevant, and responsive to MENA citizens’ aspirations.

In March 2012, just over one year after the outbreak of the Arab Spring, the European Parliament assumed the rotating presidency of the PA UfM. From the very beginning of this presidency, the EP and its new president, Martin Schulz, were committed to empowering the long-marginalized Assembly to become a useful body for the exchange of views between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean. The president was confident that the UfM's combination of formal and hallway diplomacy presented an ideal forum for exchange, communications, and interaction among parliamentarians from both shores of the Mediterranean Sea, which would in turn encourage MPs from countries with long-standing parliamentary traditions to be received as models for newly elected representatives in transitioning countries. By leveraging the PA UfM, Schulz envisioned that 2012 would "be the year when we close the gap between intentions and deeds in the Euro- Mediterranean-relations."¹⁹ Schulz embraced a mutualistic approach to Mediterranean engagement, arguing, "the Mediterranean can be an effective lever serving the interests of both the EU and its Southern Neighborhood: reigniting economic growth on both shores would help consolidating democracy in the countries undergoing transition and give new stamina to the economies of Europe."²⁰

To that end, the EP planned to implement the following public diplomacy measures:

- The establishment of new partnerships between cities and universities;
- Gaining input from non-governmental stakeholders regarding strategic projects in energy and water management, which would be jointly managed by the Commission, the EIB, the Secretariat of the UfM, and indigenous stakeholders;
- Establishing the Mediterranean Civil Society Forum, in partnership with the Anna Lindh Foundation,²¹ to include a Summit of the Speakers of the Parliaments of the UfM-Members countries.

The first Summit of the Speakers was held on April 6-7, 2013 in Marseille. More than 40 speakers of UfM parliaments and more than

1,500 non-governmental participants attended. Parliamentarians and representatives of civil society had the opportunity to listen to each other, exchanging views and building personal rapport, with the ultimate goal of coming to an understanding of how the citizens of the MENA region could be reconnected with their parliaments, how lingering gaps between MENA parliaments and their constituents could be bridged and how Europe could assist in this endeavor.

However, enthusiasm for listening to foreign publics has not always been applied effectively. In November 2012, MEPs arranged to meet with an assortment of local Egyptian NGOs through the EU Special Representative to the Southern Mediterranean's Task Force, which was launched a year earlier as a platform for European officials and business representatives to conduct knowledge sharing, exchanges, and joint planning with Arab stakeholders and private financial institutions. MEPs hoped to learn from the frontline experiences of the leaders of the protest movements in order to better tailor EP programs to suit the needs of transitioning societies. By this point, Cairo's transition had backslid significantly, and MEPs therefore sought to listen to civil society directly, rather than accepting government mediation from increasingly illiberal officials. But this plan was rendered futile when MEPs discovered that the Egyptian government had preselected pro-government NGOs for this meeting, which was entirely devoid of independent organizations. The meeting continued with little purpose, as the MEPs expressed their hopes for augmentation of women's rights, minority rights, and gender equality with partners assumed to be unwaveringly supportive of status quo social policies. This was "an extremely worrying indicator for the development of a new partnership between the EU and Egypt aiming at promoting democracy and human rights."²² Whereas local newspapers, as well as the EEAS, celebrated the two-day Task Force meeting as a major success, MEPs lamented a lost opportunity for genuine dialogue.

Advocacy

Advocacy is defined as “an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by undertaking an international communication activity to actively promote a particular policy, idea, or that actor’s general interests in the minds of a foreign public,” and it is most valuable for its “short-term utility.”²³ In addition to its immediacy, in this case, advocacy had the advantage of invoking a clear, straightforward message. The EU’s ability to craft a compelling and credible counter-message to strong authoritarian media machines was critical in the early stages of the Arab Spring. When seeking to influence information-poor countries, filling knowledge gaps with facts that were accurate, believable, and relevant was a very powerful tool. Given the EP’s history of outspoken support for democracy, human rights, and European values, unfettered by diplomatic ramifications and empowered by universalist convictions, the EP was well positioned to advocate for Arab democracy.

From the very beginning of the revolutions, the EP considered pro-democracy advocacy in the MENA region to be a fundamental duty and responsibility. Because unrelenting pro-democracy advocacy directed at Warsaw Pact countries during the Cold War was perceived as integral to the eventual collapse of dictatorship in Eastern Europe, Eastern MEPs took for granted that the MENA region would also require external advocacy and support if its fledgling democratic movements were to gain traction. As explained by Buzek, “If countries in free Europe, the USA, and other democracies had not called relentlessly for freedom and democracy in Central and Eastern Europe, we would never have won that fight. Today it is up to the West to fight for freedom and democracy everywhere in the world.”²⁴ Furthermore, a consensus existed among EP leadership that the EP, as the legitimate representation of many Europeans’ personal struggles to achieve democracy, should play a special role in the ongoing revolutions. Edward McMillan Scott, the EP Vice President for Human Rights and Democracy, encapsulated this perspective: “The European Parliament should be absolutely central to the process of democratization. Not just in our region, in Europe

itself, the wider neighborhood as we call it, the Arab World for example, and countries to our east, but also worldwide.”²⁵

The unique value of EP advocacy is clear when compared with that of the EEAS and national legislatures. By mid-January, President Buzek was quick to express solidarity and empathy with the protestors, legitimizing their cause with passionately inclusive rhetoric: “As Europeans we share the aspirations of the Tunisian people. We want to accompany them on the path of their fulfillment.”²⁶ On behalf of the EEAS, High Representative Catherine Ashton offered only “sympathy to the families of the victims.”²⁷ While supportive, this statement emphasized difference rather than solidarity. U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry also projected otherness onto the Tunisian protestors, asserting that “the time has come for governments in the region to improve governance and transparency.”²⁸ Reforms are clearly positioned as the responsibility of the MENA governments, not of the U.S., and notably, not of protestors. Stability is his implicit priority. The three leaders spoke with equal divergence regarding liberal change vis-à-vis the status quo of the old regimes. Kerry emphasized partnership with the old regime, opening his statement by reminding his audience, “Tunisia has long been an important ally to the United States.”²⁹ This statement is again couched in language of stability and security. Ashton also pointed to her acceptance of the standing EU-Tunisia relationship: “The EU has a strong dialogue and broad cooperation with Tunisia and is engaged in a process of strengthening bilateral relations on a wide range of issues.”³⁰ While Tunisia was to be newly prioritized, enhanced relations would be built on existing foundations. Buzek, however, called on Europe to “not remain indifferent” to “the legitimate calls of the people.” While recognizing that the “EU and Tunisia have a long history of partnership,” Buzek immediately clarified that this relationship, along with Tunisian society, must “undergo that profound change.” Buzek went on to outline four specific “expectations” of the Tunisian government, in stark contrast to Ashton and Kerry’s ambiguous calls for accountability.³¹ The EP’s unique position regarding solidarity, empathy, and dedication to change were especially important in

the early months of the revolutions. While most of the developed world offered muted patience, the EP voiced support for, belief in, and solidarity with the idealistic demonstrators. As protestors risked their lives in the name of Western-style democracy, it was critical that they not be isolated from their liberal models.

As the protests continued to spread throughout the Arab world, the EP's support remained unwavering, with Buzek marking a February 2011 EP delegation to Tunis with unequivocal support for democratization, underwritten with promises of EP assistance:

The voice of the people demanding democratic change is loud and clear. We cannot and should not remain indifferent to those calls. We must be ready to support the democratic changes. [...] Stability matters, but a stable neighborhood is less important than a stable democratic neighborhood. You will find the Parliament a constructive partner in this matter.³²

Thus, by early February, the EP had made clear that it considered the uprisings not as threats to European or global security, as many other Western institutions had come to believe, but instead as popular insistence on democratization. This desire was recognized as highly resonant with European values and reminiscent of the Velvet Revolutions of 1989. In part because of the Eastern European experience, it was assumed that democracy would lead to stability and to peace, while internally stable dictatorship was seen as conducive to aggression, as evinced through the actions of the Soviet East. No qualifications on EP solidarity were deemed necessary by the institution's leadership.

In addition to leaders' public remarks, AFET and DROI debates and resolutions acted as mechanisms of international advocacy. Borrowing from diplomatic tradition, both committees issue declarations, *démarches*, and draft resolutions. But neither committee is bound by the limitations of traditional diplomacy. MEPs tend to

understand their representative responsibilities from an ideological perspective; many MEPs see themselves as accredited to European values more so than to the material needs of their respective regions. This responsibility diverges sharply from that of a standard diplomat, who must discreetly manage his country's international relationships, recognizing that each statement and decision is representative of and binding on the whole of his home government. Free from the responsibility of setting policy for the entire EU, the EP has been able to establish an independent foreign policy, one that is often far more interventionist and universalist than anything the EEAS would be able to champion. This flexibility has been fully embraced by the EP, which has used non-binding resolutions as key vehicles for promoting European values, which it sees as central to its mission of representing the democratic conscious of Europe. Because these foreign affairs resolutions carry rhetorical power only, they are best seen as advocacy tools, rather than as legislation. AFET and DROI do not make laws, but they do make powerful statements that, to varying degrees, "manage the international environment."³³

The EP spoke on many dimensions of the Arab Spring, supporting protestors with an adamancy that was lacking from other Western institutions' statements and resolutions. In the first half of 2011, many resolutions on Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Bahrain, and Yemen were adopted. These resolutions expressed empathy, and solidarity with demonstrators, condemned the use of force against peaceful protestors, often directly criticizing governments and empathizing with victims of government-sponsored violence, called for respect for the rule law, human rights, and fair trials by all sides, defended freedom of expression and assembly, and demanded the release of political prisoners. Most resolutions explicitly recognized the revolutions as legitimate representations of the desires of Arab societies; this acted as an important counter-narrative to the common accusation that the protests were controlled by hardline Islamists. A key resolution from February 3, 2011 touched on all of these issues, expressing "solidarity with the Tunisian people," pointing to the pro-democracy movement as "legitimate," welcoming "the release of political prisoners," emphasizing the importance of inclusive interim

governing through which “all political, social, civic and democratic forces in Tunisia should be represented, [...] [condemning] the repressive measures and the disproportionate force employed by the security forces” and calling “for those responsible to be brought to justice.”³⁴ The latter statement would be difficult for the EEAS to issue, as diplomatic protocol forbids interference in domestic justice processes. The EP, unfettered by such expectations, was free to advocate for a universalist message of fairness and accountability.

International Exchange

International exchange is defined by Cull as “an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by sending its citizens overseas and reciprocally accepting citizens from overseas for a period of study and/or acculturation.”³⁵ Governments often underutilize exchange because its political impacts can take decades to materialize, but the EU has developed uniquely advanced exchange capabilities, facilitated by long-term thinking born from seven year budgets and Brussels’ sense that the “European project” of integration as a long-term initiative that must be supported through equally long-range projects. Members of all EU institutions unanimously refer to the Erasmus student exchange program as the EU’s most successful public diplomacy initiative, and following the Arab Spring, it was intuitive for EU institutions to turn this practice outwards, creating or expanding international exchange programs with the MENA region. This tool held exceptional power following the Arab Spring because of the rapid timeline over which these programs could bear fruit. Whereas the EP’s Young Political Leaders seminars and exchange program, for example, was initiated with the goal of exposing high-potential youth to European governance and culture, with the expectation that they would be in positions of power within several decades, the Arab Spring was heavily youth-fueled, and protestors of all ages were looking for models on which to build democratic institutions and societies. Young activists did not have to spend time rising through bureaucratic ranks to gain influence in their new societies, and through exchanges with key MENA stakeholders, the Parliament could affect positive change

relatively quickly. Elite exchanges could also enjoy rapid impact; as new parliamentarians drafted constitutions and established the foundations of new democracies, influencing their worldviews would result in greater structural influence for the EU than would be possible in a time of ordinary legislating.

Many of the EP's most innovative exchange activities were managed by the Office for the Promotion Parliamentary Democracy (OPPD).³⁶ Created in 2008 to "support parliamentary development in new and emerging democracies" for the benefit of "parliamentary institutions of new and emerging democracies, its Members and civil servants," OPPD was intended to build legislative capacity in new and fragile democracies.³⁷ Couched in the implicit assumption that third countries should regard the EP as a model, OPPD offered a broad array of capacity building services, including reform guidance, election monitoring follow-ups, exchange of best practices, and civic cultivation of online public spaces, as established through exchange programs such as tailored trainings and seminars, student and professional fellowships, and peer-to-peer mentoring. These programs prioritized sustainability, trust, and mutual ownership, with hopes that the peer-to-peer relationships established through OPPD programs would outlast the exchange and continue to inform good governance into the future.

OPPD programs are not restricted to the 16 ENP-partner countries, nor to the Southern Mediterranean, but in 2011, in response to the Arab Spring, OPPD programs rebalanced towards transitioning MENA countries. This prioritization is well illustrated by the fact that many public OPPD documents, for the first time, were published in Arabic in 2011. Reflecting on the 1989 Velvet Revolutions that many Eastern and Central European MEPs had lived through, European lawmakers concluded that "building democracies in the Arab world will take many years, but if we make a long term commitment and keep it, chances of success have never been better."³⁸ MEPs shared a consensus that EU-led capacity building, knowledge sharing, and exchange of cultural principles was critical to the democratic consolidation of Velvet Revolution nations. OPPD was identified as

the best mechanism to organize this type of cooperation, and MPs were excited to collaborate with this young office. Ana Gomes, a Portuguese MEP, expressed her enthusiasm for OPPD's work as an extension of her previous experience as a democratic revolutionary. During the pro-democracy Carnation Revolution, "People came out into the streets; I came out into the streets. I was demonstrating in front of the political police when they shot into the crowd and four people were killed. [...] I do very well understand these brave people who have been demonstrating in Egypt, in Tunisia, calling for democracy and human rights."³⁹

From 2011-2014, OPPD organized training seminars for staff, members and even parliamentary candidates of the Southern Mediterranean. European cultural values and gender norms were incorporated into the structure and substance of these exchanges, with special attention paid to female and minority representation. Long-term cooperation programs allowed the EP to set up a strategic plan through which all OPPD instruments could be leveraged over time, ensuring that the most promising officials received applicable training at the most opportune time, and that exchange led to sustainable, lasting relationships between established and callow parliamentarians. These relationships facilitated continued learning and acculturation long after the end of the exchange period, while also fostering a feeling of joint ownership of the program and guarding against impressions of neocolonial instruction.

Even after the passion and hope of the initial revolutions had subsided, the EP remained committed to exchange diplomacy as illustrated by its engagement with the Arab Parliament. In November 2012, by which time Egypt had retrenched towards authoritarian rule and Syria and Libya had descended into violence, an EU-Arab Summit issued the Cairo Declaration, which provided an explicit mandate for closer cooperation, calling on the "European Parliament and the Arab Parliament to strengthen communication."⁴⁰ The proposed collaboration between the EU and the Arab League, and more directly, the EP and the Arab Parliament, extended through the end of 2014, and included a wide range of public diplomacy

activities and democratic engagements, including cultural training regarding democratic perspectives and accountability, election observation,⁴¹ civil society exchanges, and sharing of best practices for women's empowerment. The EP enthusiastically recognized the Cairo Declaration, swiftly translating its intentions into action. By the end of April 2013, a study visit had been organized by the OPPD for members and staffers of the Arab Parliament, who traveled to Brussels to learn from their EP counterparts. A month later, the president of the Arab Parliament, Ahmed al Jarwan, visited the EP president in Brussels, where the two shared their hopes, experiences, and plans for reinvigorated peer-to-peer cooperation.

Professional exchanges were another key component of the EP's public diplomacy strategy for the MENA region. These were managed primarily through the Young Political Leaders (YPL) program, launched in 2008 and open to civic-minded professionals aged 20-35. The program initially targeted Israeli and Palestinian young adults who were likely to shape their respective societies later in life. They were brought to Brussels, along with a contingent of European counterparts, with the goal of advancing mutual understanding and cultural awareness. During the Arab Spring, the program was retooled to meet the new challenges posed by the protest movements, opening opportunities for Maghreb and Mashreq residents to spend time in Brussels, where they learned about the principles of democracy, human rights, and liberal society from European peers. In late 2012, the first "Young Leaders Middle East" forum was held, with plans to make the conference an annual event. Summits allowed the exchanged young adults to discuss development initiatives directly with the president of the Delegation for Relations with the Maghreb Countries, to share their experiences with an array of interested MEPs, and to learn how the EU could facilitate democratization and liberal reforms in their home countries. This program design encoded mutuality; the EU did not only sell its own services and opinions, but also actively listened to participant's thoughts and experiences, thereby creating potential for better policy and programming on both sides of the Mediterranean. The impact of YPL was extended beyond its three day fora through the YPL

Network, launched in February 2014 to allow alumni of the program to keep in touch, share best practices, and jointly collaborate with EU partners.

The EP-MENA exchange strategy was rounded off by its youth program. Youth exchange has always been a strength of the EU, with extensive capacity built up through the development of the renowned Erasmus educational exchange program. Though Erasmus is managed by the Commission, the EP has drawn on this expertise in the management of Euro-Med-Scola, a program that allows young students from the 43 member countries of the UfM to gather in Brussels to simulate the parliamentary process. The first conference was held in 2008, but the program lay dormant until the Arab Spring, which spurred additional simulations. High-potential student leaders were selected for the program “on the basis of their engagement in social activities on human rights, fundamental freedoms, tolerance and peaceful conflict resolution.” Participants were not only likely to attain positions of power in their home countries; they were also predisposed to use this power to achieve liberal reforms. Euro-Med-Scola, in turn, taught these students how reforms can be guided through parliamentary channels. Though not all 43 eligible countries are always represented at Euro-Med-Scola conferences, the EP has taken care to include students from revolutionary nations, including Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia.

Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy is defined as “an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad.”⁷⁴² Following the Arab Spring, it was primarily political and normative culture that the EP sought to export to the MENA region. EP cultural doctrine had long acknowledged that “culture is no longer only to create art or literature.” As Dutch MEP Merietje Schaake explained in a 2010 report, “Cultural Diplomacy is increasingly being used as a vehicle to promote liberal democratic values and to foster democracy and participation.”⁷⁴³ Incumbent

in this politicized interpretation are several challenges that do not arise when public diplomacy is based in arts, athletics, or other social dimensions of culture. Arts, for example, can be mutually shared by different states; imagine painters from different countries collaborating on a single exhibit, which then tours in both countries. The norms and values of different countries, however, will rarely be treated as if they are equal or complementary, especially outside of the Western community. Norms are inherently should-based concepts, and one set of norms is almost definitionally seen as superior to others. Norms therefore lend themselves to export far more than import. The EP was not seeking to incorporate Tunisian or Egyptian culture into its own governing practices, but instead unidirectionally exporting European political and civic values to states undergoing revolutions. This is not to say that the EP forced its values on the MENA region, as the Parliament, and the EU as a whole, can intervene in the affairs of non-member states only when asked. In this case, the EP began to emphasize European values in these countries only after protesters voiced an adamant desire to adopt these principles and incorporate them into new governing institutions. But it remains notable that cultural diplomacy of a political nature inherently abandons some degree of mutuality, in turn losing one of the fundamental strengths of public diplomacy.

The EP's flagship program of political-cultural diplomacy is the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, launched in 1998 in honor of the prominent Soviet dissident to recognize "efforts on behalf of human rights and fundamental freedoms."⁴⁴ The Sakharov Prize rewards exceptional manifestations of "European values" around the world and connects awardees through the Sakharov Network for the purpose of sharing best practices and joint planning. The award has come to be seen as highly prestigious within human rights communities, and it is increasingly recognized and respected among general publics in Europe and the developing world. Unlike the Nobel Prize, which often rewards preeminent individuals years after their greatest achievements, the EP seeks to preempt history by increasing the prominence of activists at the peak of their work. Traditionally, the EP has also preferred laureates who are not only fighting for

human rights, but who are advancing values that would be considered “European,” including liberal democracy, women’s rights, and social equality, or against regimes of which the EP disapproves. Protest movements are often targeted for recognition, including Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo (1992) in Argentina and Cuba’s Ladies in White (2005). While the EEAS is incapable of offering such direct support for internal political movements, especially while the old regime remains internationally recognized, the EP has embraced the foreign policy flexibility endowed by its unique status as a legitimate—but not diplomatically accountable—mouthpiece of the EU.

On December 14, 2011 the Sakharov Prize was awarded to the Arab Spring, as represented by five leaders of the revolutions: Asmaa Mahfouz of Egypt, Ahmed al-Zubair Ahmed al-Sanusi of Libya, Razan Zaitouneh and Ali Farzat of Syria, and Mohamed Bouazizi of Tunisia, the man whose 2010 self-immolation initiated the wave of Arab protests. As declared by President Buzek, “this award reaffirms Parliament’s solidarity and firm support for their struggle for freedom, democracy and the end of authoritarian regimes.”⁴⁵

However, this sort of unilateral advocacy, in which the EU chooses foreign actors to celebrate with neither the input nor expertise of these foreign societies, can easily work counter to EU goals. Zaitouneh, one of the 2011 Syrian laureates, had been formally labeled a foreign agent by the Syrian government in retaliation for her management of the Syrian Human Rights Information Link blog. Being singled out for recognition by a Western governance organ may have further tarnished her credibility within Syria, while endangering her and her family, two members of which were already being held by the Assad regime.

Another key weakness of EU cultural diplomacy in the MENA region is its insistence on building Arab democracies that mirror European governance models. This led the EP to overlook the importance of Islamic politics and to emphasize secularism at all costs. Each Sakharov winner was a secularist, and while this type of activist might resonate more strongly in Brussels, the exclusion of

moderate Islamists from opportunities for democratic empowerment was deeply counterproductive to EP goals; exacerbating these groups' marginalization not only contradicts EU values of inclusion and diversity, but also pushes them out of the democratic system, guaranteeing that fledgling parliaments would have natural enemies, as in Libya, or else that protest movements, divided between the secular and religious, would be unable to overpower the existing regime, as in Syria. By refusing to tailor European cultural constructs to the receiving society prior to export, the significant potential of cultural engagement was undercut. Because "Europe never considered seriously engaging the Islamists," it surrendered opportunities to engage with the whole of MENA societies, ultimately choosing to ignore "the real world" in favor of a Eurocentric liberal secularism that never gained traction outside of Tunisia.⁴⁶

International Broadcasting

Finally, Cull considers international broadcasting to be an "an actor's attempt to manage the international environment by using the technologies of radio, television, and the Internet to engage with foreign publics."⁴⁷ It is important to note that while this component of public diplomacy can be conducted by states or international organizations, it can also be practiced by privately owned news corporations with an international reach and impact. In the latter case, the role of political entities is to manage the content that these private media outlets publish, not by censorship or propaganda, but by presenting journalists and reporters with information in such a way that facts the polity wishes to publicize are featured prominently in media reports.

The EP's Directorate General for Communication is tasked primarily with explaining the institution to European citizens. However, in keeping with the EP's pivot towards external affairs and international rule of law issues, this directorate began to broadcast to MENA publics in early 2011. By leveraging social media, newsletters, press releases, and EuroparlTV, the institution's online television channel, the EP broadcast its support and encouragement

directly into the homes of the Southern Mediterranean. EuroparlTV alone released 56 videos regarding the Arab Spring from 2011-2012. Though it did not reach an audience comparable to that of national broadcasters, it is nonetheless significant in that parliamentarians and protestors had the opportunity to learn of EP support and action plans through an unmediated broadcasting outlet.

The EP has more successfully broadcast its positions to the MENA region through the amplification of its resolutions. As described previously, positions enshrined in these resolutions are generally far stronger than those supported by the EEAS or the Commission, with outspoken support for human rights and democracy usually dominating AFET and DROI resolutions. This radical universalism is permitted in part by the resolutions' nonbinding nature. Free of the diplomatic consequences of acting on its opinions, the EP can unmitigatedly voice them. In Europe, these nonbinding documents are not paid much attention, but outside, they often become front-page news. Such unveiled support for universal democracy would not be possible for the EEAS or member-state parliaments with binding power over external policy, as both must strike "a careful balancing act" between the inherent universalism of European values and "the diplomatic functions" that require greater subtlety.⁴⁸ The EP is subject to no such restriction, and its statements therefore convey greater conviction and empathy. Its dramatic presentations were well positioned for prominent coverage by click-driven and purchase-driven media outlets.

For example, the EP President's January, 2011 statement that "we deplore the fact that Tunisian authorities failed to understand that their first and foremost duty is to serve the good of their citizens"⁴⁹ obtained more media coverage than Catherine Ashton's statement from that same month: "We are concerned about the events that have been taking place in Tunisia."⁵⁰ EEAS diplomats in Tunisia remained accredited to the current regime, and while Ashton did urge "Tunisian authorities to investigate the recent events and provide further information about them,"⁵¹ this statement refrained from directly criticizing the Ben Ali government and remained far less

compelling to a disenchanted public and the media outlets tasked with catering to them than Buzek's unrelenting condemnation. Even the tone of Buzek's comments is more reportable than Ashton's, with Buzek's emotional address suggesting passionate solidarity and genuine empathy regarding the Tunisian situation, in stark contrast to Ashton's bland equivocation.

Summary

To influence the proceedings of the Arab Spring, the EP utilized the following public diplomacy mechanisms:

- **Diplomatic Legislating:** The EP offered innovative recommendations regarding the Commission's ENP reform, including the introduction of the more-for-more principle, as well as frameworks for specific cooperation programs.
- **Listening:** The EP was heavily involved in the PA UfM, but also listened to MENA publics through ad hoc systems invoking delegations and election monitoring.
- **Advocacy:** Many EP resolutions addressed the need for democratic transitions and respect for human rights in MENA countries with a far stronger voice than any of its Western counterparts, especially in the early phases of the Arab Spring.
- **International Exchange:** The EP leveraged peer-to-peer exchange and knowledge sharing to build capacity in new parliamentary systems and acculturate MENA leaders to the EU model of liberal democracy.
- **Cultural Diplomacy:** The EP sought to export European political culture, focusing on secularism, liberalism, democracy, and rule of law through awards and intercultural dialogues.
- **International Broadcasting:** Relevant EP resolutions frequently permeated MENA press.

Together, these programs were intended to strengthen relationships with civil society, enhance the political dialogue among

parliamentarians from Europe and the MENA countries, develop the rule of law and deep democracy in transitioning countries, contribute to the establishment of free and fair elections, and advance human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Recommendations

While some dimensions of EP public diplomacy programming have been welcomed by MENA stakeholders, it is clear that the institution's response to the Arab Spring was far from flawless. While the EP cannot be said to have caused the autocratic retrenchment and violence that has consumed many of the Arab Spring nations, it certainly failed to prevent it. The EP may not, under any circumstances, have had the power to alter this trajectory, but it is nonetheless possible that future crises may be mitigated or avoided if the EP, as well as other legislative diplomats, learn from the mistakes of 2011-2012 and incorporate the following recommendations into future crisis management scenarios. After doing so, the EP will emerge as a formidable public diplomacy actor, with a far greater ability to manage the international environment.

1. Cultural principles must be adapted prior to export. While European values may be universalist in their definitional applicability to all people, it must be remembered that universalism itself is a European value, as are the particular rights that the EP assigns to global citizens. While it may be possible to export certain values, such as freedom of speech, without many alterations, others, such as freedom of religion, must be tailored for their new audience. The European definition of religious freedom demands a secular public space, but this may not be the case for Islamic democracies, which would consider religious tolerance, rather than absolute secularism, to be a more reasonable value. The EP must remember that public diplomacy is inherently mutual; for cultural diplomacy to be successful, societies must accept the dual responsibilities of sharing their own cultures and accepting components of others' worldview.

2. The EP's dedication to listening to foreign publics is unusual and admirable; however, MEPs must work harder to ensure that the knowledge derived from EP listening programs is incorporated into the institution's policies and programs. Following from the previous recommendation, MEPs must not only listen for similarities between the Arab, Eastern European, and Iberian experiences of democratization, but also seek to engage with the differences that separate these and other societies' transitions. MEPs must be careful to distinguish between European universalist values and Arab, Middle Eastern, or African universalist values, which may differ significantly while being no less emblematic of inclusiveness, fairness, and democratic legitimacy. Listening to these differences, and incorporating them into future public diplomacy programs, legislation, and policy, will allow MEPs to truly embody their universalist principles, rather than forcing Europeanized democracy on societies that may not be capable of or interested in implementing a foreign system.
3. EP public diplomacy strategies should prioritize precise, achievable projects that leverage the institution's strengths. Key stakeholders repeatedly indicated that EP efforts were most appreciated when they tackled specific issues that have been mastered by the EP, such as election legitimacy and parliamentary knowledge sharing, rather than broad concerns such as the advancement of human rights. Realistically, the EP budget will never allow for a sufficiently comprehensive program to approach thematic issues with the systemic problem solving that they demand. But the Parliament does have the ability to comprehensively address specific portions of these broader issues, for example, by teaching 250 Mediterranean teenagers how to participate in parliamentary democracy through the Euro-Med-Scola exchange. EP public diplomacy will be strongest when it seeks to address specific gaps in the broader projects of the EEAS, Commission, and member-state foreign ministries. While the sprawling Erasmus exchange program, for example, must be handled by the Commission's sprawling bureaucracy, the EP's OPPD is better suited to providing

tailored educational exchanges that cater to the specific needs of individual parliaments. These complementary programs are both of critical importance to EU global engagement, and to reach their full potential, each must be managed by an institution of appropriate culture, capacity, flexibility, and ambitions.

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|---|
| MENA | Middle East & North Africa |
| EU | European Union |
| EC | European Commission |
| EEAS | European External Action Service |
| EIB | European Investment Bank |
| HR/VP | High Representative/Vice President of the European Commission |
| TEU | Treaty on European Union |
| EP | European Parliament |
| MEP | Member of the European Parliament |
| EPP | European People's Party (Christian Democrats) |
| S&D | Socialists & Democrats |
| AFET | Foreign Affairs Committee |
| DROI | Human Rights Subcommittee |
| ENP | European Neighborhood Policy |
| EIB | European Investment Bank |
| OPPD | Office for the Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy |
| YPL | Young Political Leaders |
| UfM | Union for the Mediterranean |
| PA UfM | Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean |

Endnotes

1. Article 47 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) explicitly recognizes the legal personality of the European Union (EU). Consequently, the EU has the ability to conclude and negotiate international agreements in accordance with its external commitments, to become a member of international organizations, and to join international conventions, such as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).
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3. "Buzek's Opening Statement on Tunisia." European Parliament. January 18, 2011. Accessed June 14, 2014.
4. "In the Streets of Egypt Tonight." European Parliament. February 13, 2011. Accessed June 14, 2014.
5. Cull, Nicholas J. "Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616.31 (2008): 31-54.
6. Boer, Gonnie de and Frans W. Weisglas. "Parliamentary Diplomacy." *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 2.1 (2007): 93-99.
7. Ibid.
8. Hollis, Rosemary. "No Friend of Democratization: Europe's role in the genesis of the 'Arab Spring.'" *International Affairs* 88:1 (2012): 94.
9. "European Parliament resolution of 7 April 2011." European Parliament. April 7, 2011. Accessed June 3, 2015.
10. "Partnership for democracy and prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean." EUR-Lex. March 8, 2011. Accessed August 1, 2014.
11. Cull, Nicholas. "Cultural Diplomacy as a Listening Project?" Presentation at American University, Washington, DC. November 8, 2010.
12. Notable exceptions include the German Bundestag and the Austrian Nationalrat, which maintain less formal "friendship groups" of MPs which focus on various countries and regions.
13. The following missions took place in the first weeks and months of the Arab Spring: February 3-6, 2011: ad hoc EP delegation to Tunisia; March 19-21, 2011: ad hoc EP delegation to Egypt; EP President Jerzy Buzek visit to Tunisia and Egypt from March 17-21, 2011.
14. "Bulgarian MEP Metin Kazak participated in the delegation of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament." *Metin Kazak*. February 8, 2011. Accessed September 2, 2014.

15. "Press Release of the Ad Hoc-delegation of the European Parliament in Tunisia." February 6, 2011.
16. The Task Force for the Southern Mediterranean was established on June 8, 2011. Led by HR/VP Catherine Ashton, the Task Force brings together expertise from the European External Action Service, the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and other international financial institutions to act as a focal point for assistance to MENA countries in transition.
17. The Venice Commission (European Commission for Democracy through Law) is the Council of Europe's advisory body on constitutional matters. The role of the Venice Commission is to provide legal advice to its member states and, in particular, to help states in transition to bring their legal and institutional structures in line with European standards in the fields of democratic institutions and fundamental rights, constitutional justice, elections and political parties, human rights, and the rule of law.
18. Bernardino León was appointed as European Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean by the HR/VP on June 25, 2011. As the EUSR, Bernardino León played a leading role in enhancing the EU's support to the countries undergoing political transition.
19. Schulz, Martin. Speech at the 8th PA UfM Plenary Session, Rabat, Morocco. March 25, 2012.
20. Ibid.
21. The Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures is a network of civil society organizations dedicated to promoting intercultural dialogue in the Mediterranean region. It was established in 2005 by governments of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Euromed).
22. "Joint Press Release of the International federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network." November 14, 2012.
23. Cull, Nicholas J. "Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616.31 (2008): 32.
24. "Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy." European Parliament. Accessed September 14, 2014.
25. Ibid.
26. "Buzek's Opening Statement on Tunisia." European Parliament. January 18, 2011. Accessed June 14, 2014.

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32. Buzek, Jerzy. Presentation at Wider Europe Conference, Brussels, Belgium. February 3, 2011.
33. Cull, Nicholas J. "Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616.31 (2008): 32.
34. "European parliament resolution of 3 February 2011 on the situation in Tunisia." European Parliament. February 3, 2011. Accessed September 14, 2014.
35. Cull, Nicholas J. "Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past." *CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy* 2.1 (2009): 19.
36. To avoid condescending to MENA partners, the term "democracy promotion" was often conversationally substituted with "democracy support."
37. "Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy." European Parliament. Accessed September 14, 2014.
38. De Kayser, Veronique. "Democracy Support: Seizing the moment, shifting the paradigm." *OPPD Newsletter*. (2011): 2.
39. "Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy." European Parliament. Accessed September 14, 2014.
40. European Union and League of Arab States. "Cairo Declaration." November 13, 2012. Accessed September 14, 2014.
41. Upon invitation by the Egyptian government the European Union has sent an elections observation mission to the May 26-28, 2014 presidential elections, composed of 150 members from all 28 member-states, as well as Norway and Switzerland. This mission was led by Mario David, member of the European Parliament and Chair of the Mashreq Delegation.
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43. "Cultural Diplomacy: To sell European culture and values globally." *European Parliament News*. July 12, 2010. Accessed September 14, 2014.
44. "The European Parliament supports human rights." European Parliament Sakharov Prize. Accessed September 14, 2014.
45. "The Arab Spring wins Sakharov Prize 2011." European Parliament News. October 27, 2011. Accessed August 1, 2014.
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51. *Ibid.*

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