

Number 2, December 2013

## Editorial



The 2013 edition of the Lisbon Forum was attended, on 6 and 7 November, by 250

participants from more than 40 countries, including member states of the Council of Europe (CoE) and Southern Mediterranean countries.

The Forum was held at the Ismaili Centre in Lisbon and chaired by Mr. Bernardino León, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean region, on the topic: “Valuing civil society as actor of governance: Perspectives for the South Mediterranean.”

Organised by the North-South Centre of the CoE within the framework of the South Programme, it was supported by the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) and the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). Discussions and exchanges focused in particular on the role of civil society vis-à-vis other governance actors (governments, parliaments, local authorities).

For Mr. Bernardino León, the event was the opportunity to overcome obstacles to the building of a joint project between different actors of the society, stressing the importance and the crucial role of women in the transition process. According to him, democratic governance must help to develop and implement practical solutions to meet the challenges of political and social transition in the southern countries ([Interview of Mr. Bernardino León](#)).

Main conclusions of the Forum focused on the proposal to establish training programs to ensure better political preparation as well as capacity building of civil society in the field of citizenship.

It was also suggested to set-up coordinating bodies in order to assist associations in participating to the definition and implementation of public policies and in strengthening their human resources, internal organisation and leadership skills.

Finally, the need was expressed to create a framework for citizen participation at local level and strengthening the dialogue between civil society and elected representatives.

## FOCUS ON PROGRAMME'S ACTIVITIES

### Regional seminar of Tunisian and Moroccan School of Political Studies



A seminar entitled: “Seeking insight into the Arab Spring and beyond” was organised on 11 and 12 November in Hammamet, Tunisia.

This first regional meeting enabled participants to analyse the current political situation in the region influenced by developments since 2011 and the role that Schools of Political Studies could play.

Students from Schools, as well as academics, experts, civil society activists from Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Jordan and Mauritania have confirmed the potential of Schools in periods of transitions.

As a follow up, creation of a regional platform has been suggested, to strengthen the regional dimension of the South Programme and also to allow nationals from countries, in which such a School doesn't exist yet, to benefit from the training cycles and networking.

### Inter-parliamentary Conference organised by the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE in Lisbon



The Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE (PACE) organised an inter-parliamentary conference, on 8 November in Lisbon, on “Political changes in the South Mediterranean and the Middle East: the role of representatives institutions.”

Around 100 participants, including representatives of the Parliaments of Algeria, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the National Constituent Assembly of Tunisia, the Palestinian National Council, representatives of the political forces in Egypt and members of the PACE Political Affairs Committee took part in this conference.

The working sessions focused on experiences with political transitions in various countries, the added-value of the “Partnership for democracy” as a platform for co-operation, and the contribution of the CoE's Venice Commission to constitutional and legal reforms.

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## FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME

### Morocco: training session for Mediators staff members of the AOM in Rabat



The Venice Commission contributed, on 22 and 24 October, to the fourth training session organised by the President of the Association of Mediterranean Ombudsmen (AOM) and the President of the Institution of the Ombudsman of the Kingdom of Morocco.

This session focussed on: "The Role of Ombudsman institutions in the simplification of administrative procedures and access to public services."

### Participation of Schools of Political Studies at the World Forum for Democracy



Schools of Political Studies of the CoE actively participated in the second edition of the World Forum for Democracy, held in Strasbourg from 23 to 29 November 2013.

A special program has been devoted to Schools of Political Studies including events such as a meeting between Directors of Schools, a meeting between students, lawyers and judges to the European Court of Human Rights and a presentation of the Schools network. In addition, participants from Tunisia and Morocco as well as members of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) took part in a regional seminar on the Arab Spring and its developments in different countries.

#### Schools of Political Studies

In 2013, two new Schools of Political Studies were established in Morocco and Tunisia. Their main objective is to train future generations of political, economic, social and cultural leaders in countries in transition.

[http://www.coe.int/t/dgap/sps/default\\_EN.asp?](http://www.coe.int/t/dgap/sps/default_EN.asp?)

### Round table on trafficking in human beings organised in Rabat



Fight against trafficking in human beings is a priority for Morocco and the CoE for 2012-2014. In this framework a round table was organised on 28 November in Rabat, in partnership with the European Union Delegation in Morocco and international actors working in this field.

The aim of the meeting was to exchange views on the current situation, to present activities implemented by the international community, and to consider potential synergies and opportunities for co-operation. Representatives from international organisations (EU, CoE, ICMPD, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNWOMEN, IOM) as well as members of the diplomatic corps have attended.

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## CEPEJ activities continue in Morocco and Tunisia



A group of experts from the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) visited Morocco from 11 to 13 November. The visit enabled the group to discuss and exchange views with the Minister of Justice and Liberties, Mustafa el Ramid, representatives of pilot courts (Agadir, Casablanca and Sidi Kacem) and partners involved in the process of reforming the Moroccan judicial system. Two training sessions for Moroccan trainers were organized in Marrakech and Rabat on quality, optimisation and statistical indicators of the functioning of courts.

In addition, on 21 and 22 October, the CEPEJ has met representatives of four Tunisian pilot courts (Supreme Court, Court of First Instance of Tunis, Court of First Instance and Court of Canton Zagouhan) to launch a program on targeted assistance.

## FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME

### Visit to Morocco within the anti-corruption framework



An expert group has paid a visit to Morocco from 30 September to 4 October to pursue the assessment process of the Moroccan legal and institutional anti-corruption framework, based on the methodology developed by the specialised structure of the CoE, the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). Several meetings enabled experts to interact with governmental officials, law-enforcement actors, members of the Parliament and of civil society.

This activity also helped to develop the national expertise based on the methodology of GRECO and helped

This activity also helped to develop national expertise based on the methodology of GRECO and contributed to strengthen cooperation between different national entities, which constitute the anti-corruption system.

## TO COME UP

### Regional Conference on the fight against trafficking in human beings in Tunis



In February 2014, the Council of Europe will organise -in close co-operation with the EU Delegation in Tunisia, with the Ministry of Justice of Tunisia and the International Organization for Migration (IOM)- a regional conference to raise awareness on the issue of trafficking in human beings. The conference will promote a comprehensive and coordinated approach in the region, allowing for an exchange of information, experiences and good practices; stimulate the creation of a network and strengthen the capacity of those who can encourage change at a national level in terms of prevention, advocacy and assistance to victims.

The conference will bring together representatives of international organisations, governments and civil society, member States of the CoE and countries of the Southern Mediterranean.

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## Key upcoming events

### ❖ GOOD GOVERNANCE AND FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 6-7 JANUARY 2014<br>Tunis, Tunisia    | <b>ASSISTANCE TO THE INTRODUCTION OF INTERNAL RULES FOR THE INSTANCE AGAINST CORRUPTION</b><br>4 <sup>th</sup> seminar   |
| JANUARY/MARCH 2014<br>Rabat, Morocco  | <b>CAPACITY BUILDING</b><br>Targeted capacity- building trainings for Moroccan officials on the fight against corruption |
| 18-19 FEBRUARY 2014<br>Rabat, Morocco | <b>DIAGNOSTIC OF LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK</b><br>Conference on results and recommendations of the diagnostic    |

### ❖ LEGAL CO-OPERATION

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|---|---|
| JANUARY/MARCH 2014<br>Tunisia and Morocco | <b>CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES WITH CEPEJ</b><br>Working sessions with pilot courts in specific fields identified through the evaluation by CEPEJ |
| 17-21 FEBRUARY 2014<br>Tunis, Tunisia     | <b>TRAINING OF PRESIDENTS OF COURTS AND REGISTRARS</b><br>Training on managerial competencies within pilot courts                             |

### ❖ FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

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|--|--|
| 3-7 FEBRUARY 2014<br>Paris, Strasbourg and Brussels          | <b>STUDY VISIT OF MOROCCAN AUTHORITIES</b><br>Co-operation between Moroccan authorities, the Group of experts on action against trafficking in human beings (GRETA) and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), manager of the MIEUX Programme of the European Union. |
| 25 FEBRUARY 2014<br>Tunis, Tunisia<br>(Date to be confirmed) | <b>INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS</b><br>Event which brings together representatives of countries on the region and CoE member states   |

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## About the EU-CoE joint programme "Strengthening democratic reform in the southern Neighbourhood" (South Programme)

The aim of the South Programme, launched in January 2012, is to support the political and democratic reform process in the countries of the CoE's Southern neighbourhood, in line with European and international standards and on the basis of a targeted, demand-driven approach. The main areas of the program are: judicial reform, fight against corruption, promoting human rights and democratic values. The programme's budget amounts to 4.8 million € over three years (2012-2014).

On-going activities are directed primarily to Morocco and Tunisia, but the program is open to other partner countries and territories under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)<sup>1</sup>: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya and the Palestinian National Authority, and some of which are actively involved in the South Programme mainly through regional activities.

This joint program is part of the broader framework of initiatives undertaken by the two Organisations to promote democracy and human rights in the countries of the Southern Mediterranean, including the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) regarding the EU and the Policy of the CoE towards neighbouring regions.

For more information, please visit the South Programme's website: <http://south-programme-eu.coe.int>.

<sup>1</sup>The EU-Syria bilateral cooperation has been suspended since May 2012.

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