



Resolution 1779 (2010)¹

Final version

Co-operation between the Council of Europe and the Maghreb countries in the field of social cohesion

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Despite the considerable advances achieved by the three central Maghreb countries, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, in their human development over recent years – including poverty alleviation – social cohesion remains a major challenge for them. The Council of Europe for its part can share its *acquis* and experience in the promotion of social cohesion, declared to be one of the pillars of democratic stability at the Warsaw Summit (2005), and of social rights as enshrined in the European Social Charter (revised) (ETS No. 163).
2. The Parliamentary Assembly confirms its commitment to co-operation with the Maghreb countries, as expressed in its [Resolution 1598 \(2008\)](#) and [Recommendation 1825 \(2008\)](#) on strengthening co-operation with the Maghreb countries. It recalls its latest substantial contributions in this respect, particularly [Resolution 1680 \(2009\)](#) on the establishment of a "partner for democracy" status with the Parliamentary Assembly and [Recommendation 1919 \(2010\)](#) on the Euro-Mediterranean region: call for a Council of Europe strategy.
3. It welcomes the concrete moves made to implement enhanced co-operation with the Maghreb countries, particularly under various partial or enlarged agreements open to non-member states, such as the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) and the Pompidou Group.
4. In these times of world economic crisis, the Assembly is convinced that the Council of Europe should continue to regard social cohesion as an essential factor of democratic stability and that all endeavours to promote the Organisation's values beyond its boundaries should embody a social component. Special responsibility falls to the Council of Europe because of the manifold economic and social interdependence between the Maghreb countries and European states, as well its mandate as a promoter of democracy and human rights. The Assembly reiterates its strong determination to develop co-operation with the parliaments of the three Maghreb countries by means of regular debate in the framework of plenary sessions, committee meetings and more informal exchanges.
5. In order to strengthen co-operation with the three central Maghreb countries in the field of social cohesion, the Assembly invites the Council of Europe member states to:
 - 5.1. reinforce co-operation both at the level of the Parliamentary Assembly and by means of the existing intergovernmental co-operation mechanisms such as the Venice Commission, the North–South Centre and the Pompidou Group;
 - 5.2. take the following measures regarding Council of Europe co-operation mechanisms and expertise:
 - 5.2.1. support the Maghreb countries in their democratic development to help them fulfil the conditions for obtaining "partner for democracy" status with the Parliamentary Assembly;

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 12 November 2010 (see [Doc. 12353](#), report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Blum).*



5.2.2. continue to support the Maghreb countries in their efforts to accede to other Council of Europe partial or enlarged agreements open to non-member states, and encourage them to have regard to the Council of Europe standards in their national policies, such as those found in the European Social Charter (revised), even if accession is not possible;

5.2.3. reinforce their bilateral co-operation arrangements with the Maghreb countries;

5.3. follow the goals and principles below with regard to the substantive themes of co-operation with the Maghreb countries:

5.3.1. satisfy themselves that all future co-operation activity between the Council of Europe and the Maghreb countries addresses the major challenges of better social cohesion, in particular:

5.3.1.1. the problems of ill-treatment and illiteracy affecting children;

5.3.1.2. education, equal opportunities and the problem of discrimination among young people;

5.3.1.3. equal opportunities for women and men at all levels and especially as regards access to skilled employment and equal participation in public life;

5.3.1.4. proper functioning of the labour market, offering career opportunities for qualified young people;

5.3.1.5. access to health care for all, including the most vulnerable groups (unemployed, elderly, inhabitants of rural areas, etc.);

5.3.1.6. equal opportunities between different geographical sectors (town centres/ outskirts, town/country, etc.);

5.3.2. take account of migration as a factor of global interdependence by encouraging and helping the Maghreb countries to control irregular immigration through management of immigration movements from the Maghreb that is respectful of human rights;

5.3.3. address urgently the social problems of the immigrant populations in their own countries, problems which are more liable to occur among populations subject to marginal status or discrimination;

5.4. ensure that co-operation with the Maghreb countries in relation to social cohesion proceeds in co-ordination with other European and international institutions (European Union, United Nations Development Programme, etc.), whose actions for the human development of the countries concerned are complementary to those of the Council of Europe.

6. Lastly, the Assembly invites the states of the central Maghreb – Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia – to follow these same lines of co-operation with the Council of Europe and its member states, and especially to:

6.1. accede, if they have not yet done so, to the Council of Europe instruments open to non-member states, and to take account of other Council of Europe standards, such as those found in the European Social Charter (revised), in framing their national policies;

6.2. urge their competent authorities to establish contacts with the Council of Europe concerning social cohesion, social rights and other specific social questions, as well as concerning the promotion of democracy and human rights;

6.3. address, through legal and political measures, shared problems such as illegal immigration;

6.4. promote their parliaments' dialogue and co-operation with the Assembly by regularly participating in the plenary sessions of the Assembly, committee meetings and more informal exchanges (conferences, seminars, etc.), according to goals and programmes to be jointly determined.

7. Regarding the mechanisms of co-operation, the Assembly further considers that its Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee should be more closely associated with the proceedings of the Executive Council of the North–South Centre to ensure better consideration of social questions. This could be done informally, through ad hoc activities and formally, by suggesting that the committee should also be represented on the Executive Council of the North–South Centre. The Assembly asks its member states to support this idea when it comes to the adoption of the new statutory resolution of the North–South Centre by the Committee of Ministers.

8. The Assembly is convinced that even after the current reforms, social cohesion and migration should remain priority themes of the future action of the Council of Europe, owing to their close links with the fundamental values of the Organisation.