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## Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

### Conference on *The political changes in the South Mediterranean and in the Middle East: the role of representative institutions*

Lisbon, 8 November 2013

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Strengthening democratic reform in the southern Neighbourhood

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## I. PROGRAMME

### 09.30 Opening of the Conference

Ms Assunção Esteves, Speaker of the Parliament of Portugal

Mr Jean-Claude Mignon, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Mr Karim Ghellab, President of the Chamber of Representatives, Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco

Mr Mohamed Cheikh Biadillah, President of the Chamber of Councillors, Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco

### 10.00 *Working session 1: Challenges of transition: national experiences*

Open debate with the participation of speakers and representatives of *parliaments of Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, of the National Constituent Assembly of Tunisia, of the Palestinian National Council and representatives of Egyptian political forces*

Moderator: Mr Bernard Sabella, Member of the Palestinian National Council, Chairperson of the Palestinian partner for democracy delegation to the Assembly

#### *Working session 2: Accompanying transitions: What can international partners offer?*

- *Partnership for democracy with the Parliamentary Assembly as a platform for interparliamentary cooperation*

Presentation by Mr Tiny Kox, Chairperson of the Group of the Unified European Left, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

The Moroccan experience: Presentation by Mr Karim Ghellab, President of the Chamber of Representatives

### 12.30 Lunch

### 14.00 *Working session 2 (cont'd)*

- *The contribution of the Council of Europe's Venice Commission to constitutional and legal reforms*

Mr Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission

*Summing-up* by Mr João B. Mota Amaral, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, former Speaker of the Parliament of Portugal

### 15.30 End of the Conference and continuation of the Committee meeting (see separate agenda)

### 18.00 End of the Committee meeting and departure for the Portuguese Parliament

### 18.30 Visit of the Portuguese Parliament and reception

## II. SPEECHES

### **Ms Assunção Esteves, Speaker of the Parliament of Portugal**

Mr President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe,  
 Mr President of the House of Councillors and Mr President of the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco,  
 Mr Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy,  
 Mr Representative of the Aga Khan Foundation in Portugal,  
 Speakers and Members of Parliament present here, from Europe and the Arab world,  
 A special word to Mota Amaral, MP, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy and former President of the Assembly of the Republic, dear friend,  
 Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to Lisbon, the cradle of the discoveries in the 15th and 16th centuries and, through them, the inaugurator of universality. It is that universality that configures the discursive basis of human rights, the ultimate purpose of the Council of Europe and an aspiration, in fact, that belongs to all of us.

This Conference places us in the most extraordinary political transformation of recent times. In North Africa and the Middle East, an enormous collective spirit crossed private domains and information technology networks, and through that course it made the peoples take their destiny into their own hands. The idea of civil society took shape. In Tunisia, Libya or in Egypt, rather than a crowd of isolated individuals, a trial for the formation of a public space.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The country that hosts you today triggered the so-called "third wave of democratisation", started by the Portuguese Revolution in 1974 and followed by other places, from Latin America to Asia-Pacific and Eastern Europe. Disregarding differences in institutions, culture and region, there is one thing we can say: what is common to all, what unites us in the human community, are the universal aspirations claimed on the streets of Tunis, in Tahrir Square, just as they were in Lisbon in 1974, and a long time before in the Place de la Bastille, in 1789. Mohamed Bouazizi's immolation was a desperate metonymy of the protests and claims found across the entire region, a desperate reaction to the steadfast prevalence of social inequality and differences in income, against suffocating levels of unemployment, the imbalance between low wages and the price of essential goods. It was also the defence of an inclusive public sphere, more permeable to the voices of the citizens and civil society organisations. It was a cry of dignity that we all acknowledge and that, today, we all declare.

What moved the Arab civil societies was the struggle for an increase in individual freedom, not only understood in its 'negative' meaning as the absence of interference by the state but also in its 'positive' meaning of direct participation in social and political decisions.

Freedom is measured precisely by what I would call Parliament syndrome. If Parliaments are free and operational, that is, if they are true Parliaments, then freedom is there! Parliaments guarantee us the status of citizens, they defend us from autocratic leviathans. Parliaments have, in their genesis through free elections and in their functioning based on contradiction and debate, a structuring discourse of fundamental rights, free choice, equality and universality as the sum of all individuals.

Parliaments are like that: a strategic place for all emancipatory political reforms, the door to all springs! We know that freedom from autocratic regimes does not always open the door to a straightforward path that can be predicted in the medium term.

Instability is, in a manner of speaking, a structural factor in political transitions. It is as if the roads to freedom always involved an unavoidable pain, the pain of birth.

Historical experience and also the idealization of justice tell us that rebuilding the social contract calls upon Parliaments. They are the centre of legitimating discourse.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Council of Europe is a reference of civilisation. A human rights organisation par excellence, founded on the painful memories of the Second World War and therefore also resilient and aware, the Council of Europe is a strategic space of support for countries moving towards democracy. We should, therefore, mobilise its institutions and our actions – the Parliamentary Assembly, the North-South Centre, the Venice Commission. We should extend "Partner for Democracy" status to those countries. We should encourage supranational Arab parliamentary forums, like the Arab Inter-parliamentary Union or the Arab Parliament, and also encourage close partnerships between these Parliaments and the Parliaments of the European Union.

I proudly remember that the North-South Centre was launched in Lisbon. The idea of bringing the North and the South closer is at the same time political, cultural and moral. In fact, it is difficult to say when these things are not mixed together. Human dignity always leads us to a single homeland, which is Man. It leads us to a combination of wills, a practice of political sharing between states. It leads us to a moral closeness that is the ultimate condition for justice. Going back to the title of this conference, we could say, like Boaventura de Sousa Santos, that what is needed is an opening up to the epistemologies of the South. And now, remembering the film *Babette's Feast*, by Gabriel Axel, what is needed is an embrace between the North and the South. In the words of the film's protagonist, if this happens, one day "righteousness and bliss shall kiss one another"!

Today's meeting of parliamentarians from all around the Mediterranean brings into play this practice of interaction that is, precisely for that reason, first and foremost, a moral one. Let us be able to draw results from it!

**Mr Jean-Claude Mignon, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**

Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to be taking part in the opening of this conference and I am very grateful to the Speaker of the Portuguese Parliament, whose presence here today honours us, for inviting us this evening to a reception in the beautiful premises of the Portuguese Parliament as well as for the excellent organisation of my own bilateral meetings here in Lisbon.

My thanks also go to the North-South Centre as well as the Aga Khan Foundation, our hosts today here in the Ismaili Centre.

I believe that the subject of our discussions today “Political changes in the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East: the role of representative institutions” highlights the key role of elected representatives in all political changes but also their special responsibility.

We can unreservedly welcome the fact that both our Assembly and its Partners for Democracy have responded positively to these responsibilities.

The Assembly anticipated these changes back in 2009 when it established the status of partner for democracy. We were prepared to strengthen dialogue with our counterparts and to defend and share our values with those who claimed to uphold them. That is our role as elected representatives with seats in the Parliamentary Assembly the Council of Europe.

Whatever the outcome of the changes currently taking place, one thing is clear: Irrespective of whether we are optimistic or pessimistic about the “Arab Spring”, it is our duty to support all those who are fighting in the name of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

We must also improve our understanding of the situation of our neighbours in the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East. It cannot be said often enough that there are no ready-made solutions and that it is all the less envisageable that we should impose the solutions which we consider to be most appropriate.

The day before yesterday I took part in the 2013 Lisbon Forum. The discussions focused on the role of civil society in the southern Mediterranean. There too I drew attention to the fact that it is also the responsibility of representative institutions to support civil society.

If civil society is to play its full role as an agent of change, it needs the support of institutional structures. It is therefore also the role of representative institutions to strengthen their partnerships with civil society.

The representative institutions obviously have a vital role to play in the political changes currently taking place – and our Assembly is giving and will continue to give its full support to our Partners for Democracy. However, the representative institutions can only be genuinely effective and legitimate agents for change in a broader context that encompasses all those concerned with good governance.

I am convinced that today’s discussions will benefit from our varied experiences on both sides of the Mediterranean.

**Mr Karim Ghellab, President of the Chamber of Representatives,  
Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to express once again how pleased and proud I am to take part in this important conference that will undoubtedly afford us further opportunities to strengthen our relationships, enhance our positive and fruitful co-operation and provide us with a renewed framework for further developing our partnerships, harmonising our strategies and exploring our perceptions on and approach to a number of issues and topics of common interest and the many challenges we all face on both the southern and northern shores of the Mediterranean, looking forward to a future in which our peoples will enjoy greater security, stability, prosperity, growth and well-being.

My presentation will focus on “The role of international partners in the democratic transition through the Moroccan experience”. However, before addressing this topic, I would first of all like, if I may, to very briefly mention some of the main stages in the development of the political and constitutional process in Morocco and the role of our representative institution in these developments.

**1 – The background to political reform in Morocco**

Right from the very first days of its independence in 1956, Morocco began little by little to establish the foundations of a modern, outward-looking state which believes in the value of institutions and ensures the protection of rights and freedoms, in a constitutional monarchy system which sets out the powers and limits of each authority in the country.

The system in Morocco is based on two fundamental concepts:

1. Political pluralism (prohibition of a single party),
2. The establishment and guarantee of collective freedoms (1958 decree).

Application of these principles experienced various ups and downs, as there were some who defended them and others who opposed them. Morocco experienced some difficult times in establishing democracy, especially in the 1970s and 1980s.

However, democratic reform began in the mid-1990s, particularly with regard to human rights, and this stage culminated in 1998 in what is termed “consensual alternation”, when the then opposition (the Democratic Bloc) took power and formed a government in a form of reconciliation with the democratic political forces of that time.

Following King Mohammed VI’s accession to the throne of the Kingdom of Morocco in 1999, he sought to carry out a peaceful revolution in the general organisation of the state in total harmony with the expectations of the political bodies and Moroccan society, with the aim of establishing an active democratic system and building a state governed by the rule of law and human rights by means of a series of specific and far-reaching reforms:

- In 2004, the Equity and Reconciliation Commission was set up tasked with identifying and compensating the victims of human rights violations that had taken place in Morocco, and issuing recommendations to avoid any repetition of such serious abuses in the future. It promoted compliance with freedom of expression, a guarantee of media pluralism (liberalising the media sector), the freedom to demonstrate, and a guarantee of electoral transparency through the organisation of local and parliamentary elections, free from any controversy, since 2003 (in the presence of independent international observers such as the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe).
- The promulgation of the Family Code, enabling access to gender equality in terms of rights and duties. Prior to this, women were regarded as having no legal competence and passed from the guardianship of their fathers to the guardianship of their husbands.

This pre-emptive spirit of the reforms carried out by Morocco of its own accord, without any pressure whatsoever from any quarter, many years before the so-called “Arab Spring” enabled Morocco to pass through this stage while on the one hand maintaining its stability, and on the other speeding up the reform

process through the adoption of a new constitution approved by the Moroccan people in a national referendum held in July 2011.

## **2 – Constitutional reforms and recognition of the position of the parliamentary institution**

The new constitution strengthened the role of parliament in the general organisation of the state:

- Stipulating that parliament is the sole source of legislation. It has the exclusive role of enacting laws, either through government bills or private member bills, with particular importance being given to private member bills insofar as sittings must be held at least monthly to discuss and vote on such bills;
- Establishing the principle of the separation and balance of powers between the legislative and the executive, the latter becoming the responsibility of the government.

This made parliament institutionally independent from the government. It falls to the former to monitor the latter and evaluate public policies, giving practical form to the principle of linking responsibility and accountability:

The constitution has established multiple mechanisms: the monthly questions addressed to the Prime Minister (annual evaluation of public policies, assessing in stages the work of the government, monitoring public finances, etc. );

- Adding a diplomatic role, which has been growing in importance throughout the world as well as in Morocco.

Clearly, this modern constitutional reference places our parliamentary institution at the very heart of these reforms and it requires us, as representatives of the nation, to engage in it more strongly and effectively, bearing in mind that the current legislative mandate is a constituent mandate, distinguished by the fact that it is primarily devoted to studying, discussing and voting on a number of legal texts, both organisational and pertaining to ordinary law, designed to complete the construction of the institutional structure of the state. In addition, parliament will be required, using all the powers conferred upon it, to fully respond to the aspirations of its citizens, both male and female, and future generations to implement and give practical form to the constitutional reforms.

The magnitude of these challenges and the heavy responsibilities placed upon our parliamentary institution prompted our assembly to prepare a plan, unique at both regional and international level, called the Strategic Plan for the development and enhancement of the work of the House of Representatives, through which we in the House of Representatives, are seeking to ensure that it measures up to the role assigned to it in the new constitution, and bring it into line with the expectations of our citizens.

We were keen for this plan to be an integrated project to enhance parliamentary action by drawing up a series of key procedures and measures, classifying them into five fundamental themes: enhancing the institutional and practical capacity of the House of Representatives; developing its legislative activity; increasing the monitoring of the government; increasing capacities in the field of parliamentary diplomacy; and promoting the House of Representatives' outreach to citizens and its communication strategy.

## **3 – The role of international partners in supporting these changes and reforms**

With regard to the role of international partners:

These significant efforts and earnest endeavours have received the support of our international partners, foremost of which is the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, with which we have had an important co-operation programme, whether in the organisation of conferences and training sessions, the Moroccan parliament's hosting meetings of the PACE committees or participation in various activities organised by the Assembly. In addition, it has provided its support for the various reforms undertaken by Morocco.

The Moroccan parliament has also benefited from the support of other international partners, and special mention should be made here of the European Union through several mechanisms and programmes, including the Sigma programme, as well as partnership and co-operation programmes with other institutions such as the UNDP, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, and others.

#### 4 – Evaluation of co-operation mechanisms

First of all, I must express our appreciation for the various relationships and partnerships with international players and the development over time of this co-operation in various fields (partner for democracy, our privileged position with the EU). Accordingly, we look forward to seeing this support becoming broader, deeper and more ambitious through extensive involvement in this reform process and support for the various endeavours and initiatives that we are launching.

I would like to point out that these reforms are binding on us and we undertake to carry out many reforms vis-à-vis our partners.

I should add at this point that Morocco has committed itself to all these reforms voluntarily and of its own accord and is employing the partnership mechanisms I referred to as a means of ensuring the best conditions for success.

In this context, I would like to point out that despite the efforts made by Morocco in the field of reforms and its commitment to the international dynamic in the field of democracy and protection of human rights, unfortunately, from time to time we see isolated details or false or incorrect information; there is, however, no justification for these to lead one to make negative judgements on the overall approach to our reform initiatives. Consequently, we would like to see our international partners play a greater role in protecting our constructive partnership from any partisan exploitation or from calling into question the transparency with which Morocco operates in these partnerships; such attempts are the settling of accounts by certain quarters opposed to the interests of Morocco. We look to our partners to welcome and acknowledge our efforts and to highlight their importance and positive aspects.

We would also like the co-operation with our international partners to be more comprehensive and more balanced between our national institutions, i.e. between parliament and government.

True, we treasure and appreciate the different forms of support and assistance provided by our partners to the governmental authorities with their many and varied programmes and action. However, as a parliamentary institution in urgent need of an increase in the aid allocated to us, bearing in mind that we have limited opportunities, given the challenges we are facing, in making progress in the parliamentary institution and establishing citizen-based democracy, ensuring that parliament is involved in the various national reforms, thereby reflecting the expectations of society.

In this regard, we also look forward to increased support provided in particular by the European bodies, which we believe remains limited and that this support be directed to parliaments. We are convinced that support to national parliaments is an investment in democracy and encourages the spread of its universal principles and values, and that this support is essential in order to deepen our irreversible choices in the field of development, security and stability, especially as many of the countries of the southern Mediterranean are faced with a number of genuine dangers and difficulties on account of the growing phenomenon of terrorism, illegal immigration, drug trafficking and trafficking in arms and human beings.

Therefore, the role of international partners is particularly important in supporting the process of democratisation and ensuring the stability and security of our region, since we firmly believe that the security and stability of Europe depends on the security and stability of the southern shore of the Mediterranean, including in the Sahel and the Sahara.

I am sure that the shared desire that joins us together and unites our vision will be the best support for establishing a new era of outstanding co-operation and partnership, becoming a model partnership for building a better future for our countries and our people.

In conclusion, I can only reiterate my thanks to you and express my hope for the success of this conference.

**Mr Mohamed Cheikh Biadillah, President of the House of Councillors,  
Kingdom of Morocco**

Your Excellency, Ms Assunção Esteves, President of the Portuguese Parliament,  
Your Excellency, Mr Jean-Claude Mignon, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe,  
Honourable members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy of the Parliamentary Assembly,  
Honourable colleagues, presidents and representatives of the parliaments of Algeria, Jordan, the Lebanon, Morocco, of the Assembly of Tunisia and of the political forces of Egypt,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to be here with you today and I would like extend my warmest gratitude to President Jean-Claude Mignon for his kind invitation.

This conference is taking place at a time when important changes are shaping countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean – Mare Nostrum – and at a time when new types of problems are posing increasing threats to our joint security every day.

The South Mediterranean and the Middle East are in constant upheaval under the combined influence of two major and spectacular events, with their train of tragedies; one was global, in the shape of the impact of the tragedy of 11 September – with the Palestinian problem as its background, while the other was more recent: the so-called Arab Spring.

The latter, which initially raised great hopes, has unfortunately over time become a source of great concern. Add to that the impact of the international economic crisis on some countries, while others enjoy great wealth, and the situation in the Sahel and Sahara region, from Somalia to the Atlantic - an area which the great French historian, Fernand Braudel, referred to as “the other Mediterranean” - and it is easy to understand why this conference is both relevant and important.

Need I say that the situation in this region continues to be extremely unstable, as can be seen from the latest events in Libya, Tunisia, Egypt and Mali, not to mention the ongoing civil war in Syria, two and a half years after the events in Tunisia and the birth of the Arab Spring?

Despite their legitimate aspirations – “more democracy, more freedom, more dignity and equal access to the labour market” - the young initiators of the Arab Spring have seen the results of their efforts usurped by forces which were either marginalised or oppressed by previous regimes. As a result of the ensuing power struggle, these young people have found themselves even more marginalised.

These events, which were spontaneous, uncontrolled, without either ideologies or charismatic leaders, and which disrupted the status quo that had in some countries prevailed for over half a century, did not result in the new order desired and expected by their initiators.

Need I point out that, not only has this movement raised hopes among young people and democrats across the world, but considerable progress has also been made: free elections have been held, the role of civil society has been strengthened, and there is greater freedom of expression and of assembly. Nevertheless, the course taken by these events raises concerns.

These changes can best be described as "hesitant", as their immediate result is political instability that has exacerbated social, economic and humanitarian crises and even crises of identity in some countries. There are also other problems in the region that pose a threat to international peace and security:

- The civil war raging in Syria with all the tragedies it entails...;
- The threats hanging over Libya and their impact on the Sahelo-Saharan region where the danger comes from a tribal and ethnic imbroglio;
- The growing polarisation between so-called secular forces and those considered to be Islamic or inspired by Islam;
- The re-emerging inter-religious conflict, which risks tearing some communities apart despite the fact that their members have lived in harmony for centuries.

The picture would be incomplete if I did not mention the demographic transition taking place throughout the region: youth unemployment on the one hand and, on the other, the imperative need to guarantee a dignified life to an ageing segment of the population.

If we add to these problems the shortcomings in terms of education, culture and governance, we can appreciate the fragility of these democratic transitions and the pressing need to ensure that they are fully entrenched.

And what about the experience of my own country, which has succeeded in following its own specific approach so as to make this historic move with stability and social peace?

It is not by chance that the Kingdom of Morocco was an exception during the Arab Spring, thanks to a determined, reformist and structuring approach in which the monarchy constantly provided the driving force as the main bringer of change.

Morocco, which was the only country in the region to opt for a multi-party system and a market economy from its independence and will this year celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its parliament, put in place all the tools which have helped it to absorb the shock of the Arab Spring in stability and social peace.

Indeed, a multi-party system, civil society and a free press have been realities in Morocco for over more than half a century.

His Majesty, King Mohammed VI, has set in motion a process of substantial reforms that has led to a new participatory democracy, enshrined in the Constitution of July 2011.

This reform process has provided the opportunity to:

- make up for past shortcomings in terms of human rights, thanks to the work of the national Equity and Reconciliation Commission and to exemplary transitional justice;
- enshrine in the Constitution our diverse identity with its Arab, Amazigh, Hassani and Hebrew components;
- recognise the Amazigh language as an official language alongside Arabic;
- strengthen the role of women through the Family Code adopted in 2004 and a national authority for gender equality guaranteed by the Constitution ;
- enshrine all types of human rights in the Constitution;
- ensure the separation and independence of the three branches of power;
- ensure that parliament has the sole right to introduce legislation;
- safeguard the role and the right of the opposition in parliament.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our advanced status with the European Union, our Partner for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and our geostrategic situation as a bridge between Europe, Africa and the Arab world constantly influence our policy decisions and make us take on new responsibilities.

Our model of society, enshrined in the Constitution of July 2011, is the outcome of this process and of the context that I have just described; our partners should give this model their full and active support so as to secure it and thereby create an area of shared prosperity, while helping to ensure regional stability.

Thank you for your attention.

**Mr Bernard Sabella, Member of the Palestinian National Council, Chairperson of the  
Palestinian partner for democracy delegation to the Parliament Assembly of the  
Council of Europe**

Transitions are a natural part of our lives and of our world. Each human being, family, community and nation passes at certain junctures with transitions. These transitions can be difficult as they indicate passage from one phase to another. Preference is certainly towards smooth transitions that can help us accommodate at a relatively slower pace but transitions can also come unannounced. Such transitions create additional challenges and it is the task of individuals, families, communities and nations to rise up and deal with such challenges.

In the Middle East and in the Southern shore of the Mediterranean, national transitions have been occurring since 2011. Some of these have been accompanied by difficult times often affecting thousands if not millions of people. But the underlying causes of these transitions can be summarized in the yearning of people, ordinary people, for the rule of law that offers them equality, opportunity and the freedom to express themselves without censorship or retribution. These ordinary people were seeking the vision of human security whereby the governing system and its institutions cater to their various needs, dreams and citizen aspirations.

The violence and civil strife accompanying some of the Arab transitions are cause for concern to all of us who champion the values of democracy, respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law. Especially disconcerting are the phenomena that see one community rising against another; ethnic and religious groups being targeted and dislodged from their original communal homes; armed groups rampaging villages, neighbourhoods and whole communities in the name of religion. These phenomena divert from the real cause and reason for which Arab masses went to the streets in quest of democracy and citizens' rights. Besides these phenomena make it impossible to recreate the society and national community in a manner that would ensure participatory democracy and harmonious coexistence among the various groups making up the societies of the Arab Middle East.

As we ponder the causes and effects of the respective experiences of national transitions, with the presence of the distinguished representatives of most of the Southern Mediterranean neighbour states, it behooves us to also share together our thoughts for the future of our societies and of relationships with neighbouring states and with those of our neighbours in the Northern Mediterranean, in particular the Council of Europe, the European Union and their representative and specialized institutions that are preoccupied with the Rule of Law and the questions pertaining to Human Rights and their preservation in keeping with a democratic system of governance.

The task we have on our hands is not a simple one nor is it an easy one. Precisely because of its complexity and difficulty, we need to work in concert and to have trust in each other. Especially significant are the experiences of some of our European Northern neighbours who have gone in the last decade or two through very difficult transitions themselves. The success of some of the transitions occurring on the European continent was possible because of willingness to share experiences and to learn from others, especially as these relate to constitutional and legal provisions needed to preserve democratic transition and the promotion of the Rule of Law.

The "Partnership for Democracy" which was initiated by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) is in itself an indication of the willingness of our European partners to accompany us, in the Southern shore of the Mediterranean, throughout the difficult process of national transitions. From our experience as partners for democracy, we can attest that this partnership is a rich learning experience whereby respect and mutual trust are the basis of the relationship and whereby the successes of member states of the PACE as reflected in their institutional and governing infrastructures are considered without prejudice to our own political, social and cultural contexts and their specificities.

As moderator of this session, I invite each and every one of the distinguished representatives of the different parliaments and public and private institutions to offer their reflections on the transition occurring in their own nation states as well as general reflections on the prospects awaiting the region and our societies as they cope with the transitions and as they work, also in concert with others on both shores of the Mediterranean, to secure a future that guarantees a pluralist, democratic and citizen-based rule of law.

## **Mr Tiny Kox, Chairperson of the Group of the Unified European Left Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**

In the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, the parliaments of 47 European member States are represented.

In our Rules we have the possibility to grant partner for democracy status to national parliaments of non-member States of the Council of Europe in neighbouring countries. This possibility was created by adopting in 2009 Resolution 1680, prepared by my former Belgium colleague and former Flemish Prime Minister Luc van den Brande.

In this Resolution, it was recalled that the heads of state and government of the Council of Europe, meeting at their Warsaw Summit in May 2005, expressed their commitment to new intercultural and interreligious dialogue with neighbouring regions – the southern Mediterranean, the Middle East and central Asia – based on respect for universal human rights. It was also recalled that political dialogue and cooperation at parliamentary level was of key importance in the process of rapprochement between central and eastern European states and the Council of Europe in the early 1990s. The Resolution stated that the Assembly was convinced that strengthening the existing working relations with parliaments of neighbouring countries would be similarly decisive for establishing a new partnership, as well as for promoting parliamentary democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the principles of the rule of law in these countries. The Resolution stated that the Assembly stood ready to play fully its role as the political engine of the Council of Europe, and to take the lead in building institutionalised relations with the neighbourhood, by creating the new partnership for democracy status.

Parliaments which want to enter into such a partnership have to meet the general conditions set out in Resolution 1680 (now formulated in Rule 61 of our Rules and Procedures) plus any specific conditions which the Assembly may lay down.

The general conditions from the side of the parliament that wants to become PACE's partner, include the following elements:

- An explicit reference to the aspiration of the parliament to embrace the values of the Council of Europe which are pluralist and gender parity-based democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- A commitment to act to abolish the death penalty and to encourage the competent authorities to introduce a moratorium on executions;
- A statement on the intention of the parliament to make use of the Assembly's experience, as well as the expertise of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), in its institutional and legislative work;
- A commitment to organise free and fair elections in compliance with relevant international standards;
- A commitment to encourage balanced participation of women and men in public and political life;
- A commitment to encourage the competent authorities to become party to the relevant Council of Europe conventions and partial agreements which are open for signature and ratification by non-member States, in particular those dealing with human rights, rule of law and democracy issues;
- An obligation to inform the Assembly regularly on the state of progress in implementing Council of Europe principles.

The partnership status is recognition of the fact that although Europe – and therefore the Council of Europe – has its geographic borders which cannot not be broadened, it also has neighbours which cannot be neglected. Europe is not an island but part of a broader region.

Since the creation in 2009 of the partnership status, other forms of relationship have been set aside for the future, with continuation of earlier specific relations. The Parliamentary Assembly granted in the past observer status to the parliaments of Canada, Mexico and Israel. A special guest status was granted to Belarus but suspended by the Bureau of the Assembly in 1997.

To date, the partnership for democracy has been granted to the parliaments of Morocco and Palestine. Requests have been received from the parliaments of Jordan and Kyrgyzstan. The partnership with Morocco has been evaluated recently with the Assembly's decision to continue the special relation with the Moroccan Parliament; whereas the partnership with Palestine is now under evaluation and a decision on continuation will be taken in the first meeting of next year by the Assembly. As the Assembly's rapporteur for Palestine, I will visit Palestine next week to prepare a final evaluation report, which will be first presented to the Committee of Political Affairs and Democracy.

I hope to meet next week the President and the Prime Minister of Palestine to ask their opinion on two years of this special partnership and its possible future. And of course, I will meet with the Palestinian delegation to the Assembly as well as with other members of the Palestinian National and Legislative Councils. Furthermore, representatives of civil society are most welcome to brief me on their experiences with the partnership. When I first prepared a report on the request of the Palestinian parliament for the partnership status, I tried to get into contact with all relevant players in Palestine in order to be sure that the partnership has a broad basis in Palestinian society. It was a pleasure to see that, in spite of all differences in Palestine, all political forces and all relevant civil society forces were in favour of a partnership with the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly. When the partnership was ready to be signed, the Speaker of the Palestinian National Council, Mr Al Zanoun, came to Strasbourg to show the importance the Palestinian parliament acknowledges to this agreement of cooperation. Shortly after the partnership was signed, President Abbas himself came to the Parliamentary Assembly to address us and answer questions of PACE members. The partnership was seen by President Abbas as part of Palestinian attempts to become more accepted by the international community. The Assembly supported President Abbas' request to grant UN membership to the State of Palestine. Unfortunately – as far as I see it – that main status was blocked by the Security Council. However, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided to give Palestine the so called 'non-member state status', which is a serious upgrading of Palestine in the international community. The partnership with the Council of Europe's Assembly was in this respect the first step in the process of upgrading.

The Palestinian parliament was entitled to send 3 representatives and 3 substitutes as a delegation to the plenary and committee meetings of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly. Palestinian delegates regularly intervene in our meetings, not only on issues which regard Palestine as such, but also in other issues on which the Palestinian delegation has questions, opinions and suggestions. As far as I know, this is seen as useful for both our Palestinian friends as well as the other members of the Parliamentary Assembly. The participation also makes it possible to have – if wished – bilateral contacts with the Israeli delegation to the Assembly and trilateral contacts in the Assembly's Sub-Committee on the Middle East. Recently, Palestinian members participated in a fact finding mission of the Sub-Committee to Jordan and Palestine.

A partnership for democracy with the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly is not and should not be for free. It needs obligations and commitments, for both partners, in order to give the partnership serious substance.

The Palestinian parliament committed itself not only to the general conditions which I mentioned before, but also to several specific obligations. In the evaluation report I am now preparing, all commitments will be reviewed, and updated if needed. Especially for Palestine, a state which is under foreign Israeli occupation since almost half a century, it is very difficult to live up to some of its obligations. Palestinian sovereignty is often only partly or even non-existent due to this illegal occupation. In a memorandum to the Political Affairs Committee, I therefore concluded that, according to Palestine, the occupation is one of the main reasons which hinder fully fledged commitment by Palestine to its obligations. I called upon the Israeli delegation to do its best to improve circumstances for the Palestinian delegation. Unfortunately, the Israeli response was rather negative, also to me. But I see it as the Assembly's obligation to put some pressure to delegations and nations which hinder Palestine to live up to its obligations.

The obligations the Palestinian Parliament took upon it are very relevant to us but perhaps even more to the citizens of Palestine and their civil organisations, such as trade unions and human rights organisations. They can refer to these obligations when dealing with the Palestinian authorities on specific issues which regard human rights, rule of law and democracy issues. In this regard as well the partnership is not and should not be for free.

When I visit Palestine next week, I will ask our Palestinian friends on how they see their commitments to date. But I will also ask them what our Assembly, and the Council of Europe, could and should do better to fulfil our part of the partnership obligations. One of the issues could be whether European member States, as well as the Council of Europe as such, do enough to strengthen Palestinian statehood development and put enough pressure on Israel to put an end to the illegal and degrading occupation of Palestine, to put an end to

things such as administrative detention of Palestinian citizens and to respect verdicts of the International Court of Justice with regard to the illegal construction of the so called Wall.

As said, the parliaments of Palestine and Morocco are to date the only two partners for democracy with our Assembly. But last week a special *ad hoc* Committee of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy paid a fact finding mission to Kyrgyzstan to see if and how a new partnership is possible with this central Asian republic which tries to develop a parliamentary democracy. The guideline for the visit was an earlier report of the former President of our Assembly, Mr Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu. Later today we will get more information on the results of this fact finding mission when our Committee meets here in Lisbon.

As said, there is also a new request from the parliament of Jordan. The Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy recently appointed a rapporteur to investigate this request and to advise the Assembly.

The countries in Northern Africa which are looking for their own path towards pluralist democracy, rule of law structures and respect for human rights, are invited to apply for the partnership for democracy with our Parliamentary Assembly. We already have good contacts with Tunisia in this respect but it is up to the Tunisian parliament to take a decision on a possible request for the partnership.

I come to a conclusion.

The partnership for democracy allows our Assembly to broaden its contacts with the parliaments of countries in our neighbourhood and gives these parliaments opportunities to take advantage of the *acquis* build up by the Council of Europe and of its institutions, such as the Venice Commission. It is always work in progress. But we have to take care that the partnership is not for free and therefore we regularly have to evaluate the progress made in the partnership.

## Mr Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission

Mr Mignon, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you know, since it was established in 1990, the Venice Commission has assisted many new democracies in reforming their constitutions and implementing them.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe undertook wide-ranging reforms of their legal and institutional framework so as to break with their totalitarian past. The Venice Commission had the privilege of being able to help these countries to update their constitutions in keeping with fundamental principles of democracy such as respect for individual rights, the separation of powers and the rule of law.

Over the last twenty years, the Commission has gathered unique experience in this field. The wide range of systems in its member countries and the particularities of each case of constitutional reform have added to what we call the common constitutional heritage. I think I can say that the Venice Commission has made a substantial contribution to this process by facilitating the sharing of good practices, both in Europe and in other parts of the world.

This success can be seen in the growing number of countries wishing to become full members of the Commission, which now comprises 59 member states, including Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

Our dialogue with the Arab countries is not new. It began well before the events of the Arab Spring and paved the way for a partnership which has been strengthened over the last few years.

Our first contacts with constitutional courts in the region were made through the Union of Arab Constitutional Courts and Councils (UACCC). The representatives of the Venice Commission have maintained an uninterrupted dialogue with this institution since 2008 when they signed a co-operation agreement.

The Arab awakening certainly marked a quantitative and qualitative transformation in our relations with our member countries, in particular with Morocco and Tunisia, but also opened the doors to an ongoing and regular dialogue with other countries in the Arab region such as Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Libya and Yemen.

From the very beginning of the democratic reforms in the countries of the South Mediterranean in 2011 the Venice Commission was, owing to its experience in constitutional matters, in a position to provide assistance to our partners in Tunisia, Morocco and, sometimes other countries in the region. Thanks to voluntary contributions from France, Italy, Norway, Turkey and the European Union, the Venice Commission set up assistance activities in the field of constitutional reform, justice and the reform of the institutions responsible for protecting human rights in Tunisia and the implementation of the new constitution in Morocco. In 2013 we launched a project of co-operation with the new Constitutional Court of Jordan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe that we can today make a very positive assessment of our co-operation with countries in the region.

By way of example, I would mention some of the most important co-operation activities, which I believe clearly illustrate the main thrusts of our co-operation with countries in the region: building mutual trust, fostering regional exchanges on problems of constitutionalism in societies in transition, responding to the practical needs of partner countries and promoting the role of constitutional justice in democratic societies

### a. Building mutual trust – constitutional reform in Tunisia

In January 2012, I joined a delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe visiting Tunisia, following the observation of the election of Tunisian Constituent National Assembly on 23 October 2011.

This visit helped establish excellent working relations with the new Constituent National Assembly and strengthened the Venice Commission's relations with other Tunisian institutions and partners.

Following this visit, the Commission organised thematic exchanges with the Constituent National Assembly, in particular the chairs of its constitutional committees. They had useful exchanges of views with the Venice Commission in June, July, October and December 2012.

On 3 June 2013, following this constructive dialogue with the Venice Commission and its members, the President of the Tunisian Constituent National Assembly (CNA) officially asked for the Commission's opinion on the draft Constitution.

On 18 July 2013, the Venice Commission published the comments of 10 of its members on the draft Constitution of Tunisia. The rapporteurs of the Commission had been impressed by the quality of the work done by the CNA. Nevertheless, they made a number of recommendations and expressed the hope that the suggestions set out in the document would be of use to the CNA. At the plenary session in October 2013, the Commission adopted the opinion on the final draft of the Constitution of the Republic of Tunisia.

b. Fostering regional exchanges on problems of constitutionalism in societies in transition - dialogue between Arab and European countries in the context of intercultural workshops on democracy

In March 2012, at the initiative of the Moroccan Association of Constitutional Law, the International Association of Constitutional Law and the Constitutional Council of Morocco, the Venice Commission organised the 1st Intercultural Workshop on Democracy on "Constitutional Processes and Democratic Processes" in Marrakech. The discussions focused on a number of important issues of the constitutional reform such as different ways of conducting a constitutional reform, institutional design, choice of electoral system, relations between the parliament and the government and other issues. This exchange of views provided an opportunity to study recent constitutional reforms in different countries, including Morocco, and to define possible areas where additional changes were needed.

The 2nd Intercultural Workshop on Democracy on "The process of constitution making in a changing environment" was held in Marrakech in May 2013. This activity brought together constitution drafters from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia. They discussed their experiences in the field of constitutional reform. Among other subjects, they compared the approaches used in launching the revision of their respective Constitutions, procedures for their elaboration and adoption and implementation of the constitutional provisions through new legislation.

On 18 and 19 October 2013, following the first two workshops, which had been well received by the different Arab countries, the Venice Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania held a 3rd Intercultural Workshop on democracy in Bucharest. This workshop was attended by representatives of national parliaments and academics from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen, who discussed their experiences in the area of international standards and national legislation and practice in the field of political parties.

c. Responding to the practical needs of countries in transition with regard to the implementation of democratic reforms

In Tunisia, in addition to the adoption of the new Constitution, the Commission has been engaged in constructive dialogue with the authorities and civil society, which has taken a very active part in the reform process. Representatives of the Venice Commission took part in a seminar entitled "Trade on the normative and institutional guarantees of freedom of expression", organised by the Council of Europe in partnership with the Arab Institute of Human Rights (AIHR) and the International Organisation of the Francophonie (IOF). This activity provided the opportunity to discuss constitutional and legal guarantees of freedom of expression and thereby provide elements that might assist in the discussions on the new Constitution.

The Venice Commission was invited to contribute to the discussions on issues concerning judicial reform, in particular the independence of the judiciary, the improvement of election laws and practice, the protection of freedom of expression and other subjects relating to the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

As regards Morocco, the Commission has co-operated with the Moroccan Parliament, the Constitutional Council and the Ombudsperson.

At the request of the Moroccan Minister of Solidarity, Women, the Family and Social Development, the Venice Commission organised several exchanges of views with Moroccan experts on the establishment of the Authority for gender equality and combating all forms of discrimination and the Advisory Council for Family and Childhood Affairs.

In May 2013, the Egyptian authorities asked the Venice Commission to give its opinion on the draft legislation on non-governmental organisations. At its plenary session in June, the Venice Commission adopted an interim opinion on this law.

Dialogue with Egypt continued despite the tragic events that took place in summer 2013. The Venice Commission embarked on a dialogue with the Commission of 50 in charge of drafting the new Egyptian constitution and a delegation of the Venice Commission travelled to Cairo from 20 to 23 October for an exchange of views with those responsible for drafting the new constitution.

d. Promoting the role of constitutional justice in democratic societies – the World Conference on Constitutional Justice

Eighty constitutional courts and councils and Supreme Courts in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe are members of the World Conference, which promotes constitutional justice – understood as constitutional review including human rights case-law – as a key element for democracy, the protection of human rights and the rule of law.

Many constitutional courts and councils in Arab countries gave their backing to this initiative and Algeria, the Lebanon, Morocco, Mauritania and the constitutional courts of Egypt and Jordan are now members of the Conference.

Owing to the successful development of the projects I have just mentioned, I believe that the future activities of the Venice Commission will continue to include the four areas of co-operation we have chosen: we will continue to build mutual trust with our partners, to foster regional exchanges on problems of constitutionalism in societies in transition, to respond to the practical needs of partner countries as rapidly as possible and to promote the role of constitutional justice in democratic societies.

It has taken some time for us to get to know and understand one another but I believe that we can now say that, despite the fact that the European constitutional heritage in many areas is very specific, principles such as the separation of powers, respect for human rights and the rule of law are universal values.

The subject of our joint discussion today – the role of representative institutions – clearly illustrates this. The fields of activity of the Venice Commission that I have just mentioned clearly show the complexity of the process of constitutional reforms in the region, as we have ascertained in our bilateral co-operation and during multilateral exchanges on constitutional changes in Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan.

Each country has its own way of tackling constitutional reform – and that is perfectly normal. Morocco has opted for a process where the draft Constitution has been prepared by a constitutional committee and the new text has been submitted to a referendum. Tunisia elected a Constituent Assembly in charge of preparing the text of the new Constitution. That is what Libya also intends to do. The Commission of 50 in Egypt is in the process of drafting the text of the new Constitution.

The reform process in the countries in question has been launched to meet the aspirations and concrete demands of society. Those responsible for drafting the constitution must obviously take account of the people's legitimate expectations if the constitution is to work. To ensure its actual implementation, specialised commissions and constituent assemblies must be able to translate the people's aspirations into an institutional system that respects international standards and which is both functional and viable.

We also know that the preparation of new constitutions by representative bodies, such as specialised commissions and constituent assemblies, is only part of the work, which, although essential in laying the foundations of a democratic society, is not complete if constitutional provisions are not backed up by laws which go further in putting the main principles set out in the constitution into practice.

It is up to national parliaments to undertake the necessary work in this field. Unfortunately we very often see delays in the implementation of new constitutions and this may give rise to severe political and social crises.

There can be many reasons for delays in enacting the legislation required for the implementation of reforms following constitutional changes. Sometimes new parliaments lack experience and need more time to come up with the solutions most appropriate to the political, economic and social context of their respective countries.

I am convinced that institutions like the Venice Commission can help the authorities to overcome their problems and to find the best solutions by sharing international experience in implementing constitutional reforms.

The work undertaken by the Venice Commission in Morocco and Tunisia has had an important impact on the prospects of co-operation with other countries in the region. Our interlocutors in countries such as Egypt, Libya and the Lebanon have expressed strong interest in taking part in this co-operation project, which will be run by the Venice Commission. We are also prepared to provide Algeria, which is about to embark on constitutional reform, with any type of assistance it may require in this process.

In conclusion, I believe that, on the basis of the achievements of the last few years and the expertise the Commission has acquired in the aforementioned countries, we can undertake more closely targeted and concrete activities in all Arab countries which wish to co-operate with us. I am thinking, for example, of closer co-operation in the following fields:

- Legislation guaranteeing the separation of powers and the establishment of new institutions for the protection of human rights;
- Election-related legislation and assistance to electoral authorities;
- Constitutional justice;
- Organisation of discussions or multilateral exchanges between Mediterranean countries, in particular in the context of the intercultural workshops.

Mr Mignon, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although most of the Venice Commission's activities take place in Europe, we consider co-operation with countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean to be very important and we are prepared to share our experience of democracy with countries in the region if they so wish.

Thank you for your attention.

### III. CONCLUSIONS

#### **Summing-up by Mr João B. Mota Amaral, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, former Speaker of the Parliament of Portugal**

- In 2011, mass popular movements in Tunisia and Egypt set in motion the process of political transformation which is now known as “the Arab Spring”. The people in a number of countries stood up in a quest for freedom, dignity and equality, against social injustice and political persecution, and against corrupt and oppressive rule. They expressed a clear will to enjoy fundamental freedoms and to have a say on their own future – in other words, to see their countries transformed into democracies.
- Even if in varying forms, with different degrees of anticipation by the authorities and with uneven results, this process has extended to, or influenced, almost the whole region of South Mediterranean and Middle East. It has brought about high hopes and expectations, both throughout the region and beyond.
- The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe welcomed this process with enthusiasm and offered its support, including through the prospect of offering partner for democracy status to parliaments in the emerging democracies of the region. It also served as a bridge between the countries in transition and the Council of Europe expert body on constitutional and legal reforms, the Venice Commission.
- However, change doesn’t come overnight, and requires hard work. The will of the people expressed on streets and squares needs to be transformed into legal acts through democratic process and legitimate institutions. Representative institutions, such as Parliaments and Constituent Assemblies, have a key role to play in this transformation process. As the pillars of democratic power, they offer an optimal framework to transform the will of the general public into political decisions, and should be actors of change, while at the same time ensuring the respect of the general interest.
- It is a duty of politicians and institutions not to fail to peoples’ expectations. Otherwise, they will be swept away by new rounds of mass protests, which could eventually degenerate into terror, violence and war. We cannot afford for this to happen again. The civil war going on in Syria for more than two and a half years, with its devastating humanitarian consequences both in the country and in the neighbouring countries, is the tragic demonstration of how wrong things can go if politicians fail the peoples’ expectations.
- Building democracy is never an accomplished process; it is always “work in progress”, be it in Europe, or in the Mediterranean, or elsewhere. It is a long path full of traps. We have a better chance of avoiding such traps if we go it together, and if we can rely on the experience of friends.
- Our conference today in Lisbon has included exchanges with speakers and representatives of parliaments of Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, of the National Constituent Assembly of Tunisia, of the Palestinian National Council and representatives of Egyptian political forces.
- It is but a step on the path to democracy. Let us continue further along it. The Assembly is genuinely committed to pursuing the dialogue with our colleagues from neighbouring regions, and stands ready to continue sharing our experience.

#### IV. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

##### PARLIAMENT OF THE HOST COUNTRY / PARLEMENT DU PAYS HÔTE

Mme ESTEVES Assunção Speaker of the Parliament of Portugal /  
*Présidente du Parlement portugais*

##### PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE (PACE) / ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE (APCE)

M. MIGNON Jean-Claude President / *Président*

##### Members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy / *Membres de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie*

Mr	VON SYDOW	Björn	Sweden, Chairperson / Suède, Président	(SOC)
Mr	ALIGRUDIĆ	Milos	Serbia / Serbie	(EDG)
Lord	ANDERSON	Donald	United Kingdom / <i>Royaume-Uni</i>	(SOC)
Mr	BAYKAL	Deniz	Turkey / <i>Turquie</i>	(SOC)
Mr	BENEYTO	José María	Spain / <i>Espagne</i>	(EPP/CD)
Mr	BOCKEL	Jean-Marie	France	(EPP/CD)
Ms	BRASSEUR	Anne	Luxembourg	(ALDE)
Mr	BRAUN	Márton	Hungary / <i>Hongrie</i>	(EPP/CD)
Mr	BUGNON	André	Switzerland / <i>Suisse</i>	(ALDE)
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Mr	DIŞLI	Şaban	Turkey / <i>Turquie</i>	(EPP/CD)
Ms	DJUROVIĆ	Aleksandra	Serbia / <i>Serbie</i>	(EPP/CD)
Mme	DURRIEU	Josette	France	(SOC)
Mr	FLANAGAN	Terence	Ireland / <i>Irlande</i>	(EPP/CD)
Mr	FRÉCON	Jean-Claude	France	(SOC)
Mr	GARÐARSON	Karl	Iceland / <i>Islande</i>	(ALDE)
Mr	GROSS	Andreas	Switzerland / <i>Suisse</i>	(SOC)
Ms	GUZENINA-RICHARDSON	Maria	Finland / <i>Finlande</i>	(SOC)
Mr	HAJIYEV	Sabir	Azerbaijan / <i>Azerbaïdjan</i>	(SOC)
Mr	HERKEL	Andres	Estonia / <i>Estonie</i>	(EPP/CD)
Mr	HÖRSTER	Joachim	Germany / <i>Allemagne</i>	(EPP/CD)
Mr	HUNKO	Andrej	Germany / <i>Allemagne</i>	(UEL)
Mme	KHIDASHELI	Tinatin	Georgia / <i>Géorgie</i>	(ALDE)
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Mr	KOX	Tiny	Netherlands / <i>Pays Bas</i>	(UEL)
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Ms	MEMECAN	Nursuna	Turkey / <i>Turquie</i>	(ALDE)
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Mr	WADEPHUL	Johann	Germany / <i>Allemagne</i>	(EPP/CD)
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**SECRETARIAT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE /  
SECRETARIAT DE L'ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

Mr SAWICKI Wojciech Secretary General / *Secrétaire Général*

**OBSERVER DELEGATION TO THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY /  
DÉLÉGATION D'OBSERVATEURS AUPRÈS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE**

**Israel / Israël - Knesset**

Mr	HOFFMAN	Ronen	Member / <i>Membre</i>
Mr	OHAYON	Shimon	Member / <i>Membre</i>
Mr	SHAI	Nachman	Member / <i>Membre</i>

**PARTNER FOR DEMOCRACY DELEGATIONS /  
DELEGATIONS DE PARTENAIRES POUR LA DÉMOCRATIE**

**Morocco / Maroc**

**Chamber of Representatives / *Chambre des Représentants***

M.	GHELLAB	Karim	President / <i>Président</i>
M.	YATIM	Mohamed	Vice-President, Chairperson of the partner for democracy delegation to the PACE / <i>Vice-Président, Président de la délégation partenaire pour la démocratie auprès de l'APCE</i>
M.	AMEUR	Mohammed	Deputy / <i>Député</i>
M.	BENSAID	Mohammed	Deputy / <i>Député</i>

**Chamber of Councillors / *Chambre des Conseillers***

M.	BIADILLAH	Mohammed	President / <i>Président</i>
M.	BERKIA	Abdelkebir	Councillor / <i>Conseiller</i>
M.	CHAGAF	Ali Salem	Councillor / <i>Conseiller</i>

**Palestine – Palestinian National Council / *Conseil national palestinien***

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M.	SALHI	Bassam	Member / <i>Membre</i>

**OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF PARLIAMENTS - ASSEMBLIES - POLITICAL FORCES  
OF THE SOUTH MEDITERRANEAN REGION AND OF THE MIDDLE EAST /  
AUTRES REPRÉSENTANTS DE PARLEMENTS – ASSEMBLEES - FORCES POLITIQUES  
DE LA REGION DU SUD DE LA MEDITERRANEE ET DU PROCHE-ORIENT**

**Algeria / Algérie**

M.	KHALDI	Elhadi	Senator, Member of the National Council / <i>Sénateur, Membre du Conseil de la Nation</i>
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**Egypt / Egypte**

Mr	EL GHOR	Galal	Head of the Energy Committee, Free Egyptian Party / <i>Chef de la Commission de l'énergie, Parti Libre de l'Égypte</i>
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**Jordan – House of Representatives / Jordanie – Chambre des Représentants**

Mr	AL HAMARNEH	Mustafa	Member / <i>Membre</i>
Mr	AL QARNEH	Yousef	Member / <i>Membre</i>
Mr	BANI HANI	Qasim	Member / <i>Membre</i>

**Lebanon – National Assembly / Liban – Assemblée nationale**

M.	MOUSSA	Michel	Member / <i>Membre</i>
M.	MOUKHEIBER	Ghassan	Member / <i>Membre</i>

**Tunisia – National Constituent Assembly / Tunisie – Assemblée Nationale Constituante**

M.	ABDELKEFI	Badreddine	Vice-President and Member of the Bureau / <i>Vice-Président et Membre du Bureau</i>
Mme	THEIRI	Rim	Member of the Education Committee / <i>Membre de la Commission des Affaires d'éducation</i>

**VENICE COMMISSION / COMMISSION DE VENISE**

M.	BUQUICCHIO	Gianni	President / <i>Président</i>
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M.	MARCENARO	Pietro	Former Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy of the PACE / <i>Ancien Président de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie de l'APCE</i>
Mr	MILIVOJEVIĆ	Dejan	Secretary of the Serbian Delegation to the PACE / <i>Secrétaire de la délégation serbe auprès de l'APCE</i>
M.	PINON	Xavier	Secretariat of the French National Assembly, Assistant of Mr Mignon / <i>Secrétariat de l'Assemblée nationale française, Assistant de M. Mignon</i>
Ms	RIMON	Tzipora	Ambassador of Israel in Portugal / <i>Ambassadrice d'Israël au Portugal</i>
Mr	TAWARNEH	Hassan	Secretariat, House of Representatives of Jordan / <i>Secrétariat, Chambre des Représentants de la Jordanie</i>