



EURO-MEDITERRANEAN HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK  
RESEAU EURO-MÉDITERRANÉEN DES DROITS DE L'HOMME  
الشبكة الأوروبية - المتوسطية لحقوق الإنسان

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

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## **Morocco after the Arab Spring:**

### **Human Rights Warrant Continued Vigilance**

On the occasion of the EU-Morocco Association Council meeting taking place today, 23 April, the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) calls upon the European Union (EU) to continue to monitor the constitutional reforms that have recently taken place in Morocco.

The EMHRN is pleased to note that the reforms include the recognition of a multifaceted Moroccan identity and the return of legislative power to the Parliament. While the Network also welcomes the inclusion of the principles of gender parity and the primacy of international law over domestic laws, it wishes to draw attention to the fact that the recognition of these principles remains subject to interpretation.

The new constitution affirms Morocco's compliance with the different human rights treaties, but the confusion between religious reality and secular power appears to limit the scope of this positive step. The result is the absence in the constitution of any reference to freedom of thought.

*'The immediate issue is the adoption of a range of organic laws that will set out the criteria for implementing these constitutional reforms, said Michel Tubiana, member of the EMHRN Executive Committee. Depending on their content, these laws will either make it possible to move forward in applying international human rights standards or block progress in that direction. One must be particularly attentive to the reform of the justice system, often announced in the past but never actually implemented, as well as to women's rights.'*

It is essential to strengthen the expertise resources of the Moroccan Parliament in order to ensure that the mechanisms of participative democracy function normally, as provided for in the new constitution.

The EMHRN hopes that these crucial points will be addressed in detail in the second Action Plan under the European Neighbourhood Policy, which is to be adopted at the Association Council meeting.

The Network calls for the implementation of the Action Plan to include concrete steps in support of Morocco's acceptance of international human rights standards, including economic, social and cultural rights. The EMHRN urges the EU and Morocco to establish a structured dialogue with

Moroccan and European civil society to address the implementation of human rights and assess the human rights situation, and also recommends that these issues be incorporated into the Action Plan follow-up and development processes.

At the same time, the Network reiterates its opposition to any readmission agreement, currently under negotiations as part of the EU-Morocco Partnership for Mobility.

The implementation of the EU-Morocco Action Plan must serve as a means to give tangible expression to Morocco's compliance with international standards on human rights and on economic and social rights. These negotiations must also guide the EU towards a new approach to its relations with Mediterranean countries, especially by putting an end to border closures and by seeking the ways and means of ensuring more equitable development and improving social conditions in the countries concerned.

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