

THE FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN HUMAN RIGHTS
NETWORK

LA QUATRIÈME ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE DU
RÉSEAU EURO-MÉDITERRANÉEN DES
DROITS DE L'HOMME

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INTRODUCTION

On 7-8 November 2000, the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) gathered for its Fourth General Assembly. The General Assembly took place in Marseilles on the occasion of the Civil Forum, Marseilles, 10 -12 November 2000.

The overall objective of the EMHRN, established in 1997, is to contribute to the protection and promotion of the human rights principles embodied in the Barcelona Declaration, and thus to the promotion of peace, stability, and the dignity and worth of the human being in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

In addition, the EMHRN works to increase civil society participation in the Barcelona Process and human rights work in the region through a synergetic process of mutual support and the exchange of experience and knowledge between human rights organisations.

The main objectives of the present General Assembly were to evaluate the work done since the third general assembly in Stuttgart in April 1999, and to elect the EMHRN president, vice-president, treasurer and members of the executive committee.

Most participants later went on to attend the Civil Forum in Marseilles, which was organised parallel to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership summit. The meeting of the NGOs was divided into three main workshops: the EMHRN and the FIDH were responsible for organising the workshop on 'Democratisation and the Rule of Law' (a report on this workshop is available).

Short summary of the meeting

The meeting was opened by Mr Bennani, president of the EMHRN, who expressed his regret concerning the painful events being experienced by the whole area because of the escalation of the Middle East crisis. He explained that the current situation constituted a serious challenge to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Barcelona Declaration's declared objectives of 'turning the Mediterranean region into an area of peace, stability and growth'.

In view of this, he stressed that it was of tremendous importance for NGOs in the region to co-operate in order to establish a lasting peace, to promote human rights and democracy and to establish the rule of law in the Mediterranean countries.

Finally, he encouraged the General Assembly to engage in a constructive dialogue and contribute to bridging the gaps created by conflict within civil society.

The first session opened with the approval of the General Assembly secretariat, composed of Eva Noerstroem, Saeda Kilani and Marc Schade-Poulsen.

Stefano Leszczynski presented the annual report, which outlined the Network's activities over the past year on the basis of the work programme adopted at the third General Assembly in Stuttgart in 1999 (see report on Third General Assembly).

In the period from March 1999 to November 2000, the EMHRN substantially developed its activities both thematically and in relation to specific countries. From a fragile beginning, it has increasingly

become a key actor and interface in promoting and protecting human rights within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

Khidr Skhirat presented the financial report. He stressed that the financial statement should be regarded as a provisional balance sheet, insofar as sums allocated to different activities might change according to the actions undertaken.

The General Assembly adopted the annual report and the financial report.

Kamel Jendoubi then presented the plan of action and the projected budget for 2001. The plan of action outlined the general considerations upon which the EMHRN's work is based, general methodology and concrete EMHRN initiatives for the future. The projected budget contained an overview of fund allocations for projects and activities foreseen for 2001.

The plan of action and the projected budget were adopted unanimously by the Assembly.

The Assembly then moved on to discuss the Middle East crisis on the basis of presentations by Stefan Luetgenau and Bahey El-Din Hassan, who addressed this issue from a northern and southern perspective respectively. Eitan Felner from Israel and Khidr Shkirat from Palestine initiated the discussion by presenting their respective views on the conflict.

Following a very intense debate, during which several proposals for EMHRN action were put forward, a resolution was submitted to the General Assembly which adopted it on the second day of the meeting (appendix 4).

The General Assembly also supported a statement on the rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel, submitted by The Legal Centre for Arab Minority Rights in Israel (Adalah) and the Arab Association for Human Rights, Nazareth (appendix 5).

On the second day, the participants met in three working groups which reported back to the General Assembly in the afternoon.

The workshop on 'Migration, Refugees and Asylum Seekers' heard presentations by Christopher Hein, Italian Refugee Council, Driss El-Yazami, Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, France, and A.H. Shaban, Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK. Among its main recommendations was the establishment of a working group on migration, refugees and asylum seekers within the Network.

The workshop on 'Dialogue with Government' began with a presentation by Morten Kjaerum, Danish Centre for Human Rights. It discussed methodologies to establish a dialogue with governments and possible ways of influencing the human rights mechanisms of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Finally, the workshop on 'Human Rights Education and Training' was based on a presentation by Colm Regan, 80:20 Education for a Better World; one of its recommendations was the establishment of a human rights education working group.

A proposed change of the statutes concerning membership criteria and the composition of the executive committee was presented by Theocharis Papamargaris and adopted unanimously by the General Assembly.

A proposal for cancellation of membership and ratification of new members was presented by Eva Noerstroem and adopted unanimously by the General Assembly.

Then the General Assembly moved on to the elections of president, vice-president, treasurer and members of the executive committee and auditor. Annette Juenemann presented the candidates and the Assembly decided to vote by secret ballot.

The General Assembly was closed by A. Bennani, president of the EMHRN, who outlined the development of the Network and stressed that it had now consolidated itself as a credible partner in the eyes of governments, European institutions and international NGOs.

This report presents a summary of the proceedings of the General Assembly, and includes the annual report of activities and next year's programme adopted by the General Assembly. It does not attempt to follow the agenda nor the debates in chronological order, but is organised according to the themes discussed.

We believe that this General Assembly constituted an important step in the development of the EMHRN and we thank the participants for their constructive and positive contributions to the debates.

The adoption of the resolution on a 'New Approach for a Just and Lasting Peace in the Middle East' proved the ability and willingness of members to co-operate in spite of diverse backgrounds, confronting the difficult circumstances in the Middle East with great sensitivity and strength.

We feel that the participants agreed that it is important to adopt a human rights based approach to the Middle East crisis, and that this is the basis upon which to achieve the Barcelona Declaration's objective of turning the Mediterranean region into an area of 'peace, stability and growth'.

Finally, many thanks to Jelloul Benhamida, Laurent, Sebastian, as well as to Lawrence Lemoing for their help in organising the General Assembly. Thanks also go to the interpreters for their professional services.

The Executive Committee, August 2001

PART 1 : PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE EMHRN

1. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL REPORT

Summary

In the period covered by this report, March 1999 to November 2000, the EMHRN substantially developed its activities both thematically and in relation to single countries. From a fragile beginning, it has increasingly become a key actor and interface in promoting and protecting human rights within the framework of the Barcelona Process. Although much remains to be done, the EMHRN has developed instruments with which to expand its activities in the future.

Lobbying the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

The EMHRN has developed a series of instruments and initiatives as a firm foundation on which to build its work on the human rights dimension of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It has been a key actor in setting the human rights agenda of the Civil Fora in relation to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It has mobilised the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's institutions and members through its seminars, and a series of publications have become a source of reference for human rights promotion within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

In addition, the EMHRN has initiated dialogue with a number of governments in the region and significantly enhanced co-operation with other international and regional human rights NGOs and civil society agents active in the region.

The EMHRN has also been involved in several actions relating to country issues. However, it has not yet been able to lobby the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership about its concerns on a regular basis, nor to report regularly to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership about the human rights situation in the region. Nevertheless, preliminary work has been done, enabling the EMHRN to open an office in Brussels in order to improve the ability of its members to mobilise in relation to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's agenda and to systematise its reporting and advocacy.

Capacity building and human rights education

By establishing its web site, the EMHRN has significantly increased its capacity to communicate and inform on human rights issues in the region.

It has initiated work to promote the projects of its members on a national level in countries where oppression is particularly severe. Furthermore, it has sparked the development of sub-structures within the Network that might lead to concrete projects on the ground.

It has also initiated de-centralisation of decision-making procedures by involving members in preparatory meetings, such as those for the conference on women's rights and the seminar on freedom of association.

Women's rights

The EMHRN is still male-biased in terms of the way its membership is composed, and no practical measures have yet been identified to change this. However, the EMHRN has recently taken significant

steps to develop actions to promote women's rights and to have this issue integrated in the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process.

Freedom of association and expression

The EMHRN has taken initiatives in relation to freedom of association and expression in Palestine, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco.

On a regional level it succeeded in bringing a number of NGOs together for a seminar in Morocco, which adopted a platform for future work in this priority area. The seminar was a first step towards securing a basis for systematising efforts in this field and for future concerted efforts for the regional promotion of freedom of association.

In the field of freedom of expression, the activities of the EMHRN have concentrated on Jordan, and the creation of synergy with other actors is still in its infancy.

Racism and xenophobia, migration and refugees and human exchange

These issues are still considered priority areas for the EMHRN. However, it has not yet identified actions nor had sufficient resources to develop work in this field.

Protection of human rights defenders and human rights in conflict situations

The EMHRN has expanded its day-to-day solidarity work significantly in relation to a regrettably high number of human rights violations and attacks on human rights defenders. Furthermore, it has increasingly succeeded in establishing co-operation with a number of international human rights organisations. Work on developing regional and country strategies is underway.

Comments and discussion

General satisfaction with the annual report was expressed. In addition, the reinforcing of the secretariat and the improvement in the functioning of the administration were welcomed.

It was noted that one of the achievements of the EMHRN had been to co-ordinate its activities with a number of human rights organisations. In order to expand the area of its activities in relation to the defence of human rights, the EMHRN should continue to increase its number of member organisations.

Women's rights

It was suggested that in setting up a working group on women's rights, the EMHRN should try to involve all members, i.e. both men's and women's associations, in order to avoid the marginalization of a group consisting exclusively of women.

The executive committee explained that in 1999, the seminar in Brussels decided that the issue of women's rights should be one of the four key themes of the conference in Marseilles. A preparatory committee was set up and met to plan a conference on 'Women in the Mediterranean Basin, between Physical and Symbolic Violence'. The meeting was postponed because of insufficient funding and the

situation in the Middle East.

Human rights education

The strengthening of human rights education since the last General Assembly was welcomed.

Access to justice

As a comment on the two-track approach mentioned in the report, namely a) the protection of rights against violations and b) capacity building, together with the reinforcement of rights, it was recommended that support be given to reforms aimed at human rights and good governance. The conference on access to justice was seen as a good opportunity to develop the EMHRN's work on these issues.

Consultation with members

It was suggested that the assessment of the human rights situation in a given area should be submitted to local members working in that area for a more comprehensive view of the situation. As an example of this, it was noted that the EMHRN had undertaken effective action in relation to Tunisia, although concern was expressed that the Network had engaged in relations with the Ministry of Home Affairs in Tunisia without consulting the local NGOs.

It was felt that the EMHRN had made efforts to work in close co-operation with local NGOs to create synergy, for example in Jordan concerning the press law and in Egypt concerning the law on associations.

Identification of projects

The question was raised as to which criteria the executive committee used in taking its decisions to hold conferences. In particular, it was pointed out that a large number of the conferences have been organised in co-operation with the same member organisations.

The executive committee underlined that the EMHRN is very dependent on receiving proposals from its members. Consequently, it will necessarily undertake actions with member organisations that are already working closely with the Network if it is unable to identify actions proposed by other members.

Country strategies

The EMHRN would like to draft a report on human rights issues within each country, but can only do so in close co-operation with local NGOs. The Network has sent many reminders to its members to ask for their participation, but has not always received feedback. Therefore, it was suggested that conditions be improved in order for members to contribute more fully.

2. PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL REPORT¹

It was explained that the 207.104 euros figuring in the financial report have not been fully utilised for various reasons: The grant application was forwarded by the EMHRN to the Commission in 1997, but the grant was not released until January 1999. In order to ensure full use of the EU Commission grant, the EMHRN was supposed to assure 20% of the total project budget from other funding sources. However, only 66.666 EURO were provided from other sources for the following reasons:

a) When the EU grant was released, the EMHRN had not yet established a strong record to attract funding agencies. In addition, the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process was not sufficiently well known.

b) In September 1997, when the project was presented to the EU Commission, the EMHRN had not yet been established and it was not possible to assess the future financial need of the Network.

3. PRESENTATION OF THE EMHRN PLAN OF ACTION²

EMHRN objectives:

In accordance with the statutes of the EMHRN, the objectives were listed as:

- A. Promotion of human rights in the Euro-Mediterranean area;
- B. Monitoring and protection of human rights;
- C. Developing and promoting education on human rights.

EMHRN means:

Four means to achieve these objectives were defined:

1. Dialogue with the states, to urge them:
 - To respect their own commitments and to respect the principles of human rights
 - To adopt a national plan for human rights;
2. Information to be used for dissemination, observation, monitoring of human rights and lobbying of European institutions and all states within the region;
3. Support and assistance to and co-ordination with NGOs involved in monitoring human rights, in order to reinforce capacity building;
4. Co-operation with NGOs and international agencies, research, and fact-finding.

¹ The Financial Report consist of two reports: the report of 1999, available upon request from the Secretariat and the projected budget for 2002, which was not finalised at the time of the GA, and which is attached (annex 3)

² The Plan of Action is included in the third part of this report.

Regional priorities

In the light of the objectives and means stated above, the following priorities were defined:

Setting up of an assessment and verification mechanism for human rights in the region, focusing on:

- The MEDA programmes;
- The Committee of High Officials, the Barcelona Ambassadors;
- The Euro-Mediterranean Inter-Parliamentarian Forum;
- The Association Council meetings.

In this regard it was suggested that:

- A specific percentage of the MEDA Programme should be allocated to projects on human rights. Members or non-member experts should carry out an assessment of the MEDA Democracy Programme (MDP);
- An independent committee should be set up under the Committee of High Officials, on the same lines as the UN system. This committee would make recommendations to the Committee of High Officials, appoint special reporters, conduct a dialogue with governments, and prepare an annual report;
- The Euro-Mediterranean Inter-parliamentary Forum should be developed so as to also deal with human rights in the area;
- Association Council meetings should be used as opportunities to publish reports and make the necessary approaches to encourage states that committed themselves to the Barcelona Declaration to adhere to their commitments.

Country priorities

It was underlined that country priorities cannot be defined by the Network itself but only by its members. The secretariat has sent questionnaires to all members asking them to define country priorities, but received limited feedback.

Thematic priorities

The following thematic priorities were identified:

- i) The protection of human rights defenders, including freedom of association and expression;
- ii) Justice and equal access to justice;
- iii) Women's rights;
- iv) Migrants' and asylum seekers rights, and human exchange;
- v) Human rights education;
- vi) Self-determination and the rights of refugees;
- vii) Economic, social and cultural rights.

It was stressed that the Network must co-operate with its members and seek the necessary partnerships to achieve these priorities on human rights at an international, regional, and national level.

4. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECTED BUDGET FOR 2001

The projected budget for 2001 was presented to the General Assembly. Concerning funding, it was underlined that the European Commission mainly funds the EMHRN. The contract signed with the Commission covers 4 years and specifies that European Commission funding cannot exceed 80% of the overall funding of the EMHRN. The Network must assure the remaining 20% from other sources, but until now, it has only been possible to assure 15%. In order to increase this figure, the Network will look into the possibility of developing partnerships with its members so as to set up joint agreements and projects. It was stressed that the secretariat is also making efforts to find supplementary funding.

The EMHRN's expenditure is divided between administrative costs and costs for activities.

It was stressed that the budget for administrative costs, representing only 1/3 of the total budget, is used to administer the Network in a positive sense, and is not meant to increase bureaucracy. Rather, it covers public relations and communications, including internet access, audit, accountancy, mail, and operating costs such as electricity, office supplies, and rent.

The administration costs also cover the working of the two executive bodies provided for in the statutes of the EMHRN, the executive committee and the General Assembly. The executive committee and the General Assembly must meet regularly and work properly in order to develop the skills and capacity of the Network.

It was explained that the executive committee usually convenes three times a year. Two meetings are tied to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership agenda, and are convened in the country holding the EU presidency and the country that is to hold the presidency. The third meeting takes place in a Southern Mediterranean country.

The costs for activities and the EMHRN action within each field were identified as follows:

A. Regionally

Human rights mechanisms

These mechanisms include financing a meeting of a working group that will develop proposals for human rights mechanisms.

Lobbying the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership institutions

The importance was stressed of setting up an office in Brussels, which will work under the authority of the secretariat in Copenhagen. This investment will facilitate the lobbying of the European institutions and is intended to integrate the Network in the decision-making mechanisms in Brussels at a European as well as at a Euro-Mediterranean level.

B. By Country

Country strategies

Such strategies need to be developed for every country in the region. As these can only be developed in co-operation with the EMHRN members, the members were urged to co-operate in working out strategies, which would then be adopted in a budgetary decision as a joint strategy between the Network and its members.

C. Thematically

Women's rights

The Network will capitalise on the work already done on this priority and reflect on ways to work in the field. The conference on violence against women, to take place during the summer of 2001 (or alternatively in 2002), was mentioned as an activity in this area.

Migrants and refugees

These groups represent 3% of the budget, and the EMHRN plans to set up a mechanism inside the Network in order to work efficiently in this field.

Self-determination

This field was covered in the budget of the previous year. A preview was given of action within the field for the coming year.

Access to justice

This is related to the conference on 'Access to Justice' to be held under the Swedish presidency. No amount has been fixed as the Swedish presidency and the Commission and possibly other organisations will set the funding.

The Civil Forum

This was mentioned among the key initiatives for the coming years. The next forum will take place in 2002.

Capacity building

This is a general aim and a priority for the EMHRN. It will translate into training seminars, probably in Brussels, on the financial and institutional mechanisms of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Note: The low budget of the EMHRN

It was stressed that the budget of the EMHRN is a low budget compared to the budget of other international organisations. The Network must make sure that it sets out a good strategy, with a view to doubling the budget within the next 2 years to meet the needs that keep accumulating. The allotment of resources must not just be an issue for the executive committee, but for all members. The

funds are used not only to finance activities, but also to increase the resources available to all members.

Discussion on the plan of action and the budget

The plan of action was regarded as positive because of its methodology and its practical, targeted actions, which were seen as opening up new horizons and giving new impetus.

Human rights education

The EMHRN was urged to stress human rights education both in the North and South to fight racism. It was argued that the budget for human rights education (HRE) was much too small, since many organisations have pleaded for a long-term strategy on HRE. Some participants felt that HRE should also have a higher priority in national organisations. In the field of education, the notion of human rights should be extended to include economic and cultural rights.

Dialogue with governments

It was suggested that the Network publicise its ongoing dialogue on human rights within the Barcelona Process more effectively so as not to limit this dialogue to a dialogue between governments. It was felt that the EMHRN had neglected the dimension of mobilising active public opinion in the North and the South by only stressing dialogue with governments.

MEDA Democracy Programme

It was proposed that the plan of action should include the MEDA Democracy Programme, which was seen as an important instrument for human rights organisations in the region.

'Access to Justice'

Concerning access to justice, it was added that not only should unfair laws be changed, the failure to enforce laws (leading to crimes going unpunished) should also be addressed.

Proposals for thematic issues

A number of proposals for thematic priorities were mentioned:

- Rights of national and religious minorities;
- Environment;
- Rights of children;
- Internally displaced persons in the region;
- Penal reform and conditions in prisons;
- Poverty (social aspects of human rights).

It was suggested that these priorities could be worked on by sub-networks within the EMHRN itself.

Some participants expressed concern that the Network cannot address all the suggested priorities.

Therefore, all members should consider what they want to share with other members of the Network in order to establish common practices and joint objectives.

Proposal for a conference on the Kurdish question

It was proposed that a conference on the Kurdish question should be organised in co-operation with regional NGOs in one of the Middle East countries, e.g. Palestine, Egypt, or Lebanon.

Socio-economic rights

It was suggested that the priorities on socio-economic rights should include an educational dimension, since the strengthening of human rights was seen as related to the overall social, political, and economic development of the region. The combination of education and socio-economic rights would highlight the links between the socio-economic dilemmas and the political dilemmas around democratisation.

Some participants considered that the plan of action should include an assessment of the positive or negative effects of free trade zones.

Support for the South

It was suggested that the EMHRN should give priority to reducing the gap between rich and poor organisations within the Network by raising funds and strengthening human and financial resources in the South.

In addition, it was proposed that part of the budget should be allocated on a more specific basis to organisations in Southern countries. The EMHRN was asked to consider not only the financial management of actions, but also support for capacity building, for instance training of trainers active in Southern NGOs.

It was felt that funding for new equipment was missing from the budget. Southern members often do not have a computer or a fax machine, or even a telephone. Thus there is a lack of relatively inexpensive equipment which could greatly facilitate the work of human rights organisations and human rights defenders.

Women's rights

It was suggested that the EMHRN should not wait for the postponed conference on this issue to decide which actions should be undertaken in the future. Actions could be proposed now, based on reports that have already been written by for instance Collective Maghreb Egalité.

It was pointed out that only 1% of expenditure was allocated to the programme on women's rights which seemed insufficient to seriously support women's rights.

The reply was that the present financial report is only a provisional balance sheet. The share allocated to, for instance, women's rights might grow depending on what actions are adopted.

Budget

The comment was made that the priorities of the plan of action seemingly did not correspond to the percentages allocated for each priority of the budget, and questions were raised as to why women's rights were allocated a bigger share than human rights education.

In response, it was explained that a co-ordination of economic resources could offer new possibilities in each priority field and that the allocation of funds should only be seen as provisional and would be adjusted if additional funding was secured.

Against this background, it was suggested that the EHMRN operate with two kinds of budget: a provisional budget based on existing funding, and a fundraising budget, giving the Network the opportunity to look for additional funding for specific projects.

It was proposed that the figures and percentages of the budget should be based on specific proposals; funds should not be allocated to areas with no concrete plans. In addition, it was suggested that working groups should have a responsibility to put forward concrete proposals, which could then be funded.

It was pointed out that the EMHRN experiences major losses when meetings and conferences are organised abroad. This is often due to sudden changes of schedule by EMHRN members, leading to the cancellation of flights and hotels which have already been booked and paid for. It was understood that members might encounter difficulties in complying with dates and times, but all members were nonetheless urged to help save expenses by avoiding these cancellations.

The plan of action was adopted unanimously with no abstentions.

The budget was adopted unanimously with no abstentions.

5. VISIONS AND CHALLENGES OF THE EMHRN: THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS.

Introduction and discussion

The General Assembly discussed the Middle East crisis on the basis of two presentations by members who respectively addressed the crisis from a Northern and a Southern point of view.

The aim of the discussion was to identify areas of mutual concern and to develop mutual strategies by addressing two main issues: a) human rights violations and b) action-oriented thinking on the possibilities of the Network to influence the conflict, (e.g. by making recommendations to the Euro-Mediterranean states).

From a Northern perspective, it was suggested that when addressing the Middle East crisis, the Network should use language which differs from that of the parties involved in the conflict. An important consequence of the conflict is that violence has entered the domestic sphere as a consequence of the media's transmission of violent clashes. As a result, the language of hate and extremism is generalised. Therefore, the Network was advised to avoid radicalisation of language and thinking in its public statements.

The Network should address and pursue the fundamentals of the Barcelona Process and its documents: the rule of law, the indivisibility of human rights, and peace in all parts of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The members in the North were called upon to support and assist local groups in the affected region, rather than take the lead. This was seen as enabling the Network to address the root causes of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, namely the absence of the rule of law, of the right to self-determination, and of the right to live in peace and security, as well as the structural inequality in civil and political rights under military occupation

From a Southern perspective, it was argued that the causes of the present conflict cannot be reduced to the visit of Ariel Sharon to the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Rather, it must be understood in the context of the frustration that has built up among the Palestinian people over the last 50 years of Israeli occupation as a consequence of forced exile, ethnic cleansing, racial discrimination, torture and exclusion.

It was noted that the international community has been unable to force Israel to comply with UN resolutions regarding the non-lawfulness of occupation. Moreover, it was noted that the European states have been passive in the present conflict, without differentiating between the attacking state and the attacked one. Europe, as Israel's largest trading partner, was urged to make use of this position to put pressure on Israel. Finally, it was mentioned that the United States has not tried to involve the European states in the peace process in the Middle East.

It was suggested that the Network lobby European institutions to bring about Israel's compliance with Article 2 of the Association Agreement, which requires that human rights be respected with regard to the Arab minorities both in Israel and in the Occupied Territories. Furthermore, the EMHRN was recommended to press the UN to foster the implementation of the agreements signed.

The Network was asked to make recommendations to the Security Council and the European institutions and to send missions to the region.

It was also suggested that the EMHRN support the setting up of courts to judge those people who have committed crimes against the Palestinians, and that the EMHRN include in its plan of action the holding of a seminar on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

Debate

The presentations were followed-up by a general discussion initiated by two NGO representatives from Israel and Palestine, who commented on the current crisis from two different positions. Mr. Eitan Felner from B'Tselem drew attention to the fact that his organisation was facing severe harassment in Israel, particularly at this time of crisis, because of B'Tselem's commitment to the human rights issues in the Occupied Territories. At the same time, Palestinian and Arab organisations were experiencing problems of credibility in their own countries because they were attending the General Assembly of the EMHRN in the presence of Israeli organisations. Nevertheless he saw it as a sign of commitment to human rights that both parties had come to the General Assembly and found it important to meet and engage in dialogue from a human rights perspective.

He criticised the Network's mission³ statement for being selective in dealing with human rights in the current crisis. Although there was absolutely no symmetry in the situation, where the Israelis were the occupying force, he urged the Network to analyse human rights violations by both parties. He argued that the legitimate struggle for fulfilment of the right to self-determination did not exempt the Palestinian Authority from any responsibility regarding violations of humanitarian law. He gave two examples of this: Israeli soldiers should be strongly condemned for killing children, but at the same time, the question should be raised as to whether the Palestinian Authority actively was seeking to prevent children from participating in the legitimate struggle against occupation. Secondly, while the Israeli settlements were illegal and created a situation of apartheid, their illegality did not justify random shooting at settlements by the Palestinians. The Palestinian Authority had not taken measures to ensure enforcement of the law in these areas.

Eitan Felner concluded that if the EMHRN wished to be a network for the promotion of human rights, and not a solidarity group for the Palestinian cause, it could not ignore human rights violations by the Palestinian Authority. Ignoring them would contradict the very concept of human rights, which condemns any violation regardless of perpetrator and victim. In other words, the idea of human rights is to define what is permissible regardless of the legitimacy of the war itself.

Mr. Khader Shkirat from LAW responded that the parties would not reach common ground if they kept attempting to justify the current crisis. Furthermore the Israeli NGOs could be accused of using the same language as the Israeli government.

He stressed that LAW had actively criticised its own national authority and continued to do so. However, the issue should not be that Palestinian children participated in demonstrations, or that shootings at settlements occurred, but the fact that Israeli occupation had continued for more than 50 years. He argued that the problem was the presence of the Israeli occupation, and that criticism of the Palestinian Authorities or of the Palestinians generally only served to divert attention from this fact. A Palestinian shooting with a machine gun did not justify Israel bombing Ramallah by helicopter. There was no symmetry in the conflict. Furthermore, criticising the Palestinian Authority for not taking measures to prevent Palestinians from shooting at Israeli settlements only highlighted the inequality, as the Palestinian Authority was not allowed to have law enforcement bodies.

Khader Shkirat thus pointed to the risk of diverting attention from the real issues of the crisis, and argued that the challenge was how to find a balance between the human rights violations committed by both parties, without putting them on an equal footing.

Discussion

The General Assembly expressed a consensus on the need to address human rights in general terms, while taking the different power structures in society and in the region into consideration. It was stressed that there was an enormous difference between the Israeli occupation force and Palestinian strength.

In their function as human rights activists the members rejected all forms of violence committed against civilians on either side. On the other hand, it was stressed that the Israeli settlements were not only illegal, but also the homes of armed colonizers.

³ Available on the Internet site: http://www.euromedrights.net/english/emhrn-documents/pressreleases/11_10_2001.htm

The importance of keeping a dialogue open with Israeli NGOs and civil society in order to reduce the isolation of Israeli NGOs was stressed. Therefore, it was suggested that non-official visits be made to Israel to contact sections of Israeli civil society with the aim of involving Israeli NGOs more fully in efforts to find a just and lasting solution to the crisis.

It was stressed that the Network should not equate the Israeli government and defence forces with the Israeli people themselves. Furthermore, the human rights defence organisations in Israel were urged to work together with the Network to make sure it did not use the same sort of language as the official declarations of opinion by the Israeli State.

It was argued that the present crisis demanded a political solution, as violence would not solve the conflict. The role of the Network was seen as to further such a solution by challenging and taking action against the Israeli government and defence forces on the basis of human rights instruments.

The Network was encouraged to be extremely careful about the language it used for its statements so as not to be caught up in either stereotypes or the language of extremism whereby the credibility of the Network would be jeopardised.

Suggestions for direct EMHRN action

- Fact finding missions: sending an increased number of fact-finding missions to the region with the dual purpose of showing publicly that human rights observers are present in the area, and of documenting the facts on the ground.
- International protection for the Palestinian people: setting up international protection for the Palestinian people.
- International inquiry mission: a) setting up an international fact-finding mission to investigate the Israeli security forces' and the police's treatment of Palestinian citizens of Israel killed or imprisoned during the ongoing conflict, and who have no access to international protection; b) supporting the appointment of an independent, international commission of inquiry in accordance with the Geneva Agreements signed in 1949. In addition, the Network was urged to take advantage of the current trend towards prosecuting war criminals who have committed crimes against humanity.

Suggestions for indirect EMHRN action

- Human rights-based peace process within the Barcelona Process: The framework of the Barcelona Process was stressed as an important element in a human rights-based peace process. While the Oslo Peace Process was regarded as dead, it should be investigated and analysed from a human rights point of view in order to identify the political and structural changes required to start a new, human rights-based peace process.
- Lobbying for Israeli-Palestinian conflict to become a key issue of the Barcelona Process: The EMHRN should lobby to have the Israeli - Palestinian conflict adopted as one of the key issues of the Barcelona Process.
- EU as a political player in the Middle East: The General Assembly felt strongly that the peace

process in the Middle East cannot be left entirely to the United States, and that it is crucial for the EU to become a political player in the Middle East. The Partnership was criticised for having chosen to dissociate the peace process from the Barcelona Process. It was suggested that the European institutions should be lobbied insofar as they are an integral part of the peace process. The executive committee was advised to work out clear positions and action to be taken in respect of the EU Commission's role in the peace process.

- Lobbying the EU: Training in lobbying of the EU was expressed as a need. The lobbying strategy should not only come from the North; persons from the Southern countries should also be present in Brussels to build up systematic knowledge about the EU institutions and lobbying. Considering the strength of the Israeli lobby in Brussels, the need for a Palestinian as well as an Israeli presence working on a human rights agenda was strongly felt.
- It was proposed that the human rights mechanisms of the Council of Europe and its role in the present conflict should be investigated.
- UN Conference on racism: It was stressed that the UN conference on racism in South Africa next year offers an important international platform for the discussion of new aspects of racism. It was commented that racism exists both in the Southern countries, such as Libya, and in the North. It is important to regard racism as more than an old paradigm, and actually address racism as a broader and more modern phenomenon. The concept needs an update, and the Middle East conflict should be seen in the context of a modern definition of racism.

Lastly, it was decided that some members of the Assembly should draft a resolution to be adopted by the General Assembly.

The resolution was presented the following day (appendix 4). A short discussion took place, during which some amendments to the resolution were made. The resolution was adopted with 24 in favour, 1 against, and 2 abstentions, out of 33 possible votes.

Following the discussion on Palestinian citizens of Israel, a statement was drafted by Adalah, the Legal Centre for Arab Minority and HRA, the Arab Association for Human Rights (appendix 5). The statement was presented to the General Assembly which adopted it by consensus.

6. REPORT FROM WORKSHOPS

A: Workshop on migration, refugees and asylum seekers

The issue of migration, refugees, and asylum seekers was dealt with in a working group session, based on presentations by Driss El-Yazami, Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, France; Christopher Hein, Italian Refugee Council; and A.H. Shaban, Arab Organization for Human Rights in the UK.

The report of the working group set out the changes in immigration patterns and policies in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Before 1973, immigration to Europe was mainly to the large industrial countries in the North. It was mostly for labour reasons that these countries were interested in immigrants, and the immigrants were often young men, who were supposed to return home after a short period. Immigration was primarily

from former colonies to the colonising countries.

After 1973, the laws of Europe changed, and it became increasingly difficult to immigrate. Europe was almost closed between 1973 and 2000. Now a new trend towards opening up to immigration is apparent. One example is Italy, where quotas for people from outside Europe have been set, and people can sign up on a waiting list in order to enter legally.

Another trend is that people have come to stay. The various programmes for integration developed by nearly all EU countries reflect this.

It was explained that the 15 EU countries have been working on a harmonisation of their immigration policy since the 1980s. The foremost result of this was the Schengen Agreement in 1985, and the second one in 1990, followed by the Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam. This co-operation between states is unique and makes the 15 states very strong in relation to the rest of the world. Looking at the countries in the Barcelona Process, it is evident that the countries south of the Mediterranean do not have a co-operation agreement concerning migrants, nor proper legislation.

It was concluded that there is a very unbalanced attitude to migration within the Partner countries of the Barcelona Process.

It was noted that countries like Greece, Spain, and Portugal have changed from being countries of emigration to also becoming countries of immigration, but the political will to welcome immigration is lacking. This is also the case for countries south of the Mediterranean, which are now countries of both emigration and immigration. It was noted that in many of these countries, notably the oil-producing countries, no laws to protect migrants exist. One example is Libya, where at least 800.000 people from the Sub-Saharan countries are living without any rights.

On the other hand, it was stressed that the Northern European countries do have legislation granting rights to migrants. However, there is a gap between formal law and informal action, resulting in continued discrimination against immigrants on the labour market, as well as with regard to housing, education, health care and many other areas.

An example from Turkey was presented in the working group. Turkey has not signed the UN Protocol from 1967 on the Status of Refugees and the government insists on classifying large numbers of refugees as 'illegal immigrants', in addition to not recognizing the large number of displaced persons. The situations in Turkey and in Lebanon were used to highlight the inter-relatedness of the problems of migration – illustrated by the direct link between the situation in Turkey and the arrival of a large number of boat refugees in Italy and other countries. Participants considered that the example of both countries shows the failure of UNHCR to work on the refugee situation in these countries.

Recommendations from the working group to the EMHRN

- Promote the establishment of a working group within the Network as soon as possible. The working group should be used as a think tank, but within 6 months should also come up with a strategy plan that could be sent out to all the members for comments. An organisation within the Network to take the lead and work in close co-operation with the secretariat and the executive committee should be defined;

- Lobby the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in order to have the rights of migrants and asylum seekers adopted as a priority and core issue;
- Reconsider the budget with a view to increasing the 20, 000 EURO allocated for work on migrants and asylum seekers;
- Co-ordinate with the international conference on racism to take place in South Africa to promote a global view of the problems in the Mediterranean concerning migration, refugees and asylum seekers.

Proposals to the working group

- Work on freedom of movement of persons (which is a part of the Network's mandate), while also inquiring into the rights of refugees;
- Compile research in close co-operation with others, such as ECRE, in order to avoid duplication of work;
- Look at alternative ways of thinking to make it possible for people who need to move to do so in an orderly way so as to counter the illegal trafficking of human beings. It was suggested that more coherent policies for should be developed for arrivals instead of the existing negative measures such as visa restrictions, carrier sanctions, border control, and airport passport control.

B. Workshop on dialogue with governments; plan of action of the EMHRN and the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process

The workshop had a dual task. Firstly, it discussed possible methodologies for establishing a dialogue with governments. Secondly, it was devoted to the Network's plan of action and possible ways of influencing the human rights mechanisms of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Concerning dialogue with governments, participants agreed on a basic assumption: for human rights NGOs, dialogue is a prerequisite for achieving a better understanding between all parties.

However, it was also noted that dialogue entails some risks for the NGOs. By engaging in dialogue with governments, NGOs acknowledge those governments as partners and thus run the risk of legitimising them. By the same token, NGOs may jeopardise their own credibility by being part of the dialogue process, as the government might use the dialogue as a tool for official propaganda.

Despite such risks, it was argued that only governments are able to move things forward and change situations in the field of human rights. NGOs do not have that power.

The question was discussed of how NGOs can develop dialogue so as to entice governments to reform their human rights policy, while retaining a role as independent NGOs and the vocation to protest against human rights abuses. It was agreed that NGOs want to continue acting as a counterweight to governments and should always maintain their independence.

Often governments reject any dialogue or use it as a propaganda tool, and it is not possible to give a simple answer to the general question of whether or not to engage in dialogue with governments. Depending on the country, the dialogue may be a reality or an objective, and sometimes a very remote objective.

It was pointed out that the question of dialogue reflects a general gap between the North and the South. Dialogue is often made possible and seems natural in the North, whereas in the South it is rarely possible due to the imbalance between the partners to the dialogue. In the South, NGOs do not always have freedom of speech or access to the press.

After having analysed the various aspects of dialogue, several criteria for dialogue with governments were identified:

- Dialogue should not be an end in itself, but a way of influencing government policies in the field of human rights;
- Dialogue should not replace critique;
- The decisions made by the parties to the dialogue should lead to regular reports and follow-up;
- Dialogue should be developed on a case by case basis and not necessarily on a continuous basis;
- An assessment of the criteria of transparency for that dialogue and the need to publicise the contents of such a dialogue to the population were stressed.

Suggestions derived from the workshop

- To foster dialogue, when there is none, or reinforce existing dialogue;
- In countries where it is possible to engage in a dialogue, work should be carried out to prepare a national plan as a basis and framework for developing dialogue, in accordance with the proposals of the Vienna human rights conference. Such a national plan should involve various parties in society like academics, partner organisations and NGOs;
- The implementation of such a national plan should be subjected to close monitoring and follow-up. These action plans will be all the more effective if they are followed up at the international level, for instance by the High Commissioner for human rights in the UN;
- In countries where dialogue is impossible, the Network should promote contacts with possible dialogue partners, and defend fundamental liberties on the basis of which the dialogue could be initiated.

Finally, the Network was urged to promote and facilitate dialogue at a national level as a third party. The EMHRN can do this by being a partner in a national dialogue.

As to the second part of the workshop on mechanisms to protect human rights within the Barcelona Process, the main idea developed by the workshop was to promote more discussion of the human

rights dimension in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, for instance by setting up an independent expert group that could make recommendations to the Barcelona Ambassadors.

The workshop underlined the incoherence and insufficiency of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership funding for small NGOs that either do not have the capacity to manage huge funds or are prevented from obtaining funds by a veto imposed by their governments. On the other hand, NGOs from the North, which are more likely to receive larger sums, are faced with excessive bureaucracy and incomprehensible procedures. It was therefore suggested that the Network should try to persuade the Commission to change its funding policies and rules.

Further suggestions from the working group to the EMHRN

- Create a human rights commission at the Inter-Mediterranean parliamentary forum;
- Make the discussion on human rights according to Article 2 the object of a special *ad hoc* report;
- Promote alternative and 'safe' spaces and opportunities for discussion and dialogue between government representatives and civil society, in order to have more impact on European institutions. One key element is the issue of the funding policies within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Finally, it was agreed that the opening of an office in Brussels will develop new prospects for the members of the Network. It will make it possible to be better informed and increase the ability to use European institutions in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership framework. The working group underlined the need for the Network to improve the training of its members as regards European institutions and various human rights instruments.

C. Workshop on human rights education and training

The issue of human rights education and training was discussed in a working group, which took as its point of departure a report drawn up after the first meeting on human rights education and training organised in the framework of the EMHRN (Policy and Strategy on Human Rights Education, Bray, 2000).

There was a broad consensus for accepting the report from Bray (appendix 6). Nevertheless, many participants had additional points of a technical nature. Some of these points concerned the structure, whereas others concerned the content of education.

Participants agreed on the importance of involving youth more than in the past and giving them greater visibility and more responsibilities in work in this area.

The working group emphasised universal values as their reference point, and the Euro-Mediterranean area as the context.

Recommendations to the EMHRN from the working group

- Formally establish a human rights education group within the Network, and allocate adequate and appropriate resources so as to carry out a realistic and practical programme for human rights education;
- Appoint a convenor or several convenors, preferably representing both North and South, and preferably within the executive committee, to implement and co-ordinate this human rights education programme;
- Promote dialogue as the key element of this programme;
- Organise a summer school under the auspices of EMHRN;
- Organise a series of workshops exploring both pedagogical issues and cultural dialogue issues, and encourage individual member organisations to take a lead role in organising such workshops;
- Allocate reasonable resources for translations of key documents from Arabic to other languages and vice versa;
- Initiate an inventory project to catalogue current human rights education work within the membership of the Network to identify current strengths and weaknesses as well as to share lessons and challenges.

7. CHANGE OF STATUTES

Amendments to the EMHRN statutes were proposed concerning both membership criteria and extending the executive committee. The reason for the proposal on a change of membership criteria was to allow all human rights organisations in the Euro-Mediterranean area to become members and not limit the EMHRN membership to the geo-political definition of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The change of statutes extending the number of members of the executive committee would allow for a more representative executive committee.

For the adopted text, see appendix 7.

Comments

The amendment was welcomed, as it would enable NGOs from countries which have not signed the Barcelona Declaration to become members of the EMHRN. The specific example given was the Libyan League, which had been an associate member, but unfortunately not permitted to be a full member as Libya is not part of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It was pointed out that the Libyan League operates and lives in exile because it is impossible for a human rights organisation to operate in Libya, and that the League should not be punished for this fact.

Amendment to Article 3.1.a.i regarding membership was adopted unanimously, and the Libyan League for Human Rights was welcomed as a full member.

Amendment to Article 4.3.2 regarding the executive committee was also adopted unanimously.

8. RATIFICATION OF NEW MEMBERS AND CANCELLATION OF MEMBERSHIP

The executive committee proposed the ratification of the membership of the following organisations and individuals as new members of the Network:

The Libyan League for Human Rights, Libya
Conseil National pour les Libertés en Tunisie (CNLT), Tunisia
Arab Association for Human Rights, Nazareth, Israel

All the membership applications were ratified with one abstention.

The proposal to cancel the membership of the following members was adopted unanimously:

Egyptian Community in Greece
MEDEA
Mediterranean Centre for Human Rights

Membership criteria

The issue of membership criteria was discussed against the background of a dilemma: that of wanting to have as many members as possible but not having the financial means to do so. It was argued that the present Network is still at a foundation stage regarding membership criteria, which are mainly defined by the limit of three members per country. Members of the EMHRN were urged to suggest ideas to enable the executive committee to establish more specific membership criteria.

It was mentioned that some members figure both as individual and ordinary members, which creates confusion as to whether specific criteria exist for the membership of individuals as opposed to organisations. In answer to this, it was argued that the double membership status in the case of two specific members should be regarded as a protection mechanism against prosecution and maintained until specific membership criteria have been established.

Regarding the limit of three members per country, it was suggested that the EMHRN should freeze any new membership applications and contact as many NGOs as possible in order to select the most representative NGOs in the region, rather than accepting a random membership application from those NGOs that happen to know about the EMHRN.

In addition, in order to be able to keep to the limit of three members per country, it was suggested that a national platform be created in countries from which there are multiple membership applications. The national platform could then become a member of the EMHRN.

Several members mentioned the possibility of including organisations involved in other areas related to human rights, such as environmental organisations, as well as organisations fighting against corruption, poverty, and pollution. However, other participants argued that the EMHRN is not a political organisation and should not move beyond the human rights field.

It was noted that there is only one woman among the candidates for the new executive committee, which was seen as contradictory to the EMHRN's priority on women's rights. Similarly, it was pointed out that whereas the EMHRN receives many applications from some countries, it is hardly represented at all in others. It was therefore recommended that the organisational strategy of the EMHRN should take into account its priority themes in the defence of human rights and also reflect the diversity of the EMHRN's work. It was suggested that a report should be produced on the organisational strategy of the EMHRN as a basis for selecting member organisations that would correspond to the strategic choices of the EMHRN.

9. ELECTION OF PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENT, TREASURER, MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND AUDITOR

Voting was conducted by secret ballot. 34 participants had the right to vote.

Candidate for the post of President

Mr. Abdelaziz Bennani, Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme, was elected with 27 in favour, 6 against and 1 abstention.

Candidate for the post of Vice-President

Mr. Kamel Jendoubi, Comité pour le Respect des Libertés et des Droits de l'Homme en Tunisie, was elected with 30 in favour, 2 against and 2 abstentions.

Candidate for the post of Treasurer

Mr. Kerim Yildiz, Kurdish Human Rights Project, was elected with 30 in favour, 0 against, 2 abstentions and two papers missing.

Candidate for the post of Auditor

Mr. Primdal, Price Waterhouse Coopers, was elected with 31 in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

Candidates for the Executive Committee in alphabetical order:

Nazmi Gür, Human Rights Association in Turkey, elected with 21 votes.

Bahey el-Din Hassan, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, elected with 27 votes.

Morten Kjaerum, Danish Centre for Human Rights, elected with 26 votes.

Stefan Lutgenau, 16 votes, not elected.

Eva Norstroem, Swedish Refugee Council, elected with 30 votes.

Colm Regan, 80:20 Education and Acting for a Better World, elected with 24 votes.

Khader Skhirat, LAW, elected with 25 votes.

Driss El-Yazami, Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, elected with 32 votes.

Stefano Leszczynski decided not to stand for election again. The Assembly, led by President Bennani, paid tribute to and thanked him for the three years of work he has performed in the EMHRN, contributing to the progress of the Network.

In addition, Mr. Stefan Lutgenau, who stood for election to the executive committee but was not elected, was thanked for the work he had already done for the EMHRN and the wish was expressed that he would continue his co-operation in the future.

10. CLOSING STATEMENT

In conclusion, President Abdelaziz Bennani thanked the Assembly on behalf of the executive committee for the election and summed up the results achieved at this General Assembly.

Mr. Bennani stressed that the participants had good reason to congratulate themselves on the serene atmosphere at this General Assembly, as well as on the quality of their work, and the results achieved since the establishment of the Network.

The EMHRN was depicted as having gone through three important stages:

- The first was seen as the childhood stage, where the EMHRN had to overcome a number of obstacles inherent in the cultural diversity within the Network, and which were due to the differences in pathways between Northern and Southern members. The EMHRN had to promote cohesion in the team, and must continue to do so.
- The second stage lasted for 18 months. It brought the Network to this General Assembly. During this period, the Network gained credibility at a regional level, in the eyes of governments, of public opinion, and of international NGOs, who were now prepared to associate themselves with the EMHRN for actions initiated either by them or the Network.
- The third stage was seen as this General Assembly. The Assembly only lasted for 2 days, but it was intense because of the significance of the matters that were tackled, the problems analysed, the challenges faced, and what the participants did to overcome them.

He present General Assembly thus took important measures to perfect the overall strategy of the EMHRN by discussing intensified action in areas not given sufficient attention previously. The strategy regarding immigrants and asylum seekers was one such area, together with human rights education and dialogue with governments.

Most importantly, the discussion on the situation in the Middle East was confronted with lucidity and force and proved the ability and willingness of EMHRN members to co-operate in spite of their diverse

backgrounds. The adoption of the resolution on the Middle East conflict was drafted and adopted with only one abstention and thus proved a very useful precedent for the work of EMHRN members, who took a position as human rights activists regardless of political and national backgrounds.

Finally, Mr. Bennani stressed that the executive committee was determined to work hard to achieve the objectives of the Network and hoped that it would be able to demonstrate not only that the Network had progressed but that the human rights situation in the Mediterranean had also progressed.

**APPENDIX 1: AGENDA FOR THE FOURTH EMHRN ASSEMBLY GENERAL MEETING, 7-8
NOVEMBER 2000, CARRY LE ROUET, MARSEILLES**

7 NOVEMBER

- 09.00-09.20 Opening statement and political report by the President of the EMHRN
Abdelaziz Bennani, OMDH.
- 09.20-09.30 Election of meeting secretariat and general rapporteurs.
- 09.30-11.00 Presentation and discussion of annual report and financial statement.
Ratification of new members and termination of memberships.
Moderator: Eva Norstroem, Swedish Refugee Council.
Presentation of annual report: Stefano Leszczynski, Italian Helsinki Committee.
Presentation of financial report: Khader Shkirat, LAW and Marc Schade-Poulsen,
EMHRN.
- 11.00-12.00 Change of statutes.
Presentation of candidates for the executive committee.
Membership status of the Libyan League for Human Rights.
Presentation of candidates for the executive committee.
Moderator: Theocharis Papamargaris, Greek Committee for International Democratic
Solidarity.
- 12.00-13.30 Lunch.
- 13.30-15.30 Visions and challenges of the EMHRN. The Middle East Crisis.
Introduction and discussion.
Moderator: Morten Kjaerum, Danish Centre for Human Rights.
- A perspective from the South
Bahey El Din Hassan, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies.
- A perspective from the North
Stefan Lütgenau, Bruno Kreisky Foundation.
- 15.30-16.00 Coffee break.
- 16.00-17.30 EMHRN strategy, future work programme and budgetary priorities.
Presentation and opening remarks: Kamel Jendoubi, CRLDHT.
Moderator: Samira Trad, Consultant, individual member of the EMHRN.
- 17.30-18.30 Workshops:
- A. Migrants and Asylum seekers
Papers: Driss El Yazami, Human Rights League and Christopher Hein, Italian Refugee
Council.
Moderator: Malika Horchani, Collectif 95 - Maghreb Egalité.
Rapporteur: Eva Norstroem, Swedish Refugee Council.

B. Dialogue with governments and human rights mechanisms in the Barcelona Process.

Paper: Morten Kjaerum.

Moderator: Hani Hourani, Al Urdun al Jedid Centre Research Centre.

Rapporteur: Sara Guillet, FIDH.

C. Human rights education and training.

Paper: Colm Regan, 88:20 Education and Acting for a Better World.

Moderator: Ahmed Karaoud, Arab Institute for Human Rights.

Rapporteur: Wa'el Kheir, Foundation for Humanitarian and Human Rights, Lebanon.

8 NOVEMBER

09.00-12.00 Workshops continued.

12.00-13.30 Lunch.

13.30-16.00 Reports from workshops, discussion and adoption of the next year's programme and budget.

Moderator: Driss El Yazami, Human Rights League.

16.00-16.30 Break.

16.30-17.30 Election of president, vice-president, treasurer and members of the executive committee and auditor.

Moderator: Anette Jüneman (individual member of the EMHRN).

17.30-17.45 Closing statement.

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ORDINARY MEMBERS: NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Ghechir Boudjma, Président, Ligue Algérienne des Droits de l'Homme

Mohand Ouali Ait Yahya, Secrétaire général, Ligue Algérienne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme

Stefan Lütgenau, Coordinator, Bruno Kreisky Foundation for Human Rights

Driss Ouazzani, Directeur, Centre de Prévention Jeunesse Maghrébine (A.M.O)

Morten Kjaerum, Director, Danish Centre for Human Rights

Tuomo Melasuo, Research Director, Tampere Peace Research Institute

Susan Villa, Researcher, Tampere Peace Research Institute

Driss El-Yazami, Vice-Président, Ligue des droits de l'Homme

Mohieddine Cherbib, Vice-Président, Fédération des Tunisiens pour une Citoyenneté des Deux Rives (FTCR)

Mokhtar Trifi, Président, Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme

Nafsika Papanikolatos, Programme Director, Greek Helsinki Monitor

Theocharis Papamargaris, President, Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity

Colm Regan, Coordinator, 80.20 Educating and Acting for a Better World

Treasa Galvin, Chairperson, 80.20 Education and Acting for a Better World

Andrea Battista, Coordinator - EU Advocacy Project, Arab Association for Human Rights

Mohammed Zeidan, Director, Arab Association for Human Rights

Eitan Felner, Executive Director, B'Tselem

Stefano Leszczynski, Project Director, Italian Helsinki Committee

Christopher Hein, President, Italian Refugee Council (C.I.R.)

Claudio Zanghi, Professor, Intercenter Hani Hourani, General Director, Al-Urdun Al-Jadid Research Centre

Wa'il Kheir, Managing Director, Foundation for Human & Humanitarian Rights Lebanon

Selim Hanna Mawad, Assistant to General Director, René Moawad Foundation

Georges J. Assaf, Director, Beirut Bar Association
Lucienne Attard, Lecturer, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies

Mohammed Alahyane, Membre du Bureau National, chargé des relations internationales,
Organisation Marocaine des Droits Humains (OMDH)

Abdelaziz Benanni, Organisation Marocaine des Droits Humains (OMDH), Président du REMDH

Kamal Lahbib, Secrétaire Général Adjoint, Espace Associatif

Saida Drissi Amrani, Enseignante, Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc

Khader Shkirat, Director, LAW, Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment

Raji Sourani, Director, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

Eva Norstroem, President, Swedish Refugee Council (SRC)

Naser Al-Ghazali, President Damascus Centre for Theoretical and Civil Rights Studies

Kamel Jendoubi, Président, Comité pour le Respect des Libertés et des Droits de l'Homme en Tunisie

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**APPENDIX 3: FINANCIAL STATEMENT, EMHRN, 2000
INCOME**

CORDAID, DANIDA, FORD FOUNDATION, SOUTH CO- ORDINATION	139.000	32%
EUROPEAN COMMISSION	301.884	68%
TOTAL	440.884	100%

EXPENDITURES

ORGANIZATION OF THE EMHRN

GENERAL ASSEMBLY	70.000	16 %
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	36.615	8 %
CAPACITY-BUILDING, ARABIC GUIDE	9.200	2 %
TOTAL	115.815	26 %

EMHRN ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES BY COUNTRY		
MISSIONS TO SYRIA	5.927	1%
FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, JORDAN	10.667	2%
SUMMER SCHOOL, ALGERIA	3.067	1%

ACTIVITIES, TUNISIA	5.000	1%
MISSION AND REPORT, TURKEY	4.800	1%

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS: FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION, PREPARATORY MEETINGS AND SEMINAR	47.268	11%
WOMEN'S RIGHTS	4.705	1%
EDUCATION, THE BRAY WORKSHOP AND THE CONFERENCE IN CAIRO	24.735	6%
THE RIGHT TO SELF DETERMINATION, A REPORT ON PALESTINIAN REFUGEES, THE CAIRO CONFERENCE	30.334	7%
INITIATIVE IN RELATION TO THE EMP REPORTS, OFFICE, TRAVEL	17.429	4%

KEY INITIATIVES		
DIALOGUE WITH GOVERNMENTS	3.382	1%
THE CIVIL FORUM, CO- ORDINATION, THE JERUSALEM WORKSHOPS	24.000	6%
TOTAL	181.314	41%

ADMINISTRATION OF THE EMHRN

EXECUTIVE BODY	53.400	11%
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION	36.173	8%

ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT	23.320	5%
FUNCTIONING COSTS	30.610	7%
TOTAL	143.755	31%

TOTAL	444.884	100 %
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APPENDIX 4: RESOLUTION ON A NEW APPROACH FOR A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Resolution on a new approach for a just and lasting peace based on human rights and humanitarian law.

The human rights organisations meeting in Marseille 7-8 November 2000, forming the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN), expressed their deep concern regarding the recent developments in the Middle East. The current uprising is, among other factors, a consequence of the continued violations of human rights by Israeli occupation forces including the right to self-determination of the Palestinian People.

On the basis, inter alia, of the report written by the mission which was sent to the area in October 2000 by the EMHRN and other NGOs, the General Assembly strongly condemned the widespread and sustained abuses of human rights combined with failure to adhere to international humanitarian law, in particular the fourth Geneva Convention, contradicting the Barcelona Declaration and the Association Agreements.

The general assembly is convinced that the only way to end the current crisis and create a new approach for a just and lasting peace is: (1) an immediate end to the Israeli occupation of June 1967, including the evacuation from the settlements in order to fulfil the right to self determination of the Palestinian people; (2) an unconditional adherence by all parties to all international human rights instruments.

The General Assembly is convinced that all the Euro-Mediterranean partner countries and the EU bodies have a central role to play in placing human rights and humanitarian law at the heart of any new peace process.

The General Assembly requests that the executive committee promotes this new approach by, inter alia:

- Strengthening the dialogue with the different organs of the Euro-Med Partnership;
- Reinforcing collaboration within the human rights movement in the region and at the international level;
- Sending fact-finding missions to the region in order to investigate human rights violations and identify those responsible;
- Supporting the commission of inquiry sent by the UN Commission on Human Rights as decided on 18 October 2000 in Geneva;
- Supporting the creation of an international committee to prepare the establishment of a tribunal to bring to justice those who have committed human rights crimes;
- Supporting initiatives with the aim of ensuring proper compensation to the victims of human rights violations.

APPENDIX 5: STATEMENT CONCERNING PALESTINIAN CITIZENS OF THE ISRAELI STATE

Statement submitted by Adalah, the Legal Centre for the Arab Minority and HRA, the Arab Association for Human Rights, to the EMHRN General Assembly, Marseille, 7-8 November 2000.

In the intifada of October 2000, the police killed 13 Palestinian citizens of the Israeli state. More than 700 were injured and 400 were detained.

In the same areas, especially in the mixed cities, Israeli Jewish citizens committed pogroms against Palestinian residents and their businesses. The police did not protect the Palestinians and as a result, in some areas they feel insecure and threatened. In Nazareth, at the beginning of the Yom Kippur festivities, the security forces attacked the Palestinian citizens gathered in the streets in order to defend the eastern neighbourhood of the city from the aggression by Israeli Jewish extremists coming from the close Nazareth Illit. Two people were shot dead.

The Palestinian minority economy was also seriously affected by the selective withholding of services by state monopolies, quasi-governmental and private companies and the dismissal of a significant proportion of Palestinian workers, citizens of the state.

The Attorney General of the Israeli State delivered directions to all the prosecutors to ask before Israeli courts to immediately open indictment against the detainees. The Supreme Court of Israel has confirmed this policy.

Despite all these facts, the Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Barak, refused the Palestinians' request to appoint an official enquiry committee, a proposal also supported by the Israeli Jewish human rights organisations as well as by law professors in Israeli universities. Instead of an effective legal commission empowered by the Israeli Law, the government appointed a committee whose aim is simply to clarify the events, with no legal jurisdiction.

Based on these facts we suggest that the EMHRN adopt the following recommendations:

Support the creation of an international commission to inquire into the events. Former European judges whose reputation and independence is acknowledged should head such commission. The Commission would hear witnesses and inquire facts in order to deliver results and recommendations publicly both to the Israeli society as well as to the international community.

Support the request of the Palestinians of Israel to investigate and to punish those responsible for the disproportionate use of force and massive violations of human rights during the confrontations of the previous weeks.

Condemn the behaviour of the Israeli security forces against its own citizens, requesting them to stop the discriminatory policy and release the Palestinians unlawfully detained.

APPENDIX 6: BRAY REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

EMHRN
Policy and Strategy on Human Rights Education
Report on a Workshop, April 27 - 29, 2000
80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World
Bray, Co. Wicklow, Ireland

Overall workshop objectives:

- To develop a draft policy perspective and approach in human rights education for the EMHRN;
- To agree draft principles for such an approach;
- To develop a draft programme in human rights education for consideration at the Fourth General Assembly of the Network.

This brief report outlines the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop and proposes a course of action for the network to consider in developing a policy and programme for human rights education.

General workshop discussion and points arising

The workshop participants concluded that the following general points need to be considered in developing an EMHRN approach to human rights education (HRE).

- Human rights education should be an integral part of the overall human rights agenda of the Network. It should not be an 'add-on' or something separate from the other strands of work. The educational work needs to reinforce the overall work of the Network and vice versa. Human rights education should not become the preserve of 'experts' in that field but should be something of interest and concern to all members. Therefore, the Network should have both a specialist 'working group' on HRE and an HRE dimension within other working groups.
- Our approach must take into account the 'real world' context of human rights promotion and not just a theoretical or a de-contextualised model. The Network needs to root its approach in the experience of its members and should base its understanding and approach on such experiences. Our work should provide a real sense of urgency as well as a flavour of the context and circumstances in which our members pursue human rights concerns.
- Equal reference should be made to specific issues of human rights violations and protection as well as to the more general issue of promoting a '*Human Rights Culture*'. The Network's approach to HRE should emphasise the ongoing need for education as a tool or mechanism for preventing human rights violations, challenging such violations and abuses and not simply as a 'soft' option in monitoring human rights practices.
- If we are to be taken seriously within education, equal weighting must be given to educational considerations as well as to those relating directly to human rights per se. Our approach needs to place equal emphasis on the educational needs, capacities and interests of those with whom we

seek to work. We cannot simply enforce 'our views' without negotiating the views of others. We need to respect the 'learning agenda' of HRE.

- One of the objectives of the programme should be to establish and develop a dialogue between the Network and those already engaged in human rights education, with a view to establishing what precisely a network such as EMHRN can contribute. We should try to avoid duplicating the work of others (especially where they have been active for many years and/or have a specifically educational mandate) and should strive to develop a distinctive perspective and approach, for example as a network with a specific focus and membership.
- Our agenda in HRE needs to respect the 'universality' principles of human rights while at the same time respecting and encouraging the local specificity of applying those universal principles. One of the contributions which the Network might make involves the Arab/Islamic-Western dialogue on such issues. There is considerable material in Arabic on the topic of human rights that could be usefully publicised and translated for wider circulation and use.
- In general, the Network needs to be careful to avoid 'Eurocentrism' in its approach or emphasis as regards its materials or its reference points. We need to deliberately and consciously expand the terms of reference within HRE culturally. However, we need to do this while maintaining a firm commitment to the need for universal norms and standards. We should be open to the 'clashing of world cultures', while also highlighting the classical traditions in human rights literature and philosophy (for example secular humanism and Judeo Christian traditions to name but one).
- In developing its approach to HRE, the Network should seek to build strategic links into other related areas of social and political education as well as into other social movements (the development, environmental and women's movements), and into areas such as development education, intercultural education etc. Our objective should be to add something specific to the work and agendas of such organisations and movements rather than to 'compete' with them in any way. Our contribution should, again, rest on the experience of the membership.
- One of our objectives should be to raise awareness of a number of key issues and questions and to publicise international documents and instruments relating to human rights, especially in those countries and contexts where knowledge of this information is limited. An initial draft listing for discussion of some of these is provided in the appendix of this workshop report.

Some of the key principles and questions, which should inform our work, include the following:

- **Human dignity**
Why do we all as human beings have rights and how does this question relate to human rights today?
- **Human rights**
What are the international instruments that codify these rights?
- **Responsibilities**
What are our responsibilities with regard to human rights and how do we protect and promote them? Who has prime responsibility?

- **Human rights practices**

How do we confront violations and encourage (or demand) adherence?

The Network should emphasise that human rights education is a fundamental, not 'optional' element of human rights promotion and advocacy. Policy or strategy documents from the Network as well as events organised by the Network should clearly illustrate this by including reference to HRE or agenda activities related to HRE.

In our approach to defining human rights education, the Network should seek to endorse not only the specifics of human rights but also the broader principles of social and political education. In this context, our definition should highlight a number of key areas – values (or dispositions), skills (or capabilities), ideas (or understandings) as well as experiences (or actions). This latter dimension of action is especially important in areas such as HRE. Other principles which should be emphasised or endorsed include: critical thinking, tolerance of diversity, freedom of expression, active participation etc. Our emphasis should also be on effecting change at a variety of levels (all of which are important) – at the individual level, at community level, at state level and internationally.

It is important that the Network refer to and endorse the approach of other policy documents or statements on HRE. For example, The United Nations Decade on Human Rights Education 1995-2004, the work of UNESCO, UNESCO Arab Conference 1997, the OAU Charter, Harare 1988 etc.

The Network should pay attention to the need to train its members in HRE, ensuring that we develop our capacity and skills as well as learning from the experiences of others, it must understand the need to share lessons, methods and experiences. It is especially important that we focus on the training of trainers. This is something that some members are already engaged in and we should build further on their work.

The Network should recognise that, in so far as it is possible, the agenda should relate to all levels of society; from schools and colleges to sectors within civil society; women, NGOs, clergy, youth, the media, as well as to state structures.

Towards a draft EMHRN definition and understanding of human rights education

(Note: this framework has been developed from the work of the Development Education Commission and is presented to encourage debate and discussion at this stage in the development of the EMHRN).

The four key dimensions

In our view, human rights education must take into account four key dimensions, all of which need to be addressed in order to achieve desired ends. Each of these dimensions is of equal importance and one should not be prioritised above another. In such a context, education for human rights is the active process by which people, through personal experience and shared knowledge:

1. Gain experience of, develop and practise values and dispositions crucial to a just, democratic and peaceful society which respects and promotes the human rights of all.
2. Engage with, develop and apply ideas and understandings which help explain the origins, diversity and dynamic nature of society. These should include the interactions between and

among societies, cultures, individuals, identities and environments and the core role of human rights in mediating these interactions.

3. Engage with, develop and practise skills and capabilities which enable the investigation of society, the discussion of issues, problem-tackling, decision-making, working co-operatively and negotiating with others.

4. Take actions and have access to essential experiences that are illuminated and initiated by these ideas, values and skills, and which might contribute to the achievement of a peaceful and democratic society.

While it would be one of the key objectives of the Network to develop the detail of such an approach (and to root this in an understanding of the current practice of HRE in the members states and organisations of the Network), it may be useful and illustrative, at this stage, to identify some of the potential content and emphases of these dimensions. The examples provided are simply illustrative.

The four key areas initially explored

1. Values and dispositions

Respect and caring for self

In a just and democratic society, respect and caring for self is central to the flourishing of the well being of both the individual and the wider community. Respecting and caring for oneself brings both the capacity to act autonomously and to be self-motivated. It is an essential pre-requisite for an understanding of how to care for others and it creates the potential for inner peace in a world of change and uncertainty.

Respect and caring for others

In a pluralist democracy, the disposition to respect and care for others is central to living interdependently. The positive relationships forged among individuals and groups are essential to the development of qualities such as co-operation, interdependence and respect for a diversity of people and cultures. These allow us to live and work in the realities of the world of today and the future.

A sense of social responsibility

In a society geared to the general well being of all, it is essential to develop a commitment to social responsibility. This should be based on the critical scrutiny of information and evidence within an awareness of existing power relationships, social mores, principles and traditions. Such a disposition to social responsibility should also entail a commitment to living in an environment that is held in trust for the future.

A sense of belonging

Citizenship depends on a disposition to be part of the enterprise as a whole, a commitment to common purposes that go beyond personal interests, a willingness to participate as an active citizen.

An understanding of the world as a place where each individual feels valued and where both group and individual concerns and opinions are respected engenders it.

2. Ideas and understandings

The centrality of relationships

In an increasingly pluralist and interdependent society, there is a need to recognise and foster economic, social, cultural and political relationships based on equality and reciprocity, as well as a recognition that mutual benefits follow from such relationships.

The importance of compromise and negotiation

In a context of moving away from violence towards the possibility of peace and human rights, the need to develop an awareness of the importance of negotiation and compromise. Also, the ability to recognise what is essential and what is subsidiary.

The concepts of democracy, governance and citizenship

To promote an understanding and action in order to underpin democratic practices and procedures. This extends to the duties of all citizens. An appreciation of the history of the struggle for democracy and human rights and the need to safeguard them, as well as the recognition of the responsibilities of governments and civil society at large.

Cultural identities, conflicts and conciliations

At a time of rapid internationalisation, we need to foster recognition of the equal value of all cultural identities and the dangers of ethnocentricity, which fuels conflict and aggression. The value of conciliation and the skills necessary to achieve it also needs to be developed and practised.

Rules, rights and responsibilities

Equality, participation and democracy require the active involvement of all citizens in all countries. The recognition that all are born with inalienable rights must be matched with a recognition that there are also parallel responsibilities. A recognition also, that the promotion and protection of rights and responsibilities is not simply the duty of government, but of all.

Gender identities

In order to realise the full humanity and dignity as well as the potential contribution of all, we need to foster a recognition of the equal rights of all, regardless of gender and that discrimination on that basis is immoral and increasingly illegal. We need to rediscover stories which have been hidden from history because of gender discrimination, and we need to explore and foster new and different gender roles for the future.

3. Skills and capabilities

Communication skills

Including the ability to: listen, discuss, make oral presentations, debate, interview, communicate competently across all language modes and a range of media, write for a purpose, defend a position, express one's interests, beliefs and viewpoints through an appropriate medium, perceive and understand the interests, beliefs and viewpoints of others, be empathetic and make appropriate use of information technology.

Research and problem-tackling skills

Including the ability to: research and evaluate information and ideas, interpret media 'texts', identify bias and prejudice, recognise discrimination and the use of stereotypes, organise information, apply reasoning skills to problems and issues and to perceive the consequences of taking, or not taking, specific actions in particular contexts.

Social skills

Including the ability to: develop satisfying and interactive human relations in different cultural contexts and across domains of power, take responsibility and make decisions, establish democratic working relationships, sustain dialogue within and across cultural settings and negotiate and make necessary compromises.

Action skills

This dimension is frequently neglected and yet is central to a curriculum for peace and democracy. Including the ability to: identify and understand the objectives and impact as well as the importance of appropriate action, participate in group decision-making, effectively engage in participative and appropriate democratic action and organise meetings and engage with representatives of different social, political and cultural groups.

4. Experiences and actions

If all of the above are to translate into action, they need to be fostered by means of a variety of methodologies and processes. However, there are certain types of essential experience which foster the development of the values, ideas, skills and actions, and which should be featured in all educational settings. These include:

- Working co-operatively and working independently;
- Giving and receiving feedback and participating in decision-making;
- Feeling valued and sharing responsibility;
- Knowing a sense of achievement.

While learners should regularly experience many of these in formal educational settings, there should also be opportunities built into organisational arrangements that allow the experiences to be made real, in other, non-formal contexts. The experiences do not change, but the contexts do. It is the responsibility of educational managers and policy makers to ensure that learners have the opportunity to take part in such things as:

- Residential experiences;
- Opportunities to join societies and associations;
- Opportunities to be involved with school councils;
- Opportunities to engage with representatives of other and perhaps 'opposing' traditions and perspectives, including those of other cultures. This dimension is especially important in the context of comparative or cross-cultural learning;
- Opportunities to practise skills of negotiation and conciliation outside the 'safety' of the formal settings.

Workshop suggestions and recommendations to EMHRN General Assembly

The workshop discussed a number of possible initiatives which should be considered by the next General Assembly and which might form some of the core work of the Network in HRE over the next few years. These suggestions are based, in part, on work already underway within the membership of the Network:

- Establish a working group within the Network to develop and deliver a clear programme in HRE and to seek the necessary funding to make this programme a reality.
- Draft an EMHRN Declaration on Human Rights Education - translating, publishing and disseminating it widely (within the membership in the first instance);
- A project for taking stock of current activities and approaches to HRE within the countries represented in the Network. This project would, in essence, be a digest or review of experiences, current practice and methods etc.;
- The Network should consider assisting with the organisation of a Second International Conference of the Arab Human Rights Movement with a focus on Human Rights Education and Dissemination in the Arab Region. This proposal is already well advanced within the work programme of the Cairo Institute and other related NGOs and centres.

Using information technology

The Network should consider designing and publishing an annotated listing of human rights related internet sites (possibly in poster format) and begin the process of developing an EMHRN site with effective HRE content for different groupings. These would help to profile the Network, as well as deliver a core educational agenda.

The Network should consider publishing and disseminating a set of Human Rights Briefings which could focus on specific issues or countries or which could highlight certain campaigns. These should be accessible and popular, for 'public' consumption, and would need to be published in the working languages of the Network.

The organising of a (bi-annual ?) summer school, designed in different instances for different constituencies. It would be held in various member states within the Network and could address a variety of issues such as Arab-Western dialogue in human rights, to women's rights, to methodologies in human rights education. It could be organised for teachers and educators, the media, women's

groups etc., depending on the context and needs of the organisers. The EMHRN could assist with the preparation and content, but the details and delivery would be left to local organisations.

Some priority should be given to the issue of training. There are specific needs within the Network and the HRE agenda in general which require support and formation as well as capacity building (within the member organisations). For example, the relationship between religion and human rights, Islam and human rights, the question of women's rights etc. Particular seminars or workshops could be relatively easily organised based on the current work of some members (their seminars could be expanded). Training manuals could also be considered for use within the membership. Some of these already exist and might simply need translating, editing or distributing more widely.

The EMHRN should examine the possibility of designing a popular 'slogan' and 'motif' that would highlight the existence and nature of the Network in addition to the Arab-Western dialogue. This would be used to popularise the notion of human rights. This approach could also include the design of a human rights pin for young people.

The Network should consider commissioning a human rights 'primer' or 'reader' of key documents and writings within human rights, with a dual purpose in mind. Firstly, the sharing of key human rights documents within the member states of the network; secondly, the primer would include materials and articles (for example, those written in Arabic which are not currently widely available). A draft of such a primer is already in circulation amongst students associated with the Centre for Human and Human Rights in Beirut and this could be extended and developed further in partnership with the Network. The primer might also be made available on CD ROM.

The Network should, as a matter of priority, prepare an annotated listing of key documents and articles relating to human rights and human rights education, with a view to include key international and regional documents and views. Such a listing would be, in the first instance, for members of the Network but would also have wider applicability. There are already many articles in Arabic not available in English or French and perhaps the Network could assist with having these translated.

The Network should consider joining in partnership with member organisations to co-publish a cartoon book on human rights, with an emphasis on the Arab World through using Arab cartoonists (amongst others), and with a focus on human rights issues within that world. Such a collection has already been published in a number of contexts, for example the work of Amnesty International and in the area of development issues.

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Appendix to the Bray report: draft listing of the major human rights systems and instruments

Milestones in the adoption of major human rights instruments

- 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- 1967 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- 1984 Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
- 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child

International Bill of Rights

The International Bill of Rights consists of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its two protocols. Also, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human rights recognises the indivisibility of human rights. Nevertheless, separate covenants evolved on civil and political and economic, social and cultural rights, reflecting the legacy of the cold war.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Building on the principles of the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations on 10 December 1948, is the primary document proclaiming human rights standards and norms. The declaration recognises the universality, indivisibility and inalienability of the rights of all people as the foundation of equality, freedom, justice and peace in the world.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

Adopted in 1966 and entered into force in 1976, the ICCPR defines the economic, social and cultural rights of people. It introduced a new way of looking at development, the rights-based perspective. There are 142 states parties to this covenant.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)

The ICERD was adopted in 1965 and entered into force in 1969 in the aftermath of decolonisation, a period characterised by apartheid and racial and ethnic conflicts. It deals with a particular form of discrimination – that based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. 155 countries have ratified the convention.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

Adopted in 1979 and entered into force in 1981, CEDAW represents the first comprehensive, legally binding international instrument prohibiting discrimination against women, and obligating governments to take affirmative action to advance gender equality. The convention, ratified by 165 countries, is often referred to as the International Bill of Rights for Women.

Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)

The CAT, adopted in 1984 and entered into force in 1989, added an important pillar to the international protection of human rights. The convention, which deals with the right not to be subjected to torture, lays out the steps to be taken by states to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. 119 countries have ratified it.

Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Adopted in 1989 and entered into force in 1990, the CRC recognises the need for specific attention to protecting and promoting the rights of children, to support their growth, development and becoming worthy citizens of the world. 191 countries, making it almost universal, have ratified it.

Regional human rights instruments and institutions

Inter-American Human Rights System

The inter-American human rights system coexists with the UN treaty-based and non-treaty-based mechanisms.

Main Instruments

American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man (1948)

- Has a preamble explicitly linking rights and duties.
- Covers a roster of economic and social rights, most relating to labour, contained in a social charter.
- Links human rights and democracy.
- Is legally non-binding and thus led to the adoption of the American Convention of Human Rights.

American Convention on Human Rights (1969)

- Is fundamentally a civil and political rights treaty but a new protocol on economic and social rights has now come into force.
- Provides progressive treatment of freedom of expression.
- Makes explicit the conditions under which guaranteed rights can be overridden in times of public danger.
- Has been ratified by 24 of the 35 members of the Organisation of American States.

Other instruments

Inter-American Convention of Forced Disappearance (1994)

Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture (1985)

Convention of the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (1994)

Implementing institutions and mechanisms

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (1959)

- Is made up of members elected by the General Assembly of the Organisation of American States.
- Combines promotion and adjudication functions.
- Advises governments on legislation affecting human rights.

Inter-American Court of Human Rights (1979)

- Has two types of jurisdiction-advisory and contentious.
- Issues advisory opinions on correct interpretation of treaty obligations.
- Contentious jurisdiction encompasses cases submitted by the commission against states parties and vice versa.

European human rights

The European human rights system is by far the most developed of the regional systems. Distinguished by its preference for judicial approaches, it has gone the furthest in developing judicial processes. The European system also enjoys the highest rate of state compliance with its decisions.

Main instruments

European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950)

- Convention provides for collective enforcement of certain civil and political rights.
- European Court of Human Rights rules in cases alleging that individuals have been denied their human rights.
- Contracting states undertake to secure the rights defined by the convention for all.
- Subsequent protocols have extended the initial set of rights.
- Most countries that have ratified the convention have incorporated the provisions into their own national law.

European Social Charter (1961, revised in 1996)

- Guarantees a series of rights relating to conditions of employment and social cohesion.
- Has a system of supervision that includes the Committee of Independent Experts, the Governmental Committee.
- Provides for all collective complaints.

Other Instruments

European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1987)

Framework Convention on National Minorities (1955)

Implementing institutions and mechanisms

European Court of Human Rights (1959)

- Has as many judges as there are contracting states.
- Hears cases from individuals and contracting states.
- Uses a procedure that is adversarial and public.
- Issues advisory opinions on legal issues relating to conventions and protocols.

African human rights system

The African system of human rights is relatively recent. It prefers judicial and quasi-judicial approaches.

Instrument

African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981)

- Covers civil, and political, economic, social and cultural rights.
- Provides for collective rights and for state and individual duties.
- Includes claw-back clauses restricting human rights to the maximum extent allowed by domestic law

Implementation institutions and mechanisms

African Human Rights Commission (1987)

- Serves more promotional and less protective functions.
- Examines state reports.
- Considers communications alleging violations.
- Expounds the African charter.

African Human Rights Court (decision to establish made in 1988, court has yet to start functioning)

- Consists of 11 judges appointed in their personal capacity.
- Complements the work of the African Human Rights Commission.
- Serves more protective and less promotional functions.
- Has a jurisdiction not limited to cases or disputes arising out of the African charter.

Arab human rights system

The Arab human rights system came into existence with the adoption of the *Arab Charter of Human Rights by the Arab League in 1994*. The charter:

- Provides for a Committee of Human Experts to examine reports submitted by the states parties and then reports these to the Permanent Commission of Human Rights of the Arab League.
- Prohibits denial of any of the fundamental human rights, but provides for limitations and restrictions on all rights for reasons of national security, the economy, public order, the rights of others and the like.
- Includes no requirements for a valid declaration of a state of emergency, and during a state of emergency provides for only a few rights, such as prohibition of torture and safeguards for a fair trial.
- Provides for no right to political organisation and participation.

APPENDIX 7: AMENDMENTS TO THE EMHRN STATUTES

Proposed by the executive committee for the Fourth General Assembly of the EMHRN
Carré Le Rouet, Marseille, 7-8 November

Membership criteria

Article 3.1.a.i - present wording

Regular Members shall consist of national or regional non-governmental organisations, academic institutions and national human rights institutions. They must be designated by the General Assembly as being located in one of the 27 Partner States, independent of government authorities and non-partisan. They must be active in at least one of the human rights issues contained in the Barcelona Declaration and, accept the statutes of the Network and co-operate with the existing members of the Network. In order to be recognised as such, a Regular Member shall, prior to its recognition, have demonstrated its ability to organise and maintain basic activities of the Network and show its willingness to involve itself the overall regional aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

Amendment

Regular Members shall consist of national or regional non-governmental organisations, academic institutions and national human rights institutions, designated by the General Assembly as being located in one of the 27 Partner States, **or other potential partners states to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership**. They must be independent of government authorities and non-partisan, being active in at least one of the human rights issues contained in the Barcelona Declaration. They must accept the statutes of the Network and co-operate with the existing members of the Network. In order to be recognised as such, a Regular Member shall, prior to its recognition, have demonstrated its ability to organise and maintain basic activities of the Network and its willingness to involve itself in the overall regional aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

The Executive Committee

Article 4.3.2

a) The members of the Executive Committee shall be the President, the Vice President and such number of Representatives of Regular Member Organisations or Institutions (not more than five) as the General Assembly shall elect at every second Annual Meeting, provided that:

- i) only one Representative of the same Regular Member may serve on the Executive Committee;
- ii) only one Representative may represent Regular Member Organisations and Institutions of the same State;
- iii) only four members of the Executive Committee may represent respectively Regular Members of the EU States or the Mediterranean Partners of the EU;
- iv) the Executive Committee membership should aim to reflect the diversity of the human rights work of the Network.

Amendment

a) The members of the Executive Committee shall be the President, the Vice President and such number of Representatives of Regular Member Organisations or Institutions (**not more than seven**) as the General Assembly shall elect at every second Annual Meeting provided that:

- i) only one Representative of the same Regular Member may serve on the Executive Committee;
- ii) only one Representative may represent Regular Member Organisations and Institutions from the same State;
- iii) only **five members** of the Executive Committee may represent respectively Regular Members of the EU States or the Mediterranean Partners of the EU;
- iv) the Executive Committee membership should aim to reflect the diversity of the human rights work of the Network.

PART 2: ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 1999-2000

On April 12-13, 1999, fifty member representatives of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network met in Stuttgart for the Third General Assembly in order to evaluate the activities of the EMHRN's first years, and to discuss the future development of the Network.

They adopted a work programme outlining seven fields of activities: lobbying the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership; protection of human rights defenders, and peace and conflict resolution.

Furthermore, the participants at the AGM made a series of recommendations for the future work of the EMHRN. These were fed into the report of the Third General Assembly as additional and important guidelines for the work of the executive bodies of the EMHRN.

In order to allow readers to evaluate the actions of the EMHRN since Stuttgart, the report follows the headings of the work programme. It also describes EMHRN activities in relation to countries where specific activities have been carried out.

The period covered in this report starts from where the last annual report ended, i.e. March 1999, and leads as far as November 1, 2000. Thus it covers a period of 20 months and attempts to describe the activities that took place between the third and fourth general assembly as extensively as possible.

In the introduction, the report draws-up the main conclusions related to the past period's activities. It also seeks to clarify main phases in the development of the EMHRN as an organisational entity.

1. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

As mentioned above, the participants at the Third General Assembly adopted a work programme outlining seven fields of activities for the work of the EMHRN.

To help evaluate the development of the EMHRN in the past period, this chapter will summarise point by point what the EMHRN has achieved in relation to the goals it set up in April 1999.

In general

In the period covered by this report, the EMHRN has substantially developed its activities both thematically and in relation to countries. From a fragile starting point, it has increasingly become a key actor and interface in promoting and protecting human rights within the framework of the Barcelona Process. Although much remains to be done, the EMHRN has developed instruments with which to expand its activities in the future.

Lobbying the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

The EMHRN has developed a series of instruments and initiatives as a firm foundation on which to build its work on the human rights dimension of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It has been a key actor in setting the human rights of the Civil Fora related to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It has mobilised the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership institutions and members around

its seminars, and a series of publications has become a source of reference for human rights promotion within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

In addition, the EMHRN has initiated dialogue with a number of governments in the region and significantly strengthened co-operation with other international and regional human rights NGOs and civil society agents active in the region.

The EMHRN has also been involved in several actions relating to country issues. However, it has not yet been able to advocate for its concerns on a regular basis in relation to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, nor to report regularly to the Partnership about the human rights situation in the region. Nevertheless, preliminary work has been done. The EMHRN was able to open an office in Brussels in order to strengthen the ability of its members to mobilise in relation to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership agenda. It also enabled the EMHRN to systematise its reporting and advocacy.

Capacity-building and human rights education

By establishing its web site, the EMHRN has significantly increased its capacity to communicate and inform on human rights issues in the region.

It has initiated work to promote the projects of its members on a national level in countries where oppression is particularly high. Furthermore, it has sparked the development of substructures within the Network that might lead to concrete projects on the ground.

It has also initiated decentralisation of decision-making procedures by involving members in preparatory meetings, such as for the conference on women's rights and the seminar on freedom of association.

Women's rights

The EMHRN is still male biased in terms of the way its membership is composed, and action on the ground has not yet been identified. On the other hand, the EMHRN has recently taken significant steps to develop actions in this field and to integrate the question of women's rights in the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process.

Freedom of association and expression

The EMHRN has taken initiatives in relation to the situation in Palestine, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco.

On a regional level it has succeeded in bringing a number of NGOs together for a seminar in Morocco, which adopted a platform for future work in this priority area. The seminar was a first step in securing a basis for systematising efforts in this field and for future concerted efforts for the regional promotion of freedom of association.

In the field of freedom of expression, the activities of the EMHRN have concentrated on Jordan, and the creation of synergy with other actors is still in its infancy.

Racism and xenophobia, migration and refugees and human exchange

These issues are still considered priority areas of the EMHRN. However, it has not yet identified actions nor had sufficient resources to develop work in this field.

Protection of human rights defenders and human rights in conflict situations

The EMHRN has expanded its day-to-day solidarity work significantly in relation to a regrettably high number of human rights violations and attacks on human rights defenders. Furthermore, it has increasingly succeeded in establishing co-operation with a number of international human rights organisations. Work in order to develop regional and country strategies is still ongoing.

It is worth noting that during the past period the EMHRN has relied extensively on voluntary contributions from its membership base and executive bodies. Many thanks go out to all who invested time, expertise and resources.

Many thanks also go out to those agencies that have funded the EMHRN's work: The EU Commission, DANIDA, the Ford Foundation, Cordaid and the Danish Peace Foundation.

2. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The period covered in this report can be divided into three phases.

Phase 1: In January 1999, the EMHRN was able to sign its first contract with the Commission for a project proposal that had been delivered in September 1997. The late release of the contract meant that the momentum behind the 1997 proposal had changed over time. On the one hand, therefore, the EMHRN's work was limited by the necessity of having to implement a contract that was to some extent outdated.¹ On the other hand it allowed the EMHRN to expand its activities in a range of relevant fields.

Phase 2: In June, the EMHRN submitted a 2,5 million euro project to the EU Commission for the period 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2003. The project was approved by the end of 1999, but the contract was not released until late May 2000. In the period between the expiry of the first contract and the beginning of the second, the expansion of EMHRN activities had to be temporarily scaled down.

Phase 3: From June 2000 onwards, the EMHRN has been able to move forward again and it expects in the future, due to favourable contractual terms, to be able to adapt in a flexible manner to the strategic and organisational guidelines defined the member base. It will also be able to plan future activities for longer periods, as the new contract with the EU extends to June 2004.

The various phases in the development of the EMHRN have been reflected in the work of the executive committee.

At the Paris meeting in July 1999, the executive committee dealt mainly with assessing the results of the Third General Assembly in order to develop the organisational work of the EMHRN. Furthermore, discussions mainly concentrated upon the degree to which the Network could/should develop into an activist structure. Discussions towards clarifying the strategic approach continued at the Stockholm meeting in September 1999. In Amman in January 2000, it was clear that longer term planning was now possible due to the improved financial situation of the EMHRN. The executive committee then embarked on developing a strategic methodology for EMHRN work. This work has been pursued up to the Fourth General Assembly and the outcome is reflected in the EMHRN strategy plan.

Parallel to these meetings, the EMHRN was able to begin developing its work on a horizontal level. In April 2000, a first workshop meeting took place on human rights education in Bray, Ireland, according to the organisational idea that the EMHRN should not primarily develop into a centralised organisation, but encourage member organisations to take the lead in their field of activity and create networks with the Network. Since June 2000, the EMHRN has been able to encourage this way of working by supporting preparatory working group meetings for, respectively, a seminar on freedom of association (in Rabat) and a conference on women's rights (in Marseille). (See below for further details).

Finally, the secretariat, from relying on one full time employee, was able to employ a second staff member in September 1999. In October 2000, a third staff member was employed and at the end of the year, the EMHRN expects to open an antenna of the secretariat in Brussels.

It is worth noting that during the past period the EMHRN has relied extensively on voluntary contributions from its membership base and executive bodies. Many thanks go to all who invested time, expertise and resources.

Many thanks also go to the agencies that have funded the EMHRN's work: The EU Commission, DANIDA, the Ford Foundation, Cordaid and the Danish Peace Foundation.

3. EMHRN ACTIVITIES

A: LOBBYING THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP

Since the General Assembly in Stuttgart, the EMHRN has continued its work in relation to the institutions of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, to help contribute to the development of the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process.

Civil Fora:

Stuttgart, April 1999

After only two years' existence, the EMHRN was among the co-organisers of a Civil Forum conference on Human Rights and Civil Society in the Mediterranean which took place in relation to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Foreign Ministers' Meeting in April, 1999. In the month preceding the General Assembly, the EMHRN published a Policy Paper in consultation with its members which was forwarded to all Euro-Mediterranean Partnership governments and which gave a first coherent profile to the EMHRN in relation to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The Policy paper furthermore formed a basis for the declaration published by the EMHRN and the Forum des Citoyens de la Méditerranée at the conclusion of the Stuttgart Conference.

The Stuttgart Civil Forum Conference established the EMHRN as a conspicuous actor in the Barcelona Process. It was the first Civil Forum since Barcelona, 1995 where representatives of independent human rights organisations had the opportunity to express themselves and bring recommendations to the governments of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in direct encounter with Euro-Mediterranean Partnership officials. Many of the EMHRN members were present and contributed to the success of the conference through the high quality of their inputs and their involvement and commitment.

Marseille, November 2000

Shortly before the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership governmental meeting in Stuttgart in April 1999, preparations for the Civil Forum in relation to the next Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Summit were launched by a group of French NGOs in co-operation with the Quai d'Orsay. However, it was not until eight months later that human rights NGO concerns were included in the planning following a Euro-Mediterranean seminar organised by FIDH in Paris. 5 On this occasion, FIDH and the EMHRN were urged to co-operate in ensuring one of the Stuttgart *acquis*, i.e. that human rights should be at the forefront of the agenda of the next civil forum.

Since then, Paris-based members of the executive committee, in co-operation with FIDH, have worked intensively to ensure that human rights has become an independent item on the agenda,

in close co-operation with FIDH. During the course of the year 2000, several meetings per month have taken place between interested organisations. The Civil Forum eventually came to be structured in the following way: one conference for local and regional councils (150 participants); one conference for trade unions (150 participants); and one conference for NGOs (300 participants), the latter being sub-divided into 4 themes: A. Rule of Law and Democracy; B. Peace and Security; C. Culture and Human Exchange; D. Sustainable Development and Environment.

The EMHRN and FIDH took charge over co-ordinating the human rights dimension of the Civil Society Conference.

In order to focus attention around the human rights dimension and to involve human rights activists in the region in the preparations as much as possible, the executive committee decided at its Amman meeting in January 2000, that ongoing activities should be integrated into the preparations for the Civil Forum, i.e.:

8-11 February 2000, in Paris: First Euro-Mediterranean Meeting of the Families of Disappeared persons (organised by FIDH in co-operation with a number of organisations). The EMHRN supported the conference by financing the participation of two relatives of the disappeared in Algeria.

5-7 June 2000, in Jerusalem: LAW Conference on Culture, Community and Jerusalem. The EMHRN organised and funded a panel during the conference on the role of the Barcelona Process in relation to the Peace Process. It also organised a workshop on the human rights clause in the association agreements between the EU and respectively, Israel and the Palestinian National Authorities.

5-7 October 2000, in Casablanca: Seminar on Freedom of Association in the Euro-Mediterranean region (organised by the EMHRN, Espace Associatif, the Moroccan Association of Democratic Women, and the Moroccan Organisation for Human Rights).

13-16 October 2000, in Cairo: Conference on Human Rights Education in the Arab World (organised by the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies). The EMHRN financed travel costs allowing EMHRN members to attend this Second Conference of the Arab Human Rights Movement.

21-22 October 2000, in Stuttgart: From Stuttgart to Marseille. Conference organised by the EMHRN with a number of German partners to assess the outcome of the Civil Fora in Stuttgart and the development of the Barcelona Process since April 1999.

27-28 October 2000, in Marseille: Women between Symbolic and Physical Violence. Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Women's Rights organised by the EMHRN and FIDH in co-operation with the French Human Rights League.

29-31 October 2000, in Cairo: Conference on Palestinian Refugees (organised by the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies in co-operation with the EMHRN).

Due to the acute crisis in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the conference on women's rights and the situation of Palestinian refugees had to be postponed at the last minute.

Details of the other events are described below.

On 4 October 2000, the EMHRN forwarded a letter to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Foreign Ministers, encouraging them to follow-up on NGO recommendations from Stuttgart in Marseille, and to contribute to the establishment of an Euro-Mediterranean Partnership working programme in the field of human rights, including establishing a relevant fora where human rights issues can be promoted in a concrete and action-oriented manner in consultation with civil society.

Finally, the EMHRN, in co-operation with FIDH, invited main international human rights NGOs 6 to collaborate in organising a joint press conference on the opening day of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Ministerial Meeting in order to highlight the importance of the human rights dimension for the region. Each organisation was asked to make an assessment of the development of the human rights situation within selected fields since November 1995, to assess the impact of the Barcelona Process on the human rights situation, and to propose recommendations for the future. The 'white book' is currently being finalised.

Lobbying in relation to Brussels

The EMHRN's presence and participation in the Barcelona Process was consolidated in November 1999, when it organised a training seminar on the 'Human Rights Dimension of the Barcelona Process' in Brussels, November 8-11 1999, with the assistance of Jeunesse Maghebine, Brussels-based member of the EMHRN.

The seminar included an introduction to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, debates about the institutions of the EU, the MEDA Democracy Programme as well as key human rights aspects of the Barcelona Process. It brought around fifty human rights defenders to Brussels and actively involved high-level representatives of the EU institutions, the Commission, the Council and the Parliament, as well as ambassadors of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

As a part of the training seminar, the EMHRN organised a one-day reflection seminar on the implementation of the human rights clause of the EU association agreements in the European Parliament, which was sponsored by the five major political groups of the EP, and in which MEPs took part together with representatives of the major international human rights organisations. The proceedings of the Reflection seminar were published in April 2000, as a contribution to the development of a strong human rights mechanism on the basis of the human rights clauses. Furthermore, the debates of the training seminar fed into another key publication of the EMHRN:

Guide to human rights in the Barcelona Process

In April 2000, the EMHRN launched the French version of its Guide to Human Rights in the Barcelona Process at a meeting in the EP building in Paris in which MEPs took part as well as representatives of French human rights organisations.

Written by Khemais Chammari and Caroline Stainier, the Guide is a pioneering work in relation to the Barcelona Process and has been in great demand since then, including several EU delegations. An up-dated English version was published in October and the Arabic version is forthcoming.

The aim of the guide is to explain 'who is doing what and how' within the Euro-Mediterranean

Partnership. It describes the procedures and the institutions within the Partnership, such as the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the European Parliament. Two other chapters deal with the structure and the functioning of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and the financing of human rights and democracy projects. Finally, the Guide contains a section with contact addresses and key documents of the Partnership.

The guide is addressed to members and co-ordinators of networks and movements, who work for the promotion and protection of human rights within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and for the active participation of civil society in its development.

The Association Agreements between the EU and its Mediterranean partners

In continuation of its work on the development of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership human rights mechanisms, the EMHRN has participated in general campaigns to put human rights on the agenda of the Association Council meetings between the EU and its Mediterranean Partners.

In preparation for the Second Association Council meeting between the EU and Tunisia, scheduled for 16 November 1999, EMHRN representatives had several meetings with representatives of the Finnish Presidency of the EU. During these meetings, EMHRN concerns about the situation in the country were tabled. Contacts were also taken to the Swedish, and French governments.

A week before the Association Council meeting, the EMHRN issued two reports on Tunisia, one on the trials against Radhia Nassraoui and twenty co-defendants in summer, 1999, and one on the situation of civil liberties in Tunisia.

Finally, the organisation of the training seminar in Brussels in early November and the reflection seminar in the European Parliament had a not inconsiderable affect on the outcome of the Association Council meeting. During the training seminar it was announced that the meeting was postponed and would take place during the Portuguese Presidency of the EU.

Shortly before the first Association Council between Israel and the EU, the EMHRN organised a workshop in continuation of the LAW conference on Jerusalem where members and partners of the EMHRN were invited to formulate recommendations for the Association Council meeting. The meeting however, was organised with too short notice to produce the expected outcome. A report from the workshop is currently being finalised.

In October 2000, the EMHRN published a declaration on the occasion of the first Association Council between Morocco and the EU, in which progress and major problems relating to the human rights situation were highlighted, including concerns about the increase of racist incidents in the EU with regard to Moroccan migrants. The declaration was forwarded to all the relevant Euro-Mediterranean Partnership institutions.

In summer 2000, the EMHRN facilitated financial support for the English translation of the IHD report on its Legislative Screening of Turkish legislation relevant to Turkey's compliance with the Copenhagen Political Criteria for adherence to the EU.

It funded a mission of IHD composed of Akin Birdal, Hüsnü Urgül and Nazmi Gür to Brussels to meet representatives of the EU institutions and present their report. The meetings and a press

conference were organised by FIDH representatives in Brussels and were widely publicised in Turkey.

The MEDA Democracy Programme

Since the time it was set up, the EMHRN has followed the development of the MEDA Democracy Programme with great concern. From the outset, the management of the MDP has suffered from the institutional crisis of the EU, which peaked with the departure of the Santer Commission in 1999.

In June 1999, the Lebanese NGO Forum was disregarded by the Commission in relation to the funding initiatives in Lebanon. According to both the Lebanese NGO Forum and the EMHRN, the procedures chosen by the Commission were not transparent and were disrespectful of spirit of the Barcelona Process, which calls for dialogue and partnership and for funds to be directed towards South NGOs rather than EU based agencies. On behalf of the Lebanese NGO Forum, representatives of the EMHRN met with the Commission in October 1999 in order to express their concern about the handling of grants in Lebanon. The EMHRN furthermore invited a representative of the Lebanese NGO Forum to attend the training seminar in Brussels in order to allow meetings to take place with relevant representatives of the Commission. Finally, the EMHRN addressed a letter to Commissioner Patten in January 2000, expressing its support for the Lebanese NGO Forum and the EMHRN's willingness to bring in the expertise of its members for the benefit of the management of human rights funds.

In spring 2000, the EMHRN contacted the Commission several times on behalf of members in Lebanon, Palestine and Israel to further the release of funds for projects approved in 1998; from spring until the funds were released in September 2000, it monitored the handling of projects approved in 1999 by the Commission for human rights NGOs in Israel, including B'tselem.

Aware that, since the Prodi Cabinet was set up, the Commission has been undergoing a process of reforming grant management procedures under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, the EMHRN contacted the members in the first half of 2000 to communicate their experience with the MDP. On this basis, a set of recommendations was established which were circulated among all members for comments.

Thereafter, the recommendations were forwarded to all relevant representatives of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership institutions and have, according to various sources, become a document of reference. Following its publication, representatives of the EU Commission invited the EMHRN to Brussels in June 2000, where it had the occasion to promote EMHRN positions further.

Parallel to this work, the EMHRN has supported the advocacy campaigns of Brussels-based NGOs, aimed at ensuring greater transparency in the EU's management of human rights funds in relation to the ongoing restructuring of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, and to ensure that the prime beneficiaries of the funds are NGOs in the South and East Mediterranean region.

EU human rights discussion forum

In November 1999, the first EU Annual Report on Human Rights was published under the Finnish Presidency of the EU. Although criticised for a number of shortcomings, the publication was welcomed as a positive step towards the development of EU policy in the human rights field. On 30 November and 1 December 1999, the report was discussed at a Discussion Forum meeting in Brussels between representatives of governments, the EU institutions, academics and NGOs, a meeting which was highly welcomed by all parties. The dialogue was followed-up by a second forum in Venice in May, 2000, under the Portuguese Presidency, and is about to be institutionalised. The EMHRN is a regular participant at these biannual consultations.

EMHRN Brussels office

During the past period, the executive committee has discussed the feasibility of opening an office in Brussels in relation to format and timing. In Paris, April 2000, it was decided to open an antenna of the secretariat in Brussels in order to strengthen the role of the EMHRN as an interface between its members and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership institutions. Upon release of the latest EU grant, the EMHRN announced a job vacancy for a post in Brussels. Out of 17 applicants, five were chosen for job interviews that took place in Paris on September 7, 2000. Details are at present being finalised in order for the opening of a representation in December 2000/ January 2001.

Dialogue with governments

In the past period, the EMHRN has systematically fed governments and ambassadors of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership with reports, press releases and news from the region.

Similar information has been addressed to the EU delegations, EU Parliamentarians and key representatives of the Commission and the European Council through documentation. The EMHRN has also been represented at key conferences on Euro-Mediterranean issues in the period covered by this report.

Representatives of the Finnish, French, Jordanian and Moroccan governments gave presentations at the EMHRN training seminar in Brussels, and all Representations to the EU of the 27 partner countries were invited to attend the Reflection Seminar in the European Parliament.

A special dialogue has taken place with the Jordanian government, and meetings have been organised with representatives of the Egyptian government and the Palestinian Authorities (see below).

In order to try and initiate dialogue with the Syrian and Algerian governments, letters have been addressed to the authorities asking for permission to hold an executive committee meeting in these countries (see below).

Official demarches have been taken vis-à-vis the Human Rights Commission of the Arab League in order to obtain consultative status. The quest has been received positively, but is still awaiting final decisions.

In relation to the EU governments, the EMHRN has had meetings with the representatives of the Finnish, French and Swedish governments. Further meetings have been organised with

representatives of the Austrian, British and Dutch Foreign Offices.

In order to strengthen contacts with Euro-Mediterranean Partnership governments, the executive committee decided in Amman that future executive committee meetings should take place in EU countries with the presidency of the EU upcoming, while a third annual executive committee meeting should aim to take place in a South Mediterranean country.

A major initiative has been initiated with the Swedish, Danish and Finnish governments on the organisation of a conference on Access to Justice in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The conference will be part of the official programme of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and will focus on identifying various weaknesses in judicial systems in the region while at the same time identifying strong elements and best practices. The aim of the conference is:

- To reach an understanding of common standards, changes and reforms needed in this field and feed this into future Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial meetings,
- To reinvigorate human rights dialogue within the official programme of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
- To establish/strengthen dialogue between civil society and governments on human rights issues.

The conference is expected to take place on 26-28 April 2001, at the University of Uppsala. The EMHRN has been asked to act as consultants in relation to the programme and the relevant participants. The Law Faculty of the University of Uppsala will be the convening body.

The non-dialogue with Tunisia

In the past year, EMHRN activities have been aggressively monitored by envoys of the Tunisian authorities in a way it has not experienced elsewhere. Organisations such as: Association des Mères Tunisiennes; Association de Défense des Tunisiens à l'Etranger; Avocats sans Frontières; Jeunes Médecins Sans Frontières; Ligue Africaine des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples; N.E.A.P.O.L.I.S; Trait d'Union - Association Franco-Tunisienne de Seine Saint Denis; and Union National des Femmes Tunisiennes have sought to intrude in the meetings arranged or co-organised by the EMHRN, or have sent letters (without addressee) protesting against EMHRN activities.

Three representatives of Tunisian GONGOs tried to spoil the proceedings of the Civil Forum in Stuttgart, April 1999; five representatives tried the same at the launch of the Guide to Human Rights in the EP Building in Paris, April 2000.

Numerous persons tried to interfere during the training seminar in Brussels, 8-11 November. On this occasion lists of participants and conference documents were stolen. Unknown persons succeeded in getting hold of the list of EMHRN guests at the conference hotels and Mr. Khémais Chammari, an individual member of the EMHRN and well known human rights activist and opponent to the Tunisian regime had his address book and a his keys stolen from his hotel room in Brussels.

After the seminar, the Tunisian government complained officially to the EU Commission and Council about the seminar being selective and because EU representatives took part in the proceedings.

During the Conference 'From Stuttgart to Marseille', Stuttgart 20-22 October 2000, 9 representatives of Tunisian government interests made their presence felt.

NGO and civil society co-operation

During the past period, the EMHRN has developed co-operation with a range of partners.

It is now regularly involved in co-ordinating joint actions with the major international human rights NGOs, as several paragraphs of this report will show, and it has or is developing alliances with a range of partners who are listed below. In all, besides co-operation with its regular members, the EMHRN has worked with the following organisations in organising concrete actions and events:

Amnesty International, Arab Initiative for Freedom of Association, Article 19, Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, Bunian Programme, Committee to Protect Journalists, Freedom of Expression Forum, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, German Mediterranean Forum, Heinrich Bll Foundation, Human Rights Watch, ICJ-Denmark, ICJ-Sweden, IFEX, International Coalition for a Criminal Court, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), International Press Institute, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights; Minority Rights Group, Norwegian Bar Association; Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders; Penal Reform International, Reporters sans Frontières, Sorros Foundation, World Organisation against Torture, and several others.

Annual report

In the last report of activities, an outline of the annual report was presented which aimed at including a series of thematic articles relating to key human rights issues within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

When conceived in the 1997 EMHRN project proposal to the EU, the idea was to base the report on the active participation of the members. Subsequently, a number of members were contacted in spring 1999, and invited to contribute to the report. The invitations were positively met but only few contributions were finalised and it became clear that members' time constraints and workload did not allow things to proceed in the way originally planned.

Due to this, the EMHRN addressed a letter to the Commission in June 1999, to ask for a restructuring of the budget lines for the annual report, in order to allow the EMHRN to cover author fees. The EMHRN did not receive a reply until January, 2000, when it was no longer clear as to what degree an annual report of the kind first imagined, should be a priority activity of the EMHRN. Regrettably, this part of the first contract was not implemented.

B: CAPACITY BUILDING AND HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

EMHRN website

In January 2000, the EMHRN launched the English and French versions of its website on www.euromedrights.net in order to strengthen the capacity of EMHRN members to work on human rights within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

The website contains basic information about the EMHRN, including its documents, reports, and press releases. It also includes links to the member organisations, international human rights organisations, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership institutions and the United Nations. It also contains documents relevant to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and to civil society activities within the framework of the Barcelona Process. Finally, it contains a calendar and a news page. The development of the web site is highly dependent on information received from the members and is also fed with information gathered by the secretariat.

A weekly notice about news on the web site is forwarded by mail to subscribers. In its present form the news service is conceived in such a way as to avoid overloading subscribers with information, and to guide them towards the places where further information can be obtained.

The creation of this information service has helped increase public awareness of the EMHRN and the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process. Since January 2000, 550 subscribers have been receiving the weekly news, including EMHRN members, other NGOs, representatives of the EU and Euro-Mediterranean Partnership institutions, other decision makers, the press and interested individuals.

Funds have been secured for the launch of the Arabic version of the Web site in April 2001.

Sub network meeting

28-30 April 2000, a first workshop or 'sub network meeting' was organised within the framework of the EMHRN. A well-articulated proposal has existed since the second General Assembly in Copenhagen on how the EMHRN should move forward in the field of human rights education (HRE). At the General Assembly in Stuttgart, it was recommended that the EMHRN create a task group to audit the experience of human rights education within the Network's membership, and to develop a policy paper on education for discussion and endorsement by next year's assembly.

A grant from Cordaid made it possible to organise a workshop on HRE in Bray, Ireland in April 2000, upon invitation from 80:20 Education for a Better World. Funding was allowed for a limited number of participants who were identified according to their participation in previous AGM HRE workshops.

Based on an exchange of experience from their work, participants from 80:20 Education for a Better World, Ireland; Human Rights Centre, University of Essex, UK; CIHRS, Egypt; Arab Institute for Human Rights, Tunisia; and the Foundation for Human and Humanitarian Rights, Lebanon, agreed on a draft policy paper to be submitted for discussion and approval at the AGM in Marseille. The paper includes an introduction to the role of human rights education within human rights; human rights in the context of the Euro-Med; HRE in an educational context; a definition of HRE; a proposal for an HRE agenda of the EMHRN and for integrating HRE in the EMHRN's

approach.

Furthermore, the paper outlines a strategy for the EMHRN including: (a) a research project on current HRE practices and methodologies in the Euro-Med; (b) a summer school for human rights educators; (c) exchange and translation of manuals and other literature; (d) developing a web site on HRE; (e) strengthening the presentation of the EMHRN and its messages; (f) publishing a book with cartoons on human rights issues in the Euro-Med.

Summer school on human rights

In August 2000, the EMHRN supported the holding of a summer school on human rights for Algerian university youth organised by the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (see below).

Cairo Conference

In October 2000, the EMHRN financially supported the participation of EMHRN members in the Cairo Conference on Human rights education and dissemination: 21st Century Agenda (organised by the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies). The conference was a follow-up to the First International Conference of the Human Rights Movement in the Arab World that was successfully arranged by the CIHRS in co-operation with the Moroccan Organisation for Human Rights in April 1999. Among the issues discussed were the role of the media and art in HRE; the contribution of NGOs and governments to the field; the impact of dominant political culture and of religion on HRE. A report from the conference is forthcoming.

Training courses on human rights

The EMHRN has recommended to the Danish Centre for Human Rights that members of the Network attend the DCHR's bi-annual training courses on human rights. In the past period, representatives of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights, the Beirut Bar Association, the Foundation for Human and Humanitarian Rights in Lebanon, LAW, Palestine, and the Moroccan Organisation for Human Rights have attended the training courses.

C. WOMEN'S RIGHTS

In July 2000, a proposal entitled 'A Plan of Action for a Euro-Mediterranean Committee for Women's Rights' was drafted as a follow-up to the workshop on women's rights at the AGM in Stuttgart, to promote debate on the question within the membership base. The draft was circulated to the participants of the women's rights workshop, and to participants at the Stuttgart Civil Forum, who expressed an interest in working on the issue. However only a few responded to the draft.

At the training seminar in Brussels, an informal meeting was organised for the participants with the aim of broadening the circle of people interested in promoting women's rights in a EuroMed context.

The participants agreed that there is a need to strengthen the women's rights aspect of the Barcelona Process.

Several participants proposed establishing a working group on women's rights under the umbrella

of the EMHRN, while others felt that the main challenge lies in integrating women's rights issues into all human rights activities and not confining them to a separate sphere. It was eventually agreed that the first step should be to identify ongoing activities in the region and to identify existing networks and organisations working in the field of women's rights in the EuroMed region.

At the beginning of the year 2000, the Regional Council in Marseille proved willing to support a conference on women's rights in the Euro-Mediterranean region in preparation for the Civil Forum in Marseille. At the executive committee meeting in Amman, the question of women's rights was high on the agenda, and at the Paris meeting it was decided to give financial priority to the holding of the conference in co-operation with FIDH and the French Human Rights League.

On 5-7 July 2000, a preparatory meeting was held in Marseille in order to settle the outline of the Conference.⁸ The following themes were adopted: Forms of violence against women ('legal violence'; violence by state and non-state actors, and socio-economic violence); women's rights in the Barcelona Process; international instruments for the protection of women's rights; strategies for inscribing equality into the Barcelona Process and for reinforcing the capacity of NGOs to influence and benefit from the Barcelona Process.

The conference preparations were co-ordinated by FIDH, and were more or less finalised when the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories made it necessary to postpone the conference to spring, 2001.

D. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND EXPRESSION

Freedom of association is a priority of the EMHRN and considered a prerequisite for civil society participation in the Barcelona Process. Therefore, in the past period, the EMHRN has followed the developments closely in a number of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership countries, as the country sections below will show.

At the third general assembly of the EMHRN, it was recommended that a seminar in Morocco be organised on this issue, with the objective of establishing a common platform and work programme for independent NGOs in the region.

In early spring 2000, contacts were made with the Arab Initiative for Freedom of Association, and it was agreed that synergy could be reached through joint efforts. In March, representatives of the executive committee and the secretariat met with the representatives of the Moroccan EMHRN members, and it was found feasible to organise a seminar on Freedom of Association in the Euro-Mediterranean Region in Morocco.

A steering committee composed of members of the EMHRN Executive Committee, initiators of the AIFA and Association Démocratique des Femmes Marocaines, Espace Associatif, and Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme was identified.

At a meeting in Rabat, 16-17 June, 2000, the Steering Committee met⁹ and agreed on criteria for invitations, the outline of the seminar programme and objectives of the seminar which were to

- Situate the question of freedom of association in a Euro-Mediterranean context and to review the current state of affairs in the light of the democratic principles and criteria that should guide

legislation with respect to freedom of association;

- Adopt a work programme and identify the means for promoting freedom of association in the context of the Barcelona Process in synergy with ongoing initiatives, in particular the action plan and Declaration of Freedom of Association of Amman.

It was also decided to hold the meeting in early October, shortly before a new law on associations was discussed in the Moroccan Parliament.

The seminar was organised by the EMHRN and the Moroccan EMHRN member organisations and took place on 5-7 October 2000, with the financial support of the EMHRN and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Conference participation was seriously influenced by the conflict in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, but the participants succeeded in adopting a Declaration and an outline for a work programme and as such, a platform upon which the EMHRN can build its future strategy within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

In the past period, the EMHRN has sought to investigate possibilities for organising a Euro-Mediterranean seminar on freedom of expression as a first step towards establishing a common platform in this field.

The EMHRN was present at two seminars in Amman, 'Media and Democracy in the Arab World', 3-4 February, and 'Freedom of Expression and the Media in Jordan', 5 February, organised by the International Press Institute (IPI) during which contacts were established with IFEX members.

However, links strong enough to promote synergy between the EMHRN and other initiatives have not yet been created.

Finally, the EMHRN has closely followed the situation of the press in Jordan (see below).

E. COUNTRY REPORTS, INCLUDING HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

A great deal of EMHRN activities have been devoted to solidarity actions in relation to a regrettably high number of cases in the region where human rights are under attack. EMHRN activities in these fields are best rendered by a country-to-country approach.

Algeria

In Algeria the main actions of the EMHRN have primarily concentrated on assisting member organisations and partners in building their capacity to promote and protect human rights in a country still torn by conflict.

- In April 1999, the EMHRN acted as intermediary in organising a visit of the Collectif des Familles des Disparus in Denmark, during which it met with representatives of the Danish Government and Parliament. The EMHRN furthermore facilitated a project proposal on behalf of the Collectif, aimed at establishing a structure in Algeria to help families of the disappeared to defend their rights. A positive reaction to the proposal is expected in the near future.

- From August 20-30, 2000, the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights organised a summer university in Tizirt-Sur-Mer with the support of the EMHRN. Between 45 and 60 persons, mainly students from the universities of Tizi-Ouzou, Bejaia, Setif, Bordj-Bou-Areridj, Bouira and Boumerdes attended the course, which lasted ten days. Experts and human rights activists gave lectures on the relation between universality and cultural specificity; human rights and structural adjustment; globalisation and economic and social rights; constitutionalism, democratic culture and rule of law; the media and human rights; corruption and globalisation; and human rights in the Barcelona Process. The seminar was an occasion for numerous debates among the youth present. It was welcomed by the heads of the local and regional council and publicised in the local press (a report from the seminar is available at the EMHRN secretariat).
- Finally, in December 1999, the EMHRN forwarded a letter to the Algerian President asking for authorization to hold a meeting of the executive committee in Algeria, with the aim of strengthening relations between the EMHRN and Algerian civil society, and to engage in dialogue with authorities. Despite the fact that unofficial sources said that the request would be positively met, the EMHRN has not received an answer to its request.

Egypt

In May 1999, as the EMHRN was about to release a report from its mission to Egypt in early 1999 (see report from Stuttgart) news was received that the People's Assembly was about to adopt a new repressive Law on Civil Associations and Institutions

An urgent mission was sent to Egypt (in co-operation with FIDH) that met with high-level representatives of the Egyptian authorities and with Egyptian NGOs. A preliminary report from the mission was presented to Mary Robinson at a meeting in June 1999, before she left for a visit to Egypt.

The mission's final report was published in August 1999. It expressed deep concern about the deterioration of the human rights situation in Egypt, and urged the EU institutions to take concrete steps in order to get the law repealed.

Furthermore, members of the EMHRN were contacted during the summer of 1999, and asked to write to the Egyptian Minister of Social Affairs, urging her to reconsider the law.

In autumn 1999, EMHRN concern over the situation in Egypt was voiced at meetings with Troika representatives in Brussels. Two representatives of the Egyptian human rights movement, Hafez Abou Sa'eda, Secretary General of the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights and Gasser Abderrazak, Hishem Moubarak Centre, were invited to speak about the situation in Egypt at the reflection seminar in the European Parliament.

- In February 2000, the EMHRN took part in the campaign on behalf of Hafez Abou Sa'eda in relation to the arrest order that was issued against him, charging him, under military decree, with accepting a cheque from the British embassy in 1998 without giving required notification to the authorities.
- On 15 February 2000, a statement was issued in co-operation with Amnesty International,

Human Rights Watch, The International Federation of Human Rights, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and the World Organisation against Torture, condemning the prosecution of Hafez Abou Sa'eda.

- Funds were provided in order to contribute to covering the costs relating to Hafez Abou Sa'eda's travel to Europe; a letter was sent to the Egyptian Ambassador in Brussels, asking for a meeting about Hafez Abou Sa'eda; and an EMHRN representative met with the Public Prosecutor in Cairo and representatives of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry and the British Embassy.
- On June 5 2000, the EMHRN addressed a letter to the EU delegation in Cairo concerning the participation of only one human rights NGO at a Round Table meeting in Cairo that was assessing the Egyptian NGOs experience with the EU.
- On 27 June, EMHRN representatives met with the Egyptian Ambassador in Brussels in order to explore possibilities for dialogue.
- In July and August 2000, the EMHRN protested against renewed attacks on Egyptian civil society, this time the arrest of Sa'ad Ed Din Ibrahim. Letters sent jointly to the EU governments with the above-mentioned partners. Furthermore, a joint letter was co-ordinated, protesting against the silence of the EU with regard to Saad Ed Din Ibrahim's arrest.

Jordan and Lebanon

Following the publication of the report by Sa'eda Kilani on the 1998 Press and Publications Law, entitled Black Year for Democracy in Jordan, and the ensuing lobbying activity in the European Parliament in November 1998, the Jordanian Ambassador in Bonn paid a visit to the Danish Centre for Human Rights in order to present his government's objections to the report. At the end of the meeting, the ambassador extended an official invitation to the EMHRN to visit Jordan and to continue dialogue on the situation on freedom of the press.

The executive committee accepted the invitation and a visit to Jordan was organised in January 2000.

In the meantime, on 13 August, 1999, the EMHRN issued a joint statement in co-operation with Article 19, the Arab Archives Institute for Publishing, Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, Committee to Protect Journalists, International Federation of Human Rights, International Federation of Journalists, International Press Institute, Reporters sans Frontières, and World Association of Newspapers. The statement was sent to the Jordanian parliamentarians on the occasion of a parliamentary discussion of amendments to the Press law of 1998, urging them to ensure that the amended Press and Publications Law respects constitutional and international guarantees of freedom of expression.

In January 2000, the EMHRN delegation had meetings with representatives of Jordanian human rights NGOs, the press, representatives of the Jordanian Press Association, the Speakers of the Lower House and the Senate, the Secretary General of the Press and Publications Department, and Prime Minister Rawabdeh.

The meetings were conducted in an open atmosphere; particularly promising was Prime Minister Rawabdeh's commitment to have his government publish international covenants and treaties ratified by Jordan in the Official Gazette, as a first step towards bringing national legislation into line with Jordan's international commitments.

At the end of the visit, the parties agreed to continue the dialogue. Subsequently, the EMHRN asked Ms Sa'eda Kilani to write a new comprehensive report on press freedoms in the country from which further dialogue would follow. The report is currently being finalised.

Before the dialogue meetings, the EMHRN held an executive committee meeting in Amman, 19-20 January with the invaluable support of Sa'eda Kilani, individual member of the EMHRN, and Hani Hourani, director of Al Urdun Al Jedid Research Centre. The meeting was an occasion for encounters with several representatives of Jordanian human rights NGOs.

From September 18-25 the EMHRN sent a mission to Lebanon and Jordan with the mandate to:

1. Evaluate the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan in the light of international standards for human rights and refugee protection; 2. Compare the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan with the situation of other refugee groups and with the situation of 'ordinary' citizens.
2. Examine whether changes in the policy of the EU countries over the past five years had had an impact on the situation of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Palestine. A report from the mission is currently being finalised.

In the past period, the EMHRN has closely followed EU Commission management of human rights grants to Lebanese NGOs (see above).

Morocco

On October 5-7, 2000, the EMHRN, Association Démocratique des Femmes Marocaine, Espace Associatif and the Moroccan Organisation for Human Rights jointly organised a seminar on freedom of association (see above) shortly before the Moroccan Parliament was about to adopt a new law on associations.

On October 7, 2000, the EMHRN published a declaration on the occasion of the first Association Council meeting between the EU and Morocco, welcoming progress with regard to the human rights situation in Morocco while expressing concern that the situation still needs to be redressed in numerous fields, and concern about racist incidents against Moroccans in the EU countries.

Palestine

Following the recommendations of the Third General Assembly, the EMHRN forwarded a letter to the governments of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in support of the campaign of Palestinian human rights NGOs for convening the conference of the High Contracting Parties of the Fourth Geneva Convention on July 15, 1999. It also urged members to support their Palestinian colleagues by forwarding similar letters to national governments.

In June 1999, two and a half weeks after the People's Assembly in Egypt adopted new repressive

law on associations, the EMHRN was informed that a campaign was running against Palestinian human rights organisations, seeking to slander their reputation.

The campaign appeared to be part of efforts to undermine a new law on associations which had been passed through the Palestine Legislative Council (PLC) three times and was viewed as an achievement by Palestinian NGOs.

Because of this, the EMHRN sent a mission to Palestine, July 31 to August 2 1999, with the mandate to inquire into the pending law on NGOs and the recent attacks on human rights organisations. The mission was organised in close co-ordination with LAW and The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, and met with NGO representatives, members of the PLC and the Ministers of Justice and of NGOs. The mission gave rise to a number of constructive dialogues. However, the EMHRN deeply regrets that a report was not issued following the visit, due to a shortage of capacity.

On 8 August, the EMHRN sent a letter to President Arafat following the summoning of Dr. Eyad El Sarraj by the Palestinian Police upon publication of an article criticising Arafat for not ratifying the new NGO law adopted by the Legislative Council. The EMHRN asked the President to revoke the order of the Palestinian Police, prohibiting Dr. Sarraj from leaving the country.

The previous initiatives were followed up when EMHRN sent a mission to Palestine to attend the hearing on 11 October 1999, in the Ramallah Magistrate Court in the case filed by LAW against the chief editor of 'Al-Hayat al-Jadidah' newspaper and two lawyers accusing them of defamation. The hearing was postponed as the judge responsible for the case had been transferred to another court, and a new judge appointed overnight. After agreement between LAW and the newspaper, the defendants withdrew their accusations and LAW dropped the case.

On May 17 2000, the EMHRN sent a letter to the head of the Palestinian Bar Association, the Palestinian Minister of Justice and President Arafat expressing its concern that all lawyers at the PCHR, including Mr Raji Sourani, Director of the PCHR, had been removed from the Bar Association's list of practising lawyers on the basis of a restrictive interpretation of the Palestinian Bar Association Law (article 7), which prohibits lawyers from the practice of law combined with the holding of public or private employment; it also expressed concern that Mr. Khader Shkirat, Director of LAW, was threatened by the Deputy Head of the Bar Council to stop his critique of the Bar.

On 5-7 June 2000, the EMHRN representatives attended the LAW conference on Culture, Community and Jerusalem. During the conference the EMHRN chaired a panel on the impact of the Barcelona Process on human rights in Palestine and the Peace Process. Furthermore, on 8 June 2000, a workshop was organised (as a follow-up of the panel at the LAW Conference) with the aim of discussing whether the Barcelona Process had contributed to a human rights approach to the Peace Process. The objective was also to make recommendations to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership on how such an approach could be strengthened; and to reflect on recommendations in relation to the first Association Council meeting between the EU and Israel. The participants were the same as at the panel at the LAW conference. They included representatives from Human Rights Watch; LAW; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; FIDH; World Organisation Against Torture; Arab Association for Human Rights in Nazareth; Human Rights Association of Turkey; Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity; the MATTIN group, Palestine; and the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland. A report from the

workshop is being prepared.

From 4-8 October, 2000, the EMHRN sent a mission to Israel and the Palestinian Occupied Territories in co-operation with FIDH and ICJ-Sweden,¹² with the mandate to evaluate the current crisis and the parties' handling of the situation in the light of international human rights standards, including the provisions of the Barcelona Declaration in the field of human rights and the Association Agreements.

In carrying out the mission, the team liaised closely with local EMHRN and FIDH members, together with other human rights and humanitarian organisations working throughout the affected areas of Northern Israel, East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The statement following the mission heavily criticised the widespread and sustained abuses of human rights combined with a failure to adhere to international humanitarian law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention, as required by the provisions of the Barcelona Declaration and related Association Agreements.

The mission statement was followed up with a letter from the EMHRN to the EU governments, urging the EU to act firmly upon its commitment to base its Mediterranean policy on the respect for human rights and to:

- Support an urgent international, independent commission of inquiry to Israel and the occupied Palestinian Territories, to carry out a thorough and comprehensive investigation into the events during the current crisis, and of alleged abuses of human rights and breaches of humanitarian law;
- Ensure that efficient and appropriate measures are taken to stop human rights abuses, and to bring perpetrators to justice;
- Call for an extraordinary Association Council between the EU and Israel;
- Take the initiative of reconvening the High Contracting Parties to the adjourned conference and pressure Israel to implement de jure the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Syria

On 19 July 1999, following an exchange of letters between the EMHRN and representatives of the Syrian government (see last Annual report), the EMHRN sent a letter to the Syrian authorities asking for authorisation to hold the next executive committee meeting in Syria. On 15 August 1999, the EMHRN received a reply from the Syrian embassies in Cairo and Bonn stating that although it was not possible for the time being to convene in Syria, the request had been given 'great appreciation and interest'.

Since this period, the EMHRN has kept in regular contact with Aktham Naisse, now formally President of the CDF in Syria, in order to monitor the impact that EMHRN initiatives have had on the situation of human rights defenders in Syria. Slightly encouraged by the exchange of letters with the Syrian authorities, the EMHRN sent a mission to Damascus in January. The mission was allowed into Syria and met with CDF representatives without any interference from the Syrian authorities. It was briefed about the situation of human rights defenders in the country and

discussed how the EMHRN could contribute to progress in the field of human rights. At the executive committee meeting in Paris in April 2000, Aktham Naisse was adopted as an individual member of the EMHRN. Shortly beforehand, a letter was addressed to the Syrian authorities asking to extend dialogue with the EMHRN and expressing concern about the health situation of Aktham Naisse.

A new mission was sent to Damascus in June 2000, in order to extend support to the human rights defenders in Syria and to discuss further how the EMHRN could contribute to the CDF's work. Again the mission was allowed to meet with its member colleagues, who shortly thereafter were able to hold the first general assembly of the CDF for years and to elect Aktham Naisse as its President.

Tunisia

The EMHRN has closely followed the situation in Tunisia during the past period.

In March 1999, the EMHRN co-organised a round-trip for two members of the Tunisian League to Denmark, Sweden, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, where they met with the representatives of governments, funding agencies and EU institutions.

On June 7, 1999, the EMHRN wrote a letter to the Tunisian Minister of the Interior and requested an urgent meeting about the situation of Moncef Marzouki and the CNLT following the arrest of Mr Moncef Marzouki on his way to a ceremony commemorating the death of Nabil Barakat, who died under torture in 1987. Dr. Marzouki was charged by the examining magistrate with establishing and running an unrecognised organisation, disseminating information, disturbing public order and propagating false news. He was released in the afternoon and ordered not to leave Tunisia.

On May 15, Hans Kjellund, individual member of the Network, attended the trial in Tunis, against Ms Radhia Nasraoui, lawyer and human rights defender, and her twenty co-defendants who were accused of links with an unauthorised association and participation in unauthorised meetings with the aim of inciting hatred. Mohammed Tahri was also appointed to attend the trial by the EMHRN in collaboration with FIDH.

The trial was postponed to June 19, 1999, where Mr Dimitris Kaltsonis, of the Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity, represented the EMHRN. The night before the trial, Ms Radhia Nasraoui gave birth to a baby daughter and the trial was postponed again to July 10 1999, and again monitored by Mr. Kaltsonis. The appeal process on August 6 was attended by Mr Mohammed Anik, Moroccan lawyer and member of the Organisation marocaine des droits de l'Homme, on behalf of the EMHRN. The report from the mission was released in November 1999, shortly before the Association Council meeting between the EU and Tunisia.

On 4 August 1999, the EMHRN sent a letter to the Tunisian Minister of the Interior, asking for authorisation to send a mission of inquiry to Tunisia to look into the situation of human rights defenders and of Mr. Abderraouf Chammari, who was arrested on 5 July 1999, charged with 'defamation of the authorities and diffusing false news'. Abderraouf Chammari, who is the brother of Khémais Chammari, member of the EMHRN, was released on 31 August on humanitarian grounds.

In autumn 1999, the EMHHRN had several meetings with EU representatives in order to express

its concern about the situation in Tunisia and urge the EU to address the human rights violations in Tunisia at the second Association Council meeting.

In preparation for the meeting, the EMHRN issued a report entitled the State of Liberties and Human Rights in Tunisia, in addition to the report on the trial against Radhia Nassraoui.

In spring 2000, the EMHRN took part in the international solidarity campaign for the Tunisian human rights defenders that was sparked off by journalist Taoufik Ben Brik's hunger strike.

On 27 April 2000, the EMHRN forwarded an open letter to President Ben Ali, concerning Taoufik Ben Brik's state of health.

On 12 May 2000, the EMHRN, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), and Reporters without Borders (RSF) called upon the EU institutions to clearly condemn the systematic intimidation and harassment of human rights defenders and their family, as well as independent human rights organizations.

On 15 May 2000, the EMHRN was present at the trial of Jalal Zoughlami, brother of Taoufik Ben Brik. He was charged with 'unacceptable behaviour' according to the decree of 25 April 1940, in the Tunisian Penal Code and with 'aggression and violence against a policeman on duty'.

On the World day Against Torture, 23 June 2000, the EMHRN co-published a report by Khémair Ksila, Vice-President of the LTDH on 'The Tunisians Prisons seen from within', with FIDH and the CRLDHT.

On August 4, 2000, it issued an open letter to President Ben Ali protesting against the sacking of Marzouki from his job.

On 26 October, the EMHRN issued another open letter to President Ben Ali (in co-operation with FIDH) to protest against the ban on foreign travel imposed on Dr. Moncef Marzouki. Dr. Marzouki appeared before the senior magistrate on 23 October 2000, who charged him with 'being a member of an unrecognised association', 'spreading false information', 'defaming justice', and 'distributing tracts of a nature likely to

disrupt public order and incite citizens to revolt against the laws of the land', accusations which can result in penal sanctions to the order of 20 years in prison.

Turkey

On May 28-31, 1999, the EMHRN mandated Klaus Slavensky, Head of the Information Department at the Danish Centre for Human Rights, to meet with Mr Akin Birdal, President of the Human Rights Association (IHD) and express the EMHRN's solidarity with Mr Birdal before he starting a prison sentence of nine months and 15 days on June 3, 1999.

Mr Birdal was sentenced by the State Security Court on charges of 'inciting people explicitly to hatred and hostility by discriminating on the basis of race, region, religious sects or opinion' for a speech on September 6, 1995, where he stated that an unfair and dirty war had been waged for 11 years because of the non-recognition of the rights of the Kurds.

Akin Birdal is among the founders of the Human Rights Association. He has reported on

widespread and systematic torture, campaigns on freedom of expression, and initiatives for peace keeping. So far nearly 30 court actions have been brought against him.

During Klaus Slavensky's visit to the HRA it was discussed how the EMHRN could be of help in the difficult situation Mr Birdal is facing. Based on these consultations, it was suggested that during each week of Mr Birdal's imprisonment the Turkish authorities should receive a letter from organisations and individuals in the Euro-Mediterranean region, asking for his release. The Secretariat co-ordinated the action which received positive feedback from the members.

Nazmi Gür from the Human Rights Association in Turkey and Kerim Yildiz from the Kurdish Human Rights Project, both members of the EMHRN, were invited to participate in the executive committee meeting in Stockholm to update the members on East Mediterranean human rights issues and to participate in the discussion on how these issues can be incorporated into the future strategy of the EMHRN. They suggested that the EMHRN focus more on Turkey, and proposed sponsoring a mission of the EMHRN to Turkey to disseminate knowledge about the Network.

On February 3, 2000, on behalf of the EMHRN and in co-operation with the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a former judge at the European Court of Human Rights, Mr Isi Foighel attended the hearing of the State Security Court of Ankara on 3 February, 2000, against the Secretary General of the Human Rights Association of Turkey (IHD), Nazmi Gür, member of the EMHRN.

Nazmi Gür was charged with the crime of assisting organisation of an armed gang after publishing an article entitled 'It is not hard to reach peace' on World Peace Day, 1 September 1999, and faced between 3 and 7,5 years imprisonment for calling for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question and 15 years armed conflict in south east Turkey.

The mission was co-ordinated with the Kurdish Human Rights Project, the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, the Norwegian Bar Association, the Danish Centre for Human Rights and ICJ-Denmark, who also sent international trial observers to the hearing.

Nazmi Gür was acquitted because of lack of 'adequate and convincing evidence'.

The EMHRN later supported the publication of the report 'Peace is not Difficult: Observing the Trial of Nazmi Gür', that was published in co-operation with the Kurdish Human Rights Project, the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, the Norwegian Bar Association, and the Danish Centre for Human Rights on 16 May 2000.

As mentioned above, the EMHRN facilitated financial support for the English translation of the IHD report on its Legislative Screening of Turkish legislation and funded a mission of IHD composed to Brussels, October 2000.

Other questions

On 18 August, the EMHRN forwarded an Open letter to Greek Foreign Minister, G. Papandreou, concerning the harassment by the Greek Intelligence Service of Ms Aysal Zeybek, Office Co-ordinator at the Greek Helsinki Monitor, and concerning her complaints being brushed aside by the Greek Ombudsman.

On 17 July, the EMHRN forwarded an open letter to the Knesset, concerning the draft law on 'Imprisonment of Combatants not Entitled to Prisoner-of-War Status', nullifying the distinction between combatants and civilians made in international law and diluting the protections given to civilians under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Germany

In autumn, 1999, the EMHRN was contacted by the German Mediterranean Forum and asked to support a follow-up conference to the Civil Fora that took place in Stuttgart in April, 1999. The purpose would be to raise awareness in Germany about the Barcelona Process and to evaluate the Civil Fora and the development of the Barcelona Process in order to bring this experience to the Marseille conferences.

The EMHRN collaborated with the Friedrich Ebert, Heinrich Boell Foundations, the Mayor of Stuttgart, the German Mediterranean Forum and the Stuttgart Forum of Cultures and several other institutions and networks in organising the conference. It took place from 20-22 October 2000, and concluded with a letter addressed to the key actors in the Barcelona Process, highlighting the main *acquis* of the Stuttgart Civil Fora, and expressing concern about the development of the Barcelona Process, in particular with regard to the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

4. INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE EMHRN

Executive committee meetings

The executive committee has met 5 times since the Stuttgart meeting (Paris, Stockholm, Amman, Paris, Stockholm). Besides dealing with organisational matters, membership applications, urgent initiatives and proposals from the members, it has engaged in a process aiming at defining a strategic approach for the EMHRN's work.

The executive committee meeting in Paris, July 8-9, 1999, primarily dealt with evaluating the Stuttgart General Assembly and discussing how to develop the EMHRN's work according to the guidelines of the AGM.

Furthermore, it discussed the necessity of redirecting the focus of the network towards a more activist approach where an impression is given of the human rights situation deteriorating in a key country like Egypt. The executive committee felt the urgency of addressing an EMHRN strategy on this issue and decided to meet in September, 1999.

The next meeting was supposed to take place in Ankara, Turkey, to strengthen the input of East Mediterranean members into the development of an executive committee strategy. However, due to the earthquake in September 1999, the venue changed to Stockholm at the last moment.

Nazmi Gür, from the Human Rights Association in Turkey, and Kerim Yildiz from the Kurdish Human Rights Project, were invited to participate in the executive committee meeting in Stockholm, 3-4 September, 1999, to update the members on East Mediterranean human rights issues and participate in the discussion about how these could be incorporated into the future strategy of the EMHRN.

It was decided to focus more on Egypt during the autumn and to elaborate the strategy paper by integrating the Turkish perspective and placing it within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

In Amman, 19-20 January 2000, the executive committee continued work developing a strategy plan and priorities for future EMHRN work.

It was decided to opt for the strategic choice of linking EMHRN work up to the official Euro-Mediterranean Partnership agenda, while at the same time acknowledging the limits of the concept of the Barcelona Process.

The executive committee agreed to give priority to the development of human rights mechanisms in relation to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership as a regional initiative; and as a key initiative: the participation in the Civil Forum under the French presidency of the EU, as well as dialogue with governments.

Thematic priorities were defined as being the protection of human rights defenders, including freedom of association and expression; human rights education; migrants' rights and the rights of asylum seekers; women's rights; self-determination and the rights of refugee; justice, including penal reform and access to justice.

It was also decided to start elaborating country strategies.

At the Paris meeting, the main issue was the discussion of thematic priorities, and a detailed planning of the Civil Forum in Marseille. Furthermore, the final obstacles in the way of taking concrete steps towards opening an office in Brussels were removed.

The Stockholm meeting was devoted to finalising the action plan, opening the office in Brussels and preparing the proceedings for the General Assembly.

New members

In the past period, the executive committee has welcomed the following organisations and individuals as new members of the EMHRN:

Regular members

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in Nazareth; Conseil National pour les Libertés en Tunisie; Fédération des tunisiens pour une citoyenneté des deux rives; Greek Helsinki Committee, Greece; and the René Moawad Foundation, Lebanon.

Associate members

Article 19 International Centre Against Censorship; Penal Reform International.

Individual members

Ms Anna Bozzo, Researcher, Italy; Mr. Khémais Chammari, expert-consultant; Ms Annette Juenemann, Dr Habil, Researcher, Germany; Mr. Aktham Naisse, President the Committee for the Defence of Liberties and Democratic Freedoms (CDF); Mohamed Tahri Lawyer, Algeria; Ms

Samira Trad, Consultant; Lebanon.

Cancellation of memberships

In the period since the last General Assembly, the following organisations have ceased meaningful activities with the EMHRN, or have ceased responding to the EMHRN's requests or enquiries:

The Egyptian Community in Greece
The Mediterranean Centre for Human Rights
The European Institute for Research on Mediterranean and Euro-Arab Co-operation (MEDEA Institute).

The executive committee therefore recommends the cancellation of these organisations' membership.

Membership criteria

After discussion of the membership status of the Libyan League for Human Rights at the Third General Assembly, the executive committee agreed to postpone the decision to admit the League as a full member until the fourth General Assembly. The executive committee acknowledged that the statutes had not been followed with regard to the procedures during the Stuttgart assembly: two-third of the regular members present at the General Assembly should agree on introducing new items on the agenda, and a vote should be taken on the admission of the League as a full member. Neither of these formalities was respected. At the executive committee meeting in Paris in July 1999, it was decided to mandate the executive director to formulate amendments of the statutes in order for the Libyan League to be admitted as a regular member at the next General Assembly.

New organisational status of the EMHRN

On 1 February 2000, the EMHRN formally became an independent regional NGO. Until then the EMHRN had, in terms of financial management, been administered as a part of the Danish Centre for Human Rights. The reason for this arrangement was that funds for the Network were applied for in the name of the Danish Centre for Human Rights before the adoption of EMHRN statutes and election of the executive committee in 1997. In February 2000, the projects implemented in the name of the DCHR were finalised and all new contracts are now signed in the name of the EMHRN. As a consequence, the EMHRN has registered as an independent NGO at the Danish Tax and Customs Authorities, and has drawn up an agreement with the DCHR, defining the terms of administrative co-operation with the DCHR. In conclusion, the EMHRN is now operating fully and independently according to its statutes.

Funding

The funding situation of the EMHRN has significantly improved during the past period.

In June 1999, the EMHRN submitted a 2,5 million euro project to the EU Commission for the period covering 1 January 2000, to 31 December 2003. The project was finally approved at the end of 1999 and the contract was signed in late May 2000.

The fact that the EMHRN has become increasingly operational has also meant that other funding agencies have shown an interest in supporting the EMHRN.

Contributions from the Ford Foundation in Cairo, Cordaid, and recently the British Foreign Office, bear witness to an increased recognition of the importance of the work carried out by the EMHRN.

The EMHRN is still highly dependent on EU support for its activities. However, contacts with several funding agencies indicate that, in the future, the EMHRN will be able to further diversify its funding sources.

Staff

During the past period, Marc Schade-Poulsen has worked as the executive director of the EMHRN. He was the only full time employee until September 1, 2000, when Marit Floe Joergensen was employed as the EMHRN Information Officer. On 1 October 2000, the EMHRN employed Sannie Nielsen as the third full time employee. She will be responsible for administrative affairs.

During the past period, the secretariat has been assisted by one or two part-time student assistants for various periods of time. These are: Marit Floe Joergensen; Olivier Mukarji; Karsten Gam Nielsen; Katrine Roemhild Nielsen; Louise Johansen; Ivar Herlev Soerensen and Frederik Thuesen.

PART 3: PLAN OF ACTION FOR 2001

PLAN OF ACTION OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK

Adopted at the Fourth General Assembly, November 2000.

Five years ago the governments of 27 countries (the Partners), and the European Union, in establishing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership initiative, committed themselves to act in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They agreed to develop the rule of law and democracy in their political systems and to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms including freedom of expression and freedom of association, and to combat racism, xenophobia and intolerance. Furthermore, they recognized the important role civil society can play in contributing to the Euro-Mediterranean development process by promoting better mutual understanding and closer co-operation between peoples.

These intentions of the Barcelona Declaration have since then been confirmed in bilateral Association Agreements between the EU and five South Mediterranean partners, article two of which states that the respect for human rights and democratic principles underlies their policies and is an essential element of the agreements. Furthermore, it has been confirmed in relation to pre-accession strategies for three non-EU Mediterranean Partners based on the Copenhagen Criteria.

The EMHRN was established in January 1997 upon the initiative of North and South based human rights organisations in response to the Barcelona Declaration and the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. Today, it has more than sixty members representing human rights organisations and institutions, as well as individuals, from over twenty countries in the region.

Its overall objectives are to:

- Support and publicize the universal principles of human rights as expressed by all international instruments on human rights and as expressed by the Barcelona Declaration of November 1995;
- Strengthen, assist and coordinate the efforts of its members to monitor compliance by the Partner States with the principles of the Barcelona Declaration in the field of human rights;
- Support the development of democratic institutions, the promotion of rule of law, human rights and human rights education in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Since its establishment, the EMHRN has become known as a credible regional civil society partner to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

In the years to come, the EMHRN will develop its approach as a constructive interface between the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership institutions, human rights organisations in the region and other relevant agents involved in the Barcelona Process.

The following pages detail the main issues and initiatives that will guide the EMHRN's work. It is based on the EMHRN statutes; its work programme of 1997; recommendations of the third General Assembly, April 1999, and proposals developed by the executive committee since the Stuttgart assembly.

The paper describes the:

1. General considerations upon which the EMHRN's work is built;
2. General methodology of the EMHRN;
3. Concrete initiatives that will be taken by the EMHRN in the future.

1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The *raison-d'être* and the specificity of the EMHRN is the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the dynamic the Barcelona Process has installed in the region. The EMHRN work programme and strategy are closely linked to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and are guided by the following three assumptions:

- The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the accompanying Barcelona Process offer an important framework for human rights, democracy and civil society promotion and protection;
- Yet the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is dominated by a top-down approach, and it is more directed by security concerns than by solidarity principles;
- There is a need to strengthen cooperation between human rights activists working on the ground in order for these to benefit from, and be able to act upon, the rise of this new regional geo-political entity. Network structures and horizontal co-operation are flexible and participatory ways of meeting such new challenges.

These considerations, and the recognition that human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, the EMHRN aims to:

- Develop the human rights instruments and mechanisms that are embedded in the Barcelona Process;
- Monitor the impact of the Barcelona Process on human rights promotion and protection;
- Strengthen civil society participation in the development of the Barcelona Process;
- Enhance human rights organisations' capacity to work on the ground through a synergetic process of exchange of experience and knowledge between the organisations on the basis of their constituencies.

It will do this by means of a general methodology consisting of three interlinked and interrelated activities:

- A. Information, documentation and dissemination;
- B. Dialogue, advocacy and campaigning;
- C. Capacity building and education.

2. GENERAL METHODOLOGY

A. Information, documentation and dissemination

The EMHRN will raise awareness of the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process among its members and the public at large, and inform the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership mechanisms and the public about the human rights situation in the region as well as about the work of human rights organisations.

This will be carried out through:

- The maintenance of a computerised information service (including a web site and an electronic mailing lists);
- The development of a media strategy; periodical reports about the development of the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process and about key human rights issues in the region;
- In-depth research on issues which are not covered by existing knowledge;
- The publication of reports on the general activities of the EMHRN.

Furthermore, the EMHRN will each year organise a training seminar for its members on key human rights issues related to the Barcelona Process. A booklet will be produced in relation to each seminar as a tool for goal oriented activities.

B. Dialogue, lobbying and campaigning

The EMHRN will participate in the strengthening of the human rights mechanisms embedded in the Barcelona Process, and promote dialogue between civil society and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership institutions in the field of human rights.

On a permanent level the EMHRN will lobby the Partnership to develop a working programme, actions and mechanisms for the implementation of the human rights provisions and principles of the Barcelona Declaration and Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Summit conclusions, as well as the human rights clauses of the Association agreements. In addition, campaigns on urgent issues will be organised.

Dialogue, lobbying and campaigning will be based on the active participation of the members of the EMHRN whose inputs will be complemented by the operational bureau of the EMHRN in Copenhagen and its antenna in Brussels (see below).

The EMHRN will arrange meetings between its members and relevant officials and representatives of the EU institutions, and of the Partner Countries, and with international and regional organisations, depending on the nature of the issue. These activities will be supported by the EMHRN reports and its computerised information service.

C. Capacity building and general education

Capacity building and raising awareness is crucial for human rights promotion and protection in the region. The EMHRN will enhance this by:

- Strengthening communication and exchanges between human rights organisations;
- Promoting the development of joint projects between EMHRN members, including transfer of knowledge from one organisation to another.

This will be carried out by encouraging members to become lead agencies within their field of expertise and by developing networks within the Network; organising exchange visits between member organisations and periodical meetings of working groups under the umbrella of the EMHRN on issues such as human rights education; migrant and refugee issues; women's rights; conflict resolution; human rights monitoring; and capacity building.

Special concern will be devoted to the support of member organisations operating in countries where state repression is high and funding opportunities limited.

The operational bureau, including its information service will support communication, exchange and coordination.

3. EMHRN METHODOLOGY IN PRACTICE

On a concrete level, the EMHRN will opt for the strategic choice of linking its programme of activities to the official agenda of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, while maintaining an independent and critical stance on the Partnership's development.

The EMHRN will open an office in Brussels that will:

- Represent and implement the policy of the EMHRN and its members in relation to the institutions and representatives of the EU and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership;
- Inform EMHRN members about the policies and development of the institutions of the EU and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership;
- Facilitate access of EMHRN members to the institutions of the EU and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

From early 2001, the EMHRN will establish a calendar of all main events related to the Barcelona Process relevant to human rights, i.e. regional meetings, bilateral meetings, EU institution agendas, priorities of the various Presidencies of the EU, development of new policies, resolutions, etc. The calendar will be regularly up-dated and revised and will be a leading thread for the timing of EMHRN activities in relation to the Barcelona Process.

These activities will be implemented following 4 tracks:

- A. Regional Mechanisms
- B. Key Initiatives

- C. Country Priorities
- D. Thematic Priorities

In carrying out its programme, the EMHRN will coordinate or cooperate with relevant partners, such as member organisations and international and regional human rights NGOs. Thus, the activities listed below should not be considered the exclusive domain of the EMHRN, but as key activities to which the EMHRN will commit itself in order to further the development of the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process.

A. REGIONAL MECHANISMS

Despite the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership governments' commitment to human rights in the Barcelona Declaration and despite the reaffirmation thereof in the bilateral association agreements (as well as in pre-accession talks) few steps have been taken by the official partnership to establish structures, fora or mechanisms whereby human rights concerns can be taken further within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

Building on the results of previous activities, the EMHRN will focus on four potential human rights mechanisms of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership:

- i. The MEDA Programmes
- ii. The Committee of High Officials, the Barcelona Ambassadors
- iii. The Euro-Mediterranean Inter-Parliamentarian Forum
- iv. The Association Council Meetings

i. The MEDA Programmes

- The EU to produce regular evaluations of the MEDA Programmes' impact on the human rights situation in the region;
- The earmarking of a fixed percentage of the MEDA funds for human rights projects within the framework bi-lateral programmes between the EU and its Mediterranean partners. Unused funds should be returned and allocated for regional projects;
- The ear-marking of a fixed percentage of the general MEDA funds for the support of countries engaged in explicit reform programmes towards democracy and human rights compliance, for example by means of national human rights plans as recommended at the world conference in Vienna 1993.

In order for the MEDA programmes to constitute the main financial instrument of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and, according to the MEDA regulation, their implementation should be based on the respect for human rights and democratic principles. In addition, a percentage of the MEDA funds are to be used for the support of civil society in agreement with governments of partner countries.

However, little has been done so far to integrate a human rights approach into policy making regarding MEDA funds, and little is known about the funds' impact on the human rights situation in the beneficiary countries, or on the impact on civil society support programmes.

Therefore, the EMHRN will advocate for:

supporting advocacy in this field, the EMHRN will commission a report that will:

- Critically assess existing documentation regarding the use of the MEDA funds, including existing evaluation reports;
- Enquire into the existing use of (and programmes for) MEDA funds devoted to civil society support.

On the basis of the results of EMHRN advocacy in this field, it will examine the feasibility of establishing a similar initiative in relation to the European Investment Bank policies.

ii. The follow-up committee of high officials

The EMHRN will advocate for the establishment of an independent committee under the Committee of High Officials (the Barcelona Ambassadors) with the mandate to:

- Recommend to the Committee of High Officials specific action, targeting a particular country;
- Appoint special rapporteurs in relation to countries as well as thematic issues;
- Enter into dialogue with governments regarding specific questions and problems;
- Prepare an annual report on the human rights situation in the individual countries and possible assess areas where progress in the human rights protection can be detected and where it is moving backwards;
- Become a focal point for partner countries, which are looking for financial assistance from the European Union for human rights programmes, including the development of national human rights plans.

In order to move this idea forward, a comprehensive paper on the idea and structure will be elaborated situating it in relation to other institutional models and finding inspiration in the sub-commission of the Human Rights Commission; pre-accession strategies to the EU, the EU-ACP Agreement and the Commonwealth institutions.

Before being launched, the paper will be discussed at a meeting with experts and members of the EMHRN.

iii. The Euro-Mediterranean Inter-Parliamentary Forum

The EMHRN will advocate for the establishment of a human rights committee within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Inter-parliamentary Forum having the mandate to address human rights issues of regional

concerns, including individual cases and country issues, and to propose to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership governments:

- Initiatives for the promotion and protection of human rights in the region.
- Initiatives towards arriving at common standards and norms in the field of human rights.
- Initiatives towards promoting dialogue between civil society, parliaments and governments.

iv. Association Council meetings

The EMHRN will continue past efforts of advocating for human rights to become an explicit point on the agenda of the Association Council meetings in relation to the bi-lateral agreements between the EU and its Mediterranean Partners. In this regard, its work will be linked to, and based on, the three initiatives listed above. In order to further the idea of incorporating human rights on the agenda, the EMHRN will:

- Publish briefings/ reports on the occasion of association council meetings in cooperation with members;
- Urge the relevant Inter-parliamentary delegations of the European Parliament to promote human rights dialogue and assessments of human rights progress or setbacks, in relation to association council meetings;
- Urge the European Parliament to organise human rights hearings in relation to assent procedures related to bi-lateral association agreements.

B. KEY INITIATIVES

i. Civil fora

The EMHRN was established as a civil society partner to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. As such it has given priority to the Civil Fora held in relation to the Summits of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. These are occasions for affirming the importance of civil society participation in human rights promotion and protection in the Barcelona Process, and for making civil society voices heard by governments and the public at large.

The EMHRN was among the main organisers of the Civil Forum in Stuttgart, April 1999, and is co-organising the Marseille Civil Forum, November 2000, and has as such been conducive to bringing human rights and independent human rights activists on the forefront of the agenda of these meetings.

The EMHRN will build on this acquis. As soon as the dates and location of the 5th Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Summit is known, the EMHRN will take contact to relevant partners and officials in order to ensure a strong human rights input at the meeting. Furthermore, it will work for the strengthening of

direct encounters between civil society representatives and governments before, under and after the summits.

ii. Dialogue with governments

Human rights dialogues are important mechanisms in creating a general understanding of the nature and scope of human rights, as well as creating a less defensive attitude towards the implementation of human rights.

Thus, the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network will seek to promote that human rights dialogues are being established in as many areas as possible within the framework of the Barcelona Process. In this regard, the EMHRN aims to:

- Assist whenever needed, members of the Network in creating dialogues at the national level;
- Use the international dimension of the Network to engage itself in dialogues with governments as a supplement or alternative to a uniquely domestic dialogue.

The EMHRN has already initiated dialogue with the Jordanian, the Syrian and the Egyptian governments on various levels, and is involved in a joint project on Access to Justice with the Nordic EU countries.

Before the Fifth General Assembly, it will produce a paper evaluating the outcome of its initiatives in this regard in order to stimulate discussions on how to move forward in this field.

Regarding the dialogue conducted by members of the Network, it will elaborate a toolbox with good examples and methodologies taking into consideration the different cultural and religious traditions and approaches to dialogues.

Furthermore, the Network will suggest to the Commission that it support and initiate the creation of national human rights plans in all partner countries (following the recommendations from the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993) as an opportunity to establish and institutionalise a dialogue between governments and human rights organisations and civil society in general.

C. COUNTRY PRIORITIES

The EMHRN will, in the next years, give priority to the human rights situation in the non-EU Euro-Mediterranean Partnership countries, in particular Turkey and the Arab Euro-Mediterranean Partnership countries. As mentioned above, special concern will be devoted to the support of member organisations operating in countries where state repression is high and funding opportunities limited.

The situation in the EU countries is far better than in the South and Eastern part of the Mediterranean in terms of democracy, human rights compliance and participation of civil society in decision-making processes. Therefore human rights issues in the North will mainly be approached through the EMHRN's thematic priorities.

In order to systematise its country strategy, members of the executive committee and secretariat staff will, during the first half of year 2001, visit all South and East Mediterranean members with the

purpose to:

- Discuss priorities of the members in relation to the Barcelona Process for the next years to come;
- Discuss what members expect from the EMHRN;
- Discuss members' contribution to the EMHRN;
- Establish a calendar of main human rights related events in the various partner countries;
- Establish a report of the mission and on this basis establish a draft programme for EMHRN country priorities to be discussed by the member base.

D. THEMATIC PRIORITIES

The EMHRN has identified the following thematic priorities in its work:

- i) The protection of human rights defenders, including freedom of association and expression;
- ii) Justice and equal access to justice;
- iii) Women's rights;
- iv) Migrants' and asylum seekers rights, and human exchange;
- v) Human rights education;
- vi) Self-determination and the rights of refugees;
- vii) Economic, social and cultural rights.

i) Protection of Human Rights Defenders, including Freedom of Association and Freedom of Expression.

Civil society participation is crucial for the development of the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process, and human rights defenders are key actors in this regard.

Despite the commitment of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to international human rights principles, harassment, repression, torture, imprisonment, etc. of human rights defenders is still widespread in the region. Furthermore, freedom of association and expression standards, key rights and preconditions for civil society participation in the development of their societies, give rise to serious concern in several South and East Mediterranean countries.

Thus, the transitional period initiated by the Barcelona Declaration, has yet to translate into a programme for protecting human rights defenders in practice and a working programme for the development of regional standards and principles for the promotion and protection of freedom of association and expression, including adequate training and education needed for capacity building in this field.

The EMHRN initiatives in relation to a regional human rights mechanism, dialogue with governments and in relation to country priorities are an integral part of its work under this chapter. In addition, the EMHRN propose the following initiatives:

a. Cooperation with international NGOs

Human rights organisations have developed significantly over the past decades. Yet, resources are few compared to state assets when it comes to the combat of repression of human rights defenders. Therefore, cooperation and coordination of activities between international, regional and national human rights organisations is needed.

The EMHRN will call major international human rights NGOs working in the region for an annual meeting in order to discuss how to improve coordination of activities, as well as priorities for work in the region.

Furthermore, it will continue past practice of co-operating with international organisations and its members in sending missions to key trials, and with regard to urgent appeals.

b. Foundation for human rights defenders

Funds are essential for the protection of human rights defenders. Even small funds can make a big difference, for example when it comes to: travel and accommodation costs for persons who are forced to escape their country for a limited period of time; the purchase of a mobile phone when all telephone lines have been cut by the authorities; the purchase of fax machines or computers; economic support for the health care of ill persons recently released from prison; economic support to families whose members were sacked or jailed by the authorities, etc.

Human rights defenders are in need of readily available funds for such purposes. Therefore, the EMHRN will establish a Foundation for Human Rights Defenders in the Euro-Mediterranean region with a board consisting of independent personalities.

It will finalise a proposal for statutes of the Foundation before the 5th General assembly of the EMHRN, including the proposal that membership fees to the EMHRN are earmarked for the foundation. Furthermore, it will urge funding agencies, private companies, political parties, etc. to contribute with the necessary basic capital.

c. Trial monitoring network

Trial monitoring is a key instrument in human rights work. It is a main instrument in assessing the compliance by states with international human rights commitments with regard to fair trial procedures. Furthermore, it serves as a mechanism to protect human rights defenders and persons persecuted for political reasons.

Lawyers and NGOs have in the past years worked extensively in the field of trial monitoring in the Euro-Mediterranean region. However, no systematic exchange of information or experience has resulted from these activities. Neither do we find regular consultations between persons involved in trial monitoring in the South and the North of the Mediterranean. The EMHRN will therefore encourage member organisations and partners to run a seminar/ workshop with the aim of:

- Comparing legal systems and trial procedures in the region;
- Discussing methodologies for trial reporting and for the follow-up on trial monitoring;

- Identifying needs and methods for strengthening trial monitoring in the region as well as for increased cooperation and exchange of information between trial monitors;
- Forming the basis of a Euro-Mediterranean network of trial monitors, and of North-South monitoring mission teams.

d. Freedom of association

On 5-7 October 2000, the EMHRN is co-organising a seminar on freedom of association in the Euro-Mediterranean region in Casablanca with the objective of:

- Situating the question of freedom of association in a Euro-Mediterranean context and reviewing the current state of affairs;
- Adopting a work programme and identifying the means for promoting freedom of association in the context of the Barcelona Process in synergy with ongoing initiatives.

As a follow-up to the seminar, the EMHRN will call for a meeting of key participants in order to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the seminar.

In particular, the working group will consider how to implement proposals to:

- Monitor the situation of freedom of association in the region.
- Enhance the capacity of human organisations to promote freedom of association on a national level.
- Enhance the capacity of human rights organisations with regard to the strengthening of their internal organisation, to management and strategic planning.
- Raise funds to implement activities in the field of freedom of association.

e. Freedom of expression

The EMHRN will promote the idea of organising a seminar on freedom of expression in the Euro-Mediterranean region in order to establish a platform and working programme in this field. In this regard, it will contact freedom of expression NGOs working in the region in order to explore possibilities for cooperation in this regard.

ii) Justice, including Equal Access to Justice

The commitment of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership partners to create a zone of peace, stability and prosperity in the Euro-Mediterranean region implies the respect for human rights and the developing of rule of law and democracy. As such it demands bringing internal legislation into conformity with international human rights standards, and the just application of the rule of law, i.e. sound administration of and equal access to justice.

Most violations are today caused by unjust laws and legislation that run counter to international norms,

as well as by deficits in implementing the law.

The latter often manifests itself in the:

- Prosecution of individuals and groups for exercising their individual or public liberties under the pretext that they disturb public order or they threaten the security of the State;
- Impunity of public agents or employees involved in human rights violations;
- Unfair trials and unequal access to justice in relation to individual freedoms and socio-economic and cultural rights.

In the South and East Mediterranean where democratic institutions are lacking, there is no clear-cut separation of legislative, executive, and law enforcing authorities. As such, justice and the administration thereof are subordinated to the political power, and are often used for repression of freedoms and liberties.

In order to set-off a dynamic in the field of Justice, the EMHRN will:

- Promote the idea among its members of strengthening efforts to monitor trials on a local level and of strengthening legal advise centres;
- Support increased dialogue between the North, South and East of the Mediterranean on how to work towards common standards in the region.

It will collaborate with the Danish, Finnish and Swedish governments on the organisation of a regional conference in April 2001 on equal access to justice in order to:

- Review progress in this field;
- Reach an understanding of common standards and changes needed;
- Discuss methodologies and mechanisms for the promotion of equal access to justice within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

A group of experts should be asked to continue the work on the conference themes for one year and produce a report, the result of which should be discussed in a larger forum, eventually a Euro-Med conference on human rights and justice in 2002.

In order to support the preparations of the conference and its follow-up, the EMHRN will establish a working group to support the organisers of the conference and the follow-up committee.

iii) Women's Rights

While the Barcelona Declaration considers human rights to be a corner stone of the Partnership, women's rights are hardly evoked except for the recognition of the key role of women in development and the need to promote their active participation in economic and social life and in the creation of employment. Yet, it is difficult to conceive how the objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

can be reached without full participation of women in the economic, social, cultural and political life of their respective societies.

Today, this participation is seriously hampered by the inequalities between men and women that are inscribed in the legislation of several countries (Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, etc.); the state of traditions and mentalities; and the lack of political will of several governments. Although most of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership countries have signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, reservations have often been made that devoid the countries' commitment of any legal impact.

Women in the region are today organising to denounce the situation in which they find themselves; to claim equality and halt to legal discrimination; and to struggle against negative representations and social practices. Tens of women's organisations have seen the light of day in the past years, regional networks have been created and thousands of women involve themselves in the work of human rights organisations.

In this context, the EMHRN is co-organising a conference on women's rights in the Euro-Mediterranean region, in Marseilles, that originally was scheduled to take place on 27-28 October 2000, but postponed to the beginning of year 2001 due to the situation in Israel and Palestine.

The aims of the conference are to:

- Review the current state of violations of women's rights (institutional, social, and domestic);
- Assess government policies to diminish discriminations against women;
- Assess and review major initiatives by women in the region with the view to diminish discriminations against women;
- Assess the major problems facing women in migration and in asylum;
- Draw-up recommendations for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The EMHRN will base its future work on the outcome of the conference and contribute to the follow-up of the recommendations.

iv) Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Human Exchange

The question of migrants' and asylum seekers' rights and the question of freedom of movement and human exchange is a key issue of the Barcelona Process, and a key area for developing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in the spirit of solidarity.

Several organisations already work in this field to which the EMHRN will bring its resources in its capacity of being a network based in the North, South as well as the East of the Mediterranean:

A. At the Special Meeting of the European Council on the Establishment of an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, 15/16 October 1999, Tampere, the EU approved the action plan of the High Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration which is intended to diminish migration pressure on the

EU and which includes one Euro-Mediterranean Partnership country, i.e. Morocco. Experience from implementing the plan for Morocco will be used in relation to similar plans for other Euro-Mediterranean Partnership countries. Therefore, the EMHRN feels it important to monitor the overall effect of the plan for human rights protection and promotion of the Moroccan population.

B. The EU Council of Ministers has agreed on the wording of a text concerning readmission of undocumented third country citizens to countries from which they entered Europe.

The wording will be incorporated in future association agreements, which in the long run risk to force third countries to strengthen border controls and tighten visa regimes and thus become buffer zones for Europe in relation to migrants and asylum seekers.

A main problem concerning readmission agreements is that very little is known about the South and East Mediterranean countries protection standards of political refugees and their handling of documented as well as undocumented migrants, and thus the conditions to which people are sent back.

Various articles, reports and testimonies tend to show that standards for protecting refugees and migrants in several South countries are worse than in Europe. Furthermore, the Arab Convention against Terrorism seems to be implemented by several countries against internationally recognised protection standards.

C. In recent years, several EU countries have legalised a large number of undocumented migrants (for example France, Greece, Spain, Italy and Belgium). In each country, NGOs have been active in monitoring the procedures and effects of legalisation, but it seems that no overview or comparative approach to the issue exists in a European context.

In order to move further in the above mentioned fields, the EMHRN will organise a workshop with the participation of member organisations, experts and representatives of other relevant organisations with the mandate to out-line a programme for:

- Monitoring the EU High Official Committee plan of action for Morocco in the field of migration;
- Gaining comprehensive knowledge of the situation of migrant and refugee protection in the South and East Mediterranean countries, including the readmission agreements between the EU and its Mediterranean Partners;
- Discussing and identifying needs for strengthened regional co-operation between human rights organisations, refugee organisations, migrant organisations and anti-racist organisations, in particular in relation to the question of undocumented migrants.

v) Human Rights Education and Training (HRE)

The EMHRN will build on the results of the Bray workshop on human rights education and pay attention to the need to train its members in human rights education to ensure the development of new generations of human rights defenders.

The EMHRN will support the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies; 80:20 Education and Citizens

for a Better World; the University of Essex, the Arab Institute for Human Rights and the Foundation for Human and Humanitarian in Lebanon in taking the lead on the promotion of HRE within the framework of the EMHRN. It will support the enlargement of the working group, and support the developments of its activities according to the guidelines of the Bray workshop, April 2000.

In particular:

- The drafting of an EMHRN Declaration on Human Rights Education - translating, publishing and disseminating it widely;
- A project for taking stock of current activities and approaches to HRE within the countries represented in the Network. This project would, in essence, be a digest or review of experiences, current practice and methods etc.;
- Designing and publishing an annotated listing of human rights related Internet sites (possibly in poster format) and begin the process of developing an EMHRN site with effective HRE content for different groupings etc.;
- The organisation of an annual or bi-annual summer school. It would be held in various member states within the Network and could address a variety of issues such as Arab-Western dialogue in human rights, women's rights, methodologies in human rights education etc.;
- Commissioning a human right 'primer' or 'reader' of key documents and writings within human rights.

Finally, the EMHRN will explore possibilities for the build-up of training programmes in a Euro-Mediterranean context for new generations of human rights activists.

vi) Self-determination and the Right of Refugees

The question of self-determination and the right of refugees with regard to the Middle East conflict has been marginalized in the Barcelona Process. Full attention should be given to the question as a key issue for the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as for conflict resolution based on international humanitarian and human rights principles.

The EMHRN will promote discussion among its members in order to arrive at a strategy in this field and in order to identify how it can make a difference compared to ongoing initiatives.

A conference organized by the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies in cooperation with the EMHRN (scheduled for 10 December 2000) on the situation of Palestinian refugees, and a forthcoming report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan, will constitute an important input towards identifying concrete action.

vii) Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The EMHRN will develop its approach to the main financial and economic aspect of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, i.e. the impact of the future free trade zone, the MEDA Programme and EIB grants on the promotion and protection of human rights, civil and political rights as well as

economic, social and cultural rights, and the right to development.

The EMHRN believes that the future free trade zone will have a profound impact on the region, and that it is imperative to monitor the impact here of on the human rights situation.

In order to build-up expertise in this field for the benefit of its members, the EMHRN will establish a report on the disbursement and effect of MEDA funds since 1995. In this connection, it will seek information on and evaluate the use of funds allocated for civil society projects under the MEDA programmes.

It will run a training seminar for its members on the economic chapter of the Barcelona Declaration, on its ideological foundation, and on its relation to the human rights dimension of the Barcelona Process.