



**1st Meeting of the Mediterranean
Institutions of Diwan Al Madhalim,
Mediator & Ombudsman**

***Rabat declaration presented by Diwan
Al Madhalim, the Mediator of the French
Republic, the Defender of the Spanish People
and adopted by the participants.***

1st Meeting of Diwan Al Madhalim, Mediator and Ombudsman Institutions of the Mediterranean countries

Rabat, Morocco 8-10 November 2007

Rabat Declaration

Upon an invitation of Wali Al Madhalim (Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco) the Mediator of the French Republic and the Defender of the Spanish People, the mediators of the Mediterranean countries attended on the 8th, 9th and 10th November 2007 a conference in Rabat.

This meeting joined together representatives of Diwan Al Madhalim, Mediator and Ombudsman institutions and other similar institutions under other active labels in the Mediterranean area.

The aim was to foster greater cooperation and partnerships among mediation institutions in countries bordering the Mediterranean sea.

Also the target was to meet the objectives of this initial meeting, namely :

- Fostering continuous and jointly organized cooperation between the various mediation institutions;
- Supporting and strengthening the mediation institutions in the relevant countries to enable them to fully play their role in favor of justice, equity and good governance, democracy and Human Rights;
- Helping and encouraging countries that have neither national mediation nor human rights protection institutions, to put some in place.

This meeting made it possible to testify to the fact:

- That the democratic transitions occurring in the Mediterranean after the fall of the Berlin Wall, concerned some of the countries in this zone. The said transition, still on-going in other countries, deserves greater consolidation;
- That the record of democratic practice, of rights and freedoms in the Mediterranean area include some achievements deserving of encouragement, for example, the constitutional consecration of Human Rights, the establishment of democratic institutions and the rule of law, the existence of mediation systems in relations between the public and the administration, the progress registered in multiple party

systems and the holding of transparent elections, the contribution of the opposition to the running of a democracy, the encouragement to local democracy through decentralization, the introduction of rules of good governance in the management of public affair;

■ That, however, this situation remains marked by certain insufficiencies and failures :

Recurring conflicts, the interruption of democratic processes, repression, political violence, serious infringements to Human Rights, the persistence of types of behavior putting a brake on the development of democratic culture, the lack of independence of certain institutions, economic, financial and social constraints giving rise to reservations on the part of citizens with regard to the advent of democracy.

This meeting declares its attachment to the following guidelines :

- Democracy as a system based on the recognition of the inalienable and universal nature of dignity and equal rights of all human beings as well as their rights as recognized in international and regional treaties conventions and declarations;
- The rule of law implies the submission of all institutions to the law, the separation of powers, the free exercise of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms, the attachment to the values of justice and equity, as well as equality before the law of human beings, both male and female;
- At regular intervals, the holding of free and transparent elections founded on the respect and exercise, without hindrance or discrimination, of the right to freedom of opinion, expression, assembly, demonstration and association. Multi party systems and the existence of political parties equal before the law, free to organize and express their opinions, so long as their programs and undertakings do not challenge the fundamental values of democracy and Human Rights. The respect of statute principles and functioning of the national institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights as approved at the General Assembly of the United Nations 'Resolution A/RES/48/134) dated December 20, 1993, known as Paris Principles;
- The spirit and practice of dialogue at all levels between citizens, parties of interest, political parties, the State and civil society;
- Good governance, the obligation of accountability, administrative transparency and the improvement of relations between administrators and the administered for effective management of public matters.

Taking inspiration from the aforesaid principles, the Diwan Al Madhalim, Mediator and Ombudsmen institutions in the Mediterranean area express their attachment to the common values of mediation, i.e. conciliation, development of communications, the right to know and enjoy access to information and the fostering of initiatives calling upon public administration to respect the principles of justice, equality and the rule of law.

This meeting deems that the development and consolidation of mediation institutions are part and a parcel of the creation of an environment conducive to the spread of these values.

This meeting therefore considers that the said event largely contributes to the achievement of these objectives.

Whereas the experience registered in certain countries in the field of mediation between Administration and the public, deserves being better known and shared.

Whereas the development and strengthening of cooperation between mediation institutions in Mediterranean countries fits into the framework of this objective.

Whereas it is necessary to define a strategy at the Mediterranean level regarding the role of the mediation institutions in the development of rules of good governance in public administrations, as well as the modernization thereof, the improvement of relations with users, the reinforcement of ethics in public services, the promotion of democratic culture and the protection of human being's rights.

Whereas the need to establish an institutional mechanism enabling mediation institutions to coordinate their actions and consolidate their achievements.

This meeting suggests :

- The setting up of a permanent committee for coordination and monitoring to meet on a regular basis every two years from one place to another throughout the countries of the Mediterranean;
- A reflection on the appropriateness of creating an organization of mediation institutions in the Mediterranean.

For this purpose, the meeting asks its President to provide follow-up and the bringing to fruition of these objectives.

This meeting asks its President to keep the members updated on any actions he may undertake in the framework of this declaration.

Rabat, 10th November 2007