



South Programme II Newsletter No.3

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Editorial

FIRST BILATERAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS WITH MOROCCO AND TUNISIA TAKE STOCK OF PROGRESS IN THE CO-OPERATION UNDER THE SOUTH PROGRAMME II

The promotion of good governance and the fight against global and cross-border threats in the southern Mediterranean, through the protection of human rights, the rule of law and democracy have been high on the agenda of the Council of Europe since the roll-out of the South Programme II in January 2015.

During the first bilateral steering committees of the South Programme II, held in Tunis and in Rabat on 26 and 30 November 2015, partners from Morocco and Tunisia discussed the progress achieved in the first year of implementation along with the strategic framework for co-operation in 2016.

Reforms of the justice sector were highlighted as a priority area by all partners, who have warmly welcomed efforts stepped-up in the dissemination of CEPEJ tools and methodology through the pilot courts, along with the overall support in the strengthening of partner countries' legislative frameworks.

In the case of Morocco, support in the development of two draft pieces of legislation, namely the magistrates' statute and the Superior Council of the Judiciary, were cited as examples of CoE's added value in the field of justice reform. As for Tunisia, an official request for CoE's legislative support on the statute and the functioning of the five independent instances established by the new Tunisian Constitution is expected to follow.



Steering Committee meeting in Tunis, 26 November 2015

Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean

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Steering Committee meeting in Rabat, 30 November 2015

Side meetings to the steering committees have allowed both countries to confirm once again their interest in the CoE conventions and to review the progress on the accession to several of these instruments. The Moroccan authorities have transmitted a copy of the instrument of accession to the Convention on Cybercrime and its Additional Protocol and have indicated the imminent submission of instruments of accession to several other conventions, particularly in the field of the protection of personal data and the rights of children. Finally, Morocco has reiterated its interest in the conventions in the field of the fight against corruption, torture, violence against women or terrorism. Tunisia has also confirmed its interest in several conventions, including those relating to the fight of violence against women and children, cybercrime, prevention of torture, terrorism, and in particular, the new protocol on foreign terrorist fighters. Furthermore, in December 2015, the CoE Committee of Ministers invited Tunisia to accede to the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data.



Tunisian representative during the Steering Committee meeting in Tunis, 26 November 2015

This is recognition of the good level of co-operation established under the South Programme II, particularly with Tunisia and Morocco. However, there are still many challenges that lie ahead for democratic governance in the southern Mediterranean region. The combined bilateral-regional approach and the demand-driven nature of the South Programme II make it an efficient co-operation tool that can respond to the varying needs of partner countries and also help replicate successful initiatives at the regional level.

[Tunisia Steering Committee operational conclusions \(French only\)](#)

[Morocco Steering Committee operational conclusions \(French only\)](#)

PROTECTING AND PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS

A concrete step forward in the setting up of the national authority for the prevention of torture in Tunisia



Workshop on the establishment of the Tunisian national preventive mechanism against torture in Tunis, 12 January 2015

On 12 January 2016 in Tunis, the CoE in collaboration with the Tunisian Ministry of Relations with Constitutional Instances, Civil Society and Human Rights Organisation, United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) and the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), convened a workshop to discuss the human, financial and logistical resources needed in the establishment of an effective and an independent National Authority for the Prevention of Torture. Among the participants were representatives of civil society, the parliament and the media, who took part in the preliminary review of progress in the selection process of members of the institution, which will be submitted to the Assembly of the Representatives of the People (ARP) for final designation. A key objective of this workshop was also to enable potential members of the forthcoming Authority draw from international expertise and experience of established national preventive mechanisms.

PROMOTING RULE OF LAW

Pilot courts of Morocco and Tunisia revisit CEPEJ tools and methodology for the improvement of the quality of justice

Experts of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) carried out a two day mission (6-9 October 2015) to Rabat and Casablanca, for a discussion with representatives of the Ministry of Justice and Liberties of Morocco, on current and future developments of the co-operation under the South Programme II. Visits were also extended to the Commercial Court of Casablanca and the Administrative Tribunal of Rabat with the aim of presenting the CEPEJ's draft reports on the judicial time management and quality tools. Finally, a presentation of the CEPEJ tools and methodology was delivered in the Court of Appeal of Fez, as the new pilot court which will be receiving the CEPEJ coaching programmes.

In Tunisia, the third on-site visit to the pilot courts by the CEPEJ experts, took place on 09-11 November 2015. The first part of the visit was devoted to the presentation of the CEPEJ tools for judicial time management, quality of justice and monitoring of the judiciary system to 65 representatives of the pilot courts. A series of meetings held later with high representatives from the Ministry of Justice, donor organisations and the Tunisian Bar Association provided highlights of the CEPEJ's work in the country, framed under the South Programme II. Ultimately, discussions were also held on the functioning and the foreseen co-operation activities of the pilot court of Nebeul.

The CoE released a French-Arabic compendium of its key human rights conventions in Rabat



Seminar on key CoE human rights conventions in Rabat, 1 December 2015

The CoE organised a seminar on its key human rights conventions in co-operation with the Interministerial Delegation for Human Rights of Morocco on 1 December 2015, in Rabat. With over 100 participants from public institutions, international organizations, civil society, media, the academic sector and professional networks, the seminar launched a French-Arabic compendium of the CoE Conventions open for signature and accession of non-member states. The aim of the seminar was to raise awareness on the issues addressed by these conventions and to foster national debate on their ratification. The seminar provided an ideal platform for all stakeholders to reflect on international standards and to discuss advances and challenges in Morocco as to: the fight against human trafficking, prevention of torture and inhuman or degrading punishment/treatment, prevention and fight against violence on women and protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse.

The CoE mobilises southern Mediterranean partners' efforts against sexual abuse of children



Workshop on media coverage of sexual abuse of children in Tunis, 27-28 October 2015

Upon the request of the Tunisian Ministry of Women, Family and Children and the Independent High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA), the CoE organised a workshop on 27-28 October 2015 in Tunis for the training of journalists on media coverage of sexual exploitation and abuse of children as well as the Lanzarote Convention. The Moroccan authorities in collaboration with the CoE organised a seminar presenting the Lanzarote Convention as an instrument against sexual abuse and exploitation of children on internet on 19 November 2015, in Rabat. This follows Morocco's ratification of the Lanzarote Convention and the recent adoption of the National Integrated Policy for the Protection of Children.



Workshop on the Lanzarote Convention and the protection of children from abuses on Internet in Rabat, 19 November 2015

Another major capacity strengthening event that provided a unique networking opportunity by bringing together civil society and national authorities in the promotion and consolidation of the common legal space was the “International Conference on Family Mediation”, which was held in Rabat on 7-8 December 2015. Organised by the Ministry of Solidarity, Woman, Family and Social Development of Morocco, with the support of the CoE, the Conference enabled the exchange of experiences as well as approaches to and best practices in the institutionalisation of family mediation.



Workshop on family mediation in Rabat, 7-8 December 2015

Strengthening law enforcement and institutional capacities of southern Mediterranean partners in the prevention of corruption

A consultation on the draft organic law establishing the Tunisian new constitutional anti-corruption authority was held on 19 November 2015 in Tunis, with the participation of relevant national stakeholders, international partners and CoE experts. This follows several legislative drafting sessions and workshops run under the South Neighbourhood Anti-corruption Project II (SNAC II) since April 2015.

In October-November 2015, SNAC II operations involved a needs assessment visit of the Jordanian Anti-corruption Commission for the upgrading of its forensic/financial analysis software and hardware (6-7 October 2015), the delivery of a capacity building workshop on whistle-blower protection and use of whistle-blower information in anti-corruption inquiries and investigations (12-14 October 2015, Amman), as well as an on-site assessment of the asset recovery framework of Jordan (16-18 November 2015).

In addition, two ‘training of trainers’ sessions for public officials were organised in Rabat (19-20 October 2015) and in Amman (9-11 November 2015) on basic anti-corruption concepts. The sessions focused on specialised training techniques and methodologies which enable participants to deliver anti-corruption training courses.

SUSTAINING DEMOCRACY

Launching of the PATHS Programme in Venice



PATHS first module training workshop in Venice, 30 November - 3 December 2015

With the delivery of the first training module in Venice (Italy), from [30 November to 3 December 2015](#), the CoE has launched a structured, comprehensive and demand-driven three year training programme called “Programme on Advanced Training on Human rights for CoE's Southern Neighbourhood” (PATHS, 2015-2017). This capacity and institutional strengthening tool, tailored to the needs of the southern Mediterranean partners is implemented in the framework of the South Programme II, and as such, the first module saw the participation of some 30 representatives from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. PATHS is formulated and developed as a “training of trainers” (TOT) programme which will consolidate training in the reinforcement of capacities of target groups on issues relating to human rights, the rule of law and democracy. It builds on lessons learnt from co-operation with the region over the last years, in conjunction with the relevant success of the CoE experience working with the UNIDEM Campus (University for Democracy) that is run by the Venice Commission for countries of South Eastern Europe and the HELP Programme on human rights education for legal professionals.

Participation of the School of Political Studies of Morocco and Tunisia in the World Forum for Democracy 2015 on “Freedom vs control: For a democratic response”



Hearing of the School of Political Studies of Tunisia in the Word Forum for Democracy in Strasbourg, 18-20 November 2015

The [World Forum for Democracy 2015](#), hosted in Strasbourg on 18-20 November 2015, was dedicated to the theme of “Freedom vs control: For a democratic response”. Within the framework of the South Programme II, the Forum has brought together 50 young leaders from the Tunisian and the Moroccan Schools of Political Studies of the CoE with some 500 policy actors - politicians, civil society activists, academia, media and professional groups.

Main topics concerned the democratic responses to overcoming growing fears of security risks - that legitimise repressive surveillance - and the safeguarding of freedom in light of growing ideology-driven violence. This unique Forum has, once again, provided the opportunity for the young leaders from the two Schools, and all other participants, to share knowledge, experience and overall benefit, from the exceptional networking opportunity with researchers, practitioners, leaders and peers.

Exploring measures to combat radicalisation and terrorism: southern Mediterranean partners participate in the Lisbon Forum 2015



Lisbon Forum 2015 in Lisbon, 3-4 December 2015

Threats to human rights and democratic values posed by violent extremism were also at the heart of the annual Lisbon Forum, organised by the North-South Centre of the CoE, thanks to the support of the South Programme II. The [Lisbon Forum 2015](#), held in Lisbon on 3-4 December 2015, on the theme of “How to combat radicalisation and terrorism: prevention tools and shared knowledge in the Mediterranean and European space” was developed along three main axes:

- ❖ Rule of Law and Democratic responses: A bulwark against radicalisation
- ❖ Preventing radicalisation through education and training
- ❖ Empowering young people and women to prevent and combat radicalisation

Over the course of a two day series of workshops and roundtable discussions, participants from the southern Mediterranean region representing national authorities, instances, civil society and the Schools of Political Studies of the CoE were joined by their European counterparts to debate and share knowledge and most importantly to promote measures and approaches that prevent and combat radicalisation and terrorism.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Onsite visit for the assessment of Tunisia's legislative and institutional anti-corruption framework based on GRECO methodology, 22- 26 February 2016, Tunis, Tunisia

Consultation for the design of a comprehensive training curriculum for future members and staff of the national preventive mechanism against torture, 23-24 February 2016, Rabat, Morocco

Workshops on interagency information exchange for asset recovery and on the setting-up of an asset recovery unit within the Jordanian Anti-corruption Commission, 6-10 March 2016, Amman, Jordan

Participation of Jordanian, Moroccan and Tunisian representatives in the 13th European Conference of the Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) on "New technologies in elections: public trust and challenges for EMBs" organised by the Venice Commission 14-15 April 2016, Bucharest, Romania

Delivery of PATHS module 2 training: introduction to the European Convention of Human Rights and other international systems for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, May 2016, Strasbourg, France



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