



**Meeting of the Executive Committee of the EMHRN  
Barcelona, 31 March 2012**

*DRAFT Minutes – approved*

The Executive Committee (EC) of the EMHRN held a meeting in Barcelona on 31 March 2012. Discussion at the meeting focused on the preparation of the upcoming EuroMed Seminar and the EMHRN General Assembly to be held in Copenhagen from 31 May to 3 June, including the future work programme and the new Strategy.

In the margins of the meeting, an EC delegation met on 30 March with IEMed Director Manager Josep Ferré as well as with Human Rights Institute in Catalonia (IDHC) President David Bondia Garcia and SODEPAU President Josep María Navarro, whose organisations had been recommended for EMHRN membership by the EC in February 2012.

**PARTICIPANTS**

Executive Committee (EC) of the EMHRN:

Kamel Jendoubi (President), Lone Lindholt (Vice-President), Moataz El Fegiery (Treasurer), Maysa Zorob (EC member), Michel Tubiana (EC member), Magali Thill (EC member), Emrah Seyhanlioglu (EC member) and Marie Lavrentiadou (EC member).

Secretariat:

Marc Schade-Poulsen (Executive Director), Fabrice Liebaut (Human Resource and Fundraising Manager) and Caroline Rey (Executive Secretary, rapporteur).

Absent:

Wadih Al-Asmar (EC member) and Danial Saoud (EC member) – excused.

**AGENDA**

1. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting and the agenda of this meeting
2. Political discussion on recent developments in the region
3. EMHRN human resources
4. Finalising the Strategy and discussing the work programme
5. Elections and candidates for the next Executive Committee & discussions on possible nominations of honorary members.
6. Planning the EuroMed Seminar and General Assembly, incl. appointment of GA session chairpersons
7. Miscellaneous





## 1. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting and the agenda of this meeting

*Moderator: Kamel Jendoubi*

The agenda was approved. The minutes of the EC meeting in Tunis on 24-26 February 2012 were approved with a few changes. Besides, regarding session 7 on membership applications, it was confirmed that the EMHRN Secretariat had received in due time the missing recommendation letter supporting Andalus Institute for Tolerance and Non Violence Studies' membership application. The application was thus completed within the deadlines as set in the EMHRN statutes.

### Decision:

- The minutes of EC meeting in Tunis on 24-26 February 2012 were approved with some changes.

### Documents:

- 1.1. Agenda (for approval)
- 1.2. Minutes of the EC meeting in Tunis on 24-26 February 2012 (for approval)

## 2. Political discussion on recent development in the region

*Moderator: Michel Tubiana*

The EC members exchanged information on the current human rights situation in the EuroMed region, particularly regarding:

- Egypt, where a future new Constitution is being debated. A political crisis is on-going and the transitional period is being poorly managed. There is a risk that the military will intervene against the Islamists and attempt a constitutional coup. Furthermore, NGOs –including the EMHRN Cairo office - are currently under attack and in a difficult and uncertain situation.
- Tunisia: The EC welcomed the fact that EnNahda had stated that it would not suggest including a reference to the Charia in the new Tunisian Constitution. Besides, the left wing having won the university scientific boards elections against all odds (the Islamists were expected to win) was interpreted as a sanction against the Islamists.
- Spain, where a national general strike had taken place on 29 March 2012 and where the demonstrations by associations and trade unions were severely repressed by the police. The state budget is meant to be cut by 17%, and the most affected parts will be social services and cooperation for development.
- Turkey, where discussions on a new Constitution will be the most important topic in the next three months. Several political parties are currently discussing on the matter and will present their recommendations to a commission next month. The current conflict between PKK and the military set a negative and pessimist context for the talks on a new Constitution. Besides, the conflict in Syria –and especially the issue of refugees and asylum seekers- is also subjected to important discussions in Turkey. The priority for Turkish human rights defenders is for governmental interventions to take place at political and not military level.
- Greece, where the social and economic situation is still worrying. The government announced the opening of detention centres for illegal immigrants. In the context of the upcoming elections, immigrants are presented in the media as being responsible for the social crisis.



### 3. EMHRN human resource

*Moderator: Kamel Jendoubi*

Fabrice Liebaut presented the EMHRN human resource policies by describing the current framework in relation to the staff and staff related issues. Then, he pointed out the main challenges in the years ahead and presented the outline of a plan to address some of these challenges in the coming months.

The presentation was followed by a discussion amongst EC members in which the following points were raised:

- The administrative procedure regarding the salary scale (that is currently the same for all European offices which creates administrative complications) should be simplified.
- Benefits granted to the staff in the various offices should as much as possible be based on local legislation.
- Staff development policy should be improved, as well as staff evaluation methods and follow-ups.

The EC agreed that the above-mentioned points be used as recommendations to the next EC so that they can further discuss staff issues within the framework of the EMHRN reorganisation.

#### Decisions:

- The EC recommends that staff issues be discussed by the new EC members in the framework of the discussion on the new structure of the Secretariat.

#### Documents:

##### 3.1 Staff issues (*PowerPoint*)

### 4. Finalising the Strategy and discussing the work programme

*Moderator: Lone Lindholt*

Marc Schade-Poulsen explained that the 3-year Activity report, the new Strategy and the Work programme would be finalised within the following two weeks. They would thus have to be approved by the Quartet at their meeting on 25 April in order to be ready to be sent out to the EMHRN members, in preparation for the GA. The EC decided that the documents would be sent out to them by email, for information, and that the Quartet would take the final decision on the documents.

#### *Strategy:*

Marc Schade-Poulsen presented the main changes in the new draft Strategy by indicating that the conflicts and international humanitarian law were now in separate parts of the Strategy. The EC adopted the draft Strategy.

Kamel Jendoubi noted that there was a lack of concordance between the titles of the Strategy and those of the Work programme. Marc Schade-Poulsen explained that the Work programme would be changed accordingly.

#### *Work programme:*

Marc Schade-Poulsen presented the draft Work programme and explained that it was not too detailed in order to give some flexibility to the projects, but that, at the same time, it had to be specific enough to meet the donors' requirements. The introduction should be clearer on the fact that the Network will spend a lot of time on its restructuration and that it will have an impact on how it proceeds.



Marc Schade-Poulsen then raised two specific problems on Justice and Freedom of conscience: how to put what is happening at national level in a regional perspective? He suggested writing an annual report on Justice and reducing the part on Freedom of conscience in the current draft.

It was suggested to simplify the title "Freedom of conscience, the fight against discrimination, racism and xenophobia" into "fight against discrimination".

Discussions were held by the EC on whether the country approach as described in the Work programme should specifically mention Syria, Tunisia and Algeria as the countries that the Network will be working on, or if it should be more general. The EC's understanding of the Work programme was that the solidarity programme would be changed into country approach. Besides, it was suggested including Egypt as a priority for the Network in its future activities.

#### Decisions:

- The EC will send their comments on the Work programme to the Secretariat.
- The Activity report, Work programme and Strategy will be sent out to the EC by email and the Quartet will approve the documents at their meeting on 25 April, in order to finalise the documents for the GA.
- The EC adopted the draft Strategy.
- The Quartet will discuss on the updated Work programme at their meeting on 25 April.

#### Documents:

- 4.1 Current Strategy (*for information*)
- 4.2 Updated draft Strategy – Fourth version (*for discussion*)
- 4.3 Work programme - draft

### **5. Elections and candidates for the next Executive Committee & discussions on possible nominations of honorary members**

*Moderator: Kamel Jendoubi*

#### *EMHRN members:*

Kamel Jendoubi commented on the list of EMHRN members indicating that the Network had 88 members, out of which 65 are regular members and are allowed to vote at the GA and to run for EC elections. He suggested including a members overview in the GA documents, based on the current list of EMHRN members.

#### *EMHRN honorary members:*

Discussions were held on the possibility to designate new honorary members. Some of the EC members argued in favour of recommending former EC members as honorary members in order to maintain a connection between them and the Network. Other EC members insisted on the historical reasons for appointing honorary members (Article 3.1.3 of the Statutes: honorary members are former individual members) and were opposed to extending the list, considering the fact that article 3.1.3 can be interpreted as granting lifetime honorary membership, and enabling all former EC members to become honorary members.

As an alternative to honorary membership, it was suggested creating a resource pool / pool of experts in order for former EC members to continue contributing to the Network and in order to keep some consistency in the EMHRN.

Kamel Jendoubi suggested elaborating recommendations to the next EC to discuss on the issue of honorary members, especially regarding the possibility of:



- creating a resource pool /pool of experts (that would be added to the Statutes in a new article)
- modifying the Statutes to limit the excesses of article 3.1.3

#### *Upcoming EC elections:*

The EC looked into the current and possible candidacies for the next EC elections and noted several geographical and gender imbalances. It was thus decided to contact all the EMHRN members to urge them to nominate candidates, considering the following imbalances:

- Among the representatives of the North, while gender parity as regard candidacies is met, there is an insufficient number of candidates overall.
- Among the representatives of the South, it was noted that there is an insufficient number of candidates overall as well as an imbalance in both the gender and the Mashreq-Maghreb geographical distribution.

#### Decisions:

- The EC members recommended to the next EC to discuss on the issue of honorary members, especially regarding the possibility of:
  - creating a resource pool /pool of experts (that would be added to the Statutes in a new article);
  - modifying the Statutes to limit the excesses of article 3.1.3.
- The Secretariat will send out an email to the EMHRN members in early April to raise their attention to the current imbalances in the candidacies and to urge them to nominate candidates.

#### Documents:

- 5.1 List of EMHRN members (*for information*)

## **6. Planning the EuroMed Seminar and General Assembly, incl. appointment of GA session chairpersons**

*Moderator: Maysa Zorob*

#### *General Assembly:*

Marc Schade-Poulsen recalled the EC that, according to the Statutes, the list of the GA chairpersons should be sent out to the EMHRN members 30 days before the opening of the GA. Considering the difficulty to nominate chairpersons without knowing precisely who would attend the GA, it was decided to wait until the Quartet meeting on 25 April to decide on the list.

Furthermore, the EC discussed on the possibility to give souvenirs to the GA members to commemorate the Network's 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Marc Schade-Poulsen informed that the Communication department was working on it. Besides, Kamel Jendoubi suggested showing a movie or pictures (the covers of all the EMHRN publications for example) that would illustrate the EMHRN activities in the past 15 years.

#### *EuroMed Seminar:*

The EC discussed the list of possible speakers and chairs at the EuroMed Seminar and made new suggestions and comments.

#### Decisions:

- The Quartet will decide on the GA chairpersons at their meeting on 25 April.

#### Documents:



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

- 6.1 Draft program for the seminar, incl. list of speakers (*for discussion*)
- 6.2 Draft program for the General Assembly (*for discussion*)