



South Programme II Newsletter No. 2

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Editorial

IMPROVING DAY-TO-DAY FUNCTIONING AND EFFICIENCY OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEMS IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN: CEPEJ WORK IN MOROCCO, TUNISIA AND JORDAN

The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) of the Council of Europe has been working actively in the Southern Mediterranean region since 2012 to improve the functioning of the judicial systems and to make justice more effective and accessible in Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan.

On the basis of national and courts evaluation reports setting out a number of recommendations, the CEPEJ has been closely working with pilot courts in those three partner countries in order to improve judicial time management and addressing difficulties observed in courts through the implementation of a number of CEPEJ tools.

Besides, the overall co-operation framework developed by CEPEJ has resulted in Morocco (2013) and more recently Tunisia (April 2015) obtaining the observer status by the CEPEJ. Both countries have been participating in various intergovernmental activities of the CEPEJ. The latter has also developed a strong working relationship with the Ministries of Justice in the three partner countries, by providing tailor-made support to help them improve their legislative framework allowing ultimately for a better day-to-day justice delivery. A number of activities have been carried out to strengthen the capacities of partner countries' officials and to allow them to integrate and replicate acquired knowledge and skills. Highlights of all seminars and workshops are given prominent space in the current issue of our newsletter.



25th plenary session of CEPEJ, Strasbourg, France, July 2015

Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean

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CEPEJ IN A NUTSHELL

■ The aim of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) of the Council of Europe is to improve the efficiency and functioning of justice and to further develop and implement the instruments adopted by the Council of Europe to this end.

■ Its duties are to analyse judicial systems and to identify the difficulties they meet; to define concrete ways to improve, on the one hand, the evaluation of their results, and on the other hand, the functioning of these systems; to provide a demand-driven assistance to member States and others, to propose to the competent instances of the Council of Europe the fields where it would be desirable to elaborate a new legal instrument.

■ The CEPEJ is composed of experts from all the 47 member States of the Council of Europe and is assisted by a Secretariat. Observers may be admitted to its work. In this regard, the Committee of Ministers decided to grant the observer status to the following countries: Israel (May 2012), Morocco (June 2013) and Tunisia (April 2015).

www.coe.int/t/dghl/cooperation/cepej/

PROTECTING AND PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Towards a National Preventive Mechanism against Torture: Council of Europe steps up its co-operation with Tunisia and Morocco



Council of Europe experts' mission in Tunisia to support the establishment of a National Preventive Mechanism against torture

■ A delegation of CoE experts conducted an exploratory mission (9 - 11 June 2015) followed by a workshop (17 September 2015) in Tunis, aimed at exploring prospects for the establishment of a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) against torture, and the potential Council of Europe support in the set-up of such instance. The follow-up workshop, which gathered over 100 participants from high authorities, instances and international bodies, reviewed the selection criteria for the appointment of the NMP members; the distinct roles of actors in the establishment of the institution; budgetary aspects as well as the awareness raising activities to introduce the role and functioning of the MNP.

■ As regards Morocco, following the National Council of Human Rights' appeal for the Council of Europe's support in the set-up of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), a visit was paid by Council of Europe experts on 15 and 16 September 2015, to assess and reflect on the environment, design and functioning of the prospective Moroccan NPM. The two days meeting with high-level Moroccan representatives have focused on discussions on the development of the legal framework, the identification of institutional capacity development needs and potential Council of Europe support in experience sharing and networking with European counterparts.

Effective prevention, treatment, control of addiction and fight against drug trafficking through Council of Europe knowledge networks

■ Seeking further expansion and consolidation of the regional cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking, drug abuse, and particularly the growing risk of precursor drugs, initiatives under the South Programme II in September 2015 have included the participation of MedNet experts from Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia in the annual meeting of the international network on precursor control. This co-operation mechanism gathers regulatory authorities, prosecutors, representatives of chemical industries and international agencies and substantially contributes to the development of partner countries' institutional capacities and efforts in the prevention of drug precursors' diversion.

■ Southern Mediterranean representatives also took part in the "First European Conference on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies" organised in Lisbon on 23-25 September 2015, by SICAD (Portuguese General Directorate for Intervention on Addictive Behaviours and), the journal "Addiction", the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), International Society of Addiction Journal Editors (ISAJE) and the Council of Europe Pompidou Group. This multi-disciplinary forum allowed participants from the South to share knowledge and experience with distinguished researchers on drugs and addictive behaviours practitioners and policy experts from all over the world and international organisations (UNODC, UNICRI, WHO and EMCDDA).

PROMOTING RULE OF LAW

Unleashing the potential of judicial bodies for an improved functioning and more efficient justice delivery



Seminar on "improving day to day justice", Monastir, Tunisia

■ The European Commission for Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) jointly with the Tunisian Ministry of Justice organised a regional seminar in **Monastir, on 1-2 June 2015**, that brought together a wide number of legal and judicial representatives from Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia in a stocktaking exercise of CEPEJ's work and

achievements in Tunisia. In the course of five workshops, participants have been introduced to the CEPEJ's tools and methodologies, adopted in the six Tunisian pilot courts, and provided with the opportunity to draw on expertise and experience of their peers, as well as exchanging views on the justice reforms in Tunisia and across the South Mediterranean region.

Photo gallery

www.coe.int/t/dghl/cooperation/cepej/cooperation/South_prog/Tunisia/Galerie_photos_Monastir.asp

■ A Jordanian delegation from the Ministry of Justice and the Jordanian Judicial Council have taken part in a study visit of the Swiss Federal Court in Lucerne, organised by CEPEJ **on 9 June 2015**. The study tour was dedicated to the judicial scoreboards and reporting systems, and it provided the Jordanian group with a practical insight of implementation of the CEPEJ tools at the Swiss Federal Court, including an introduction of the court's computer applications, used for case managements, designation of judges and statistical purposes.

■ As observers of the CEPEJ work – a status acquired in the context of co-operation under the South Programme II – Tunisia and Morocco participated in the 25th plenary meeting of the CEPEJ in Strasbourg, 2-3 July 2015 which centred on the launch of the new 2014-2016 evaluation cycle of judicial systems and the questionnaire on technologies that will be adopted for the purpose. Reflections were also held on prospects for the promotion of cyber-justice methodology to enhance court work efficiency, followed by an overview of co-operation and capacity development programmes. Participation to CEPEJ plenary meetings provides Tunisia and Morocco with the opportunity for networking with their European counterparts, better knowledge of the CEPEJ tools, methodology and its work in general; whilst advancing CEPEJ cooperative projects with the pilot courts.

■ CEPEJ experts carried out a field trip in Rabat and Casablanca (Morocco) on 21-24 April, 2015 aimed at road-mapping of co-operation activities with the main judicial bodies of the Ministry of Justice. After the first day visit of new pilot courts of Rabat - the Administrative Court and the Appeal Court – a presentation of CEPEJ work and a round table on the enforcement of administrative decision were delivered to the heads of jurisdictions and pilots prosecution authorities. Similarly, the Commercial Court of Casablanca has been presented with the CEPEJ methodology and tools on judicial time management and quality of justice.



Jordanian Ministry of Justice and Council of Europe representatives before the Swiss Federal court (Luzern, Switzerland)

Judicial time management was in the spotlight again during the 18th meeting of the Steering Group of the CEPEJ SATURN Centre), organised in Strasbourg on 22-24 September 2015. The session, attended by a Jordanian delegation, reviewed concepts and definitions, used in the CEPEJ tools for judicial cases management, and discussed the European time-frames for judicial proceedings. In a similar fashion, the 10th plenary meeting of pilot courts' network of the CEPEJ on 23 September 2015, in Strasbourg, also focused on the length of judicial proceedings, based on the CoE manual "Saturn Guidelines for Judicial Time Management", and was attended by Morocco and Jordan.



Jordanian participants to SATURN meeting on judicial cases management visit the European Court for Human Rights

Advancing the fight against child abuse and sexual exploitation in the Southern Mediterranean

In light of Tunisia's elaboration of the national integrated policy for the protection of children against violence, the Council of Europe in co-operation with the Ministry of Women, Family and Childhood organised a seminar in Tunis, on 3-5 June 2015 promoting awareness of the Council of Europe's Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, known as the Lanzarote Convention. The seminar has not only allowed an assessment of the context and needs upon which co-operation activities will be projected, but it has also favoured an exchange of views and experiences between Tunisian authorities and international partners operating locally in the area of children's rights.



Presentation of Lanzarote convention in Tunisia

Lanzarote convention was also presented in Jordan to national authorities, policy makers, international organisations, civil society and practitioners during a visit conducted by the Council of Europe experts in Amman on 27-28 May 2015. The visit has also allowed an assessment of the environment and the needs to which cooperation activities in the protection of children rights and the fight of violence against women will be geared. Ultimately, contacts were established with the main national and international actors working locally in this particular field.



Presentation of Lanzarote convention in Jordan

■ Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia took part in the 12th meeting of the Lanzarote Convention Committee, organised in Strasbourg, on 15-17 June 2015. Along with their European counterparts, the South Med partners examined the monitoring process for the implementation of the Convention, adopted a draft opinion and its explanatory note on Article 23 of the Convention “Solicitation of children for sexual purposes”, and discussed the results of the 1st meeting of the Working Group on Trends in Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

■ In the same vein, the Council of Europe hosted in its headquarters in Strasbourg, on 18-19 June 2015 the 5th high-level Cross-Regional Meeting on violence against children. Convened annually by the UN Special Representative on Violence against Children, the meeting was also attended by Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. It brought together regional organisations from all around the world to appraise and reflect on past achievements, common challenges, best practices and co-operation opportunities in the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against children.

Supporting Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan in their fight against corruption



Council of Europe experts meet their Tunisian counterparts

■ Between April and September 2015, the South Neighbourhood Anti-corruption Project II (SNAC II) – organised a series of workshops in which Tunisian anti-corruption institutions received legislative and institutional support from international experts. Activities encompassed the drafting of an organic law establishing the new Tunisian Anti-corruption Authority foreseen by the Constitution and the organisation of a round table to launch the comprehensive assessment of the Tunisian anti-corruption framework on the basis of the GRECO methodology.

During their 3rd on-site visit to Morocco since the roll out of the South Programme II (Rabat, 4-5 June 2015), Council of Europe experts provided support to the Central Instance for the Prevention of Corruption (ICPC) in designing a manual on administrative anti-corruption inquiries, intended also to lay out a step-by-step procedure for use by investigators. The Moroccan authorities were also advised on the preparation of an anti-corruption risk assessment of the public procurement sector during a working visit of SNAC team to Rabat on 8-12 June 2015.

Furthermore, a consultation on whistle-blowers and witness protection mechanisms and an exchange of good practices took place in Jordan, where CoE experts met in Amman with the Jordanian Anti-Corruption Authority representatives on 16-17 June 2015. In addition, the meeting provided the opportunity to discuss broadly different areas of the Jordanian Anti-corruption Authority work, including forensic capacities and investigative powers.

SNAC II website

www.coe.int/t/dghl/cooperation/economiccrime/corruption/Projects

SUSTAINING DEMOCRACY

Towards more inclusive societies nurturing diversity through the intercultural cities network



Participants in workshop on intercultural strategies (Haifa, Israel)

A team of CoE experts met with key representatives of local and international institutions in Haifa, Israel on 3-6 August 2015 to discuss the CoE support in the setting up of engaging-participatory process for the development, implementation and monitoring of the intercultural strategy in Haifa through a better engagement with civil society. A workshop, organised for the staff of the Beit Hafegen Cultural Centre and the staff of the Municipality of Haifa, focused on Community Based Results Accountability approach (CBRA) and citizens' involvement in the establishment of intercultural strategies.

2015 summer session of International Institute of Human rights focuses on children's rights

Organised in Strasbourg, from 6 to 24 July 2015, "Children and international human rights law" is the theme of the 46th annual study session of the International Institute of Human Rights, to which funding of the South Programme II has allowed 9 experts from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia to take part in this unique capacity development event, supervised by leading academics, judges and diplomats, working on children's rights. With over 300 participants from all around the world, the session has also provided a forum for experience sharing and exchange of best practices. In the closing of the event, experts of the CoE presented the 14 Conventions of the CoE, related to children's rights, and in particular the Lanzarote Convention.



Summer session of International Institute of Human Rights with Southern Mediterranean representatives, Strasbourg, France

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Participation of the Tunisian and Moroccan Schools of Political Studies in the World Forum for Democracy 'Freedom vs control: For a democratic response', 18-20 November 2015, Strasbourg , France.
- Launching of PATHS' (Advanced Programme on Human Rights Training) first training session, 30 November-3 December 2015, Venice, Italy.
- Seminar launching a Compendium of key Council of Europe Conventions on Human Rights, 1 December 2015, Rabat, Morocco.
- Lisbon Forum 2015: "How to combat radicalisation and terrorism: prevention tools and shared knowledge in the Mediterranean and European space", 3-4 December 2015, Lisbon, Portugal.



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