4. Aspects of the socio-economic situation

4.1. Communication

The minority relations' adviser on the Moroccan minority in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea concludes in an internal report dated 17 February 1994 that one of the major obstacles to socio-economic development of the Moroccan minority is communication, as the vast majority among the first generation immigrants in particular have very poor or no command of the English language. This has a negative effect on their access to services and jobs. The author of the report, Rumman (1994:5), remarks that:

> *Another factor common to many responses concerned the issue of language difficulties experienced by clients and staff, compounded by the inability of many organisations to employ a translator or interpreter because of financial constraints. This was perceived as inevitably affecting the quantity and quality of service offered and received by Moroccan clients.*

The report draws a very interesting picture, which must be seen as an example of the problems faced by the Moroccan minority not only in the area which the report concerns itself with, but also a reflection on the plight of the Moroccan minority all over Britain. Many local authorities and agencies claim that they do provide services for the Moroccan minority, and yet they fail to provide what could arguably be considered as the most important service, i.e., translation and interpreting. Lack or inadequacy of this particular service deepens the isolation and marginalisation of the Moroccan minority. The integration of the 1998 European Human Rights Act within the British law with effect from October 2000 makes it an obligation for public services providers to provide unfettered access to public services. This also means interpreting services in their native or preferred language for members of minority groups who have little or no command of English. However, from personal experience and during my field study between October 2000 and June 2001, I have noticed that many authorities and agencies are still failing the minority groups in this

duty. This is made worse by the fact that many members of the Moroccan minority are ignorant of their basic rights such as the right to an interpreter. If the parents have inadequate access to services, this has a domino effect not only on them but also on their children and the quality of services they receive. More often than not this means a continuous cycle of social exclusion from one generation to another. Skali (1998:13) notes that:

> *All statutory and voluntary agencies agreed that language is the main barrier to education and training areas and stressed that something should be done to help alleviate this barrier which has an impact on communication between home and school, and between schools and their pupils.*

4.2. Education

Often the tragic consequence of the predicament of inadequate or total lack of communication is that:

> *A large number of Moroccan pupils leave school with no qualifications at all, some are not able to sit GCSE exams although they have been born or brought up in the UK. (Skali, 1998:13)*

Moreover, the level of illiteracy of the parents who are in their vast majority uneducated first generation immigrants compounds the problem, and even for those with some level of education since theirs is not compatible with the British one. This fact has a negative impact on the education of their children. The parents find themselves unable to help with the homework, others feel intimidated by the experience and simply become disinterested in the process of education. This may explain the findings of a report by Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre (1999:12) in London which states that:

> *Moroccan students are much less literate in Arabic compared to other Arab students – only 16% claim that their written and oral skills are both very good, as compared to 30% of other Arabs. Overall, 44% of Moroccan students claim*

Arabic literacy (6+ on the combined scale) compared with 64% of other Arab students.

Another parameter for measuring under-achievement in education is the level of exclusion from school. This may partly be due to alienation, i.e. children not feeling part of the school minority and not obeying the rules either because they do not fully appreciate their meaning or because they do not agree with their underlying social norms and values. In this respect, the report by Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre (1999:13) gives the following figures,

Table 2: School exclusion of Moroccans

School	Moroccans % Excluded	Other Arabs % Excluded
School 1	23	13
School 2	20	21
School 3	0	31
School 4	20	4

The report is a comparison of achievement between the Moroccan students and the rest of the Arab minority. Even so, the figures must cause concern as they are very high. Exclusion from schools has a negative impact on the process of social integration. The report goes on to remark that:

> *... while one in five (approximately 20%) of the children in our survey reported being excluded from school at one time or another, the rate of exclusions among all secondary children, admittedly in Kensington & Chelsea alone is 2.2%. Thus, this would seem to be a major issue concerning Arabic-speaking children in the local area (Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre, 1999:13).*

No matter how bleak the picture for the Moroccan minority may appear to be with respect to education, there are a number of Moroccan students who against all odds have managed to secure a bright future. Sadly, these members of the minority represent the exception rather than the norm. In

knowledge based economy such as the British one, prosperity and social integration and advancement starts with education.

4.3. Employment

The ever rapidly changing labour market leaves immigrant minorities vulnerable to these changes. The very fact that most members of the Moroccan minority are unskilled with little or no education compounds this vulnerability.

The early waves of Moroccan immigrants came over to Britain on work permits to already allocated low-paid unskilled jobs in hotels, catering and hospitals. The financial needs of this workforce were so high that many of the immigrants took up more than one job. Many were hoping to make as much money as possible in the shortest period of time possible to allow themselves a comfortable life in their homeland. For most of them this proved to be an illusion as they were entrapped in a cycle of poor existence compounded by the misfortunes of the Moroccan economy starting from mid-seventies. Many felt that they now had little reason to return to their homeland. Another very important factor in swaying the balance towards such decision was family reunification in Britain and the education of the children who would feel uprooted if returned to what is for them a strange country and culture regardless of their ethnic and cultural origins.

The initial eagerness to save money in order to eventually rebuild their lives in Morocco led many Moroccan immigrants to work long and unsociable hours in what may be qualified as an extreme manner hoping to make good money for the return journey. This employment approach has led many of them to a state of total burnout. In this respect, Pamplin (1993:29) remarks that:

> *Moroccan migrants, along with other ethnic minority groups were not averse to working long and unsociable hours for very little pay. Due to their flexibility and the relative demand for labour, jobs were very easily obtained. Many, however, have suffered for their eagerness to work excessively, even*

when physically unfit and these Moroccans in the 40 to 50 age group are now unable to work at all due to their poor health.

The professional prospects for most of these Moroccans are uninviting, and it is almost impossible for them to branch out to private enterprise. The issues of compatible education, skills and training come back, time and again, to haunt the Moroccan minority, as Skali (1998:14) points out:

> *This lack of command of English language and lack of confidence make business opportunities very remote from the Moroccan minority as without them there will be problems with drawing business plans, financial plans and planning permissions which are the basis for any business adventure. Not being able to do all that, the Moroccan minority is marginalized and have no success in business setting like other Moroccan communities living in other parts of the European Union.*

With every economic downturn, the first to suffer are the immigrant minority groups. This is owing to their particularities and their inability to access retraining to keep up with the ever-changing work conditions and practices. They are locked into jobs which are usually the first to go during an economic downturn.

There are no precise statistical figures concerning unemployment within the Moroccan minority; however, the nearest picture to a clearer impression can be deduced from the general figures of unemployment in the areas where the Moroccan minority constitute a majority. In a survey by the polling organisation MORI (1999:15) the levels of unemployment in the wards (districts) where the Moroccan minority constitute a majority are as follows:

Table 3: Unemployment rates – trends

Ward (District)	July 1998	December 1998
Golborne	15.4	13.5
Colville	11.8	10
St Charles	14.5	12.4
Great Britain	---	4.4

One can only deduce that the Moroccan minority suffers from high rates of unemployment: 13.5% in Dec 1998 in the Golborne ward compared with the national rate at the time of only 4.4%. Another observation is that there is a decline in the level of unemployment in general as a reflection of good fortunes of the British economy and its emergence from the eighties and early nineties recession. Its positive outcome filters down to benefit the minority groups including the Moroccans, but it does little to bridge the gap between the minority groups and the rest of the general population.

The issue of pay is intrinsically linked to the type and quality of employment. The jobs which the Moroccan minority occupy are unskilled and very low paid. The survey by the polling organisation MORI (1999:17) stated :-

At £289 the average weekly earnings of Golborne residents in employment are lower than residents within other wards in the Borough and in the Borough as a whole, although Kensington & Chelsea shows higher earnings than Britain.

Table 4: Average weekly earnings of employees 1996

Golborne	£288.50
Colville	£359.80
St Charles	£317.00
RBKC	£401.20
Greater London	£480.10
GB	£367.60

Source: Figures from RBKC using1991 Census and 1996 New Earnings Survey

As mentioned earlier, the Moroccan minority constitutes the majority of the population of Golborne, Colville and St Charles. The weekly incomes of these wards (districts) are among the lowest in Britain. In addition to this, the Moroccan family is traditionally a large one; therefore, such weekly pay does not go far. It only serves for a basic existence made difficult by the fact that many Moroccans are also sometimes the only breadwinners of their families back home in Morocco towards whom they feel they have the moral duty to support them especially financially. This is often at the expense of their own families' well being in Britain.

4.4. Housing

The housing patterns of the Moroccan minority are typical of many immigrant minority groups living in Britain. Usually men immigrated first as singles or if they were married, the family stayed behind in Morocco until the head of the family was able to secure some form of accommodation for the family. This often meant that the male immigrant had to find the cheapest accommodation possible, usually a room in shared accommodation in a deprived area. The rationale behind this thinking is that he has to save enough money to clear his debt as a result of buying the work permit and the airticket which allowed him to come to Britain in the first place. Then he has to save enough to bring over his bride or young family. This process usually takes two years and requires the immigrant to take up two or more jobs to be able to execute his plans. Indeed, in my field study involving 219 respondents mentioned earlier, the percentage of male Moroccan immigrants arriving in Britain jumped from 7.3% in 1963 to 14.6% in 1969, while that of female Moroccan immigrants went up from 7.3% in 1965 to 21.9% in 1971 – two years respectively after the men immigrated. However, many were unable to provide proper accommodation for their families and were forced to live in slum-like conditions, often in one bedroom for the whole family. Some had to endure these conditions until the late seventies before their situation was addressed by the local housing authority (Pamplin, 1993:18-19). While the situation of the majority of the members of the Moroccan minority with respect to housing is now better than in the Sixties and Seventies, it is by no

means up to satisfactory standards of living in Britain. Over-crowding due to large families or allocated small accommodations compounded by lack of maintenance and security makes the living conditions of the Moroccan minority in general rather poor. The minority has little voice to complain to try to remedy the situation because of the communication difficulties (Jamai, 2008), which in turn are made worse by a maze of bureaucracy to which they are total strangers. The survey by the polling organisation MORI (1999:10) points out that:

> *Patterns of housing in Golborne are indicative of its deprived and socially excluded nature. Levels of social housing are high, most properties tend to be purpose-built flats and poor housing conditions and overcrowding are relatively common problems.... Three-quarters of households in Golborne live in social housing, including half who live in council rented accommodation and 27% who rent from a Housing Association. A further 12% live in private rented housing. Owner-occupiers form another 12% of households.*

The housing conditions of the Moroccan minority based on the housing patterns in Golborne ward (district), where most of them live, are another indication of their socio-economic exclusion as the survey by the polling organisation MORI (1999:10) seems to indicate. With increasing demands on social housing and lack of convenient job opportunities and retraining for members of the Moroccan minority, this problem of housing will persist because most will never be able to afford their way out of this housing problem as long as these problems continue to exist.

4.5 .Health

It is difficult to talk about health conditions of the Moroccan minority. This is due to the complexities of socio-economic factors such as diet, employment, housing, education and communication. The following discussion looks at the health patterns mostly in the Golborne ward (district) where the Moroccan minority form the majority of the population; and it is based on the survey by the polling organisation MORI (1999:42-60).

As they suggest, one of the benchmarks by which to measure the health condition of a minority is Standardised Mortality Ratios (SMR). With respect to Golborne, MORI (1999:45) argues that:

> *Golborne's SMR is considerably higher than the national average, at 153.6. Indeed, the gap between the ward and the national average widened between 1981 and 1991, indicating that Golborne has not kept up with improvements in health and mortality rates seen at a national level. The 20 percentage point increase in SMR for Golborne is also higher than the 10 point increase experienced by the most deprived fifth of wards within Greater London.*

High levels of SMR within a minority usually are an indication of unacceptable levels of social deprivation. This would qualify Golborne as one of the most deprived areas in Britain. In fact, MORI (1999:45) argues that:

> *While some of the wards ... have improved their position between 1981 and 1991, SMR scores in Golborne have increased, placing it second amongst the top ten most deprived in 1991.*

It seems that the Moroccan minority has been left behind in the process of social improvement and integration. In addition to health issues they have to deal with, crime is another major headache the Moroccan minority has to live with.

4.6. Crime

The wards (districts) where the Moroccan minority form a majority, especially in Golborne, are considered as black-spots of crime, riddled by drugs, burglary, prostitution and anti-social behaviour. MORI (1999:64) reports that:

> *Key issues in the area include crack cocaine, prostitution, associated harassment and distress to local residents, harassment by local youths (abuse and vandalism), and petty crime (particularly in the Portobello Road market).*

Such picture of crime is symptomatic of deprived areas and socially excluded and marginalized communities. The Moroccan minority is not immune from the effects of crime.

Conclusion

The Moroccan ethnic minority is a newly established minority in Britain. It started immigrating to Britain as early as the 1950's, and ever since has grown in strength, although its strength in numbers is debatable. Most members of the Moroccan minority in Britain settled in some of the poorest wards (districts) in Britain, particularly in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea in London. The area and the minority are burdened by almost every symptom of socioeconomic deprivation and exclusion. Many issues that the Moroccan minority faces could easily be resolved if only a viable system of communication (mostly linguistic ability which means mastering English language) could be established. The social cost in human suffering and financial losses to all parties concerned is far too great to measure. A reliable and integrated system of communication would cost a fraction and it would have an ever-lasting positive impact not only on the Moroccan minority, but also on society at large. This step should be seen as a preventive measure. Socio-economic integration, therefore, begins with, among other elements, communication.

The impression is that more often than not the problem for immigrant minority groups including Moroccans is access to services due to lack of communication, not their inexistence. For politico-financial considerations, some authorities tend to cut services to minority groups on the grounds that these services are underused. The truth of the matter is that these services cannot be accessed, as they ought to be because of the inexistence of a reliable communication system. Most, but certainly not all, problems from which the Moroccan minority suffers can be attributed to the communication issue; in addition to the cultural and religious attitudinal factors that contribute to the isolation of the minority.

The relevance of this paper is to demonstrate that social exclusion can be better understood if we appreciate the linguistic as well as cultural

behaviours of the Moroccan minority with a view to devise a better communication as well as an adequate education strategy to help in the integration of the minority in larger society.

The issue of the Moroccan minority's inability to establish proper communication to access services which results in social exclusion brings us to another viewpoint, i.e., language use and maintenance within the Moroccan minority (Jamai, 2008). Many studies such as Wei (1982) tend to suggest that low economic status immigrant communities tend to shift towards the language of the majority as a way to compensate for its low social status. Appel and Muysken (1987:33) claim that economic status is a "prominent factor in nearly all studies on language maintenance and shift".

The British government through its Social Exclusion Unit, Cabinet office, defines social inclusion as complex and interrelated factors that come about in collusion to force social exclusion. The British government says that:

> *Social exclusion is a short hand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low income, poor housing, high crime environment, bad health and family breakdown (Social Exclusion Unit, Cabinet office, quoted in Skali, 1998:1).*

Generally speaking, the socio-economic parameters have a very important impact on language use and maintenance of any given minority. With respect to the Moroccan minority in Britain, understanding its socio-economic parameters goes a long way in helping to understand its language use and maintenance.

The other point about the relevance of this work concerns the Moroccan minority itself, which this study has aimed to introduce to the reader. To the best of my knowledge, no in-depth study as this one has been produced concerning the Moroccan minority in Britain (Jamai, 2008). This gives this research an added relevance, as the literature on the Moroccan minority in

Britain is extremely rare. There are very few internal reports and studies most of which are for local as well as national governmental (usually internal) use, which are very hard to come by. This paper does not pretend to answer all questions with respect to introducing the Moroccan minority to the readers, but hopefully it may be seen as a step in the right direction.

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The political problems of the Mediterranean region have already spilled over into the Barcelona process. In May 1996 Greece threatened to obstruct the aid package for the Mediterranean countries as part of its territorial dispute with Turkey. Greece finally accepted that the aid programme could go ahead, but indicated that it would still veto aid for Turkey.

Despite the ringing declarations by the Spanish prime minister and French foreign minster at the Barcelona Conference that a new era in history was dawning, the non-Mediterranean EU members such as Germany and the UK remain unconvinced of the importance of Mediterranean cooperation. Such optimistic pronouncements are reminiscent of those at the signing of Lomé I in 1975 that a new partnership between Europe and Africa was taking shape. More than twenty years later, Europe's attention has turned away from Lomé and towards the Mediterranean (see Chapter 4). Whether Europe now has the political determination and the economic generosity to support the Mediterranean region during its long transition period to peace and prosperity remains to be seen.

MOROCCO AND THE EU

As early as 1984 Morocco took a radical approach to its relations with the Community. It decided that cooperation and trade agreements were not enough. As more Mediterranean countries such as Greece, Spain and Portugal gained entry to the Community, their products and their nationals received better treatment than those of outside countries.

The Moroccan minister concerned with the first entry application, Azeddin Ghessous, was particularly concerned over the reduction of Community import quotas for citrus fruit and other products, as well as the second-class staus of more than a million Moroccans resident in the Community. He argued:

> How can Europe not include Morocco? Spain is only fourteen kilometres away. The southern standard of living in the Mediterranean cannot suffer because of the north. In classical terms this is a setting for war. How can you make one of the great corridors of commerce of history into a barrier, a fortification? This could result in conflict.[36]

In 1987 King Hassan II wrote to the Danish president of the Community Council of Ministers, formally applying to join the European Community. The reaction, as with the earlier approach, was cold, even colder than the reception of Turkey's application. In 1984 Brussels treated the application as a joke, much to the mortification of the Moroccans. David Buchan's description of the reception of the 1987 approach was that 'no one in Brussels knew whether to laugh or cry'.[37] While this is no doubt an accurate account of the reaction, it shows a poor quality of decision-making in the Community. Instead of laughing or crying—symptoms of bad decision-making, or groupthink—the Community would have done better to consider the costs and benefits of the application more open-mindedly.

Despite the Community's initial reserve, Morocco's approaches to Europe have borne some fruit. In February 1992 Morocco began a new dialogue with the Community, and Tunisia followed suit with discussions on a *partenariat euro-maghrebin* in May. By November 1992 France announced a new partnership with Morocco. Morocco held relatively fair elections in 1993, and Commission President Delors visited the country in the same year, demonstrating an improved relationship. By December 1993 the European Council of Ministers announced a 'political gesture' from the Community towards Morocco. Morocco would engage in an institutional dialogue at the ministerial, senior official, and parliamentary levels as well as in contacts with the Economic and Social Committee of the EU. Based on 'reciprocity and common interests' the plan is to create a new agreement including the eventual removal of all customs duties from Community industrial products imported into Morocco. Morocco would retain the right to protect sensitive sectors or infant industries and would be allowed to export greater quantities (3 per cent a year for five years) of its quota-limited products to the Community. The possiblity of reciprocal free trade in agriculture for a five-year period is also under consideration. Financial help for Morocco involving EU aid, aid from EU member states and private investment is also being negotiated. This is not yet a Euro-Maghreb partnership, but at least it may be a start to greater cooperation.

THE UNION OF THE ARAB MAGHREB

The idea of a *grand maghreb* dates back to the lost unity of the medieval North African Almohad dynasty. Twentieth-century

independence movements also received inspiration from this past unity. The continuing vitality of the *grand maghreb* idea was demonstrated in 1958 when the principal North African liberation movements met in Tangier to affirm their commitment to a common future and to the cause of Algeria's liberation.

Further efforts to put flesh on the ideal of Maghreb in unity were made through the Permanent Consultative Committee of the Maghreb from 1964 until 1975 when the parties' conflicting views over the Western Sahara ended these meetings.[38] Yves Boyer attributed the foundation of the Union of the Arab Maghreb (UMA) to a process initiated by France in 1983, in keeping with its quasi-hegemonic role mentioned earlier.[39] It was a combination of the historical ties among the Arabs and their political aspirations, the diplomacy of France, and the geopolitical challenge of creating a union with the ability to match the Europeans' integration (a challenge also perceived by other regions) which led to the formation of the UMA.

In 1988 the first pan-Maghreb summit since independence which united Morocco, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Mauritania took place in Algiers. The result of the summit was that a Maghreb High Commission was established. Following a series of meetings of its sub-committees, the High Commission drew up a Treaty of Union in 1989. Wounds over Western Sahara were smoothed over as King Hassan II received a delegation from Polisario, an organization seeking the independence of the Western Sahara (now controlled by Morocco), in early 1989 and the President of Algeria officially visited Morocco.

In February 1989 the five presidents signed the Treaty of the Union of the Arab Maghreb which seemed to signal a real desire to cooperate and an historic turning point.[40] However, the new UMA ran into problems almost immediately. At the Algiers summit of 1990 a seat for the secretariat could not be agreed. The Gulf crisis saw the five countries adopt radically different positions at the Cairo summit, ranging from opposing a resolution condemning Iraq (Libya) to supporting the resolution and sending troops to Saudi Arabia (Morocco).

Despite the internal problems of the UMA, it briefly participated in a wider dialogue with Europe. The '4+5' dialogue included France, Italy, Spain and Portugal plus the five UMA members. In 1991 Malta also joined the European side, making a dialogue of 5+5. The group held two summits in Rome in 1990, and one in

Algiers in 1991. Discussions covered cooperation, the development of regional financial organizations, self-sufficiency in food, anti-desertification measures, migration, cultural dialogue, transport and communication, technology and the environment. But after 1991 the pace of cooperation slowed as political problems over Libya's involvement in the Lockerbie bombing and Algeria's struggle with religious fundamentalism impeded progress.

Up to the present the contacts between the EU countries and the Maghreb (15+5) have been limited. Several reasons can be found for this. One is the northern Europeans' general lack of interest in the Maghreb. Another is their neglect of the UMA or lack of faith in its future. There is also the apparent desire of France to keep the politics of North Africa as a *domaine reserve* to itself.

The objectives and prospects of the UMA

The treaty which united Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia in the Union of the Arab Maghreb had extensive and ambitious objectives. These included:

- to achieve economic integration;
- to remove trade barriers;
- to create a regional common market by the year 2000;
- to achieve better relations with Europe;
- to diffuse regional tension;
- to set up transport links and common institutions such as a joint consultative parliament, an investment bank and an airline.

Morocco's King Hassan II stated that the ultimate objective 'is to turn the Arab Maghreb into one country, with one passport, one identity, and a single currency'.[41]

Many objections can be raised as to the viability of the UMA enterprise. The UMA has been criticized for including too many countries, notably Mauritania. But most of the UMA's political problems have originated in other, more radical members. Mauritania's involvement with Morocco in the Western Sahara issue makes it a desirable participant in any pan-Maghreb organization.

It has also been observed that the Maghreb is not a viable economic unit. Although the five countries have a substantial population of 60 millions, 3.5 per cent of the world's oil, 3.8 per cent of its natural gas, and 75 per cent of its phosphates, their

economies are weak. Most of the North Africans' products are competitive rather than complementary and intra-UMA trade comprises only about 3 per cent of the members' foreign trade. Trade with Community is around 70 per cent of the external trade of the UMA, making cooperation with the EU arguably a more important objective than regional integration. By contrast, when the Community was founded in the late 1950s its internal trade accounted for around 40 per cent of its total foreign trade. Moreover, the members' relative wealth is very different, ranging from Libya's per caput GNP of $US5,310 to Mauritania's of just $US500.[42]

Although the UMA might not immediately seem to have the potential for prosperous unification which had been present in the Community, nevertheless greater integration could produce significant benefits. Increasing trade, political cooperation and stability are attractive in a region where fundamentalist religious challenge is strong, and even wars such as the short Moroccan-Algerian war of 1963 are possible. For EU companies anxious to avail themselves of North African labour costs which are a quarter of those in the EU, the UMA is also a bonus. Reducing tariffs between the Maghreb countries would boost their trade.

Since the 1980s the Maghreb countries have pursued more similar, liberal economic policies, following the early example of Tunisia. From the mid-1980s they have adjusted with the IMF and liberalized their trade under GATT. For Tunisia and Morocco their record of economic growth has been positive: for Tunisia economic growth in 1992 was 8.6 per cent while for Morocco it was a lower but respectable 2.3 per cent, outstripping both Germany and Japan. During 1980–92 Tunisian trade grew at an annual rate of 5 per cent and Moroccan trade by 4 per cent. The picture was less favourable for oil-exporters Algeria and Libya whose trade fell by 2 per cent and 6 per cent respectively over the same period. Mauritania, a least developed country, lost 2 per cent of its merchandise trade over the decade 1980–90 (GATT figures).

Up to the present the UMA has little to show for itself. Richard Pomfret argued that the UMA was almost entirely symbolic.[43] What could be debated is whether it is symbolic of the Maghreb countries' positive desire to cooperate or of their failure to do so. The economic benefits that were foreseen have not materialized and its political problems have so far kept the UMA from making

much progress. In early February 1993 President Ben Ali of Tunisia proposed a relaunching of the UMA. However, by the end of the month differences between Morocco and Algeria made relations difficult and a 'pause' in the UMA was agreed.

The politics of the Maghreb and the southern Mediterranean as a whole have been volatile in the post-war period. In view of the dearth of organizations linking the two shores of the Mediterranean basin, Europe should support any efforts at regional integration which, like the 5+5 process, may lead to greater stability and inter-regional cooperation. However, the UMA may prove as impermanent as the Permanent Consultative Committee of the 1960s and 1970s. A senior Moroccan official opined in 1993 that in view of divisive political problems, 'There is no Maghreb.' This may be the case in practical terms as North African states look for vertical accords with the EU rather than horizontal ones with their neighbours, but the pan-Maghreb inspiration—and indeed the Mediterranean ideal—is not yet finished.

THE MEDITERRANEAN ENVIRONMENT

One of the main trends of the late twentieth century is the growth of environmental awareness in governments, international organizations and populations. In the wake of the UN Conference on the Human Environment (1972) and the Rio 'Earth Summit' in 1992, protecting the environment is a subject which seems to be on everybody's lips, if not on everybody's political platform. In terms of environmental awareness, the gap between the views of the developed and developing countries has diminished.[44] The EU too shares in the growth of environmentalism. A *Eurobarometer* survey of public opinion in the twelve Community states in 1992 revealed that 85 per cent of respondents considered environmental issues 'an immediate and urgent problem' while only 2 per cent felt that they were 'not really a problem'.[45]

The Community has argued that the external and internal dimensions of environmental issues are inextricably linked. To the European Commission, the cross-border nature of pollution makes it a suitable subject for Community rather than national regulation. The 1957 Treaty of Rome did not explicitly deal with environmental issues, but since the 1970s the Community has expanded its legal competence on environmental issues through