

State of Qatar  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Doha, Qatar

Rand Corporation  
Santa Monica  
California

دولة قطر  
وزارة الخارجية  
الدوحة . قطر

“Legitimizing NATO’s Presence in the MENA Region”

Paper Presented by  
Dr. Hassan RAHMOUNI \*  
<http://rahmouni.i8.com>

*At the*

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON

“NATO’s TRANSFORMATION AND GULF SECURITY”

[ Doha, April 19 – 20, 2004 ]

Born in the aftermath of World War II, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has clearly set its objectives from the outset. The April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1949 Washington Treaty, to which 12 initial parties [1] adhered, clearly affirms a desire to live in peace with all peoples and governments. It further stresses a determination to safeguard freedom, common heritage and civilization, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. More countries further joined the “Alliance” [2]. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia are almost certainly going to be next on the list. Many others in the MENA region are hopefully developing various forms of expectancies to adaptable styles of partnerships. Under the pressure of growing terror in popcorn sparkling style forms, dialogue and negotiation with non traditional allies are more pressingly needed as ever before. New Mediterranean and gulf redeployment has therefore become urgently pressing on the NATO agenda. Are the peoples of the region however ready for such a venture?

Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty has been clearly formulated in terms of an open door for adhesion to only “other European State(s) in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area”. Any State in such a position may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instruments of accession with the Government of the United States of America. Despite Russia’s “negative attitude” regarding the eastern European extension of NATO territory, such a growth remains within initially targeted objectives. The fall of the Warsaw Pact has more significantly allowed for such a rapid and wide ranging development. But, will the south bound extension prove to be as evidently feasible?

Many preliminary conditions may hinder at first sight the southern NATO redeployment: geographic, political, cultural and civilizational, as well as alarmingly conjectural, regarding the Iraq and Palestinian issues. Various State leaderships may just not

be able to mobilize for any such purpose the angrily reluctant masses to any US led defensive initiative. In light of the multiple accumulations of frustration experienced in recent decades, directly or through mediatic support, various public spheres in particular and multiple fringes of public opinion in the Arab and Islamic world in general have simply grown to develop hostility to US middle east diplomacy. They simply tend to legitimately consider any such initiatives as merely disguised US supported forms of hostility and aggression towards their non western civilization. Will there be any magic recipe to overcome their reluctance?

Geographically, the concerned territories extend from the Persian (Arabian) Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean. They cover 22 countries, including Iran and Turkey. Standards of democracy are extremely variable in their context: they range from solidly established theocratic systems to relatively secular styles of temporal organization. Eight of these countries are ancestral Monarchies, Emirates or Sultanates [3]. The remaining fourteen have been developing seemingly republican trends. Six of them have stemmed from “coups” that have ousted traditional monarchs [4]. Others have also stemmed from “coups” that had ousted other republican rulers [5]. The few remaining others have directly ventured into republican life in the aftermaths of their independence from colonial occupation, while the State of Palestine is still struggling for its independence and searching for the adequate political patterns that will govern its leading institutions. With the relative exception of Lebanon (based on a multi-confession equilibrium search) and Turkey (for whom Mustapha Kamal had launched, from the outset, the sound basis of a secular State, and despite the recent access of an Islamic party to power), most of the twenty other States are declared Islamic regimes. Various levels of democratic moves have been diversely registered in their recent history. Yet, evident dissatisfaction is still reported about most of their “democratic” styles. The ‘Arab Human Development Report’ [6] has pointed at the multiple causes of democratic negation in the region. With a few scarce exceptions, individual liberties, gender equality and development inducing educational structures have been alarmingly lacking. The annual report of the “Freedom House” for 2001 – 2002 has clearly pointed out the huge deficit prevailing in most of the Muslim countries. According to its norms of democratic appreciation, not a single Arab or Muslim country is among the 36 countries which joined the prestigious club of democracy in the last two decades. How ready will then NATO prove to be willing to accept them in so far as most realities in the area do not comply with the stipulations of Article 2 of the Treaty referring to the “*strengthening of free institutions*” and to the “*principles upon which these institutions are founded*”, i.e. free democratic practices?

Regarding the stipulations of Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, what is basically at stake is “*the territorial integrity, (the) political independence or security*”. This was essentially true for the cold war era. Time has necessarily come to switch from a potential confrontation with the former Warsaw Pact physically located States to a more diffuse and scattered source of threat. The present day 26 NATO partners are actually confronted with new and more challenging realities than those which initially presided to the creation of NATO. Now that European stability has apparently been strengthened and that transatlantic links have been consolidated, time might have come to deter new forms of threat stemming from diverse geographic and socio-ethnic groups. Is Islamist extremism the real and appropriate medium range or long term target? Is the MENA region the most bearing in terms of long term strategic choices? Or isn’t the real and unexpressed target located elsewhere in terms of the demographic, technological and economic potentials that it presently carries?

What is certain, however, is that NATO’s founding principles have proven to be appealing enough that various State leaderships in the area express readiness to spouse

them. How ready are the MENA region countries to meet this newly appealing challenge? **(I)**. Genuine forms of partnership will thus have to be identified to better manage the upcoming challenges of maintaining peace in the region. Pulling their forces together, these new partners of Gulf and Mediterranean peace will necessarily have to adapt to the newly growing challenges of terrorist threat, socio-economic discrepancies and reminiscences of profoundly felt wounds of injustice in Iraq and Palestine **(II)**.

### **I. Adapting MENA realities to the Founding Principles of NATO:**

The establishment of NATO, on the legal and contractual basis of the North Atlantic Treaty of April 1949, initially stressed the importance of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter as a basic framework for the newly born cooperative institution: affirming *“the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a member of the U.N....”*. Article 5 of the Treaty clearly stipulates that *“an armed attack against one or more of them...shall be considered an attack against them all”*. However, the main objective clearly expressed by the same article 5 remains the restoration of international peace and security. Furthermore, the promotion of peace and friendly relations was also set as a main objective which was due to be reached through various means, including the use of military tools.

Ten basic targets stem out clearly from the exegeses of the Organization Treaty finally ratified in August 1949. These are:

- i. The affirmation of faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;
- ii. The declared desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments;
- iii. The will to safeguard freedom along with the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law;
- iv. The call upon peaceful means for the settlement of international disputes;
- v. The self established refrain from the use of force or the threat to use it in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations;
- vi. The development of individual and collective capacity to resist armed attacks;
- vii. The exercise of the right of individual or collective self defence recognized by Article 51 of the U.N. Charter;
- viii. The promotion of conditions of stability and well being;
- ix. The elimination of conflict in international economic policies;
- x. The encouragement of economic collaboration with each other.

Basically, three main sets of objectives are clearly established by these ten orientations: *military, economic and political*.

#### **a. Prospects for Military Cooperation:**

From a strictly military point of view, NATO pressingly needs to consolidate and preserve the positive changes that it fostered over the recent decades. Its enlargement has also constantly been an open and continuing process. Presently, there definitely is not only a need but a strong will and readiness to jointly explore, more than ever before, the potentials of extended security cooperation in order to permanently meet the constantly unpredictable security challenges. Various and geographically disseminated growing threats have proven to be alarmingly efficient whenever cooperation has been lacking. Most recently, the May 16, 2003 Casablanca and the November 2003 Istanbul blasts, the no less deadly explosions that

rocked the Saudi capital on November 8 of the same year, as well as the March 11 Madrid blowing of various railroad vehicles are just apparent signs of a dangerously immersed iceberg. A NATO coordinated effort may well fit within its mission of “development of individual and collective capacity to resist armed attacks” as well as that pertaining to the “exercise of the right of individual or collective self defence”. Beyond the risks represented by the uncontrolled dissemination of weapons of mass destruction, the threat of terrorism is the most likely to turn NATO “from a sumo wrestler to a fencer” [7]. Local military leaderships in the region may as well be resolutely oriented towards fostering some integrated forms of flexible defensive organization strategically monitored by NATO. Indivisibility of security within the contemporary terror challenges impels that no single nation be left counting on its own national effort in combating terrorist risks. A containment need imposes that the risks be dealt with beyond the presently static borders of NATO. Thus, despite reciprocal mistrust inherited from historical legacies and beyond genuine trends to undeclared wills of regional domination, most of the key local actors have nowadays ripened the need to some form of common security system able to deter or contain the menacing risk of the ungraspable terror. Yet, it has been a constant NATO policy that candidate members have to demonstrate ability to contribute militarily to collective defence as well as to peace keeping missions of the Alliance. These commitments need to be met not only on paper but in practice. One might then wonder on how eligible may most of the MENA region countries be for meeting these conditions given the relatively limited military means and budgets as compared with their north Mediterranean counterparts? It is also expected from them that they settle all their ethnic disputes or external territorial conflicts by peaceful means before aspiring to membership. It is evident, here, that the colonial heritage of the territorial “uti possideti juris” principle has profoundly complicated the application of this condition in most of the latent conflicting claims. If the Membership Action Plan (MAP), launched in 1999 was to be applicable to the region, special measures will necessarily have to be deployed by NATO negotiators if they were to overcome the military obstacles to a MENA region form of enlargement.

#### **b. Fostering Economic Forms of Partnership:**

Furthermore, and in relation with economic aspects of the Alliance, various interpretations can be set forth. Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty stipulates that the Parties will “promote conditions of stability and well-being” and “eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them”. It is evident from the outset that NATO is not and neither does it intend to be an organization for economic cooperation. Other institutions already fulfil that task very successfully. Yet, should some adapted forms of economic partnership and/or reciprocal support be identified, the application of this NATO clause to most of the MENA region countries may, just by itself, be the source of saviour, given the numerous socio-economic implications that it may be bearing.

One must bear in mind, however, that ground applications of these economic stipulations have also referred to the economic aspects of the international fight against terrorism in so much as they imply the barring of finance of terrorist activities and the freezing of assets and accounts of terrorist groups. At least, that is what the Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism issued in Prague in 2002 has provided for.

In its 1999 Alliance’s Strategic Concept, it specifically defined its approach to security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It definitely takes account of the global context and commits itself to “a broad approach to security which recognizes the importance of political, economic, social and environmental factors”. Its US leadership is extremely aware of the scarcity of

strategic resources that are still within its grasp. Its economic vulnerability is undoubtedly dictating new forms of long term steadiness and diplomatic openings. Managing change is of utmost importance. Let's just imagine one moment what the situation would be like if OPEC countries suddenly decide to bill the barrel of oil in euro instead of the dollar!

NATO also seeks to contribute to prosperity and progress, through the development of practical cooperative activities, including in civil emergency planning as well as scientific and environmental affairs. Will the Partnership for Peace bear within its capabilities genuine solutions for a MENA region economic cooperation initiative? Some of the risk-bearing regional economic distress that pretty much facilitates the growth of terror homes, along with most of the prevailing poverty conditions in many parts of the region might positively be neutralized through wisely conceived development programs. Triangular style approaches might thus find a fertile field to pull resources from in this arabo-islamic area for which coranic teachings have recommended anyway that: "And in their wealth and possessions (is) the right of the needy and necessitous" وفي أموالهم حق للسائل والمحروم (Sourate Addariate, الذاريات Ayate 18) [8].

### **c. The Quest for Democratic Values:**

From a political standpoint, the free adhesion of each individual Member State was, and has been within NATO practices, due to result from an internal process of public debate and parliamentary adoption. Approval of the concerned peoples was therefore to be guaranteed through the call upon appropriately elected democratic channels. Popular legitimacy would thus reinforce established legalities in the making of such crucial choices. Governing bodies, with various degrees of legitimacies, still called upon classical means of checks and balances to legitimate their NATO involvements. One might therefore wonder about what the realities are like in the MENA region for the full practical satisfaction of such expectancies? Are any of the commonly accepted democratic parameters presently met by any one of the target countries?

Over the years, democracy has grown to mean the government of the people, by the people and for the people. Philosophers from ancient Greece, along with political thinkers from the centuries of European enlightenment have paved the way for modern politicians to define a complete approach for democratic appreciation. Yet, up to recent developments of political thought [9], the apostles of modern democracy haven't been able to add much to what the 'Greek Miracle' set forth more than twenty five centuries ago. Democracy has been praised by some thinkers as a virtual system and criticized by others as the impulsive power of an ignorant multitude. In Greek thought, democracy remains a political phenomenon implying a popular participation to the exercise of power. Quantitative criteria, the will of the people and the enactment process of laws are determining factors in the appreciation of a democratic regime. Mediterranean heritage thus stems as a founding element of some of the "principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law" that the founding fathers of NATO initially sought through their 1949 venture.

For its part, Islam as a political thought is not contradictory with the values cherished by democracy either. The Islamic 'Shoura' ( الشورى ) concept ineluctably finds itself usefully updated in terms of western terminology both to allow for authentic choices of political rulers and to determine crucial policy making. 'Shoura' may be translated literally as 'Consultation'. In some instances, it has been interpreted as conveying the western value lying beneath political participation and its democratic implications. It is mentioned in various 'Sourates' of the Holy Coran as representing a fundamental principle of the organization of the Islamic community [10]. It has been commonly established that the concept

of 'Shoura' was applied to its fullest by the Prophet Sidna Mohamed Ibnu Abdillah both in his public and his private life. He constantly consulted with his 'Sahaba' (Companions). After the 'Hijra' from Mecca to Medine, he continued consulting with the 'Ansar'. He was also fully acted upon by his successors: 'Al Khoulafaa Arrachidoune' (الخلفاء الراشدون), who were the early rulers of Islam. In his comment about the principle of 'Shoura', the Islamic theology thinker Hassan Al Basri implies that "God's order to His prophet to consult with the Muslim community means more of a consultation pattern for them to follow in their own societal behaviour" [11]. At that time, the public conduct was to be determined by mutual consultation between the partners, were it in State affairs, in business or even in domestic matters [12]. Two basic elements are included in the concept of 'Shoura': the right for the 'Umma' to express itself on such important matters as the choice of its leaders and its right to self management in accordance with its will and ultimate interests. Such situations are evidently in perfect line with the expectation of classical type political democracy, as later developed by such classical writings of European political thinkers as Charles de Montesquieu [13] and Alexis de Tocqueville [14]: i.e. separation of powers, systems of checks and balances prevailing in presidential systems of government, as well as reciprocal controls exercised by the three branches of government within parliamentary regimes, including orleanist styles.

What has been ailing in most of modern time Arabo-Islamic contexts is that the development of various types of autocratic dynasties has progressively driven the principle of 'Shoura' into a dwindling speck. New impulses have therefore become badly needed for an institutional renewal of the Middle Eastern and North African political arenas. The democratic values for which NATO intends to build its defensive strategy will probably be alarmingly lacking if the organization were to justify its southern bound redeployment, unless popular legitimacy is finally deemed of less importance than strong ties with power holding political and military leaderships. Yet, the overall image is not that gloomy. Timidly introduced reforms have so far demonstrated evident readiness of some of the Arabo-Islamic environments for new democratic visions. As Secretary of State Colin Powell once put it: "There are rays of hope in the Middle East as well. Countries such as Bahrain, Qatar and Morocco have embarked on bold political reforms" [15]. Yet, a lot remains on the agenda if the concerned countries were ever to meet the new parameters for a democratic culture as defined in Washington by Richard Haass, in his December 2002 presentation to the "Council on Foreign Relations" [16]. Needless to ascertain here that the Islamic faith holds within its principles most of the fetched clues to the contemporary concerns related to the Middle Eastern and North African zone. Since the prevailing societal cement in these lands has constantly resided in the Islamic faith during the last fifteen centuries, there might be no justification to look for solutions elsewhere. Yet the path is sinuous. Popular legitimacy of any action must be assured in all phases of the process. Governing leaderships within the concerned states may remain the main driving forces. Global approaches need to be defined diplomatically in order to pass the message through to reluctant decision makers. Multi-faceted pressuring styles may also be called upon. Educative components may also be incorporated. Progressively, global awareness of rights and responsibilities will nurture accountability. Responsibility will accordingly be assumed and tolerance will increasingly allow for accepting differences. Thus, through an appropriately dosed modern democratic impregnation and a subtly called upon religious renewal, relevant democratic traditions may henceforth become progressively rooted. The MENA region will then have conciliated profitable progress with due respect of traditional values. Along the process, NATO may play a crucial role if that is its strategic policy choice.

## **II. Adapting the Prospected Partnership to the Growing Security Challenges:**

In their April 2004 'Declaration on Terrorism' issued at the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council of Foreign Ministers in Brussels, NATO officials "*look forward to the Summit in Istanbul as an opportunity for the Alliance to renew its commitment at the highest level to the fight against terrorism*". They thus make of this issue a key challenge on the agenda of the contemporary growing international coalition against terrorism. Yet, through its Mediterranean Dialogue, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is calling upon Middle East partners whose population is still bewildered by the perceived injustices in US handlings of the Iraq imbroglio and the Palestinian issue.

### **a. Tackling the Terrorist Threat:**

Referring to terrorism, and to the acute threat that it represents not only to innocent people but also to the political stability of numerous societies as well as to universal human values, NATO has taken firm positions to counter its deployment and to better assist national authorities in combating it. For this purpose, the Mediterranean Dialogue process has offered a unique stabilizing opportunity. Yet, competent security services still have a lot to accomplish if they were to ever eradicate this scourge. Meanwhile, the June Istanbul Summit will have to further capitalize on the measures set out at the November 2002 Prague meeting, by adopting the recommended measures by its Council of Foreign Ministers, which imply:

- i. An improved intelligence sharing between Allies;
- ii. An enhanced response to national requests for NATO support;
- iii. A further development of 'Operation Active Endeavour' to the fight against terrorism;
- iv. A support to determination of the Allies to the threat posed by terrorist use of civil aircrafts;
- v. The enhancement of cooperation with NATO Partners and with the 'Mediterranean Dialogue' countries through the implementation of the 'Partnership Action Plan' against Terrorism;
- vi. And, more globally, an enhancement of capabilities to defend against terrorist attacks.

All these measures are built on the urgent need of closer cooperation between allied or partner States. The final objective is the prevention and suppression of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations through the strengthening of the global response to this menacing phenomenon. It happens though, that in most of its recent manifestations, terrorism has been identified as stemming from Islamic environments. No matter how innocent may Islam, as a faith and as a civilization, be from such barbarian practices, it can be noted, however, that the decades long accumulation of frustrations of various Arabo-Islamic communities has certainly contributed to the outspread of this phenomenon.

### **b. Solving the Iraq Imbroglio:**

One contemporary manifestation of this frustration phenomenon happens to be the recent Iraq invasion by foreign troops. No matter what the initial motivations were and how justified they may have been, the invasion constitutes nevertheless a breach to the sovereignty of an independent nation, a manifest violation of international law and a characterized aggression. To many Arab and Muslim observers, this is just a typical manifestation of United States almighty power within its present days unipolar hegemony. In most public and private spheres, including in cafe discussions and salon debates, ordinary

citizens fustigate the unjust bellicose attitude of US led forces against ‘Sunni’ and ‘shiite’ Moslems in Iraq. Numerous are those who, all over the Arab world, bitterly lump the burden of their passive frustration. Even those Iraqi people, who finally breathed a sigh of relief after the toppling of Saddam Hussein, are reluctantly observing the multiple breaches to their inner will, while others have resorted to armed resistance and declared revolt.

Among the reasons of initial discontent is the US violation of inner attributes of the sovereignty of that nation. U.S. strategists seem to have voluntarily diminished its value and impact. Yet, the attachment to sovereignty remains a deeply anchored and a major factor in policy determination. Millenniums and centuries of difficultly equated equilibriums cannot just be swamped overnight. Continuous trends of theoretical outputs along with arduously hammered rules of international law can just not be so suddenly overruled. In Iraq, the U.S mighty superpower happens to be the main protagonist of such a dangerous contemporary evolution. Such a risky evolution may, in the long run, prove to be extremely detrimental to the regional security and to the world stability which has progressively been built on mutual respect between all sovereign States. Aren’t security and stability some of the main objectives of the NATO Alliance?

In international law, sovereignty stands for meaning that a given state has no other superior State to its power; all relations between States are to be based on equality, mutual respect and non-interference. Within its territorial borders, the State exercises freely its own sovereign power, without any outside control whatsoever by other States. International legality sets forth commonly acceptable principles. These are built on the sovereign equality of all States. All existing States have therefore equal rights and obligations as full members of the international community. Each sovereign State thus enjoys its full capacity, as an international actor; that implies that he has the right to a “*jus tractatum*” [implying the right to conclude treaties], a “*jus legationis*” [implying the right to accredit and receive diplomats], a “*jus belli*” [implying the right to declare war] as well as the right to refer to international justice for the settlement of disputes. It is however worth mentioning that the “*jus belli*” has been made obsolete by the 1928 Briand-Kellog Pact [17] which prohibits the use of force as a means of achieving objectives of national policy. Furthermore, the U.N. Charter, signed in San Francisco on June 26, 1945, has made offensive wars illegal [18]. Unilateral recourse to force has then been banned in international relations. No stipulation in the U.N. Charter authorizes one State to unilaterally put an other State ‘in the right path’ by the use of force. Let’s not forget here the situation once faced by the U.S. in the 1986 Nicaragua case, in which the International Court of Justice had ruled that “*the principle of non-intervention forbids all states and all groups of states to intervene directly or indirectly in domestic or international matters of an other state...That stands also for the choice of the political, economic, social and cultural system as well as the formulation of the foreign policy*” [19]. No moral or political legitimacy of foreign policy objectives can therefore find any legal justification in any existing legal international instruments. Legally speaking, the invasion of Iraqi territory by coalition forces has been contrary to international rules and accepted values. It is in evident contradiction with the stipulations of Article 2, §4 of the U.N. Charter which forbids to all member States to “*resort to the menace or to the use of force, either against the territorial integrity or the political independence of any state*”. It is therefore a clear act of aggression no matter how justified its motives may prove to be. In other contexts and under other circumstances, it would have represented an evident mobile for international sanctions against its authors. Are we then witnessing the emergence of new values in international law? Are we on the eve of a new era of conflict solving? Has the force of law lost ground for the benefit of the law of force?



It may be difficult for those who are suffering from it to simply welcome with open arms those whom they think are causing it. Governing leaderships might give in for evidently strategic considerations. But, will popular legitimacy follow? Given the tragic realities, this might just not be as evident.

### **c. Settling the Palestinian Issue:**

As of the Palestinian Issue, most popular fringes consider it as the injustice of the century and as the complex drama that British colonialism handed over as a distracting factor to Arab development. Since the fulfilment of the Balfour promise of establishing a Jewish home State in Palestinian land, a continuous belligerent status in the area has increasingly diminished any prospects of peace. In Gaza and the West Bank, Palestinian residents are permanently lumping all kinds of humiliations. Violence has been subsequent to violence. For many local observers, State terrorism has generated an even worse style of terror dissemination among innocent civilian victims. What once was a “Political Oslo Round” has progressively decayed into a new “Humanitarian Oslo Round”, mostly concerned with collecting help for what is unashamedly presented to donors as needy Palestinians. Even the relatively satisfactory Mitchell Plan and the no less satisfactory Road map seem so far behind after all the growing escalations of tension in the region. In this context of grief and anger, chances for mutual trust appear to be really slim.

Yet, as contradictory as this may appear to be, profound popular hope within many fringes of Arab population is placed upon one last recourse that can still be called upon to bring about peace to the region, and therefore launch an era where terror will be difficultly justifiable. Not so much that all parties do trust that hope bearing country. The Arabs have numerous good reasons to defy its objective handling of the conflict. Yet, the US remains, and behind it all of the NATO structure, the only force capable of imposing its vision of a just and equitable peace. Its image in the Arab and Islamic world is already harmed sensibly enough that the growing feeling of injustice has alarmingly turned into various means of harmful sources of hatred. America and its allies are paying an expensive tribute to a long standing unilaterally unconditional support of Israel. Is it just worth it? Can't peace be given a chance? In his recent Texas Prairie Chapel Ranch remarks to the media [20], President George W. Bush underlined that he believes that « *it's in the Palestinians' interest to have their own state, and I believe it's in Israel's interest that the Palestinians develop a peaceful state* » before further asserting that « *The people of the greater Middle East have a right to be safe, secure, prosperous and free* ». The ball is in his camp. He has all the latitude to hammer a honorable way out for all parties, unless he prefers to offer the chance of doing so to John Kerry.

On a larger cooperative scale, by overcoming its present Mediterranean and Gulf challenges, NATO may have then accomplished a giant leap forward and resolutely cleared the way for the launching of its real containment campaign of demographic, technological and economically growing Asia and, within it, most particularly, China and India. Beyond the conjectural terrorist threats, that is where the great challenges of the future really reside.

*Dr. Hassan RAHMOUNI  
Casablanca, April 2004.*

---

[1] – These were: USA, Canada, Belgium, France, Luxemburg, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway & Portugal.

- [2] – These were respectively: Greece & Turkey (1952), West Germany (1955), Spain (1982), Hungary, Poland & the Czech Republic (1999) and, more recently, in 2004, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania & Slovenia.
- [3] – These are: Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.
- [4] – That was the case of Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya and Iran.
- [5] – Algeria, Mauritania, Sudan and Tunisia.
- [6] – “Arab Human Development Report 2002: Creating Opportunities for Future Generations”, Sponsored by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, 2002.
- [7] – The expression is that of Lord Robertson, in “Change and Continuity”, NATO Review, Winter 2003.
- [8] – Sourate ‘Addariate’, Verses 15 to 19: “As the Righteous, they will be in the midst of Gardens and Springs, Taking joy in the things which their Lord gives them, because, before then, they spent generously... And in their wealth and possessions (is) the right of the needy and necessitous”
- [9] – Ref. Our papers presented at the UCLA Conference Series on Mideast Regional Security in Istanbul (2001), London (2002), Bruges (2002) and Athens (2003), in <http://rahmouni.i8.com>, click on “publications”.
- [10] – In the verse # 159 of Sourate ‘Ale Imrane’ آل عمران , it is clearly instructed to the Prophet that he should consult his community in affairs: “It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee. So, pass over their faults and ask for Allah’s forgiveness for them. And consult them in affairs. Then, when thou hast taken a decision, put thy trust in Allah. For Allah loves who put their trust in Him”. قَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لَنْتَ لَهُمْ وَ لَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ . فَأَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ  
This notion is also encountered in the verse # 38 of Sourate ‘Shoura’ (الشورى), which refers to the ideal community which conducts its affairs by mutual consultation: “Those who respond to their Lord and establish regular prayer, who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation, who spend out of what We bestow on them for sustenance” [ وَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ]. Translation drawn from ‘Mushaf Al Madina Annabawiyah: The Holy Coran, Meaning and Commentary’, revised and edited by the General Presidency of Islamic Research, Iota, Call and Guidance, King Fahd Printing Complex, Al Madinah Al-Munawarh, 1990.
- [11] – Mohammed Redha, “Muhammad Rassoulou Allah” (In Arabic), Dar Al Kitab, Beyrouth, 1945.
- [12] – Sourate ‘Al Bakara’, البقرة verse # 233: “If they both decide on weaning by mutual consent and after consultation, there is no blame on them”, [ فَإِن أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَ تَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا ].
- [13] – Charles De Montesquieu, “L’Esprit des Lois” (1748).
- [14] – Alexis De Tocqueville, « Democracy in America », Vol. I, 1835 & Vol. II, 1840.
- [15] – Collin Powell, « The Middle East Partnership Initiative », Presentation to the Heritage Foundation, Washington, D.C., December 12, 2002.
- [16] – Richard Haass, “Reinforcing Democracy in the Islamic World”, Presentation to the Council on Foreign Relations, Washington, D.C., December 4, 2002.
- [17] - Named after its two promoters (the French statesman Aristide BRIAND and the U.S. senator Frank B. KELLOG) whose joint initiative led to the signature in Paris, on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1928, of an international agreement by which 15 countries (among whom were the U.S., Great Britain and France) agreed to eliminate war as an instrument of national politics and to foster the pacific solution of conflicts. 57 countries were to later become Parties to this Pact.
- [18] – Cf. particularly articles 39 to 51 in chapter 7, related to the actions with respect to the threats to peace, breaches of peace and acts of aggression.
- [19] – Recueil des Arrêts de la Cour Internationale de Justice (International Court of Justice), 1986, p. 108, § 257.
- [20] – Joint Press Briefing held in Texas Prairie Chapel Ranch by Presidents George W. Bush and Hosni Mubarak on April 12, 2004.