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Youth Forum of the League of Arab States
“Youth and Migrations: A Human Rights Based Approach”

Assilah, Kingdom of Morocco

14-20 November 2009

In cooperation with the League of Arab States, the European Youth Forum and the Mediterranean Forum for Youth and Childhood (Morocco).

CALL FOR EUROPEAN PARTICIPANTS

With the support of the European Youth Foundation

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE: A KEY YOUTH POLICY THEME FOR THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe’s youth sector has an outstanding tradition of intercultural dialogue and including the points of view of young people from across the globe in its activities, be them organised at the European youth centres or supported by the European Youth Foundation. In its current youth policy priorities, the Youth Programme on Human Rights Education and Intercultural Dialogue provides the framework for cooperation with other regions of the world, while placing emphasis on the role of intercultural dialogue for managing diversity within each society.

The aim of the Council of Europe’s youth policy, as laid out in “Agenda 2020, The future of the Council of Europe youth policy” is “to provide young people, i.e. girls and boys, young women and young men with equal opportunities and experience which enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society.” The document, adopted by the Youth Ministers of the Council of Europe in 2008 recognises also the importance of International youth cooperation, including,

- Supporting youth work with young refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons;
- Encouraging the development of sub-regional youth co-operation in Europe and beyond;
- Encouraging young people to promote global solidarity and co-operation.

The most important area of cooperation in the recent years has been in the Euro-Mediterranean region, in particular through the human rights education and intercultural dialogue of the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth.

This is complemented, within the Council of Europe, by other activities in the field of youth policy cooperation and of intercultural dialogue, including an intercultural Arabic language training course and activities in cooperation with the Alliance of Civilizations or the Asia-Europe Foundation.

Euro-Arab youth cooperation was initiated more than 10 years by the Council of Europe with a series of activities of Euro-Arab Dialogue. In the recent years the League of Arab States has become a regular partner in the activities of the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth; and in April 2009 the League of Arab States and the Council of Europe held a joint training course for youth leaders on youth participation and intercultural dialogue for Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation.

The League of Arab States Youth Forum

The League of Arab States Youth Forum has been held annually since 2007, and is attended by a number of youth leaders, officials from youth sector, and parliamentarians from Arab countries. The first Arab Youth Forum of the League of Arab States was organised in 2007 in Egypt with the purpose of mobilising and consulting young people about the development of youth policies in their countries and the role of the League of Arab States therein. The 2nd Arab Youth Forum in 2008 in Amman, Jordan, in collaboration with the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum and the Jordanian Youth Council, gathered around some 150 young people from the Arab Region and from Europe.

In 2009, the 3rd Arab Youth Forum will be held in Assilah, Morocco, aiming to engage Arab and European youth leaders and representatives in a constructive dialogue about a Human Development and Human Rights-based approach on migration and its consequences on young people in the Arab and European countries and the role of young people and youth organisations in dealing with its consequences

The meeting will also take place in follow-up of the recommendation adopted by the 2nd forum. This recommendation called on the 3rd Euro-Arab Youth Forum to address the various dimensions of youth and migration, mainly the issues of: irregular, transit, skilled migration; Arab intraregional migration; Mediterranean migration and the issue of migrants' integration in receiving countries. It also recommended focusing on cultural exchange and dialogue, and the role of youth organisations in migratory issues.

International migration and its consequences are at the forefront of the international political agenda. According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) there are around 200 million people living today outside their

place of birth. These numbers are constantly increasing and mostly relate to the migration of young people of working age. Numerous international and regional reports show that this trend, if regulated and invested wisely, can play a vital role in constructive cooperation among states in the fields of humanitarian assistance, exchange of economic benefits, cultural and civilization dialogue, and strengthening international relations, peace and security efforts.

Objectives of the forum

In the framework of international, European and Arab conventions, and a human rights based approach, the 2009 Forum will pursue the following objectives:

- Participation and contribution in developing common knowledge and raising awareness regarding migration (levels, forms, types, trends, determinants and consequences) and related policies.
- To develop and formulate proposals highlighting and recognizing the benefits of migration for young people and development, curtailing its negative aspects.
- To develop proposals to remove barriers to youth mobility within the Arab region and between Arab and European countries.
- To develop approaches and projects on combating human trafficking networks and raising awareness of irregular migration.
- To develop proposals for safeguarding dignity, human rights and humanitarian law of young migrants and asylum seekers.
- To develop proposals for the prevention of discrimination against migrants and asylum seekers and guarantee equal opportunities for them and their children in the host societies.
- To strengthen the participation and role of young people and youth organisations in migration, development and intercultural dialogue matters.
- To further foster sustainable Euro-Arab youth cooperation projects.

Themes and programme of the forum

The programme of the forum will be based on the following themes:

- I. Youth and Migration: State of the art and horizons.
- II. Facilitating the mobility of young people pertaining to exchange & dialogue.
- III. Integration & discrimination.

The following sub-themes will be deepened in workshops:

- Migration and Global Economical Crises
- Migration policies
- Youth Mobility
- Integration and Discrimination
- Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Internal Displacement
- Skilled Migration and Brain Drain
- Irregular and Transit Migration
- Migration and Development
- Migration and Human Rights

All the workshops will look at their specific theme through five cross-cutting issues

- Human rights and development approach
- Impact on young people
- Impact on Intercultural Dialogue
- Arab-Arab, Europe-Europe, Europe-Arab, Arab-Europe migration
- Gender Issues

The programme, while based on the workshops and their themes, includes various other elements, including interaction with the city and the people of Assilah, cultural activities, a field visit to Tangiers and meetings with Moroccan NGOs and projects active in the issues of youth and migration.

The participants are expected to arrive in Assilah on 14 November and depart on the 20 November.

RECRUITMENT OF EUROPEAN PARTICIPANTS

The Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport contributes to the forum in various ways, including input in the preparatory process and financial support for European participants through the European Youth Foundation.

Part of the Council of Europe's role is also to invite, organise and support the participation of 25 youth leaders and youth workers from Council of Europe member states.

This call concerns the recruitment and selection of these participants.

Profile of the participants

Participants recruited under this call should be active in intercultural dialogue with young people and representative of the diverse realities of youth work across Europe.

All participants should:

- Be leaders and active members of a civil society organisations, particularly youth organisations;
- Be aged between 18 and 35 years
- Be experienced in the theme of youth and migration;
- Be motivated and interested in developing intercultural dialogue and cooperation with youth work and youth policy actors in the Arab region;
- Be resident in a member state of the Council of Europe or a state party to the European Cultural Convention.
- Be able to work in English or Arabic.

NB: in addition to the participants being recruited by the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum (YFJ) will also recruit a similar number of participants from its member organisations. The call for the member organisations of the European Youth Forum is available on the YFJ intranet website (<http://www.youthforum.org/webfm>), for accessing which the interested persons should contact their Member Organisation for a username and a password.

FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

Board and lodging for the duration of the forum will be provided will be provided by the Forum méditerranéen pour la jeunesse et l'enfance (FOMEJE) - Assilah, Morocco.

Travel costs will be reimbursed by the European Youth Forum through a grant provided by the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe according to the rules of the European Youth Forum. The reimbursement will be done after the meeting, by bank transfer.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATIONS

All those youth workers and youth leaders interested in attending the forum should register and fill in an on-line application form at **<http://courses.opencontent.it>** according to the instructions provided on the site. The application should be accompanied by a supporting letter of the sending organisation or institution which states the reasons why the participation of the applicant is important for the organisation.

The deadline for submitting applications is **13 October 2009.**

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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