

VIII organization - shares the above characteristics and can be considered the original grouping of this kind. ASEAN, with its long and incremental development towards the formation of a pluralistic security community, also exemplifies this type of organization. Other similar structures and processes are developing regionally. For instance, the new Association of Southern African States (ASAS) will replace the Frontline States (FLS) as the major political-military structure in Southern Africa. The proposed Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) - which may or may not move forward depending on the results of the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) and the resolve of southern European states - could also belong to this category.<sup>7</sup> And of course the MEPP itself, which is predicated on a multi-dimensional and inclusive concept of regional security, will probably lead to some institutionalization of conflict prevention and confidence-building functions.<sup>8</sup>

It cannot be over-emphasized that the latter type of bodies or groupings reflect the *regional* consensus on political-security issues rather than UN vision of how regional security should be built or organized.

### *The normative framework*

Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, which has a complex and somewhat chequered history, provides the normative framework for the role of regional 'arrangements and agencies' in the maintenance of international peace and security, along with articles 33 and 37 of Chapter V. Chapter VIII lays out the following principles of action:

- regional organizations should make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of

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<sup>7</sup> The case for the creation of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) was put forward by France, Spain, Italy and Portugal in 1991, just after the Gulf War. European interest on Mediterranean issues is extremely high at the moment. The EU, for example, is developing a Mediterranean strategy; the WEU is looking towards the Mediterranean as one of its main areas of operation; NATO has recently opened a Mediterranean dialogue process; even the OSCE has demonstrated interest in the area by holding a Mediterranean security seminar in Egypt.

<sup>8</sup> It is expected that the Arms Control and Security (ACRES) working group of MEPP will decide on the establishment of three regional security centres. A first centre, based in Jordan, would act as a regional security centre and develop an OSCE-like communication/early-warning network. A second centre, based in Tunis, would deal mainly with naval and other sea-related issues. A third centre, based in Qatar, would elaborate measures for the advance notification of regional military manoeuvres and the exchange of other confidence-building information.