



# North-South Centre of the Council of Europe



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## PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2011

The programme of activities for 2011 is the continuation of the work carried out by the North-South Centre since spring 2008. It relies on the strategic document adopted at that time by the statutory bodies of the North-South Centre, and the evaluation of its implementation carried by the same statutory bodies in spring 2010, in the context of the NSC's 20th Anniversary. Besides the permanent processes which are the Lisbon Forum, the North-South Prize and the Mollina "youth and development" University, its main axes continue to be global education, youth and intercultural dialogue. A significant part of its resources come from the co-operation programmes agreed between the North-South Centre and the European Commission at the end of 2008.

In the field of education, the political priority will be to successfully conclude the process leading to the adoption, by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, of a recommendation supporting education on global interdependence and solidarity/global education in Europe and beyond. In the field of youth, the new euro-african dimension of the Council of Europe and European Commission Youth Partnership will continue to develop, relying on the Youth Summit, organised on the fringe of the 3rd Summit of Europe/Africa Heads of State and Government in Sirt (Libya) at the end of November 2010. In the field of intercultural dialogue, the NSC's focus on the thematics of equality between women and men and history teaching in the Euro-mediterranean region will be reinforced, in the context of the Alliance of Civilisation's strategy for the Mediterranean, adopted on 8-9 November 2010 in La Valette (Malta).

Finally, 2011 will see the setting-up of a new Executive Council on the basis of the statutory Resolution, whose adoption by the Committee of Ministers is expected at the end of 2010/early 2011. Through this Resolution, all of the NSC's stakeholders within the Council of Europe, the European Union and beyond, will have the opportunity to reinforce the Centre's role as a political interface and co-operation platform between Europe and its neighbouring regions, to reaffirm its mission to promote universally shared values, and to confirm the relevance of its "quadrilogue" structure which gives the Centre its originality and credibility. On this basis, the Executive Council will define, in spring 2011, the strategic priorities of the Centre for the period 2011-2013.

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## I. INTRODUCTION TO THE NORTH-SOUTH CENTRE

In setting-up the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (more commonly known as the "North-South Centre"), in November 1989, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe – and more specifically the Centre's ten founder States<sup>1</sup> – took a **visionary decision**. At a time when the Berlin wall was falling down and all eyes in Strasbourg were turned to the east, retaining a global dimension and a southern perspective was inevitably a medium- and long-term concern.

In April/May 1990, the North-South Centre was set up in Lisbon. From the start, it has built on what, until today, still constitutes its fundamentally pioneering dimension and development potential:

- its **objectives**, both broad and ambitious: to provide a framework for European co-operation designed to heighten public awareness of global interdependence issues, and to promote policies of solidarity complying with the Council of Europe's aims and principles (in particular the respect for human rights, the development of democracy and the rule of law);
- an **open house**: as an enlarged Partial Agreement of the North-South Centre, the Centre is open not only to the Council of Europe's member States and the other Parties to the European Cultural Convention<sup>2</sup>, but also to any other interested State and the European Union<sup>3</sup>;
- its **decision-making process**: unlike the other partial agreements (and the Council of Europe itself), the decisions – including those on the programme and budget - are not taken by the member States alone. The Executive Council, the NSC's decision-making body, reflects a balance between the four components of the Centre's action (governments, parliamentarians, local and regional authorities and civil society). This "quadrilogue" composition gives the NSC not only its originality but also real credibility in a field of action where non-state actors are heavily involved;
- its **functioning and working methods**: the practical implementation, unique at the Council of Europe, of the "quadrilogue" concept also has a direct impact on the NSC's functioning and working methods, which are more open, more transparent and more inclusive than those of a classic intergovernmental organisation. At the same time, the fact that the Centre is an offshoot of the Council of Europe is a major asset, giving it access to the intellectual and operational resources of the "parent institution" as well as the partnerships forged between the Council of Europe and the other European or international organisations relevant to the Centre's work<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Cyprus, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino and Spain.

<sup>2</sup> Subject to a favourable decision of the Committee of Ministers taken by the majority provided for in the Statute of the Council of Europe and unanimously by the member States of both the CoE and the NSC.

<sup>3</sup> In anticipation of the European Union's accession to the NSC (which has still not taken place), the European Commission is entitled to sit on the Centre's Executive Council and the European Parliament is entitled to appoint two representatives to it.

<sup>4</sup> The NSC places its work in particular in the framework of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in May 2007 between the Council of Europe and the European Union, and focuses on the Co-operation Agreements signed between the Council of Europe and key partners such as the Alliance of Civilisations, UNESCO, OSCE, OECD, ALECSO, OIF and the Anna Lindh Foundation.

20 years after the break of the Berlin wall, Europe – and the world – have gone through profound changes. Indeed, a new paradigm - often called the “post-9/11” era - has gradually imposed itself in the field of international relations, leading to:

- increasingly acute awareness that the fundamental strategic challenges for world stability now lie in the south rather than in the east;
- growing evidence that many of the issues to which modern societies are confronted are not only of global nature but also put at stake the future of humanity as a whole;
- ever growing complexity of the international relations sphere, where many actors have emerged in addition to / competition with the traditional “players” (the states and the international organisations), and where basic notions such as multilateral action, the rule of (international) law and universally shared values are more necessary but also more contested than ever;
- renewed priority attached to an already old concept with revised contours: intercultural dialogue.

In this new area, the North-South Centre’s capacity of acting in different dimensions and mobilizing all relevant actors, together with its expertise in the fields of education, youth co-operation and intercultural dialogue, are strong added values. Having concentrated its action, in recent years, on two priority areas (Africa and the Mediterranean), and promoted synergies with the main actors involved, it also has a better chance to “make a difference”.

## II. OUTLOOK FOR 2011

2011 will be a year of transition between the **full implementation of the strategic document** approved in spring 2008 by the Executive Council and the Committee of Representatives of the member States, and the elaboration of a **new strategy for the period 2011-2013**, relying on the **new statutory resolution** which should be adopted by the Committee of Ministers in early 2011.

This new statutory resolution, which is part of the overall reform process currently being carried out in the Council of Europe, will provide the basis for the programme of activities in 2011 and the following years. More detailed guidelines will be defined in the strategic document for the period 2011-2013 which will be presented for adoption to the new Executive Council, to be set up in March-April 2011.

Against this backdrop, the NSC’s programme of activities will continue to be based on several **driving forces** that will guarantee its effectiveness and credibility:

- within the NSC / Council of Europe, the process aimed at adopting a Committee of Ministers recommendation on global education, the follow-up to the Africa-Europe Youth Summits of Lisbon (2007) and Sirt (2010) and the implementation of the Council of Europe’s White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue will form the backbone of the programme of activities;
- externally, the processes with the European Union and the United Nations will remain the preferred vectors of the Centre’s action, and the continuation of the processes of major political importance launched between 2006 and 2008, such as the Alliance of Civilizations, the joint EU/Africa strategy and the Union for the Mediterranean, will continue to give the

NSC opportunities to develop its role as an important player in dialogue and co-operation between Europe, the south side of the Mediterranean and Africa.

As in the past, the Centre's actions will fit into the more global framework of the goals of the United Nations, particularly as defined by the Millennium Declaration. In this respect, the North-South Centre will contribute to the following international days:

- International Women's Day (8 March)
- World day for Cultural Diversity, for Dialogue and Development (21 May)
- International Youth Day (12 August)
- International Day for Tolerance (16 November)
- International Human Rights Day (10 December).

Finally, building on the success of its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the strong political support received on this occasion, the North-South Centre will strive to convince a larger number of member States of the Council of Europe to join it and will try to continue its enlargement beyond the borders of Europe<sup>5</sup>.

### III GLOBAL EDUCATION

#### Objectives

The general objective of the education and youth programmes is to raise European awareness of issues of global interdependence and solidarity through education and youth and to promote co-operation and human contacts between Europe, the southern Mediterranean and Africa. More specifically, the NSC's objective with regard to global education is to support the development and enhancement of strategies and capacity-building for global education, targeting institutions and practitioners in the field of global education in the formal and non-formal sector, with a special emphasis on the 12 countries which have joined the European Union since 2004.

#### Context

The work of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe is based on the conviction that **global education** is a holistic education that raises awareness on the realities of the world, and encourages citizens to strive for a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all. With this in mind, global education encompasses development education, human rights education, education for sustainability, education for peace and conflict prevention and intercultural education, all of which represent the global dimensions of education for democratic citizenship.

The Centre's work falls within the context of the **United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development** (2005-2014) aimed at contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In the past, the Centre's work has been mainly guided by the Maastricht Global Education Declaration 2002 – a European strategy framework for improving and increasing global education – which defines a number of priorities, including: to continue defining and understanding global education in an inclusive fashion; to support national actions plans and

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<sup>5</sup> At the date of 1 September 2010, the North-South Centre has 23 member States: Azerbaijan, Cape Verde, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Portugal, San Marino, Serbia, Sweden and Switzerland.

structures for global education; to develop networking strategies at all levels and to support ‘peer review programmes’.

With its previous work as a starting point, the Centre is currently co-ordinating a process aiming at the adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2011 of a **recommendation supporting education for global interdependence and solidarity in the member States of the Council of Europe** which will be complementary to the newly adopted Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education [Recommendation (2010)7]. This consultative process - initiated in 2008 within the Steering Committee on Education - will bring together the work of the North-South Centre, the extensive work carried out by the Council of Europe in the field of democratic citizenship and human rights education as well as the work carried out in the EU context, more specifically the “European Consensus on Development: a strategy framework for Development Education & Awareness Raising”.

Furthermore, the Centre will be in its third year of implementing the **Joint Management Agreement 2009-2011 (JMA)**, signed in November 2008, between the North-South Centre and the European Commission. The project is based on two main pillars, firstly to strengthen global education in the new member States of the European Union and, secondly, to promote Africa-Europe youth co-operation in the context of the EU-Africa Strategy. In the field of global education, the work will, to a large extent, focus on taking stock of the results from the national and sub-regional seminars in 2009-10 and to prepare a pan-European evaluation conference for the Council of Europe’s member States on global education which will establish an action plan for the NSC in the field of global education for the next three year period 2012-2014.

In 2011, the NSC will also continue to give priority to building synergies and a mutually beneficial co-operation with the European Resource Centre on Education for Intercultural Understanding, Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship (the European Wergeland Centre), the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI), of which it is a founding member, the Anna Lindh Foundation and the UN initiative Alliance of Civilizations and other institutions active in the field of education and the promotion of dialogue.

## **ACTIVITIES FORESEEN IN 2011**

### **1. Recommendation on education for global interdependence and solidarity**

The Global Education Guidelines (2008) together with the Maastricht Declaration (2002) have provided a basis for carrying out a consultative process, started in 2008 that should lead to the adoption of a recommendation supporting education on global interdependence and solidarity/global education in the member States of the Council of Europe by the Committee of Ministers in 2011. The formal decision to launch the recommendation process was taken by the Steering Committee on Education (CDED) in March 2008 and its implementation is being carried out in close collaboration with the Education Directorate of the Council of Europe. On the basis of several consultative meetings with experts (multi stakeholder approach) organised during 2008-2010, a draft recommendation has been prepared in view of the next plenary meeting of the CDED (in early 2011) and will be considered complementary to the adopted Recommendation (2010)7 of the Committee of Ministers to the Council of Europe’s member States – the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. The text will be subsequently finalised with a view to its transmission to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption. The proposal has been welcomed by the European Commission and the Centre has included the EC, CONCORD, the GENE network, the European Youth Forum as well as other relevant stakeholders in the process.

## **2. Programme to strengthen global education in the new European Union member States**

In 2008, the NSC and the European Commission agreed to combine their efforts to promote global education and youth action in Europe and beyond by signing a Joint Management Agreement (2009-2011), which aims at raising awareness and at strengthening citizens' capacity to take action, advocate for their rights and take part in the political debate at local, national and international levels for social justice and sustainable development. This joint programme supports the encouragement of learners and educators to work co-operatively on global issues and it enables citizens to understand the complex realities and processes of today's world and to develop values, attitudes, knowledge and skills, which will allow them to face the challenges of an interconnected world. The project is based on two main pillars, i.e. the ambition to strengthen global education in the new member States of the European Union and, secondly, the promotion of Africa-Europe youth co-operation in the context of the EU-Africa Strategy – and targets mainly civil society actors and local authorities. The global education activities are thus implemented in close collaboration with CONCORD and its national member platforms, as well as with the national co-ordinators for Global Education Week.

In 2011, the NSC will complete the cycle of implementing twelve national and three regional seminars (Baltic states, Visegrad countries and Balkan/Mediterranean region) on global education in the new EU member States, resulting in a thorough needs assessment, the identification of main challenges and the production of national reports on the current state of affairs on global education and development education. The results from the national and regional seminars will be brought together through a pan-European conference in autumn 2011, to conclude the three-year programme and lay the basis for a new action plan and joint commitment for the support and promotion of global education in Europe - in particular in Central and Eastern Europe - and beyond. This conference will also take place in the larger context of the Council of Europe's process leading to the adoption of a recommendation on global interdependence and solidarity (expected adoption in 2011) and the new priorities that will be set by the European Commission for development education/global education, following the needs assessment and results from the EC Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) Study presented in October 2010.

## **3. Capacity-building and training for global education**

A Global Education Guideline was produced in 2008 by an expert group established within the Global Education Week Network. The Guideline provides the user with a pedagogical content framework and has served as a base for developing global education on-line training courses with modules covering different dimensions of global education - human rights education, intercultural education, development education, education for sustainability, education for peace and conflict prevention – designed for a variety of target groups such as educators, policy-makers and media professionals. In 2011, the dimension of intercultural dialogue will be developed complementing the existing human rights dimension and efforts will be made to offer intercultural dialogue courses in partnership with UNESCO-IBE, Anna Lindh Foundation, EMUNI and the European Wergeland Centre. Furthermore, Portuguese and Spanish speaking partners have expressed interest in extending this capacity-building tool to stakeholders in Africa and Latin America and to translate and adapt it to the respective linguistic context.

In 2011, the Global Education Guidelines will be adapted and translated into Arabic, German and Italian, completing the existing set of versions in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, all accessible through the NSC's website. Moreover, the update/revision of the Global Education Guidelines will be initiated through contributions from NSC experts/partners who will be invited to

critically review the structure and content of the pedagogical material. This reflective process should be completed in 2011.

In the framework of co-operation with the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) the Centre intends to initiate the revision of the existing publication on Global Education in the Lusophone countries as part of the mapping exercise which will take place in the framework of the Joint Management Agreement for Africa-Europe Youth Co-operation. The mapping of good practices in global education in the Portuguese speaking countries has raised substantial interest among the global education community and would be based on the facilitation of a platform of partners that will revise the existing data and create an accessible, collaborative and interactive tool (on-line portal) for global education practices in the CPLP.

#### **4. Awareness raising and networking for global education**

The Global Education Week in November acts as a kick-off event for a year-round process focusing on global education awareness-raising actions. The Week encourages educational practitioners to implement global education awareness-raising projects and activities in 37 member States of the Council of Europe and beyond. GEW guiding themes are annually proposed and selected in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. In the framework of the JMA programme, the Centre will continue to increase the visibility of the Week through the organisation of a key kick-off/awareness raising event using the various global networks of the Centre, and decentralised activities in Europe and beyond. Particular emphasis and support will continuously be given to activities in the new member States of the European Union, preferably in the framework of the large scale annual event: the European Development Days (EDD). This networking process is evaluated during the annual GEW seminar. In 2011, the GEW network should be extended to NSC non-European member States; Cape Verde and Morocco as well as to the NSC's latest member State, Azerbaijan.

The World Aware Education Award (WAEA) of the NSC seeks to recognise and encourage initiatives which display excellence and innovation in partnership with global/development education and seeks to award projects and activities which aim at making global development education a sustained part of educational systems – both in formal and non-formal settings. Through this Award, the Centre's objective is to raise awareness and promote a vision that every young person in Europe, attending school and engaged in youth organisations, will have access to education for global citizenship and human rights. Each year it rewards three projects which can serve as good practice and which give visibility to global/development education and awareness raising activities based on partnerships with stakeholders from European and other regions of the world. Since two years, the WAEA has been associated with the European Commission and the Council of Europe's Conference of INGOs and, in 2011, the WAEA ceremony will be held during the EC's European Development Days. By highlighting global education good practices, this award ceremony complements the side event and the exhibition stand organised during the EDD in collaboration with CONCORD and its DEEEP project and gives an overview of European development education/global education strategies.

## IV. YOUTH

### Objectives

The general objective is to raise European awareness of issues of global interdependence and solidarity through education and youth and to promote co-operation and human contacts between Europe, the southern Mediterranean and Africa. More specifically, in the youth field, the NSC's objective is to provide training and capacity building for young people and youth organisations as well as to facilitate policy action on youth in development policies, reinforcing the role of youth as a dynamic force in the field of North-South interdependence.

### Context

2011 will stand as an important milestone for youth and youth policies around the world, as the United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed – with Resolution A/RES/64/134) - the International Year of Youth from 12 August 2010 to 11 August 2011. This initiative indicates the importance the international community places on integrating youth-related issues into global, regional, and national development agendas. Under the theme “dialogue and mutual understanding”, the Year aims to promote the ideals of peace, respect for human rights and solidarity across generations, cultures, religions and civilisations. The world is facing many, often overlapping, crises including financial, security, environmental and other socio-economic challenges hindering the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. Investing in and partnering with youth is key to addressing these challenges in a sustainable manner. By sharing these values and supporting the objectives of the Year, the NSC will generate its contribution in this context, by continuing to bring together youth leaders and youth representatives from all regions of the world to facilitate engagements towards fruitful dialogue and mutual understanding, networking and joint action. In this light, the specificity of the Centre is to provide pioneering training and capacity building activities for young people, ensuring the diversity and outreach of global and interregional activities aiming at empowerment and political participation of youth multipliers.

The Centre also closely follows the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership adopted at the Lisbon Summit in December 2007, in particular the follow-up related to youth. The Africa-Europe Youth Summit in 2007, organised by the NSC in relation with the Heads of States and Governments' Summit, was a crucial moment to strengthen the ties between young people in Africa and Europe and to increase their knowledge about the European Union and the African Union and their policies related to the living conditions of young people. As a follow-up, the Centre is implementing, in close co-operation with the European Commission, and in the framework of the Joint Management Agreement and the CoE/EC Youth Partnership, activities related to global youth work in the context of Europe-Africa co-operation. The NSC commitment towards the promotion of Euro-African youth co-operation has been reinforced through its role as facilitator for the organisation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Africa Europe Youth Summit just prior to 3<sup>rd</sup> EU-Africa Summit of Heads of State in November 2010.

The main aim of the Centre's unique global youth training and capacity building programme is to empower and recognise young people's potential for development and change and to promote and increase their role in global and inter-regional development. This includes awareness raising, global education and intercultural learning and dialogue. Young people, who make up the majority of the world's population and one of the most important and active sociological realities in civil society, represent a key force and partnership in the field of North-South interdependence and global change. In this vein, the Centre has direct working relationships with representatives of youth

structures in Europe and other regions of the world - with governmental and non-governmental organisations working with youth in a North-South context - and facilitates the exchange of experiences and the development of a common approach between the different players. The Centre will continue in 2011 to provide key partners with expertise and training and capacity building offers in the context of global youth movements and youth initiatives.

## **ACTIVITIES FORESEEN IN 2011**

### **1. Universities on Youth and Development**

The University on Youth and Development (UYD) has taken place each year since 2000 in Mollina (Spain) in September/October. The University is a unique space for dialogue and brings together close to 300 representatives from youth organisations and movements from all over the world. The University provides an opportunity to discuss, train and be trained and define political action regarding the main issues on the global agenda. The University's theme is annually proposed and selected in co-ordination with the partners. The University is co-ordinated by the Centre and jointly organised with the Spanish Government, the European Youth Forum, the Spanish Youth Council and the Latin American Youth Forum. This event is a key opportunity to empower youth multipliers and to elaborate action-based policies on youth and global co-operation.

Inspired by the University on Youth University, two similar youth partnerships and sister universities have been developed and implemented, one in Latin America, namely the 'University on Participation and Citizenship', which will organise its 8<sup>th</sup> edition in 2011 and one in Africa, namely the 'African University on Youth and Development', which will organise its 3<sup>rd</sup> edition in 2011. The Centre will continue to facilitate and support these universities in 2011 and will support the efforts to launch an 'Asian University on Youth and Development', following the interest expressed by a number of the key youth partners to initiate this process in 2011.

### **2. Africa-Europe Youth Co-operation**

The Africa-Europe Youth Co-operation Programme, which is implemented in the framework of the NSC-EC Joint Management Agreement and the CoE/EC Youth Partnership, aims at strengthening Africa-Europe youth co-operation and youth policies through youth exchanges and capacity building of youth organisations in the context of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership framework. The implementation of the Africa-Europe Youth Co-operation Programme is guided by African and European youth organisations, as well as relevant youth institutions acting through various steering groups. In 2011, the meeting of the Monitoring Group for the Africa-Europe Youth Co-operation, as well as the Africa-Europe Youth Institutional meeting will be organised by the NSC. The purpose of the meetings will be to provide a space for exchanges among key partners, follow up on the conclusion of the Youth Summit and to monitor and give guidance to the implementation of the programme.

#### Youth policies

In 2011, the circle of sub-regional seminars on youth policies will be concluded, in the framework of the Joint Management Agreement, and the last sub-regional seminar will be held for the North Africa region. The seminar will be co-organised by the Centre and a North African partner, aiming at bringing together youth organisations to reflect on the developments of national and local youth policies in Africa, to promote the African Youth Charter and its ratification/implementation and to strengthen regional integration of the youth organisations and networks in the five building blocks of the African Union.

### Capacity building and training resources

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Training Course for Youth Leaders of the African Diaspora Living in Europe will be organised by the NSC as a follow-up of the priorities which were established by the Africa-Europe Youth Summit. The course aims at strengthening youth leaders from the African Diaspora in Europe and the role of the Diaspora youth organisations and will be organised in partnership with the African Diaspora Youth Network Europe (ADYNE). Furthermore, the Centre will continue to organise the 8<sup>th</sup> Africa-Europe Training Course for youth organisations which aims at capacity building of youth leaders and multipliers in youth organisations and to increase the dialogue and understanding between youth in Europe and Africa. The course will be organised in partnership with the European Youth Forum and the Pan African Youth Union.

The successful implementation of the “Long Term Training Course for Trainers on Africa Europe Youth Co-operation” and the subsequent documentation written by those attending the course, has provided the basis for the production of a training booklet on Euro-African Youth Co-operation. This booklet will serve as a starting point for initiating the production of a “Training Kit on Euro-African Youth Co-operation” in the framework of the CoE/EC Youth Partnership.

### Good practices

In the framework of the JMA, a mapping exercise of Africa-Europe youth co-operation and work is foreseen to be concluded in 2011. The mapping aims at systematising, cataloguing and compiling important contacts of youth and youth-serving organisations in Africa, as well as information about projects in the field of Africa-Europe youth co-operation. With the support of a team of youth experts and youth researchers, the NSC will co-ordinate the production of an interactive on-line database tool, which will contain the contact information of youth organisations in Africa and good practices/projects in the field of Africa-Europe youth co-operation. Moreover, a “seed-funding for pilot youth exchanges scheme” will be implemented in 2011, aiming at increasing the possibilities of providing the space for exchanges and exploratory study sessions between main stakeholders/actors of Africa-Europe youth co-operation. With the possibility of providing a small scale ‘seed-funding mechanism’, the NSC will fund and promote some pilot exchanges and study visits that could give an impetus, be inspirational and provide good practices for some key partners that are of crucial importance to future developments in the youth field.

### **3. Other global capacity building activities**

The inter-regional and global training programme developed by the Centre since 1995 provides a space for the Centre in performing its role in co-ordinating efforts and creating spaces for effective trainings, as well as in creating a framework to enhance the role of youth in North-South co-operation and in global youth work. The Global Youth Work training course for youth organisations was developed, in the context of the University, due to the increased interest of youth organisations and youth leaders to engage in global issues in the context of education and is unique in its kind in Europe. The Centre will continue to organise one training course for 30 youth leaders and youth organisations from Europe and the global South in the context of the University on Youth and Development in 2011. As in the previous two years, the Centre will continue to co-organise the training course in partnership with the International Co-ordination Meeting of Youth Organisations (ICMYO) in the framework of the Joint Management Agreement.

## V. INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

### Context

The debates that took place during the European Campaign for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (1988) leading to the creation of the North-South Centre gave pride of place to the “interdependence of cultures”. It is no surprise that the NSC made intercultural dialogue one of its key themes when it launched a trans-Mediterranean approach to the concept of “intercultural understanding” already in 1994. This pioneer role was recognised by the Warsaw Summit in 2005 which raised intercultural dialogue to one of the Council of Europe’s political priorities, thereby lending strong legitimacy to the work done by the Centre.

The **Council of Europe’s strategy for the development of intercultural dialogue** adopted in Faro (Portugal) in October 2005, which is aimed at European societies themselves and relations between Europe and its neighbouring regions, offers a frontline conceptual and operational framework for further development of the NSC’s activities in this field. An essential element of the Faro Strategy is the process, launched by the Committee of Ministers in April 2006 and finalised in May 2008, which led to the adoption of a **Council of Europe White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue entitled “Living together as equals in dignity”**. The design and implementation of the NSC’s activities in this field are directly inspired by the White Paper’s conclusions and recommendations and based on three strong convictions expressed therein:

- the conviction that our common future depends on our ability to protect and develop human rights, democracy, the rule of law and intercultural action offering a model for managing cultural diversity that is open to the future. The action taken must be based on the concept of each person’s human dignity and the idea of common humanity and a common destiny.
- the conviction that intercultural dialogue has a central role to play in this respect. On one hand, it helps overcome ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural cleavages. On the other hand, it enables us to progress together and recognise our different identities in a constructive, democratic fashion on the basis of shared universal values.
- the conviction that intercultural dialogue can only develop if certain conditions are first met. The White Paper particularly stresses that, for intercultural dialogue to make progress, we must adapt democratic governance of cultural diversity, reinforce democratic citizenship and participation, teach and develop intercultural skills and set up spaces reserved for intercultural dialogue or expand existing ones. Last but not least, intercultural dialogue must take on an international dimension.

As in previous years, the North-South Centre's work will be linked to the important **multi-lateral processes** launched in recent years, namely:

- the Alliance of Civilisations (at the level of the United Nations);
- the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and the Union for the Mediterranean (at the level of the European Union).

At the same time, a new paradigm will be explored, with the Centre playing a facilitator’s role in developing bilateral co-operation between the Council of Europe and specific countries from the South. Morocco, the first non-European country having joined the Centre in 2009, will serve as a pilot project in this respect.

The new working methods of the NSC aim at enabling the intercultural dialogue programme, led with countries in the south, to bring real added value to the Council of Europe and the countries in question. In order to achieve this, the role of **partnerships**, both internal (Parliamentary Assembly, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Venice Commission, Council of Europe's Campaign against discrimination) and external (European Commission, European Parliament, Committee of Regions of the EU, Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, the Alliance of Civilisations) will be carried on and intensified using the outcomes of recent years. The planned activities (and, as much as possible, the established partnerships) will be part of medium or long term processes to ensure that these exchanges are long term and ensure that solid results are achieved.

## **Objectives**

The aim is to use dialogue to contribute to the development of familiarity, mutual understanding and ties between the different players in European and southern Mediterranean societies. As far as possible, this dialogue will be extended to the African continent for which special activities will also be implemented.

Through its goals and priorities, the intercultural dialogue programme is a privileged framework for debates, exchanges and consolidation of dialogue between the two sides of the Mediterranean and between Europe and Africa. In order to mitigate ignorance, rejection, "shutting off" and extremisms, the programme gives pride of place to dialogue based on intercultural understanding and a common commitment to the universal values that are intrinsic in human beings, whatever their ethnic origin, political convictions or religious beliefs.

**The fundamental goal is thus to identify what unites us rather than focus on what divides us.** It is only on the basis of a common, reasserted commitment to universal values, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that there can be productive dialogue on different approaches, the implementation and interpretation of these values and the management of cultural diversity as a resource and fundamental asset in modern societies.

As far as the NSC itself is concerned, the main goals are:

- To promote intercultural dialogue between Europe and neighbouring countries, particularly in the Maghreb and Mashrek on one hand and African countries engaged in democratic transition processes on the other;
- To raise European, Arab and African public awareness of the need for better understanding and mutual knowledge;
- To reposition the NSC as an important player in Euro-Mediterranean relations by encouraging networks and partnerships between the two sides of the Mediterranean at the level of the quadrilogue;
- To develop pertinent, functional institutional partnerships (European Union, UNESCO, Alliance of Civilizations, ALECSO, Arab League, Anna Lindh Foundation, CPLP, African Union and OIC);
- To involve the NSC member States and partner countries in the south in activities (first level) in order to create the right conditions for more southern countries to join the NSC (second level).

## ACTIVITIES IN 2011

At the Paris Summit in July 2008, the Heads of State and Government of the 43 countries or bodies from Europe, the Balkans and the south side of the Mediterranean present recalled “the central position that the Mediterranean occupies in their political concerns” and identified several “common challenges”. Of these, migration, the fight against extremism and terrorism and the promotion of intercultural dialogue are important fields of activity of the Council of Europe and/or the North-South Centre. Political commitments made in this context<sup>6</sup> provide a solid basis for the development of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, to which the NSC can make a specific contribution in the conception of intercultural dialogue extolled by the White Paper of the Council of Europe.

In continuation of the work carried out between 2008-2010, the focus will be on the following issues in 2011:

### 1. Women as agents of change in Mediterranean societies

The universal values defended by the Council of Europe are the basis on which intercultural dialogue can and should be developed. Dialogue is not possible if there is no respect for the equal dignity of all individuals. Ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic traditions cannot be invoked to prevent people from exercising their rights or participating responsibly in the life of society. This principle applies particularly to the fundamental freedom to suffer no discrimination on the basis of gender. Equality between men and women is a crucial issue in developing societies, as confirmed by the Declaration of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe “make gender equality a reality”<sup>7</sup>. Respect for women’s fundamental rights lends a positive dimension to intercultural dialogue and is a non-negotiable basis for all debates on cultural diversity, as stressed in the White Paper.

The question of women’s rights and role in the Mediterranean region has been at the heart of the thematic priorities of the North-South Centre since 1994. The last event in association with this issue was the Conference on “Status and political participation : women as actors of Change in the Euro-Mediterranean Region”, which took place in Lisbon in April 2009, in partnership with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and with the support of the Luso-American Foundation. One of the main recommendations addressed to the Council of Europe and its North-South Centre was to propose programmes of parliamentary co-operation promoting the participation of women and men in the political, social and economical life.

As a direct follow-up of this conference, the North-South Centre will organise a seminar for political decision-makers and participants from all Euro-Mediterranean countries to meet to discuss the progress made regarding the place and the role of women in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The NSC expects to associate with this project the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. particularly paragraph 6 of the Common Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean: “Heads of State and Government underline their commitment to strengthen democracy and political pluralism by the expansion of participation in political life and the embracing of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. They also affirm their ambition to build a common future based on the full respect of democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms, as enshrined in international human rights law, such as the promotion of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, strengthening the role of women in society, the respect of minorities, the fight against racism and xenophobia and the advancement of cultural dialogue and mutual understanding”.

<sup>7</sup> Adopted by the Committee of Ministers at its 119th session (Madrid, 12 May 2009), on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Council of Europe.

Europe and the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, which has set the promotion of women's participation in the Euro-Med region as a priority action. This seminar, which will take place in Rome in early 2011, will also be part of the follow-up of both the Euromed Ministerial Conference on gender equality held in Marrakech on 11-12 November 2009 and the AoC regional conference on the Mediterranean which will take place in Malta on 8-9 November 2010.

## **2. History teaching in the Mediterranean**

The Council of Europe project "The Image of the Other in History Teaching 2006-2009" was recently completed and was part of a cohesive overall effort involving all the Council's activities in the field of intercultural dialogue. The increasing multicultural nature of European societies lends new significance to history teaching and requires, at the same time, a thorough review of its aims and methods, focusing in particular on ways of developing multiperspectivity. Taking stock of the Council of Europe's History Education Division's next phase of the history teaching project "Interactions, convergences, conflicts: European lessons in shared histories" and following up on current developments, the main aim of the North-South Centre in the field of history teaching is to provide the space and facilitate the development of networks among historians, history teachers, history teaching institutes and universities and decision makers in the field of (history) education in the context of globalisation. The Centre's work in the field of history teaching in 2011 will revolve around three major and complementary axes:

- (1) **A Global level:** establishing a world-wide dialogue on history teaching in partnership with IRCICA and in the framework of the Alliance of Civilizations;
- (2) **A Euro-Mediterranean level:** facilitating the work on complementary history teaching material for the Mediterranean;
- (3) **A South-Eastern European level,** and in the framework of the UNAOC's regional strategy for the SEE, promoting reform of history teaching methods and pedagogy in the SEE region.

## **3. Teaching intercultural dialogue and religious diversity**

The North-South Centre and the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, through its project "1001 Ideas: Muslim Cultures and Histories", will organise on 21-22 February 2011, an exploratory workshop on co-operation opportunities regarding the topic of "Teaching intercultural dialogue and religious diversity around the Mediterranean" at the Swedish Institute in Alexandria, Egypt. The overall aim of the workshop will be to foster synergies and strengthen co-operation among selected stakeholders active in the field of teaching intercultural dialogue and religious diversity in Europe and the Mediterranean. This activity will be implemented in close partnership with the Anna Lindh Foundation and the Swedish Institute in Alexandria.

## **4. Co-operation with the Alliance of Civilizations**

The Memorandum of Understanding signed in September 2008 between the Alliance of Civilizations and the Council of Europe mentions the specific role of the North-South Centre with regard to co-operation between the two, with an emphasis on joint initiatives. In this vein, a privileged relationship has been established between the NSC and the AoC, which is manifested through the following:

- the joint organisation of the Lisbon Forum, and the fact that Mr Jorge Sampaio is the current President of the Forum;
- the contribution of the North-South Centre to the elaboration of the Alliance of Civilisation's regional strategy and action plan for the Balkans (Action Plan adopted during the AoC's 3<sup>rd</sup> Forum on 27-29 May 2010). The Action Plan gives a specific mention to the Council of Europe as co-ordinator of the project "History as a tool for reconciliation";
- the contribution of the North-South Centre to the elaboration of the Alliance of Civilisation's regional strategy and action plan for the Mediterranean (to be adopted at a ministerial meeting taking place in La Valette, Malta, on 8-9 November 2010);
- the contribution of the North-South Centre to the Alliance of Civilisation's 1<sup>st</sup> summer school "Bridging hearts, opening minds and doing things together" which took place on 15-21 August 2010 in Aveiro (Portugal).

The NSC will continue its privileged co-operation with the Alliance of Civilisations throughout 2011 and will contribute to its 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum due to take place in Qatar in late 2011.

## **5. Co-operation with the Venice Commission**

In addition to the longstanding co-operation which exists between the North-South Centre and the Venice Commission with regard to the Centre's annual Lisbon Forum event, in 2011 the two institutions will co-operate on a number of other activities.

On the one hand, the North-South Centre will participate in the 2nd World Congress on constitutional justice which will be organised by the Venice Commission on the topic "Separation of Powers and Independence of Constitutional Courts and Equivalent Bodies" in Rio de Janeiro on 16-18 January 2011. This follows the Centre's contribution to the 1<sup>st</sup> World Congress on constitutional justice held in January 2009 (Cape Town, South Africa) and to the organisation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Conference of Supreme Courts of Portuguese-Speaking Countries held in May 2010 in Lisbon.

On the other hand, the Centre will contribute to the new initiative of intercultural workshops on democracy launched by the Venice Commission. The first will take place in Marrakech (Morocco) on 3-4 March 2011, devoted to the theme "Constitutional processes and democratic processes, experiences and perspectives".

## **6. World Forum for Intercultural Dialogue, Baku, 2011**

Following the accession of Azerbaijan to the North-South Centre on 1 August 2010, special efforts will be made to develop co-operation with Azerbaijan in 2011. One concrete example will be the Centre's contribution to the World Forum for Intercultural Dialogue, being held under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Mrs Mehriban Aliyeva, President of Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO and ISESCO. The objectives of the Forum are the advancement of intercultural understanding, mutual respect, and co-operation among different civilizations through culture and heritage, as well as carrying the purpose of forging partnerships in order to build substantive interaction between diverse communities and to strengthen trust and reconciliation across cultures.

## VI. STATUTORY MEETINGS AND PERMANENT PROCESSES

### 1. Statutory meetings

Although they do not constitute activities as such, the statutory meetings are important moments in the life of the North-South Centre. They provide an excellent opportunity for the member States and other NSC stakeholders to exercise their joint responsibility for deciding on the Centre's political priorities, adopting the corresponding budget and programme of activities, establishing the necessary synergies (within and beyond quadrilogue partners) to ensure coherent and effective action and supervising its management.

The practice of combining meetings of the **Executive Council** with North-South Centre activities identified as "peak times" of the year will continue. Therefore, in principle, the spring meeting in 2011 will be held in Lisbon in conjunction with the North-South Prize Ceremony and the autumn meeting will, as usual, be associated with the 2011 Lisbon Forum.

The spring meeting in 2011 will be of particular importance as the mandate of the current Executive Council is coming to an end and a new Executive Council will be set up, based on the new statutory resolution which should be adopted by the Committee of Ministers in early 2011. The new Executive Council will be invited to adopt a new strategy for the North-South Centre for the 2011-2013 period.

The meetings of the North-South Centre's "Think-Tank", created in 2010, will be associated with the two annual Executive Council meetings.

It is foreseen to maintain the January and June **Bureau** meetings, as they are a useful opportunity to take stock at the beginning and middle of the year between the autumn and spring meetings of the Executive Council. Otherwise, it does not seem necessary to schedule formal meetings of the Bureau in the context of Executive Council meetings. If necessary, a working dinner will be organised the night before the Executive Council to prepare the council meetings informally.

The meetings of the **Committee of Representatives of Member States** should in principle be held ahead of the Executive Council meetings, in March and October in Strasbourg. This would allow all NSC member States to prepare the ground for the countries representing them on the Executive Council.

### 2. The Lisbon Forum

The Lisbon Forum is a platform for dialogue and for sharing experiences, expertise and good practices between Europe and the other continents, especially the Middle East, Africa and the countries on the south side of the Mediterranean. The Forum has been held by the North-South Centre since 1994. It focuses on issues at the heart of the mandate and actions of the Council of Europe: human rights, democratic governance and the rule of law. It has been enriched since 2006 by partnerships with the Commission for Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission) and the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights.

In 2008, a new process has been launched, in partnership with the Alliance of Civilizations, devoted to a particularly topical issue: **the principle of universality of human rights and its implementation at international and regional level**. The Forum, which took place on 10-11 November in Lisbon, was devoted to a general analysis of the situation 60 years after the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General

Assembly on 10 December 1948. Taking into account the work already done by the Council of Europe and/or the North-South Centre and other initiatives organised in Europe and elsewhere to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 2008 Lisbon Forum provided a new opportunity to **share Europe's experience with the other continents** and exchange points of view and good practices with systems in other parts of the world, like those set up by regional organisations such as the African Union, the Arab League or the Organisation of American States. It also constituted a **framework for analysing geopolitical changes since 1948 and their effects on the conception, interpretation and application of human rights**. The end of the ideological clash between liberal democracies and communist countries, the increase in globalisation and the return in force of the religious phenomenon have wrought particularly powerful changes in society. Their impact on the way in which human rights are claimed and implemented in Europe and other parts of the world has fuelled and will continue to fuel debates.

On the basis of this analysis, a **work programme** has been adopted for upcoming years, focusing on certain issues which more particularly attract debate and/or raise important difficulties / differences / divergences<sup>8</sup>. After the 2009 and 2010 sessions, which were devoted to “creating a culture of human rights through education” and “freedom of expression, conscience and religion” respectively, the 2011 Forum will be the third follow-up to this adopted work programme. The choice of its theme will be made by the Executive Council at its spring meeting.

### 3. Council of Europe North-South Prize

The North-South Prize has been awarded annually since 1995 to two public figures who are recognised for their commitment to the values that are the cornerstone of interdependence and solidarity between human beings and give meaning to the concept of humanity. The prize is given to one candidate from the North and one from the South, preferably a man and a woman. The candidates must have outstanding achievements in the field of human rights protection, the defence of pluralist democracy, intercultural dialogue, raising awareness of issues of global interdependence and solidarity and reinforcement of the North-South partnership.

The **2010 North-South Prize award ceremony** will take place in spring 2011 in the Portuguese Parliament (Assembleia da República) in Lisbon, with the participation of the President of Portugal, the Speaker of the Portuguese Parliament, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and many other personalities. The Prize will be awarded to Louise Arbour (Canada) and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Brazil).

The call for nominations for the **2011 North-South Prize** will be made in January and the selection of the prize winners will be made by the Bureau of the Executive Council, in its capacity as Jury of the North-South Prize, at the end of June.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The 2011 programme of activities is, first and foremost, the result, in terms of implementation, of the political guidelines, the priorities of action and the principles of operation defined in the

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<sup>8</sup> The list of selected items is as follows: the impact of globalisation on human rights, the principle of equality between women and men, freedom of expression, conscience and religion, human rights as a basis for the integration of cultural diversity, security and freedom, creating a culture of human rights through education and abolition of the death penalty.

“strategic document on the future of the North-South Centre (2008-2010)”. It will be based on the expertise accumulated over more than 20 years and on the results achieved between 2008 and 2010, while naturally adapting to developments in a world in constant change. Its aim is to confirm the Centre in its place as a recognised player in the Euro-Mediterranean and Euro-African regions by promoting its role as an interface between the Council of Europe and the south and counting on its renewed relationship of trust and co-operation with the European Union. The development of synergies both within the Centre (activities connected to education and youth contributing systematically to the goal of reinforcing intercultural dialogue and vice-versa) and between the NSC and the Council of Europe (partnerships with PACE, Congress, Conference of INGOs, the Venice Commission, the Commissioner for Human Rights) guarantee credibility and coherence of the work carried out.

The NSC’s activities in Europe, the Mediterranean and Africa are in strict complementarity with those, not only of the Council of Europe and the European Union, but also – on a global level – of the Alliance of Civilizations. Their essential goal is to build relationships of trust and co-operation between the Council of Europe and its southern neighbours, considering their historical, geographical and cultural proximity and relying on its member States (in particular those with a particular interest in this regard), its reinforced co-operation with the European Union (implemented by the Memorandum of Understanding signed in May 2007) and the two special instruments that it has for working outside Europe (the Venice Commission for legal co-operation and the NSC for political rapprochement through intercultural dialogue). It is necessary to carry on countering the fracture that threatens to predominate with a project that tries to build a pluralistic Mediterranean and Euro-African space that will bring a future of dialogue, co-operation and peace.