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Editorial

The South Programme: taking stock and looking ahead



Three years have passed since the launch of the first European Union (EU) – Council of Europe (CoE) Joint Programme in the South Mediterranean entitled “Strengthening democratic reform in the southern Neighbourhood”.. By means of the Programme, the two organisations have accompanied the essential democratic reforms in partner countries, aiming at developing inter alia a better governance, and namely

through a better integration of the values of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law – the CoE’s three pillars.

The third and last meeting of the Steering Committee of the South Programme I was held on 15 and 16 December in Paris. It provided around 60 participants of partner countries – governance instances, civil society – and representatives of the CoE and the EU, with the opportunity to take stock of three years of intense co-operation, to analyse its results, to discuss the process of reforms undertaken by partner countries, and to assess the Programme’s impact.

The meeting in Paris has confirmed the Programme’s relevance as a useful tool to accompany the structural reforms by partner countries, to support the setting up of new legal frameworks and of new democratic governance instances, as well as to promote democratic values in the region.

The CoE’s offices in Tunisia and Morocco, whose establishment demonstrates the commitment of the CoE to engage in a long-term partnership, have greatly contributed to the success of the Programme. The added value of the offices derives from their ability to facilitate dialogue and exchanges between – and among – the different partners, by favouring and adjusting the implementation of the Programme to the partner countries’ own pace and specific needs.

South Programme I related links:

- [conclusions](#) of the final Steering Committee and [photo gallery](#);
- final [brochure](#) of the Programme.



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► FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME

High profile for the South Programme during the Human Rights World Forum in Marrakech (27 -30 November 2014)

From 27 to 30 November 2014, Marrakech hosted the 2nd edition of the Human Rights World Forum. This event brought together more than 7000 personalities and organisations from some 100 countries around the world with a view to exchanging on how to protect and promote human rights worldwide.

The South Programme has been deeply involved in the Forum's activities with several events:

- A regional seminar organised by the Moroccan School of Political studies allowed to discuss standards and tools to institutionalise policies of diversity in the Southern Mediterranean with a view to strengthening democratic pluralism and human rights in the countries of the region.
- The Moroccan School also organised a thematic conference "Democracy and Human Rights", on the conditions for stability of democratic processes as well as the theoretical and practical relations between democracy and human rights.
- In the fields of trafficking in human beings, a workshop on challenges and good practices in the fight against trafficking in human beings allowed to discuss international efforts and best practices to tackle this trans-border phenomenon on the basis of the [CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings \(ETS n° 197\)](#) and other international standards as well as the role of civil society in assisting the victims of trafficking.
- A regional conference on the evaluation and consolidation of a training-of-trainers project "The Democratic Participation of Young People: Rights and Practices" – which is part of a project launched in March 2013 aiming at supporting the democratic participation of Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian youth – allowed to take stock of what has been done and to consolidate the capacities of trainers in view of future initiatives in this field.
- CoE Venice Commission's experts have contributed to the Thematic Forum on the interaction by Parliaments with Human Rights United Nations' Mechanism and to the Round Table organised by the Mediator on Ombudsmen and Human Rights.

All activities organised in the framework of the South Programme during the Forum confirmed the need to continue strengthening the capacities of relevant actors, as well as a greater coordination and awareness raising as regards the progressive integration of human rights based approach in development co-operation activities..

► FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME/ EFFICIENCY OF THE JUDICIARY SYSTEM

Participation of Moroccan, Tunisian and Jordanian experts to the 1st Global Forum on Enforcement and to the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ)'s 24th plenary meeting (10-12 December 2014)

In the framework of the South Programme, Moroccan representatives attended the 1st Global Forum on Enforcement on 10 December in Strasbourg, while Moroccan, Tunisian and Jordanian experts participated to the 24th plenary meeting of the CEPEJ, held on 11 and 12 December in Strasbourg.

The 2014 Global Forum for Enforcement entitled "The efficiency of Civil Enforcement Proceedings in Europe" provided the Moroccan delegation, composed by representatives of the Moroccan Ministry of Justice, Rabat's Administrative Court and Nador's Court of First Instance, with the opportunity to exchange on how to improve the efficiency of enforcement using both existing and new tools.

The Forum was followed by the 24th plenary meeting of the CEPEJ which saw the active participation of experts from Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan. The plenary meeting presented an opportunity to discuss developments in the judicial field in Council of Europe (CoE)'s member states as well as the work of the CEPEJ in Europe and beyond. Guidelines on the organisation and accessibility of court premises, on the role of technical experts in judicial proceedings, and on judicial time management were adopted, and Georg Stawa (Austria) was elected as the CEPEJ's new president. The plenary provided inter alia the opportunity to discuss and exchange views on CEPEJ co-operation programmes, including the activities carried out in the framework of the South Programme in Morocco and Tunisia.

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Peer interaction in motion: representatives of Tunisian pilot courts visit their Belgian and Swiss counterparts in Liège (20-21 October 2014) and Geneva (2-4 December 2014)

Tunisian judges and court staff members participated to two study visits to Belgium and Switzerland within the framework of the South Programme. On 20 and 21 October 2014, representatives of Zaghouan's Tribunal of First Instance visited the Tribunal of First Instance of Liège (Belgium), while on 2-4 December six members of four Tunisian pilot courts (Tunis TFI, Zaghouan TFI, Nabeul TFI and Kairouan TFI) and an expert of the CEPEJ visited Geneva's Court of Justice and the Civil and Criminal Courts.

During the first study visit, the structure and the work of Liège's court as well as the functioning of the Belgian justice system were presented. The meetings allowed the participants to exchange on a project aiming at the measurement of workload in Belgian courts.

During the second study visit, the functioning and the organisation of Geneva's courts, and namely its competences and the role of IT in the field of the judiciary, were presented and discussed. The study visit represented the follow-up to a training organised by the CEPEJ at the Institut Supérieur de la Magistrature in Tunis in November 2014.

7th CEPEJ mission to Tunisia: training session for Tunisian court clerks (Tunisia, 3-4 November 2014)

A group of experts of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) visited Tunisia on 3-4 November 2014, within the framework of the South Programme.

On this occasion, the CEPEJ organised a training session for Tunisian court clerks, in co-operation with the Tunisian Higher Institute for the Judiciary. This training session focused on the relations between clerks and the judiciary as well as between clerks and lawyers.

The CEPEJ experts also met representatives of the pilot courts to take stock of the state of implementation of co-operation activities, and discuss the follow-up to the co-operation between the CEPEJ and the Tunisian pilot courts.

Reduction of excessive workload through a better management of judicial timeframe: Morocco and Tunisia take part to the 16th SATURN meeting and to the 9th plenary meeting of the CEPEJ pilot courts (Strasbourg, 15-17 October 2014)



In the framework of the South Programme, Moroccan and Tunisian representatives took part in two initiatives organised by the Council of Europe (CoE): the 16th meeting of the SATURN Centre for judicial time management, and the 9th plenary meeting of the CEPEJ pilot courts.

During the SATURN's meeting, participants covered a wide range of topics related to judicial time management, stretching from the possibility of integrating the guidelines on judicial timeframes for prosecutors, the identification of targets, and the implementation of standards at the European level. Moreover, the discussions engaged other topics, such as solutions to reduce excessive workloads in the courts and the programmes to support courts in CoE's member states.

Furthermore, the plenary meeting of the CEPEJ pilot court presented a chance to participate to practical workshops, covering several topics, such as standards of judicial timeframes, management of judicial experts and the organisation and accessibility of courts.

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► FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME / FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Joining efforts in the fight against corruption: Council of Europe carries out a scoping mission to Jordan (Amman, 14-15 October 2014)



A CoE delegation visited Amman on 14-15 October 2014 within the framework of the preparation of new co-operation priorities 2015-2027 between Jordan and the CoE.

The mission presented a chance for the CoE delegation to assess the needs and scope of potential co-operation within the framework of the South Programme. The delegation had the opportunity to discuss with representatives of Jordanian

authorities involved in the prevention and fight against corruption and economic crime and representatives of the civil society.

Furthermore, the fight against corruption was at the centre of discussions between the CoE delegation and the Delegation of the EU (EUD) to Jordan, with a view to include this new area of work in the follow-up of the South Programme. Moreover, the meeting with the EUD allowed to take stock of the progress of the CoE's work in Jordan and to coordinate future joint initiatives in the country.

Training on "Basic Concepts of the fight against corruption" in Morocco (Rabat, 11-13 November 2014)

A certified training on "Basic Anti-corruption concepts" and their institutional and legal aspects for public officials was held on 11-13 November in Rabat, Morocco.

Conducted by experts from the CoE, this training took place within the South Programme, and is part of a series of initiatives aiming at promoting good governance and the fight against corruption and money laundering in Morocco.

This training covered many topics such as identification of cases of corruption and the choice of measurement tools needed to assess corrupt practices. The National Integrity System, through examples of specific anti-corruption tools, was also discussed, together with the financing of political parties and campaigns, and the issue of conflict of interest.

Morocco: towards a sectorial strategy in the field of prevention of corruption risks (Rabat, 4 December 2014)

As part of the South Programme, a public conference brought together on 4 December 2014 in Rabat (Morocco) stakeholders of a pilot project aimed at analyzing the risks of corruption. Coordinated by the ICPC in favor of the Ministry of Foreign Trade, the meeting came as a response to a recommendation contained in the legal and institutional framework assessment as regards the periodic corruption risks analysis.

By providing the ICPC with an additional self-assessment methodology, the CoE has contributed to strengthening the already established arsenal of tools at its disposal. Corruption risks in this Ministry are minor according to experts. They have suggested 18 general and more specific recommendations and noted that "the Department could act as political entrepreneur and rally stakeholders to reform in order to achieve better governance in the country, according to the new constitutional provisions."

The event, which brought together 32 representatives of the Ministry, organisations under its supervision, professional associations and Transparency Morocco, allowed also to present the first elements of a sectorial strategy of the Ministry based on the pursuit of dematerialisation efforts and diagnosis of new risks.

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Training on detection of corruption risks in Morocco (Rabat, 16-17 December 2014)

A training on the detection of corruption risks in the phase of preparation of legislative acts was organised by the CoE in Rabat, on 16 and 17 December 2014 in partnership with the Instance Centrale de Prévention contre la Corruption (ICPC). The training was held within the framework of the South Programme and its action to support good governance in the south Mediterranean through the project “Fight against Corruption and Money Laundering – SNAC Maroc”.

Experts appointed by the CoE shared their knowledge and expertise on various techniques of analysis of corruption risks in legislative acts. Through practical workshops and various exchanges, the experts raised the participants’ awareness on various forms and factors of corruption as well as on possible actions to prevent or fight corruption.

Mr. Yassir Chokairi, Director of the Centre for partnership and development of the ICPC, underlined the importance of the training which aims at being repeated at every level of the legal departments of the bodies and institutions appointed to draft and propose regulatory or legislative texts and acts.

► FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME / PROMOTION OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES

Information seminar for officials of the Parliament of Morocco (Strasbourg, 11-12 December 2014)

An information seminar on the CoE addressed to 20 representatives of the various committees of the House of Representatives and House of Councilors of the Parliament of Morocco, was held in Strasbourg on 11-12 December 2014 in the framework of the South Programme.

An introduction to the structure and functioning of the CoE has been followed by presentations on the European Court of Human Rights and on the activities of the Parliamentary Assembly. Discussions continued on co-operation activities between the Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliament of Morocco as part of its Partner for Democracy status and of the South Programme.

High level experts’ meeting between the European Audiovisual Observatory and the Moroccan audiovisual regulatory authority (HACA) (Rabat, 18 December 2014)

The European Audiovisual Observatory and the Moroccan audiovisual regulatory authority, HACA (Haute Autorité de la Communication Audiovisuelle), organised a high level experts’ meeting in Rabat with the support of the South Programme.

The meeting dealt with the financing of public service broadcasting, both from an economic and regulatory point of view. It brought together 18 different broadcasting, economic or regulatory professionals from Europe and the Mediterranean area for an in-depth and extremely fruitful exchange of ideas.

Morocco joined the European Audiovisual Observatory in 2014 and became the first country from the Southern Mediterranean to be part of the Observatory’s network.

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16th meeting of the Mediterranean Network for Co-operation on Drugs and Addictions (MedNet): enhancing North-South and South-South co-operation and exchanges (18 November, Strasbourg)

The [MedNet network](#) of the CoE's [Pompidou Group](#) (Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs) held its 16th meeting on 18 November 2014 in Strasbourg. The event – which saw the participation of representatives from Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal and Tunisia – provided the participants with the opportunity to discuss achievements and difficulties encountered in 2014 and to identify challenges for the future.

Discussions identified the main achievements of 2014 in the development of national observatories, the delivery of addictology courses, and the publication of the Mediterranean School survey project on alcohol and MedSpad's surveys (Mediterranean School Survey Project on alcohol and other drugs) in Morocco and Tunisia. At the end of the meeting, both the 2014 annual activity report and the 2015 work programme were adopted. The latter aims at continuing the co-operation initiated at national and regional level and at enhancing North-South and South-South exchanges and co-operation.

In this context, a regional conference on harm reduction, the first European Conference on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies (Lisbon, September 2015) and the participation in the Pompidou Group airport groups, are planned.

Participation of the Moroccan and Tunisian Schools of Political Studies to the 3rd World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 3-5 November 2014)

In the framework of the South Programme, a delegation of the Moroccan and Tunisian Schools of Political Studies participated to the 3rd edition of the World Forum for Democracy. This year's Forum – entitled "From participation to influence: can youth re-vitalise democracy" – engaged with the theme of youth's involvement and exclusion in today's political life. It consisted of numerous debates, workshops, and seminars, which involved young people, decision-makers as well as opinion-formers.

Besides the main programme, a number of special events were organised specifically for all the Schools of Political Studies present at the Forum, such as visits to the European Court of Human Rights, professional group meetings, workshops and a diploma award ceremony. More specifically, members of the Moroccan and Tunisian Schools actively participated in activities dealing with the role of the EU in promoting its values in the neighbourhood and the issue of political dialogue in the Maghreb.

Furthermore, in the margins of the meeting, the Moroccan and Bulgarian Schools of Political Studies, a bilateral agreement was signed by the Directors of the two Schools, Youssef Laaraj and Irina Alexieva, paving the way for more regular exchanges and co-operation between teachers, students and alumnis of the two Schools..

Morocco's new migration policy and the European experience in the spotlight (Rabat, 23-24 October 2014)

The "seminar on the new migration policy of Morocco and European experience: new challenges in the integration policies and practices" was organised jointly by the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE (PACE) and the Parliament of Morocco, within the framework of the South Programme.

The event saw the participation of the heads of parliamentary committees of France, Italy and Spain, international experts from Portugal, Belgium and Finland, representatives of Moroccan authorities as well as representatives from the civil society and NGOs.

The conference provided the participants with the opportunity to discuss on a wide range of topics related to the issue of immigration, such as Morocco's new migration policy as well as European policies and best practices for the integration of migrants.

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About the 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 from the southern Mediterranean¹: 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 CoE and the EU 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.

Following the signature of a new agreement between the EU and the CoE on 22 December 2014, the 2nd edition of the South Programme started on 1st of January 2015, namely "Towards strengthened democratic governance in the southern Mediterranean" 2015-2017.

Building on the achievements of its 1st edition, South Programme II will continue supporting democratic governance agenda in the region more specifically by:

- Supporting the development of new constitutional and legal frameworks and independent democratic governance instances deriving from them;
- Contributing to the creation and expansion of a common legal space between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean through progressive accession to the CoE conventions and agreements;
- Fostering regional co-operation in the field of human rights, Rule of law and democracy through the creation of and the support to formal and informal networks between Europe and countries of the Southern Mediterranean region, as well as within the region

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

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

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