

## LISBON FORUM 2018:

### *Youth, Peace and Security*

*Uplifting youth engagement in peace and democratic processes  
in the Euro-Mediterranean Region*

Lisbon, Portugal  
15 and 16 November 2018

### *Draft Concept Note*

Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the Southern Mediterranean

Funded  
by the European Union



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



Implemented  
by the Council of Europe

*In partnership with:*



AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

## INTERCONNECTING PEOPLE: LISBON FORUM' NEW CYCLE 2018-2019

An annual event since it was established in 1994 by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, the Lisbon Forum is a platform which brings together high level *Quadrilogue* actors (governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities and civil society) from Council of Europe member states and Southern Mediterranean countries, international organisations, academia, foundations, donors and media to share experience and best practice on themes which are closely related to the core mission of the Council of Europe: to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

In its 17<sup>th</sup> meeting on 7 November 2017 in Rabat (Kingdom of Morocco), the Executive Committee of the North South Centre approved the proposal that the Lisbon Fora for the upcoming years will respond to the overarching theme “interconnecting people”. The decision was taken with the shared understanding that effective responses to today’s challenges require a coordinated, systematic and structured approach that places “people” at the centre of the discussion: acknowledging their sovereignty, trusting in their potential and stressing their interdependence and interconnection. The Executive Committee agreed to focus the Lisbon Forum in 2018 on youth, peace and security and in 2019 on democracy, human rights and gender equality.

The Lisbon Fora in 2018 and 2019 will continue to be part of the two-year cycle **EU/Council of Europe South Programme III: Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights**. In the framework of the South Programme III, the North-South Centre will continue to offer a platform for articulated dialogue and structured cooperation that will address key challenges faced by countries in Europe and in the Southern Mediterranean and explore possibilities for renewed regional and multilateral cooperation.

In the new cycle, the Lisbon Fora will not be stand-alone events but yearly milestones of a continuous cycle that will incorporate a seed-funding mechanism to support start-up/scale-up pilot activities with a focus on peace and human security.

## 2018: YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

Global interdependence lies at the core of the complex international order in which societies are exposed, among other elements, to growing inequality in wealth distribution, human rights violations, discrimination, armed conflicts, forced displacement, as well as climate change and human insecurity.

In this context, and according to the Independent Progress Study<sup>1</sup> presented to the Security Council on 23 April 2018, stereotypes associating young people with disengagement and violence are largely widespread.

However, in December 2015, the UN Security Council adopted for the first time a resolution on the positive role youth play in preventing conflict and violent extremism and in sustaining peace, shifting the international focus to recognize young people as a large sector of the population with the potential to contribute to constructive change. Referring to the Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security, young people are “the missing peace”; young people work on peace and security is the “connecting tissue” that bridges the silos of development, human rights, humanitarian affairs, peace and security, from the local to the global level.

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<sup>1</sup> [The missing peace: independent progress study on Youth, Peace and Security. March 2018](#)

Following a process of regional consultations with young peacebuilders to support the implementation of the UN SCR 2250 (2015), a series of recommendations have been put forward to guide the definition of vertical action plans and strategies. Nevertheless, the process is still at the very early stage.

The lessons learnt from UN SCR 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security reveal that the implementation of the recommendations will take time and its success will ultimately rely on the cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors on the principles of dialogue, partnership, solidarity and shared responsibility.

In this context, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe will aim at strengthening the commitment to shared principles and values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law which cannot be disconnected from the issues around youth, peace and security in Europe and Southern Mediterranean.

Since its creation, the North-South Centre has been an important soft power instrument for regional and multilateral cooperation of the Council of Europe with the Southern Mediterranean, serving as a platform for structured cooperation, promoting confidence building between governments, parliamentarians, local and regional authorities and particularly, civil society organisations with a bottom-up participatory approach, where youth is at the core of its programmes.

## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

In 2018, the Lisbon Forum will address current issues of youth, peace and security, more concretely, how to contribute to move from the recommendations of the UN SCR 2250 (2015) to its implementation. In looking into this issue, the Lisbon Forum will promote partnerships that ensure a collective impact at the local, national, regional and global levels.

The Lisbon Forum 2018 will provide a platform to i) facilitate dialogue between young people and decision and policy makers ii) mobilise partnerships and iii) leverage support to inclusive, comprehensive and integrated programmes to be implemented in the Euro-Mediterranean region with a focus on peace and human security.

### Methodology

The Lisbon Forum 2018 will be organised in partnership with youth-led and youth-oriented organisations, ensuring a balanced participation between decision makers and young people.

The Lisbon Forum will be followed by the launching of a flexible seed-funding mechanism that will provide opportunities for small-scale vertical pilot initiatives run by, with and/or for young people with a focus on peace and human security.

### **Targeted outputs:**

- *Quadriologue* representatives, international organisations, academia, foundations, donors and civil society organisations commit to the establishment of partnerships and networks facilitated and coordinated by the North- South Centre in the field of youth, peace and security.
- Awareness is raised on the UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, its recommendations and latest developments prompting cooperation and campaigns between

different *quadrilogue* representatives, international organisations, academia, foundations, donors and civil society organisations, particularly youth civil society.

- Structured dialogue ensuring participation of youth are promoted.
- Lessons learnt related to: i) multilateral and regional cooperation; ii) participatory and inclusive approach iii) action plans and effective implementation of the recommendations; iv) data collection and impact assesment; v) grassroots initiatives for peacebuilding are shared.
- Two follow-up projects are facilitated by the North-South Centre through a seed-funding scheme.

**Targeted outcomes:**

- Bottom-up multilateral cooperation among *quadrilogue* representatives, international organisations, academia, foundations, donors and youth representatives on issues related to youth, peace and security is enhanced through peer-learning, networking and the transfer of knowledge.
- Increased awareness about global interdependence and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by facilitating a dialogue between *quadrilogue* actors from the North and the South in which respective challenges and concepts interpretation related to youth, peace and security are acknowledged and better understood.
- The level of regional cooperation through the coordination with existing networks by means of the participation of Southern Mediterranean relevant instances is enhanced.
- Pilot activities are translated in concrete scale-up projects aiming at encouraging youth grassroot participation.
- Enhanced knowledge on Council of Europe and other international standards related to issues of youth, peace and security through their promotion.

**Targeted group(s):**

- representatives from national governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities and international organisations,
- international, national, regional and local youth-led and youth-oriented organisations
- academia, foundations, donors and media.