

**First meeting of the bilateral Steering Committee of the Programme
« Towards strengthened democratic governance in the Southern Mediterranean »
(South Programme II, 2015-2017)**

Operational conclusions

Amman, 6 December 2016

The partners of the European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme “Towards strengthened democratic governance in the Southern Mediterranean” (South Programme II, 2015-2017), gathered in Amman on 6 December 2016, in the presence of Mr Wasfi Ayyad, Head of the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Mr Basel Tarawneh, Governmental Coordinator for Human Rights of the Prime Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ms Olfa Alouini, Deputy Head of Cooperation of the European Union Delegation to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Ms Verena Taylor, Director of the Office of the Directorate General of Programming of the Council of Europe, have welcomed the holding of the first meeting of the bilateral Steering Committee of the Programme between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Council of Europe.

The partners of the South Programme II have highlighted:

- the relevance of the South Programme II in supporting democratic reforms in Jordan ;
- the key role of the South Programme II in particular in :
 - ✓ the establishment of new legislative frameworks in line with European standards ;
 - ✓ 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;
 - ✓ the progressive creation of the common legal space;
- the alignment of the Programme with the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities and the synergies between activities carried out by the two institutions with the national authorities.

They also:

- welcomed the pragmatic approach and flexibility of the South Programme II, which is based on needs and requests;

- expressed the willingness to continue the co-operation in the framework of the South Programme II.

In particular the Steering committee of the South Programme II has adopted the following operational conclusions:

Reform of justice

The Committee has:

- taken note of the activities of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice in Jordan;
- recalled that the Council of Europe remains at the disposal of the Jordanian authorities, in particular the ministry of Justice and the Judicial Council, to pursue and further develop the co-operation to support the judicial reform processes and develop tools for more efficient administration of justice.

Co-operation in constitutional matters, support to democratic institutions

The Committee has:

- welcomed the cooperation between the Venice Commission and the Jordanian authorities in the field of constitutional justice and encouraged the Constitutional Court to continue its fruitful cooperation with the Commission, notably through participation in specific multilateral activities in 2017;
- taken note of the possible extension of cooperation to the electoral field and the interest expressed by the Independent Electoral Commission of Jordan to further develop its contacts with the Venice Commission;
- taken note of possible new areas of cooperation such as capacity-building for different national institutions and development of legislation and good practices in the field of political parties;
- reminded the authorities that the Venice Commission remains at their disposal for any co-operation concerning the reform of legal framework and capacity-building activities for national independent institutions.

Prevention of corruption, money laundering and terrorism

The Committee has:

- welcomed JIACC key coordination role and the excellent cooperation established with the Jordanian counterparts, including the Anti-Money Laundering Unit, General Security Directorate, Ministry of Justice and the Prosecution Service;
- invited the Jordanian authorities to pursue further cooperation in the establishment of institutional interagency mechanisms for asset recovery and corruption-proofing of legislation as per Council of Europe proposals and ongoing assistance;

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- taken into consideration the upcoming priorities for cooperation in the area of combating terrorism financing, preventing corruption in the sector of property registration and engagement of civil society in the fight against corruption.

Council of Europe networks

The Committee has:

- welcomed and further encouraged the participation of Jordanian experts in the Council of Europe networks and in particular at its intergovernmental and conventional committees;
- welcomed the commitment of Jordanian authorities in the Intercultural Cities Network, as well as their efforts to spread the Intercultural Cities methodology to twelve municipalities and encouraged the testing of the new approach to refugee inclusion derived from the Asset Based Community Development;
- encouraged the participation of Jordanian authorities in the Programme of Advanced Training in the field of Human rights, the rule of law and democracy for Southern Mediterranean (PATHS) at its upcoming modules to be organised in 2017.

Common legal space

The Committee has:

- invited Jordanian authorities to identify priority areas of cooperation in the field of harmonization of national legislation to Council of Europe standards and encouraged accession by Jordan to Council of Europe key conventions.

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