

Editorial

number 3, March 2014

Second South Programme Steering Committee meeting (Strasbourg, 17-18 March 2014)



The second Steering Committee meeting of the EU/CoE Joint Programme “Strengthening democratic reform in the Southern Neighbourhood” (South Programme) took place in Strasbourg on 17-18 March 2014.

This event brought together representatives from Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Jordan, Israel, the EU and the CoE, as well as members of civil society from Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, in order to take stock of and exchange views on the activities carried out so far and to approve the proposals of activities planned during the last year of implementation of the South Programme, which will end in December 2014.

The participants highlighted the main achievements of the Programme, and the support that it provides to partner countries. They welcomed the co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE and the Moroccan Parliament, the support provided to several countries of the region by the Venice Commission in its areas of competence, as well as the activities carried out by the CEPEJ in Morocco and Tunisia. They also underlined the role of the Schools of Political Studies in Tunis and Rabat, now fully operational, as well as the actions carried out to combat trafficking in human beings and corruption. Different initiatives to promote the exchange of experiences and the establishment of networks between Southern Mediterranean countries were also commended, including the Lisbon Forum 2013 and activities in the youth sector. Finally, the participants expressed their satisfaction with the activities supported by the Pampidou Group to prevent and combat drug addiction.

These discussions highlighted the South Programme’s relevance and sustainability, as well as the efficiency in its implementation. In the framework of the constructive exchanges which took place, suggestions were put forward to improve the implementation of the final phase of the Programme, including the wish to further strengthen synergies among the different components of the Programme and to continue strengthening South-South co-operation. Finally, the participants stressed that the Programme should remain flexible, in order to continue providing relevant and prompt replies to the demands of partner countries.

FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME

Morocco: Conference to present the report on the anti-corruption assessment (Rabat, 19 February 2014)



A Conference to present the assessment report of the Moroccan institutional and legal anti-corruption framework was organised on 19 February 2014 in Rabat by the Council of Europe in order to present the conclusions and recom-

mendations of the diagnostic to the audience of high-level representatives of Moroccan institutions, diplomatic community, civil society and media.

The aim of the report was to assess the compliance of the current framework with international standards on fight against corruption, notably, the CoE standards, but also to contribute to strengthening institutional capacities and to suggest reforms of the regulatory framework against corruption.

The assessment of the anti-corruption framework was carried out in co-operation with the Instance centrale de prévention de la corruption (ICPC) and a number of governmental partners and institutions, judiciary, law-enforcement agencies, private sector and civil society. On the basis of the questionnaire filled out by the institutions, the experts met more than 70 representatives from public and private institutions, through on-site visits organised from 30 September to 4 October 2013.

ASSESSMENT OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK / GRECO

The assessment of the anti-corruption framework has been conceived on the basis of the methodologies developed by the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO).

It is based on a peer-evaluation carried out by senior experts from European public administrations, representing the diversity of CoE member-states.

This evaluation was adapted to take into account specific local needs in order to identify priorities and risks and favour the ownership of the results.

► FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME

Visit of the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe to Morocco (25-26 March 2014)

The Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mrs Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni paid an official visit to Morocco, on 25-26 March 2014, to discuss, in high-level meetings, the co-operation priorities between the country and the CoE for the period 2015-2017.

She was received by the Speakers of the two Chambers of the Parliament and Ministers, Heads of National Authorities and senior officials in charge of foreign affairs, justice, human rights, women, migration, the fight against corruption and audio-visual communication. She also met representatives of the civil society.

At the end of the visit, Mrs Battaini-Dragoni and her interlocutors expressed their appreciation of the work undertaken so far, mostly carried out in the framework of the partnership with the European Union.

The next visits of the Deputy Secretary-General in the region are planned in Jordan and Tunisia.

Seminars on the Protection of personal data in Tunis (18 March 2014) and Rabat (20-21 March 2014)

Two seminars on the Protection of personal data took place on 18 March 2014 in Tunis and on 20-21 March 2014 in Rabat.

The Seminar in Tunis was initiated by the National Authority for the Protection of Personal Data, founded in 2004. This event was an opportunity to present the Convention for the protection of individuals with regard to the automatic processing of personal data. Discussions focused on the protection of personal data and its relation to freedom of expression and the right of access to information.



Through the study of legal frameworks and practical experiences of other countries of the Council of Europe, the meeting aimed at providing elements to strengthen the regulatory and institutional framework of the right to the protection of personal data.

The Seminar in Rabat was co-ordinated by the National Commission for the Control of the Protection of personal data (CNDP), created in 2009. This event highlighted the importance of issues such as the protection of privacy, the relation between the right to data protection, freedom of expression, respect for human rights and the right of access to information. At the end of the session, the participants

put forward a number of recommendations, such as the implementation of an integrated national strategy in collaboration with international partners, the creation of a group of international authorities which deal with the personal data protection in order to carry out concerted action to enforce the respect for privacy in the world and finally the continued cooperation between Morocco and the CoE to strengthen the protection of personal data.

Training session for Tunisian courts on management techniques (18-19 February 2014)



The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) members and experts went to Tunis on 18 and 19 February 2014 to carry out a training session on court management techniques.

Each Tunisian jurisdiction was represented by a team composed of its President, its Prosecutor, the head of the court's clerks and its computer scientist. The teams were divided into workshops and focused on the drawing up, in real time, of justice dashboards.

The second day was devoted to improving the dynamic management of Tunisian courts.

► FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME

Exchanges of views on the draft organic laws on the Higher Council of Judicial Power and on the status of judges in Morocco (Rabat, 8 January 2014 and Paris, 6 February 2014)



Exchanges of views between the Ministry of Justice and Freedoms of Morocco and a delegation of experts from the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE) and the Venice Commission took place in Rabat on 8 January 2014 and in Paris on 6 February 2014.

These activities provided an opportunity to engage in detailed discussions on the two draft organic laws on the Higher Council of Judicial Power and on the status of judges and on European reference standards.

Study visit to Europe of representatives of Moroccan institutions and organisations involved in the fight against trafficking in human beings and in the protection of victims (3- 7 February 2014)



On 3-7 February 2014, the Council of Europe and the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) organised a study visit for the representatives of Moroccan institutions and organisations involved in the fight against trafficking in human beings and in the protection of victims.

This activity was organised within the framework of the EU/CoE programme “Strengthening democratic reform in the southern Neighbourhood” (South Programme) in co-operation with the programme “Migration EU eXpertise – MIEUX”.

This study visit enabled the representatives, among other things, to become acquainted with the systems of protection and care of victims of trafficking in France and Belgium, to meet experts from the GRETA (Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings) and to learn more about the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

Euro-Arab training course: “Co-operation and action for the democratic participation of young people” in Budapest (29 November to 6 December 2013)

A Euro-Arab training course on “Co-operation and action for the democratic participation of young people” took place at the European Youth Centre in Budapest (Hungary) from 29 November to 6 December 2013.



This event aimed to consolidate and develop the skills of multipliers and youth leaders with regard to democratic participation. This dynamics is part of their missions as trainers, activists and project managers. It operates through non-formal education of young people and youth projects implemented in the context of Euro-Arab and Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

It was aimed primarily for the trainers who already were initiated to democratic youth participation through the seminars held in Rabat (Morocco) from 6 to 14 April 2013 and Hammamet (Tunisia) on 5-6 July 2013 in the framework of the South Programme.

Strengthening democratic reform in the southern Neighbourhood

Funded
by the European Union



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by the Council of Europe

► FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME

Seminar on the Council of Europe Conventions (Amman, April 3, 2014)

On the 3rd of April 2014 the Council of Europe organised a seminar in Amman to present several key CoE conventions open to non-member states. This event is part of the efforts to gradually build a common legal space between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean.

The seminar, opened by the Deputy Secretary General of the CoE, was held at the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy in the presence and gathered Jordanian representatives from various ministries and Government bodies, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, of the police, the Anti-Corruption Commission and the National Centre for Human Rights, as well as representatives of the European Union Delegation to Jordan.

This seminar was an opportunity for the Jordanian authorities to familiarise themselves with the CoE conventions on topics such as the fight against corruption, children's rights, domestic violence and prevention of terrorism, cybercrime and the counterfeiting of medical products.

This seminar was organised within the framework of a joint programme between the EU and the CdE "Strengthening democratic reform in the southern Neighbourhood" and the Norwegian-funded regional programme on violence against women including children.

Training academy on democratic governance for young professionals of the South of the Mediterranean (5 to 13 April 2014)

The Training Academy on democratic governance for young professionals of the South of the Mediterranean is holding its first session in Venice from 5 to 13 April 2014.

Jointly organised by the EIUC (European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation), the VIU (Venice International University) and the Council of Europe with the support of the European Union and Norway, this pilot project targets around thirty young professionals from Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. Participants are mostly public institutions'

employees directly involved in the implementation of projects such as the Joint Programme between the European Union and the Council of Europe «Strengthening democratic reform in the Southern Neighbourhood» (South Programme) and the regional programme on violence against women including children, funded by Norway, both implemented with the aim of strengthening human rights, rule of law and democracy.

The Academy's objective is to enable participants to deepen their knowledge and to acquire solid skills in the field of human rights, good governance and the rule of law. Participants will then be able to act as "multipliers" of the acquired skills.

The training programme also includes the presentation of key CoE conventions supporting the strategic objectives of the two above-mentioned programmes.

► FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME / TO COME UP

International Conference on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings "Diverse responses to a multifaceted phenomenon" (Tunis, 15 - 16 April 2014)

An International Conference on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings "Diverse responses to a multifaceted phenomenon" will take place on 15 and 16 April 2014 in Tunis.

This event is organised by the Council of Europe and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), in partnership with the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Transitional Justice.

About one hundred participants will attend the meeting, including high officials from countries of the region, public institutions, international organisations, Parliaments, professional networks and civil society such as the media, trade unions and universities.

This meeting will examine the situation and the challenges specific to North Africa by discussing different mechanisms, standards, good practices and difficulties around the 4Ps: prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership, through relevant practical experiences.

► KEY UP COMING EVENTS

❖ GOOD GOVERNANCE AND FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

APRIL 2014 **PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT ON THE ANTI-CORRUPTION ASSESSMENT**
MOROCCO

APRIL 2014 **SEMINAR ON THE TUNISIAN ANTI-CORRUPTION LAW**
TUNISIA

❖ LEGAL CO-OPERATION

APRIL 2014 **CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES OF CEPEJ**
MOROCCO
- CEPEJ mission in Morocco
- SATURN meeting on judicial time management (11 April 2014)

APRIL 2014 **5th CEPEJ VISIT IN TUNISIA**
TUNIS, TUNISIA
Working session with pilot courts

❖ PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

7 MAY 2014 **INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE**
ATHENS, GREECE
on “Freedom of religion and safety for the Christian communities in the Middle East and the Southern Mediterranean”

MAY 2014 **SEMINAR ON THE ROLE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION**
RABAT, MOROCCO

❖ POMPIDOU GROUP

1ST APRIL 2014 **MedSPAD MEETING**
PARIS, FRANCE
Presentation of the results of the MedSPAD survey scheduled in 2013 in Morocco

Contacts

South-programme@coe.int

CoE's Office in Morocco

Espace Les Patios – Bâtiment B1 –
5^{ème} étage 2A
Avenue Annakhil – Hay Ryad – Rabat
E-mail : conseil.europe.rabat@coe.int

CoE's Office in Tunisia

Immeuble Le Boulevard,
Rue le Grand Boulevard de la Corniche,
Cité les Pins, 1053 LAC II, Tunis

<http://south-programme-eu.coe.int>

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)¹: 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>

¹The EU-Syria bilateral cooperation has been suspended since May 2012.