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Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean

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Introduction to European and international human rights standards with the “Programme of Advanced Training in the field of Human rights, the rule of law and democracy for Southern Mediterranean”

The Programme for Advance Training in the field of Human rights, rule of law and democracy (PATHS) has brought together 30 national experts and legal professionals from the Southern Mediterranean in a four-day workshop dedicated to the “Introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights and other international systems for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms”.



This second module of the demand-driven, comprehensive training framework developed specifically for Southern Mediterranean partners in the framework of the South Programme II's initiatives, was held in Strasbourg on 23-26 May 2016. It follows on from PATHS launching module on “constitutional justice, transitional justice and the legislative process” that was delivered in Venice in November 2015.

Through a combination of plenary and group-specific sessions, participants were introduced to the human rights protection used in the international legal systems and the European Convention of Human Rights as one of the cornerstones of “European constitutional law”. The study of the functioning of the European Court of Human Rights was also a substantial part of this capacity building session on

the procedural aspects of the protection of fundamental rights. It involved a simulation of a case before the Court and a series of presentations and case-studies, which provided participants the opportunity to share experience, reflect on the margin of appreciation of their respective national legislation as well as the opportunity for networking.

An evaluation of the feedback from the participants praised the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the training: a success that the Council of Europe will strive to guarantee with the next module.

PROTECTING AND PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Accompanying the set-up and functioning of the prospective Moroccan and Tunisian National Preventive Mechanisms against torture



In supporting Morocco's efforts to combat the phenomenon of torture, Council of Europe's experts visited Rabat on 25-26 February 2016 to prepare a training programme for members of the National Preventive Mechanism against torture (NPM) and

consult with the Delegation of the European Union in Morocco and the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) over the training content and methodology. Side meetings were also held with representatives of the National Council for Human Rights (CNDH) followed by a visit to its new training centre.

During a second workshop held on 25 April in Rabat, the Council of Europe presented the training programme for members and staff of the future NPM before the National Council for Human Rights and APT representatives.

The initial training programme was finally held on 30 and 31 May 2016 in Rabat, focused on the role, mandate and working modalities of the NPM, as well as the national and international legal framework for the fight against torture and its prevention.

In Tunisia, a key stage in the NMP set-up process was marked by the election of the sixteen constituent members of the new Authority (INPT) by the Assembly of the Representatives of the People (ARP), in late March 2016. Later on 19 May 2016, a meeting organised by the CoE in Tunis gathered the INPT members with international partners for a discussion of co-operation areas.

Prevention and fight against drug abuse and drug trafficking: the Council of Europe supports the development of regional policies



To improve the regional co-operation between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean in the fight against the abuse of alcohol and other drugs, the Council of Europe Pompidou Group held a meeting of its MedSPAD Committee on 9 February in Paris (France).

The participants exchanged experience and expertise as regards the preparation of the school surveys (MedSPAD survey) in the Southern Mediterranean – Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia –, which aim to take stock of the state of use and abuse of alcohol in the region. Subsequently, a regional report will be published in the second half of 2016 that will help partner countries develop their prevention policies.

Council of Europe Pompidou Group

PROMOTING THE RULE OF LAW

Consolidate the work with Jordan and Tunisia to improve justice in everyday life: focus on the quality of justice and judicial time management

In order to consolidate the South Programme II achievements in the field of justice reform, representatives of Tunisia and Jordan attended the meeting of the Working Group of the European Commission for efficiency of justice (CEPEJ) on the quality of justice (GT-QUAL) on 15 and 16 March in Strasbourg.

Tunisian pilot courts representatives had the opportunity to discuss with their European peers specific measures and concrete solutions to remedy shortcomings in judicial activity. The users' satisfaction surveys project in Tunisia was the



subject of a separate workshop held on 17 March in the presence of presidents of three Tunisian pilot courts: Nabeul, Sidi Bouzid and Zaghouan.

South Programme II activities in the field of justice reform were presented to the new director of the Department of International Co-operation at the Ministry of Justice in Jordan.

In a separate meeting held on 22 March, Tunisian and Jordanian representatives had constructive exchanges with their CEPEJ peers on the length of judicial proceedings and statistical data collection as well as on the implementation and dissemination of SATURN centre tools which deal with judicial time management.

European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ)



Better governance through independent bodies: the Venice Commission supports the institution of the Administrative Mediator in Morocco and Tunisia

To support the development of independent democratic governance bodies in the Southern Mediterranean, the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe in partnership with the Association of Mediators of the Mediterranean (AOM), supported the administrative Ombudsman of Tunisia on the identification of the institution's needs.

During a visit to Tunis on 25 February, the Venice Commission experts assessed the legislation relating to the Ombudsman under the new Tunisian Constitution as well as its organisational structure in the light of European and international legislation and practice. The results of the assessment will feed directly into the development of a training programme for the Ombudsman's staff including an exchange scheme between European and Tunisian peers.

Along the same line, the Venice Commission, in association with the Mediator of Morocco, contributed in the organisation of the 17th training session of staff members of the Association of Ombudsmen and Mediators of the Francophonie (AOMF) which was held on 17-19 May 2016 in Rabat. The training was dedicated to communication objectives and strategies for the mediation institutions in the times of the "social web".



Constitutional Justice in the Southern Mediterranean: regional challenges and reforms

Members of the Union of Arab Constitutional Courts and Councils from six Mediterranean countries met on 28 and 29 February 2016 by the shores of the Dead Sea in Jordan to discuss regional challenges and ways to support of regional constitutional justice bodies. The meeting was organised at the request of the Constitutional Court of Jordan in co-operation with the Council of Europe and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Participants exchanged with the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission experts on issues related to constitutional justice, and in particular on the interaction between constitutional justice and international treaties, the balance between state interests and the protection of fundamental rights, and the impact of constitutional court decisions.

Council of Europe Venice Commission



Support to the Moroccan private sector in its efforts to fight against corruption

On 22 and 23 February, the Council of Europe, in co-operation with the Moroccan Anti-Corruption Authority (ICPC) and the Federation of Entrepreneurs of Morocco (CGEM) organised two workshops addressed to the private sector. The first workshop presented international good practices for self-regulation, risk assessment, internal audit and investigations to prevent corruption in private enterprises. As a follow-up to the discussions, a guide on self-regulatory policies for anti-corruption compliance in the private sector is under preparation by the Council of Europe experts, ICPC and CGEM representatives.

The second workshop focused on corruption risks in public procurement approached from the perspectives of the private sector. Debate also covered key procedural vulnerabilities and red flags in the public procurement process in Morocco. The results of the discussion will feed into an overarching risk assessment exercise of the public procurement sector led by the ICPC with the involvement of inspections authorities, law enforcement bodies and government agencies involved in public procurement.

Strengthening the Jordanian asset recovery framework

From 6 to 10 March 2016, CoE experts held a series of workshops and meetings aimed at reinforcing the capacities of the Jordanian authorities in dealing with asset recovery cases. A first workshop on 7-8 March examined international good practices on interagency information exchange for the purpose of asset recovery.



A second workshop, held on 10 March, focused on the international asset recovery process, international networks for asset recovery and concrete examples of requests for international mutual legal assistance. The workshops were addressed to Jordanian institutions involved in asset recovery, notably the Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Unit, prosecutors seconded to the Jordanian Anti-Corruption Commission (JACC), investigators, officials from customs and from the General Security Directorate.

Additional working meetings were held by CoE experts on 6 and 9 March with JACC and AML/CFT Unit in order to provide support to the establishment of a Unit responsible for asset recovery. The discussions focused on the development of the Unit's standard operating procedures as well as the procedures to interact with other external agencies.

Regional training on administrative anti-corruption inquiries

A regional training event on “risk-based administrative anti-corruption inquiries” was held at the Council of Europe's headquarters in Strasbourg from 17 to 20 May 2016.



It brought together practitioners from inspection bodies, audit authorities and anti-corruption agencies of Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia for an in-depth insight into the types and methods of administrative inquiries, public procurement risks, financial and accounting analysis techniques, other aspects of administrative investigations, presented through a risk-based approach.

Through a series of case studies, the participants were also given the chance to share their experience and strengthen their capacities in identifying corruption-related infringements in their inspection work.

SUSTAINING DEMOCRACY

Developing inclusive policies through the intercultural lens: Intercultural Cities Network in Jordan and Morocco



The Council of Europe organised two workshops in Jordan and Morocco (February and March 2016) to launch the Intercultural Cities Project (ICC) in the Southern Mediterranean.

Both workshops presented an overview of the concepts developed by ICC in its 100-cities network to support the application of a new diversity management model called intercultural integration. The project is based on the notion of diversity advantage – treating migrants as a resource for local economic, social and cultural development, and not merely as vulnerable groups in need of support and services.

In Jordan, during the inception meeting held in Amman on 1 February 2016, four pilot municipalities (Amman, Zarqa, Wasitiyyah and Sahab) were identified as ready and willing to co-operate. On-site visits carried out from 29 May to 1 June 2016 have allowed the baseline assessment of city policies on the intercultural approach. High-level endorsement was obtained from the Minister for Municipal Affairs as well as the Great Amman Municipality in Jordan, which have officially named a programme co-ordinator.

In Morocco, during a meeting in Tangiers on 4 March 2016, representatives of eleven Moroccan cities (Tangiers, Agadir, Meknes, Rabat, Casablanca, Marrakech, Chefchaouen, Tetouan, Kenitra, Martil and Larache) unanimously approved the creation of a network of Moroccan Intercultural cities to be hosted and co-ordinated by the city of Tangiers.

In the coming months all cities will complete the ICC Index (a self-assessment and benchmarking tool surveying eleven policy indicators) and work on a common action plan and priorities areas for the Network.

**Council of Europe Intercultural
Cities**

Third Summer Academy for Strengthening Democracy in the Euro-Med Region: young leaders from Morocco, Tunisia discuss challenges and opportunities of education and democracy

The third Summer Academy for Strengthening Democracy in the Euro-Med Region which was dedicated to democracy and education was organised on 25-30 May 2016 in Pravets. It gathered 21 young political and community leaders from the Council of Europe's Schools of Political Studies in Bulgaria, Tunisia and Morocco.

While highlighting the importance of gender equality and its role as a prerequisite for stability, the experts urged for a better access of women to the daily political and social life in countries like Morocco and Tunisia. The five-day workshop allowed participants to debate on topics such as migration, career development as well as access to education for young people from Morocco and Tunisia.

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For more information about the South Programme II



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