



South Programme II Newsletter N0. 1

January – March 2015

Editorial

South Programme II: time for a new start

THE PROGRAMME SUCCESSFULLY KICKS OFF IN THE COE PREMISES IN STRASBOURG

Three years have passed since the launch of the South Programme I, in the aftermath of the Arab spring events and the call for dignity, democracy and accountability in the societies of the Southern Mediterranean region. The Programme has initially rolled out in Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan where the Council of Europe has accompanied reforms in the areas of human rights, rule of law and democracy, whilst promoting a culture of these fundamental values in the region, across all the spectrum of society, from state to non-state actors.

The second edition of the South Programme, entitled “Towards strengthened democratic governance in the South Mediterranean” was launched on 10 April 2015 in the CoE premises in Strasbourg. The event gathered around 100 high level representatives from the two shores of the Mediterranean. The participants were presented the work plan of the second edition of the South Programme and exchanged on the way the programme could help partner countries respond adequately to the numerous challenges in the field of democratic governance.

How to build more inclusive and accountable societies, when the call for an independent and better functioning judiciary is even more pressing? How to support the countries from the region efforts to combat corruption, money laundering and terrorism? How to contribute to strengthening the level of human rights protection in the Southern Mediterranean countries and to fostering a constructive dialogue between state and non-state actors to the benefit of all citizens?

To achieve its objectives, the three year, EUR 7.4 Million EU-CoE joint programme will continue working hand in hand with national authorities and civil society, offering targeted legislative expertise on demand to accompany the efforts of Southern Mediterranean partners in the process of building new constitutional and legal frameworks and approximating their legislation with European and other international standards through accession to specific Council of Europe conventions.



Opening of the launch event in the presence of the CoE Secretary General, Mr Thorbjørn Jagland.

■ The South Programme II intends to contribute to deepening the partnership between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean partners as well as between them. This partnership should be based on mutual respect and underpinned by both the CoE and EU Neighbourhood policies.

■ Through the South Programme II, partners from the region can work with both the Council of Europe and the European Union, which has financed this ambitious programme since its beginning. Both organisations share the same universal values and norms in the field of human rights, Rule of law and democracy as well as the understanding that strengthened democratic governance can effectively contribute to the human, social and economic development.

Photo gallery of South Programme launch event:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/128748281@N02/sets/72157651968156711/>



▲ Workshop on "Strengthening capacities through interparliamentary co-operation, human rights training and local democracy."

◀ Round table on "Strengthening democratic governance in the Southern Mediterranean".

Regional co-operation in the field of human rights: visit of the Human Rights Committee of the League of Arab States



Dr. Hadi Ali M Alyami, Asem Mansour Mohammad Miqdad and Mohamed Juma Jasim Khalifa Fuzaiya at the Council of Europe.

■ A high level delegation of the Human Rights Committee of the League of Arab States composed of Dr. Hadi Ali M Alyami, President of the Human Rights Committee, Asem Mansour Mohammad Miqdad and Mohamed Juma Jasim Khalifa Fuzaiya, Members of the Human Rights Committee, visited the Council of Europe on 14-15 April 2015.

■ The delegation attended a Grand Chamber hearing of the European Court of Human Rights, had fruitful exchanges of views on the system of the European Convention of Human Rights and on CoE's action in the field of human rights, as well as a meeting with the Commissioner for Human Rights and a presentation of Council of Europe's instruments in the field of fight against terrorism. In the context of the setting-up of the Arab Court of Human Rights, the visit allowed the delegation to get familiar with the European system of protection of human rights and opened new prospects for co-operation in this field between the Council of Europe and the League of Arab States.

Adopting a proactive approach to prevent torture and ill treatment in Morocco: CoE experts assess needs and scope for joint work under the South Programme II

■ Following the ratification by Morocco of the United Nations Optional protocol to the Convention against torture (OPCAT) the need has increased to support the establishment – as foreseen by the 2011 Constitution – of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (MNP).

■ In this framework CoE experts paid an exploratory mission on 26-27 March, which aimed at establishing the scope of a potential CoE intervention concerning the support to the establishment of the Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (MNP), as well as at discussing avenues of co-operation in this field.

■ CoE experts held fruitful consultative exchanges with officials of the National Council for Human Rights and the Interministerial Human Rights Delegation, as well as international monitoring groups such as Amnesty International.

■ Besides, the mission was the occasion to discuss the use of specific CoE training-of-trainers (ToT) available tools such as HELP (Human rights education for legal professionals). HELP delivers ad hoc trainings on human rights for law professionals, alternative measures of detention, anti-discrimination, asylum and international cooperation in criminal matters. It was presented to the Moroccan stakeholders and was favorably welcomed by them.

Consolidating inter- and intra-regional networks in the field of drug prevention: MedNET at the forefront



■ The Pompidou Group's Mediterranean Network for Co-operation on Drugs and Addictions (MedNET) - which aims at improving the quality of the drug policies implementation within and among South Mediterranean partners - is at the forefront of the new South Programme's objective of facilitating mutual transfer of experiences through the consolidation of regional CoE networks.

■ MedNET has organised two study visits of Tunisian (20-23 January) and Palestinian (2-6 February) experts to Malta. By exchanging with their European peers, the Tunisian and Palestinian delegations gained invaluable insight on relevant methods and good practices on Opiate Substitution Treatment, an experience which could be not only easily adapted to their specific local needs, but also easily shared with other partners of the region.

■ Equally pointing to the consolidation of a regional approach to drug use in the Mediterranean area, the MedSPAD Committee (Mediterranean School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs) gathered experts from nine countries of both shores of the Mediterranean on 11 February and served as a platform to share progress and experience as well as to coordinate and fine tune future initiatives at regional level. The 2015 Committee saw the participation of Algeria - which will conduct a survey in 2015 - and Egypt - which is currently considering doing so in the future. It should be noted that the Committee was perfectly gender-balanced, with the participation of 6 men and 6 women.

■ Beside the consolidation of regional networks, the MedNET has launched bilateral activities with the launch of new semester-long addictology courses in Rabat and Casablanca in Morocco, as well as the establishment of a new Diploma in Addictology in Tunisia with 58 registered students. The university courses will last in principle six months and have the aim of training students in the field of addictology by developing both their theoretical and practical capabilities with the contribution of teachers from both shores of the Mediterranean.

■ Lastly, on 23-25 March, representatives from Egypt and Jordan took part in the Pompidou Group Executive Training "Conducting a review of global drug policies and instruments with a view to national and European drug policy priorities" held in Slovenia. The second phase of the training will be carried out in Italy in June 2015.

PROMOTING RULE OF LAW

Working together towards a common legal area between the two shores of the Mediterranean: presentation of the CoE's Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism in Tunisia

■ The first meeting of the Working Group on Council of Europe's Conventions dedicated to "the fight against terrorism while respecting human rights" was organised by the CoE together with the Tunisian Ministry of Justice and took place in Tunis on 12 March, within the framework of the South Programme II. The meeting brought the topical issue of prevention of terrorism to the forefront of the discussion in the light of the draft anti-terrorism law initiated in 2014 by Tunisia and expected to be resumed with the House of People's Representatives.

■ Gathering 86 participants, CoE representatives presented the Council of Europe convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No. 196) and discussed with their Tunisian counterparts on the situation in the country including a detailed presentation of the Tunisian bill by the Dean of Judges and the representative of the Ministry of Justice.

Accompanying justice reform in the Southern Mediterranean: the CEPEJ resumes its activities in the region



CoE activities in the field of justice reform resume in Tunisia.

■ Building upon the success of the first phase of the Programme, the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice, more commonly known as CEPEJ, has resumed its activities in Morocco and Tunisia aimed at the spelling out of co-operation framework in support to the on-going reform of the judiciary in this country within the framework of the South Programme II.

■ CEPEJ experts met representatives from the Moroccan Ministry of Justice, the World Bank and the EU Delegation in Rabat on 23 February 2015. As a result of the meeting, CEPEJ experts discussed and coordinated their future action with other donors and stakeholders in line with the long-term objective to develop and strengthen the capacities of democratic governance instances in the country.

■ In addition five CEPEJ experts visited Tunisia on 2-4 March 2015 in order to assess future needs, elaborate a new programme of co-operation activities and ensure the commitment of Tunisia's newly elected national authorities to the programme. In this context, the CEPEJ members met with the new Minister of Justice, Mr Mohamed Salah Ben Aissa, who expressed the wish to extend the pilot initiatives organised by CEPEJ more widely in the country. In addition, the CEPEJ experts led a training session and had an exchange of views with experts from the pilot courts with the aim to review past experiences and plan future initiatives in the country.

New co-operation framework to fight against Corruption and Money laundering in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia: building upon achievements and looking forward



Fighting corruption and money laundering in the Southern Mediterranean. Presentation of SNAC 2 workplan in Morocco.

■ In line with the new South Programme's greater focus on good governance, CoE experts visited Tunisia (16-18 February) and Morocco (2-4 March), and met relevant stakeholders to take stock of previous experiences and to fine tune future co-operation initiatives in the field. The visits in Morocco and Tunisia have offered to CoE's experts a chance to present and discuss the new work plan of activities to relevant national and international bodies involved in the fight against corruption and money laundering.

■ In Tunisia, the CoE's delegation met with several national – Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, representatives from the government and the Instance Nationale de Lutte contre la Corruption (INLUCC) – and international actors – EU, UNODC, UNDP, OECD – involved in the fight against corruption and money laundering. The meetings provided the chance to present to Tunisian partners the specific SNAC 2 project work plan and to agree and coordinate future co-operation priorities and activities.

■ In Morocco, the CoE's delegation met with representatives of the Instance Centrale de Prévention de la Corruption (ICPC), the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Public Function and Modernisation of the Administration as well as with a number of other agencies, which showed great eagerness in working with the CoE, especially in fields such as ethics, conflicts of interests and corruption law enforcement.

■ Lastly, a high level delegation from Jordan visited Strasbourg on 9th of April to discuss the areas of potential bilateral support by the CoE in the field of the anticorruption and money laundering in the framework of the South Programme II.

Participation of South Mediterranean representatives to the High-Level International Conference on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Organs



High-level government representatives meet in Santiago de Compostela to launch the new CoE convention on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Organs.

■ In parallel with the opening for signature of the Santiago de Compostela Convention against trafficking in human organs (CETS 216), a High-Level International Conference on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Organs was organised by the Council of Europe in collaboration with Spanish authorities in Santiago de Compostela (Spain) on 25-25 March.

■ The conference gathered over 250 government experts, law enforcement authorities, policy-makers and medical professionals from all over the world. Within the framework of the South Programme II, representatives from Algeria, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia have attended and took part in the discussions which animated the conference.

■ The participants participated in six different sessions which looked at this new CoE Convention from different angles, ranging from criminal law and jurisprudence to ethics and public health. They saluted the new Convention as the first legally-binding document to address the issue of organ trafficking which could, in the future, serve as a harmonising tool between the different domestic legal systems in Europe and beyond.

SUSTAINING DEMOCRACY

Strengthening North-South Migration Dialogue: the Council of Europe and the Parliament of Portugal organise a regional conference

■ In the framework of the South Programme II, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the North-South Centre and the Parliament of Portugal organised a regional Conference on North South Migration dialogue, in Lagos (Portugal) on 30-31 March 2015.

■ Over the two days, representatives of the Parliaments of Algeria, Jordan, Tunisia, and Morocco were able to discuss with their colleagues from the Parliaments of the Council of Europe member states on the new migration challenges, one of the most key issues in international relations.

■ Migration has become a major social and economic factor worldwide. The growth of global population and the ageing of the population in some regions have had a significant impact on the labour market. In addition, the previous division between north and south and developing countries is no longer as relevant as before; new flows are emerging from South to South, from north to north, and from North to South. Illegal migration constitutes one of the main challenges for European migration management.



Lagos regional conference on North South migration dialogue.

— This large event, which also gathered representatives of governmental bodies and national and international NGOs dealing with migration in the region, was a follow up to a national conference on the migration policy of Morocco, held in Rabat in October 2014 in the framework of the South Programme I. Both initiatives were held in conjunction with a Meeting of the Sub-committee on Cooperation with Non-European Countries of Origin and Transit of the PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced persons.

— Reports, recommendations and resolutions are currently being prepared in various fields related to the issue of migration.

Sharing expertise in the field of Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship Education: Moroccan delegation pays a working visit to Strasbourg

— Under the South Programme's objective of educating to democratic values, representatives of the Moroccan Ministry of Education visited Strasbourg on 16 January with a view to discuss new possibilities of co-operation with the CoE in the field of education to human rights and democratic citizenship. The Moroccan delegation met and exchanged views with several CoE bodies involved in human rights education, which offered the chance to present the CoE's policies and practices in the field.

— Furthermore, the visit provided the Moroccan delegation with a chance to identify and put forward possible areas of co-operation where the CoE's expertise could be valuable, such as education to multiculturalism, multilingualism, democratic governance and IT education, which are all components of Morocco's on-going reform of education as launched by the 2011 Constitution.

DONOR COORDINATION INITIATIVES

Collaborating with other EU funded sister projects: South Programme presented at final EuroMed justice III conference



— The South Programme has been put on the spotlight with a presentation delivered in the occasion of the final conference of EuroMed Justice III project, which took place in Barcelona on 11 March 2015. Participants from partner countries showed a strong interest in the South Programme I achievements as well in the South Programme II objectives and scope of work. Partner countries involved in the first edition of South Programme

(2012-2014) expressed their satisfaction with the work already done with the CoE in the framework of the Programme and expressed their will for this joint work to continue in the future. The meeting presented the opportunity for the participants to make a link between the EuroMed Justice and the South Programme and to lay the foundations for a good division of labour between the two sister-programmes in the future.

MAIN UPCOMING EVENTS

Training of Ombudsman assistants of the "Association des Ombudsman et des Médiateurs de la Francophonie"

5-7 May, Rabat, Morocco

Conference on Indirect Individual Access (exception d'inconstitutionnalité) to Constitutional Courts

13 May, Rabat, Morocco

CEPEJ Seminar on improvement of day-to-day justice

1-2 June, Monastir/Sousse, Tunisia

CoE Schools of Political Studies, Summer Academy on Democracy Strengthening (Bulgaria, Morocco, Tunisia)

1-7 June, Sofia, Bulgaria

FOCUS - THE SOUTH PROGRAMME II IN A NUTSHELL

The EU-CoE Joint Programme "Towards strengthened democratic governance in the South Mediterranean" – South Programme II, 2015-2017 – aims to contribute to the reinforcement of democratic governance in the Southern Mediterranean 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 countries from the region.

Co-operation activities under the South Programme are primarily directed to Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan and open to other countries from the Southern Mediterranean, through regional activities or targeted bilateral activities, in response to specific demands from national authorities and in line with the Programme's objectives.



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