



# **EuroMed Rights**

## Activity Report 2015

## **Copenhagen**

EuroMed Rights

Vestergade 16, 2nd floor  
DK-1456 Copenhagen K  
DENMARK  
Tel: +45 32 64 17 00

[www.euromedrights.org](http://www.euromedrights.org)

# EuroMed Rights

## Activity Report 2015



EuroMed Rights  
EuroMed Droits  
الأورو-متوسطية لحقوق



# Contents

Foreword by EuroMed Rights President	6
About EuroMed Rights	8
How we Work	10
Executive Committee	14
What we did in 2015	16
Activity Overview 2015	18
Publications Timeline	28
Our Donors	30
Financial overview of the year	32
Our Members	34

# Foreword by EuroMed Rights President

2015 was a year marked by an unprecedented crackdown on those who fight for democracy and the rule of law. The record number of militants and activists harassed, banned from travelling, arrested, imprisoned, tragically demonstrates governments' desire to silence free, independent and critical voices.

2015 was also a year marked by terrorist acts (Ankara, Beirut, Copenhagen, Paris, Sharm El Sheikh, Sousse, Tunis) that we condemn in the strongest terms. These attacks left in their wake a trail of draconian exceptional anti-terrorist measures encroaching on fundamental freedoms, prohibiting demonstrations and legitimising arrest of peaceful activists.

Finally, 2015 was the year of the unprecedented humanitarian crisis that drove more than one million migrants to risk their lives at sea and which shook a divided Europe whose impotence in contributing to stop the tragic civil war in Syria, but also the continued Israeli expansion in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, remained evident.

Borders and barriers were erected and speeches boasting rejection of asylum seekers in need became commonplace across Europe, while the EU renewed its obsession with security in its relations with the Mediterranean countries. This was reflected by upgrading a stability approach at the expense of human rights and democratisation efforts in the context of its revision of the new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

This annual report shows how EuroMed Rights responded to this situation in its work supporting human rights activists in the region, for example in Algeria, Egypt, Israel-Palestine and Syria but also civil society in Tunisia that remains a hope for the whole region.

It also details how, against the background of an acute humanitarian crisis, EuroMed Rights worked to strengthen the voices of those activists that believe protecting the rights of migrants and refugees in need is a way to preserve our common humanity; and in addition how EuroMed Rights, through its members and partners, worked towards furthering the cause of women who are victims of violence and discrimination both in the North and the South.

During its General Assembly, held in Brussels in June 2015, and as part of its work programme for 2015-2017, EuroMed Rights renewed its commitment to support democratic reforms in the countries of the region and to protect human rights defenders whenever they are in danger. It further welcomed the renewal of the human rights movement in the region as testified by the emergence of a new generation of human rights defenders within EuroMed Rights.

Promoting and protecting the field of action of civil society across and on both shores of the Mediterranean was a priority of EuroMed Rights for 2015. In order to provide its member organisations and partners with the regional and local space they require to foster dialogue, exchanges and the development of their respective capabilities, EuroMed Rights reached out to hundreds of civil society organisations, networked, facilitated exchanges and maintained its advocacy work, both nationally and internationally.

The commitment to ensure fundamental freedoms and tolerance has never been so sorely tested. Nevertheless, the mobilisation of the region's civil society and the collective solidarity movements that marked 2015 unambiguously demonstrate the citizens' visceral attachment to universal human rights values. And as demonstrated in the following pages, the unfailing courage and dedication of our members and partners and all those who continue to promote our common values enable us to hope that all of these combined efforts augur well for the future of the region.



**Michel Tubiana**  
EuroMed Rights President

# About EuroMed Rights

EuroMed Rights is a network made up, and driven by, its members. All members of EuroMed Rights are organisations with a strong human rights mandate.

We believe that real democratic change is best promoted through equal cooperation and opportunities. The near equal distribution - 58% of members from the South and 42% from the North of the Mediterranean - and an equal amount of men and women in governing bodies is an illustration of how the Network promotes this view in practice and its representation, across the EuroMed region.

Since 1997, EuroMed Rights has been one of the few settings in the region where organisations from the North and the South can meet on an equal basis to exchange and carry out joint policy actions.

At the General Assembly (in Brussels, June 2015), all EuroMed Rights' member (see page 34 for complete list) organisations gathered to define six priority areas of intervention where EuroMed Rights retains its added value without duplicating what is already done by other international NGOs. These main thematic areas result from a thorough analysis of the current human rights situation in the region and are laid out in EuroMed Rights' Work Programme 2015-2017 (<http://euromedrights.org/publication/work-programme-2015-2017/>).

Besides its regional, thematic programmes, EuroMed Rights has carried out country programmes in Algeria, Tunisia, Syria, and Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In 2015, we further managed to consolidate a country programme in Egypt. Activities are also taking place in Libya, Morocco and Turkey.





Protecting and enabling spaces for civil society work, including freedom of peaceful assembly and association



Protecting and promoting rule of law



Protecting and promoting gender equality and women's rights



Protecting and promoting migrants' and refugees' rights



Protecting and promoting economic and social rights



Fight against discrimination, including freedom of conscience and the rights of minorities

## EuroMed Rights' Added Value

Networking is at the core of EuroMed Rights activities, and as such it does not implement or finance projects per se. This is our members' remit. Our added value lies in the fact that we complement the work of our HROs on the ground by bringing them together for networking opportunities not the least when these are either scarce or exceptionally strained. We work on themes that harbour both local and regional dimensions. EuroMed Rights provides its members and partners with its long-drawn expertise on how relationships between the EU and its Southern Neighbourhood can both help and shape their work.

## How do we work?

EuroMed Rights works along four interconnected pillars:

- **Networking and exchange** is the fundamental method underlying the three others;
- **Capacity building** is seen as a way to improve skills of member organisations, partners or even individual activists;
- **Monitoring and documenting** human rights violations and abuses is an important pillar as it provides evidence and tools for the last pillar;
- **Advocacy work**, which ultimately leads to desired changes in policies and legislation that we want to see at national and international levels.

# How we work

## WORKING GROUPS

EuroMed Rights has developed a solid track record in bringing human rights defenders together in working groups, where members and partners from the region share knowledge and experience.

Working Groups also enhance cultural understanding and co-operation between the North, East and South of the Mediterranean, improve the effectiveness of members' actions through the sharing of good practices, provide new contacts and partners, and strengthen the capacity of the participants to work with inter-governmental bodies. This close co-operation and interaction means that the members of EuroMed Rights have a real sense of ownership over the network.

### Freedom of Association and Assembly (FOAA)

Endowed with an intensive network of member organisations working on freedom of association and peaceful assembly, the FOAA WG members worked hard to strengthen their expertise in these fields. They produced pioneering reports, exchanged best practices, benefitted from EuroMed-led capacity-building activities and agreed on actions to support FOAA work at the national, regional and international level. “

### Palestine, Israel and the Palestinians (PIP)

Composed of Israeli, Palestinian, Arab and European member organisations, this Working Group strategised actions aimed to promote respect for human rights and international humanitarian law in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

To achieve these goals, the PIP WG was actively involved in advocacy work both at EU and EU member state level, as well as in other international fora. The PIP WG's is grounded in the struggle to the end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and the realisation of right of the Palestinian people to self-determination; securing the right of civilians, both Israelis and Palestinians including and Israelis. Palestinian citizens of Israel and the Palestinian refugees in host countries.

### Gender Equality and Women's Rights

As one of the few platforms in the Euro-Med region, and in the wake of the Arab uprisings, the Gender Equality and Women's Rights Working Group (GWG) is an important forum to discuss women's marginalisation in the transition processes. The GWG monitored the situation in the region and provided information to CSOs, policy makers and the media through national meetings, advocacy missions and public events. Bringing on equal footing both Northern and Southern women's rights organisations, the GWG prioritised the fight against violence and impunity for violence against women.

In addition to its thematic work on gender equality and women's rights in the region, the GWG also functioned as a knowledge and resource hub on gender mainstreaming for the entire network.

## Justice and Rule of Law

This working group addressed issues of protection or reinforcement of human rights respect and the rule of law; questions of access to an independent judiciary and needed legislative reforms to safeguard human rights.

Following the Arab uprisings, which saw the fall of several authoritarian rulers, there was for a period a window of opportunity to address transitional justice. This issue was deemed crucial to tackle past human rights abuses and to set up systems to prevent them from occurring again.

## Migration and Asylum

The Euro-Mediterranean region has been a hub of exchange and mobility between the two sides of the sea but has also witnessed the establishment of more border and control mechanism. Over the reporting period, the number of people in the Mediterranean Sea, 'the largest cemetery in the region' increased dramatically and the European states (with few notable exceptions) responded to growing refugee flows by increasing border controls. Work channelled by the active grassroots member organisations enabled the MA working group to monitor closely policy developments and human rights violations across the region including mobilising these against increasingly restrictive EU policies. The MA working group also provided support to both regional and national civil society efforts to give migrants and refugees a voice, and ensure respect for their economic and social rights as well as their right to mobility, both in law and practice.



# How we work

## OUR WORKING METHODS

Networking, dialogue, advocacy, capacity building and monitoring are the key work methods of the Network. EuroMed Rights creates effective ways to support its members, human rights and civil society organisations in times of rapid change.

### Networking

EuroMed Rights believes that enabling people to meet and share knowledge strengthens their abilities to act and therefore helps promote and protect human rights. An emphasis on continuous networking and communication facilitates the transfer of knowledge between members and encourages the development of common positions, new partnerships and initiatives. Indeed, a real strength of EuroMed Rights is its ability to bring human rights defenders from all corners of the Euro-Med region - the Maghreb, the Mashrek and Europe –together on an equal level.

### Monitoring

Monitoring the human rights situation within its thematic and country priorities is the basis for advocacy and solidarity work. WG meetings entail a round table where the members inform about the situation in their country, and reports, thematic newsletters, blogs, press releases and statements have provided civil society, decision makers, and the media with updated information. Solidarity between civil society on both shores of the Mediterranean is a key cornerstone of EuroMed Rights. Through solidarity missions, trial monitoring, PR and statements, EuroMed Rights members have expressed solidarity with each other.

### Capacity building

EuroMed Rights regularly organises trainings on a number of important issues. These include EU-level advocacy, international conventions and treaty bodies, gender issues, migration and refugee legislation and shrinking space for civil society.

## Advocacy

Advocacy is the method by which EuroMed Rights ensures that its members' policies and recommendations 'feed into' the policies and practices of the EU institutions, EU member states and South and East Mediterranean partners. EuroMed Rights also supports its members in their own advocacy work at the national and regional levels.

Over the reporting period, EuroMed Rights continued to develop activities within the UN human rights system with a view to strengthen its members' work at national level or influencing EU and EU member states relations with their Mediterranean partners.

Committed to the adoption of gender mainstreaming as a comprehensive strategy to advance gender equality, to be implemented in all EuroMed Rights structures and activities, EuroMed Rights has conducted one gender audits over the reporting period (Gender audit 2015). The audit was presented at the June General Assembly.

Building partnerships is important, as it contributes to supporting efficient networks, platforms and alliances of civil society groups in the Euro-Med region. As such, EuroMed Rights works in close partnership with many INGOs, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, FIDH, and the OMCT. EuroMed Rights also links up to social forums, political and religious groups in the region whenever relevant. It maintains close cooperation with the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation of the Support of Human Rights Defenders (a sister organisation launched by EuroMed Rights in 2004).





# Executive Committee

The members of the Executive Committee (EC) are elected by the General Assembly for a period of three years, and they may be re-elected for two further terms. EC members are also appointed as political referents for different focus areas, thus acting as the link between the Working Groups and the EC.

The EC gives guidelines for EuroMed Rights activities and consults with the members on important issues relating to the Network policy in between General Assemblies (every three years). As stipulated in EuroMed Rights statutes, the EC strives to be composed of equal numbers of men and women. The President and Vice-President may not be of the same sex.

## Among other things, the EC is responsible for:

- » Preparing the program of activities and budgets to be submitted to the General Assembly meeting;
- » Submitting the Network's annual Report of Activities and annual Financial Reports;
- » Creating working committees, and establish ad hoc or permanent working groups to design specific policies and programs and ensure the effective delivery of the mandate/agenda of the Network;
- » Implementing the EuroMed Rights Policy Paper on Gender Equality;
- » Overseeing the work of the various Network structures or Working groups;
- » Enhance and facilitate communication among the members of the Network.

**The Executive Committee, elected at the General Assembly in 2015 (June 12-14), is composed by the following members:**

## MICHEL TUBIANA, President

Michel Tubiana is a lawyer, long-time human rights defender, former president of the French Human Rights League (LDH) from 2000 to 2005, and currently the President of EUROMED RIGHTS (since 2012) and the Honorary President of the French Human Rights League.



## NABIA HADDOUCHE, Vice President

Nabia Haddouche is the President of the Democratic Association of Moroccan Women (ADFM). She is also member of several networks, coalitions and committees working both at national and regional levels, for the promotion of the women's rights. Her main working areas are education and training in gender equality and women's rights.



## MOATAZ EL FEGIERY, Treasurer

Moataz El Fegieri is the Treasurer. He is the former executive director of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS) and is currently a member of its board of directors.



## ANITTA KYNSILEHTO

Anitta Kynsilehto represents TAPRI – Mediterranean Studies Project, Tampere Peace Research Institute in Finland. She is a board member of the Finnish Peace Research Association and the Nordic Society for Middle Eastern Studies.



## ISAÍAS BARREÑADA

Isaías Barreñada is a member of the Executive Committee of Spanish member ACSUR. At the national level, Isaías works as a MENA specialist on economic and social rights with associations and trade unions. At the international level, he works on human rights of populations in conflict situations as well as minority and women's rights.



## SØS NISSEN

Søs Nissen is working as the Programme manager for the MENA region at Dignity, Denmark. She has worked for 10 years with the Danish anti-torture NGO to support human rights work against torture in the region. Prior to that, she was active on Danish advocacy and solidarity work to support the Palestinian cause for many years.



## OSMAN ISCI

Osman Isci sits in the board of the Human Rights Association (IHD) in Turkey and is in the editorial board of the journal, *Kampplatz*, writing articles on human rights. In addition, Osman is part of the Human Rights Research Network which is composed of academics in Turkey.



## RAFFAELLA BOLINI

Raffaella Bolini is a social activists committed in social movements for peace, democracy and rights since many years ago. She is the Coordinator for International Relations of Associazione Ricreativa Culturale Italiana (ARCI) in Italy, the Vice president of European Civic Forum, and member of the Board of Solidar. In addition, she is member of the World Social Forum International Council.



## WADIH AL-ASMAR

Wadih Al-Asmar is co-founder and Secretary General of the movement SOLIDA (support of Lebanese detained arbitrarily) and CLDH (Lebanese center for human rights) in Lebanon. He is also a co-founder and secretary general of the FEMED (Euro-Mediterranean federation against enforced disappearance). His main areas of expertise are the fight against enforced disappearances, National Reconciliation, Justice in countries on transition, the fight against impunity and against torture.



## HAMDİ SHAQQURA

Hamdi Shaqqura is a Deputy Director of the Palestinian Center for Human Rights for Program Affairs. His main area of expertise is democratic development, and civil and political rights.



## MESSAoud ROMDHANI

Messaoud Romdhani is a founding member and vice-president of the newly admitted member Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights (FTDES). He also acts as vice-president of the Tunisian Human Rights League. In 2008, he was the spokesperson for the Committee supporting the mining region revolt. He is currently the publication director at the Committee for the Respect of Liberties and Human Rights in Tunisia (CRLDHT).



## CATHERINE TEULE

Catherine Teule is the Vice President of the European Association for the Defense of Human Rights (AEDH). She also worked at the French Human Rights League (LDH) as a General Secretary first, then as the Vice President. Now, she's particularly interested in issues concerning the right of asylum and migration. She publishes articles and briefings on these themes, and provides training sessions and debates at community and trade union level.



# What we did in 2015

## At regional level

We continued to document and alert public opinion and decision-makers on instances where space is increasingly shrinking for civil society in the region. Our work on the judiciary focused on trial monitoring as a civil society instrument for solidarity with human rights activists and for highlighting the lack of independence and impartiality of the judiciaries. In our work on women's rights and gender equality, and adapting to a context of intensified forms of violence against women brought on by the revolutions and the continued economic crisis in Europe, we documented the adverse effects this violence has on gender equality through five dedicated factsheet (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Palestine and Syria). Our sustained work on migration and refugee work highlighted the need to protect the rights of migrants and refugees in times when borders are turned into high-security areas. This work also focused heavily on European border control agency Frontex, EU Mobility Partnerships and readmission agreements.

Two of our scheduled regional programmes did not develop during the report period (among others due to lack of funding). The programme on economic and social rights slowly started up and will be developed further in 2016. The second programme on discriminations will start when resources are available.

## At country level

We worked hard to develop our role of key reference point for civil society EU advocacy on Palestine, Israel and the Palestinians. We supported Syrian human rights defenders and developed their capacity to document human rights violations, particularly violence against women, and war crimes as well as how to cooperate on advocacy. We also conducted extensive advocacy activities with our Egyptian members and partners as they gradually became victims of more and more attacks. In a bid to complement the advocacy efforts, together with our member organisation CIHRS, we have launched a dedicated campaign titled 'Human Rights Behind Bars in Egypt' to mobilise public support and call for an end to all forms of harassment against human rights defenders and activists in Egypt.

In parallel, we eased access of our Algerian members to the international community, and identified a core group of Libyan human rights defenders with whom we would like to work in the future. In Morocco, we took part in a number of activities to support civil society striving to 'translate' the legislation respectful of international human rights standards and democratic principles. We reported on our investigative mission to Morocco and Western Sahara and launched the report in a public event.





Human rights and democracy as a core dimension of  
the EU Southern Neighbourhood Policy



# Activity Overview 2015

## COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

Over the reporting period, EuroMed Rights has reinforced its work with members and partners at country level based on the consideration that if EuroMed Rights gains strength and cohesion from being a regional, transnational organisation, the most influential political processes still take place at national and bilateral levels.

EuroMed Rights has pursued its specific country programmes on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Syria but has also worked on Morocco, Turkey and Libya.

### Algeria

#### Objective:

To increase the protection of human rights defenders and organisations, including those working with women's rights, and contribute to the emergence of a less isolated and stronger Algerian civil society.

#### Highlights:

- » Monitoring and documentation of cases of Algerian human rights defenders and civil society organisations at risk.
- » 3 field visits in Algiers or networking with civil society organisations.
- » 3 advocacy missions meeting EU and UN representatives: 1 in Algiers, 1 in Geneva and 1 in Brussels.
- » 2 briefings on the imprisonment of workers and human rights activists in Algeria were widely distributed.
- » 1 report about the militarisation of the border between Algeria and Morocco, entitled "Far from Prying Eyes, a Trap for Migrants and Refugees".
- » Promotion in Algeria and beyond of the chapter on Algeria in a Regional report on Freedom of Assembly, entitled "Muzzling Dissent: Freedom of Assembly under Threat in the Euro-Med".
- » Highlighting the human rights situation in Algeria through 4 press releases, 2 solidarity letters, 1 contribution to the UN, 3 advocacy letters, 1 statement, 1 op-ed, 1 open letter (ahead of the EU-Algeria Association Council).

## Egypt

### Objective:

To contribute to protecting Egyptian human rights activists and their organisations, enabling these to pursue their work.

### Highlights:

- » 1 campaign website “Human Rights behind Bars in Egypt” to raise awareness on systematised crackdown of activists and human rights defenders in Egypt.
- » 1 bimonthly newsletter informing about the situation of Human Rights defenders and activists in Egypt.
- » 3 trial monitoring missions on the case of Alaa Abdel Fattah, a leading activist who has been jailed under Mubarak but also by all the other regimes in place since 2011.
- » 2 coordination meetings on the state of human rights in Egypt and involving international NGOs.
- » 1 briefing on Freedom of Expression and harassment measures against Egyptian Human Rights Defenders.
- » 29 additional briefings, press releases and statements about to crackdown of Egyptian activists.

## Palestine, Israel and the Palestinians

### Objective:

To coordinate a civil society advocacy forum aimed at promoting respect for international human rights and humanitarian law (IHRL and IHL) in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and in particular in the EU and its Member States' bilateral relations with the governments of Israel and Palestine.

### Highlights:

- » Systematic advocacy efforts around the UN Commission of Inquiry report on the 2014 war in Gaza.
- » 1 mission to Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territory to express solidarity and support to our members' in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel after the 2014 war.
- » 5 advocacy missions: France, Netherlands, Sweden, UK and Germany highlighting the human rights situation in Israel and the OPTs.
- » 1 EU workshop for Israeli, Palestinian and European CSOs aiming at discussing and strategizing regarding EU advocacy.
- » 2 working group meetings to coordinate joint actions, network and exchange experience of EuroMed Rights Israeli, Palestinian, Arab and European members and partners.

## Syria

### Objective:

To increase the capacity of Syrian human rights groups and activists to promote accountability for human rights violations in Syria and in neighbouring countries, while enhancing their protection and the sustainability of their work.

### Highlights:

- » 2 coordination meetings of Syrian key human rights organisations in the Syrian Action group (Paris, Istanbul).
- » 1 public conference on the situation of Human Rights defenders in Syria jointly with Amnesty International France.
- » 3 advocacy missions with Syrian CSOs to highlight the human rights situation in Syria: Paris, Human Rights Council in Geneva, EU institutions in Brussels (jointly with Gender Programme).
- » 1 report on Syrian women in detention entitled “Detention of Women in Syria: a weapon of war and terror”.

## Tunisia

### Objective:

To support the development of a vibrant civil society in all regions of Tunisia capable of influencing national human rights and women's rights agendas and act at the international level.

### Highlights:

- » 1 civil Society Forum/Symposium gathering for the first time international (40) and national (80) HRDs to improve coordination.
- » Support to 142 human rights and democracy initiatives of Tunisian CSOs all over the country.
- » 4 field visits to 8 regions (Kasserine, Djerba, Gafsa, Sidi Bouazid, Gabes, Medenine, Tataouine, Tozeur), organising networking encounters with around 300 different local NGOs.
- » 9 trainings reaching 249 persons, on the ENP, EU HR mechanisms, EU instruments to combat violence against women, the mobility partnership and advocacy.
- » 3 advocacy missions with Tunisian CSOs to Brussels, Paris and Italy on the situation in the country and EU-Tunisia relation.
- » 9 advocacy meetings: 6 to the EU delegation in Tunisia and 3 at the Tunisian Ministry of women, childhood and family and at the Ministry of Justice.
- » More than 20 statements, press releases and press conferences on key human rights topics in Tunisian transition.



## **EP urgency resolution on imprisonment of workers and human rights activists in Algeria.**

For the first time in almost a decade, the European Parliament (EP) voted an urgency resolution on Algeria.

EuroMed Rights was indeed instrumental in the elaboration of a European Parliament's urgency resolution on imprisonment of workers and human rights activists in Algeria. Over the last 20 years, under pretext of state of emergency, the Algerian government has been violating basic human rights, stifling freedom of association and assembly. This is why, together with Amnesty International, Observatory FIDH-OMCT and Front Line Defenders, EuroMed Rights submitted a joint briefing addressing the main cases of violation and providing recommendations to political groups in the EP ahead of the negotiations.

Drawing the EU's attention to the specific issue of human rights activists in Algeria has always been particularly challenging for most NGOs considering the specific economic and industrial relations between the EU and Algeria. But EuroMed Rights kept at it and it eventually paid off!

If the Arab uprisings of 2011 shook some of the most autocratic governments across North Africa and the Middle East, despite strikes, protests and riots in early 2011, Algeria's regime has not changed and is still widely considered as a stable interlocutor in the Region by the European Institutions. Clearly, denouncing human rights violations in that country was not a top priority on the European agenda.

The resolution on Algeria was adopted on 30 April 2015. The vote was an important achievement as it attracted a lot of media attention, mainly in Algeria but in the EU as well. There were also fewer arrests in Algeria, giving breathing space to human rights defenders. The recommendations addressed to the different EU institutions in the resolution have opened the door for making them publicly accountable. Either by the Parliament itself or by civil society, the EU can be requested to report on the implementation of these recommendations.

## **The release of woman Human Rights Defender Azza Soliman**

EuroMed Rights' priority is protecting Egyptian human rights activists. As civil society has less and less space to maneuver in the country, it has become very difficult for any human groups to resist attacks by the Egyptian Government. Our NGO gives them a voice.

In this struggle, EuroMed Rights supported and reinforced international pressure on Azza Soliman, prominent Egyptian human rights lawyer and founder of the Center for Egyptian Women Legal Assistance (CEWLA), a member organisation of EuroMed Rights.

Azza has been charged with "unauthorised protest" and "breach of security and public order" in the wake of the fatal police shooting killing political activist Shaimaa Al Sabbagh on 24 January 2015. After several months, Azza was finally acquitted.

Together with other International Human Rights Organisations, EuroMed was tireless in keeping the case in the public eye throughout 2015 with publications and reporting on our website with a video interview of Azza. Our NGO made political leaders aware of the case, thereby stimulating diplomatic actions with the Egyptian authorities, for example from the Danish, UK, French and German governments. After months of civil society mobilisation, Azza Soliman was acquitted of all charges on 24 October 2015. Azza thanked all of those who had supported her, including EuroMed Rights.

## Impunity and the Peace Process in Israel / OPT: End of the European taboo

2015 was a turning point for the EuroMed Rights Working Group on Palestine, Israel and the Palestinians. After many advocacy missions organised by EuroMed Rights, our NGO's contributions to many publications and various public statements, the European Union (EU) acknowledged the importance of accountability in the peace process, finally breaking its silence as regards the serious violations of international humanitarian law committed with impunity in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

For many years, the EU has endeavoured to defend the peace process at all costs, as it believed that establishing peace in the Middle East was crucial to ensuring stability and security in the region. Fighting impunity was not a priority at the time. The issue of accountability linked to violations of international law was largely ignored by European policies, and sometimes even deliberately downplayed, as was revealed by the EU and its Member States' efforts to dissuade Palestine from acceding to the ICC. EuroMed Rights continually challenged the European authorities as regards their duty to provide justice to the victims of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, insisting that the perpetrators compensate the prejudice suffered by their victims in the interest of lasting peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.

On 3 July 2015, the EU Member States welcomed the United Nations Commission of Inquiry's report documenting the violations committed during the conflict in Gaza in 2014, and voted for the first time, unanimously, in favour of a resolution of the Human Rights Council calling all parties to hold perpetrators accountable, to address the failures of their national mechanisms, and to cooperate fully with the ICC. Quite the U-turn after years of silence on the matter. And that was not all. In July 2015, the conclusions of the EU Foreign Affairs Council established for the first time that "accountability is a cornerstone of peace and security in the region - of the Middle East". Similar statements from the EU would follow, systematically using language relating to accountability. In the European Parliament, two urgency resolutions adopted in March and September 2015 relating to the peace process in the Middle East referred to the concept of accountability.

The end of this European taboo was a considerable boon to the daily lives of our members, as was the fact that certain Member States welcomed Palestine's accession to the ICC (namely Sweden, whose Foreign Minister, Margot Wallström, EuroMed Rights met in spring 2015).

## Tripartite Dialogue in Tunisia: A Key Tool for EU-Tunisian Relations

Making Tunisian civil society a full stakeholder in EU-Tunisia relations was an ambitious goal for EuroMed Rights, work on which was largely rewarded by the establishment of the “Tripartite” in spring 2015.

With its Tunisia-EU project, EuroMed Rights is working towards ensuring that civil society can become a key partner in monitoring the relations between the European and Tunisian authorities.

Our network, which worked tirelessly to affirm civil society long before 2011, but even more still since its explosive growth in a fragile context of transition, made the latter a key stakeholder in the plural and democratic national construction of the country. Tunisian civil society is at the heart of our network’s priorities. This is why establishing a tripartite dialogue between the Tunisian government, the European authorities and civil society is a major accomplishment for our organisation.

In May 2015, and through the Tunisia-EU project, the representatives of Tunisian civil society, of the government of Tunis and of the European authorities met around the same table to prepare for the Subcommittee on Human Rights. This exchange was a turning point in EU-Tunisia relations and in the preparations for the upcoming major meetings with the publication of operational conclusions. Tunisian civil society was now truly involved in Tunisia-EU relations. It must be noted that the EU Member States are also increasingly involved in these meetings, making them more inclusive.

Tunisian civil society is delighted to be able to more actively contribute to regular meetings with the Tunisian government and the EU, namely during the subcommittees on agricultural issues and fisheries. It is also understood that civil society’s expectations are taken into account during negotiations around the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) Agreement.

# Activity Overview 2015

## REGIONAL THEMATIC PROGRAMMES

Over the reporting period, EuroMed Rights gained strength and cohesion from being a regional, transnational organisation, considered an important vehicle for dialogue and exchange in the region.

A two-way relation between the regional and national work is useful where EuroMed Rights' thematic work at regional level feeds into its work at national level and vice versa. This dynamic enables EuroMed Rights to provide diversified responses to human rights issues and situations within its fields of priorities.



### Protecting and promoting enabling spaces for civil society work, including Freedom of Assembly and Association

#### Objective:

To develop capacity for sustained civil society monitoring, expertise and action to influence policies and practices aimed at protecting and promoting spaces for civil society with a focus on freedom of association, assembly and human rights defenders.

#### Highlights:

- » 33 press releases and political statements on the FOAA situation in Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Israel, Tunisia and Europe.
- » 2 joint advocacy letters to the EU on serious human rights flaws in Spain's Security Law.
- » 1 regional coordination meeting between CSOs for the exchange of best practices on promoting FOAA, for networking and strategizing.
- » 1 regional training for CSOs on how to monitor assemblies.
- » 1 public seminar and 1 round table on peaceful assembly and civil society in Egypt, held in Copenhagen for civil society organisations.





## Protecting and Promoting Rule of Law

### Objective:

To develop civil society capacity to work on rule of law principles within the context of the fight against terrorism and radicalisation, by enhancing regional cooperation and exchange between human rights NGOs, lawyers and judges aimed at influencing national and regional initiatives in this field.

### Highlights:

- » Monitoring the situation of rule of law in Egypt, continued under the Egypt country program.
- » Trial monitoring of Egyptian activist Alaa Abdel Fattah, as well as monitoring.
- » 1 mission to Morocco to support the civil society network on judicial reform
- » 1 advocacy mission to Brussels on the situation in Morocco.
- » 3 meetings in relation to EU- Tunisia cooperation of Tunisian CSOs dealing with judicial matters.
- » 1 joint position about the bill on the High Judiciary Council in Tunisia.



## Gender Equality and Women's Rights

### Objective:

To effectively contribute to the development of sustainable civil society networks and groups of actors in the EuroMed region with capacity to influence civil society and decision makers to actively promote and protect the rights of women in the region, in particular on the question of Violence against Women (VAW) as well as actively promote gender equality by integrating gender mainstreaming into its work.

### Highlights:

- » 1 regional training workshop for CSOs workshop dealing with EU Advocacy on combating violence against women.
- » 4 factsheets on violence against women in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt and Palestine issued in cooperation with EuroMed Rights members.
- » 1 report on Syrian women in detention in collaboration with the EuroMed Rights Syria programme, entitled "Detention of Women in Syria: a weapon of war and terror".
- » 2 advocacy missions in Brussels on combatting VaW in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia and on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, with a particular focus on Syria and Palestine.
- » 2 advocacy meetings on the case of Egyptian women's rights defender Azza Soliman, judicially harassed for having witnessed the killing of another activist by Egyptian police.
- » 1 gender audit looking at gender mainstreaming efforts of EuroMed Rights member organisations.



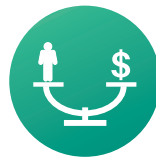
## Migrants' and Refugees' rights

### Objective:

To strengthen regional civil society cooperation on policies and projects aimed to protect and promote the rights of migrants and refugees, as well as civil society capacity to influence and engage in dialogues with governments and EU institutions on questions relating to human rights, migration and refugees.

### Highlights:

- » 1 advocacy mission on Frontex's external cooperation to members of the European Parliament.
- » 1 information session on Frontex's external cooperation at the World Social Forum in Tunis.
- » 1 meeting of the Migration & Asylum Working Group in Spain promoting networking, exchange of experience and joint strategizing.
- » 1 public event in Paris on Syrian refugees (screening of the film "On The Bride's Side").
- » 1 position paper on the situation of refugees from Syria widely disseminated.
- » 2 advocacy missions to Brussels and Paris with Syrian CSOs promoting access to the EU for refugees from Syria.
- » 1 regional roundtable for North African CSOs on Mobility Partnerships and EU's externalised policies on migration.
- » 1 statement co-signed by over 30 human rights and migrants' rights organisations related to the Valletta Summit.
- » 1 report on the militarisation at the Algeria-Morocco border entitled "Far from Prying Eyes, a Trap for Migrants and Refugees".



## Economic and Social Rights

### Objective:

To set up civil society instruments and mechanisms to monitor the impact of the economic relations between the EU and the South and East Mediterranean countries on human rights in the EuroMed region.

### Highlights:

- » Starting phase: preparation of a report mapping EuroMed economic relations and their impact on human rights.

## Syrian Women In Detention Report: Showcasing Violence Against Women in Syria

More than four years after the start of the uprising calling for democratic reforms in Syria, EuroMed Rights in May 2015 published a report, which highlights the proliferation of sexual violence, including rape, in government detention centers. The report documents, as the first of its kind, how women are used as weapons of war in Syria's armed conflict through direct testimonies by women who lived these acts of terror on their bodies and minds. An example is 36-years old Sawson, who tells how she was systematically raped while in detention, including in front of her son.

The report is a result of EuroMed Rights' efforts to build and keep together a network of Syrian human rights defenders and groups throughout the intensification of the conflict. These groups have met regularly to coordinate their work, and they have been trained on how to collect data to document human rights violations. They have then, through their presence on the ground in the midst of the war, been able to meet the victims of violence to hear and uniquely tell their stories. EuroMed Rights has also facilitated these activists' access to international mechanisms at the UN level, the EU and other policy makers in the region.

The report is the second EuroMed Rights report on violence against women in the Syrian conflict. Both reports received widespread international media coverage including by the BBC, NBC, Deutsche Welle, Al Arabiya, Al Hurra, Radio Sawsa and The Telegraph and was quoted in several policy reports and scientific articles. 22 of the documented cases were submitted to the UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria, and 6 of them further transferred to the UN special working group on "Enforced disappearance".

## First regional Meeting of Mediterranean NGOs Working on Migration and Asylum

**First regional meeting of Mediterranean associations on Migration and Asylum.** Throughout 2015, the migration crisis has divided the European Union. Armed conflicts in Syria, Libya, and Iraq have pushed hundreds of thousands of people to flee their countries to reach Europe. But the impotent and divided EU failed to agree on the solutions. EuroMed Rights has constantly reminded the authorities of their international obligations and of the human rights of refugees.

In October 2015 EuroMed Rights gathered 30 human rights organizations engaged in the defense of the rights of migrants and refugees in Gammarth, Tunisia to collectively debate the crucial role of civil society in cooperation with the EU in the field of migration policy and asylum. The meeting was unique, since it was the first to give a voice to civil society south of the Mediterranean Sea in relation to EU migration policies. This voice is indispensable in showing the full picture of the impact of EU policies on the other side of the European borders and to coordinate responses to migration issues.

Through this initiative, EuroMed Rights is laying down the foundations for broader and stronger Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. Targeted by other similar political cooperation processes, civil society in the Mediterranean has become aware of the added value of a collective effort to promote a human rights-based approach on the international stage and of countering the security-based approach favoured by their States. The adoption by 50 associations of a joint declaration based on a text proposed by EuroMed Rights, ahead of the summit of la Valette in November 2015, also demonstrates this shared commitment.

# Publications Timeline

The Human Rights Situation in Morocco and the Western Sahara  
20 March 2015



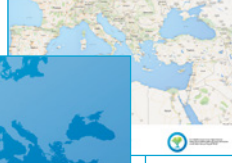
Detention of Women in Syria:  
A weapon of war and terror  
May 2015

For a 'Human Rights-friendly' European  
Neighbourhood Policy  
12 May 2015



Activity report 2012- 2014  
2 June 2015

EuroMed Rights : Work Programme 2015-2017  
2 June 2015



EGYPT: Public Prosecution v. Alaa Abd El-Fattah and  
Twenty-two others, (Final trial observation report)  
15 June 2015

Position Paper on refugees from Syria  
22 June 2015

Gender Audit Euro-Mediterranean  
Human Rights Network 2015  
29 June 2015

Palestine: Report on Violence against Women in  
the Context of Conflict  
4 December 2015



Tunisia: Report on Violence against Women  
4 December 2015

Morocco: Report on Violence against Women  
11 December 2015

Egypt: Report on Violence against Women  
16 December 2015

Far from Prying Eyes, a Trap for Migrants and Refugees  
17 December 2015

Training Guide, Definitions and Classifications for Casualty Recording according to International Humanitarian Law Principles for Syrian Human Rights Defenders  
18 December 2015

Training Guide International Criminal Law for Syrian Human Rights Defenders  
18 December 2015

Training Guide Documenting Human Rights Violations for Syrian Human Rights Defenders  
18 December 2015



## March 2015

The Human Rights Situation in Morocco and the Western Sahara

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/20150319-RE-Mission-Report-on-Morocco-and-the-Western-Sahara-EN.pdf>

## May 2015

Detention of Women in Syria: A weapon of war and terror

[http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/EMHRN\\_Womenindetention\\_EN.pdf](http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/EMHRN_Womenindetention_EN.pdf)

For a 'Human Rights-friendly' European Neighbourhood Policy

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/REM-DH-Whitebook-EN.pdf>

## June 2015

EuroMed Rights : Work Programme 2015-2017

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/REM-DH-WorkProgram-EN-Final.pdf>

Activity report 2012- 2014

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/REM-DH-ActivityReport-EN-Final-Digital.pdf>

EGYPT: Public Prosecution v. Alaa Abd El-Fattah and Twenty-two others, (Final trial observation report)

[http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/TRI-AL-OBS-REPORT\\_ALAA-ABD-EL-FATTAH\\_EUROMED-RIGHTS-July-2015.pdf](http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/TRI-AL-OBS-REPORT_ALAA-ABD-EL-FATTAH_EUROMED-RIGHTS-July-2015.pdf)

Position Paper on refugees from Syria

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/EMHRN-Position-Paper-on-Refugees-from-Syria-amended-EN.pdf>

Gender Audit Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network 2015

[http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/3\\_Gender\\_audit\\_ENG.pdf](http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/3_Gender_audit_ENG.pdf)

## December

Palestine: Report on Violence against Women in the Context of Conflict

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/EMHRN-Factsheet-VAW-Palestine-EN.pdf>

Tunisia: Report on Violence against Women

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/201411-FS-EMHRN-Factsheet-VAW-Tunisia-EN.pdf>

Morocco: Report on Violence against Women

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/EMHRN-Factsheet-VAW-Morocco-EN-2015.pdf>

Egypt : report on violence against women

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/EMHRN-Factsheet-VAW-Egypt-EN-2015.pdf>

Far from Prying Eyes, a Trap for Migrants and Refugees

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/20151218-EMR-Maghnia-Report-EN.pdf>

Training Guide Documenting Human Rights Violations for Syrian Human Rights Defenders

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/EuroMed-Rights-TTK-Syria-Doc-EN.pdf>

Training Guide International Criminal Law for Syrian Human Rights Defenders

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/EuroMed-Rights-TTK-Syria-ICL-EN.pdf>

Training Guide, Definitions and Classifications for Casualty Recording according to International Humanitarian Law Principles for Syrian Human Rights Defenders

<http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/EuroMed-Rights-TTK-Syria-IHL-EN.pdf>

# Our Donors

EuroMed Rights would like to acknowledge and thank the following donors for their financial support in 2015



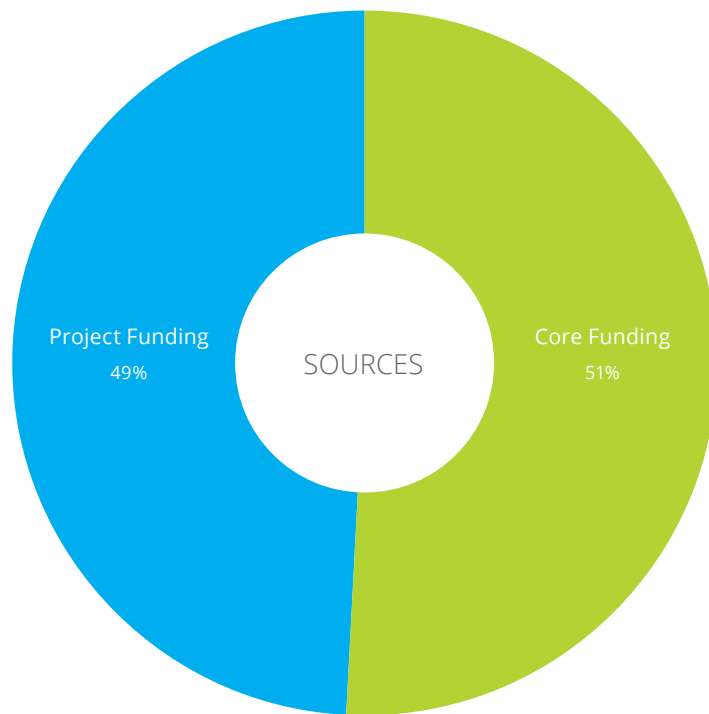
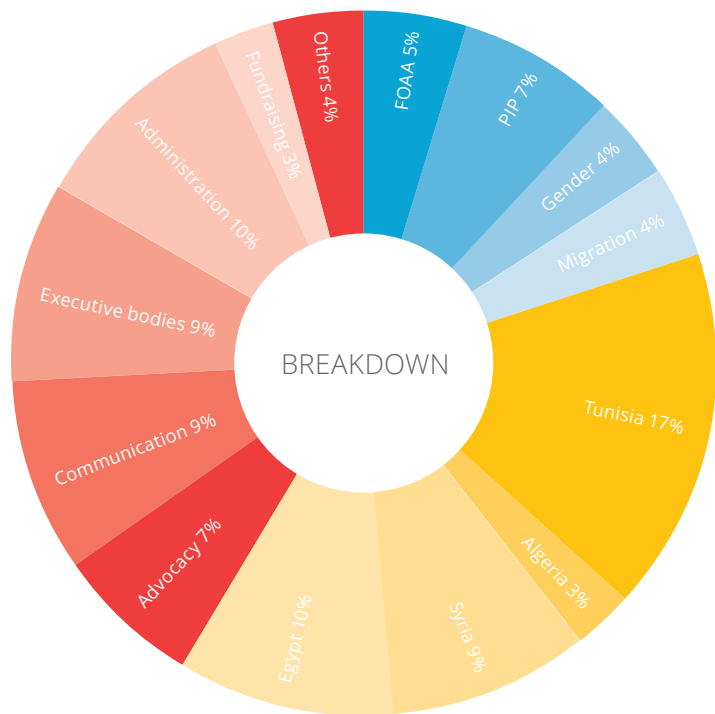




# Financial Overview of the Year

Expenses in 2015	in EUR	% of total
<b>Thematic interventions</b>	<b>661.805</b>	<b>20,2%</b>
Freedom of Association and Assembly (FOAA)	158.690	4,9%
Middle East Conflict and respect for Human Rights and International Human Rights Law (PIP)	234.142	7,2%
Gender Equality and Women's rights	131.131	4,0%
Rights of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers	132.521	4,1%
<b>Country interventions</b>	<b>1.264.972</b>	<b>38,7%</b>
Tunisia	546.112	16,6%
Algeria	89.744	2,7%
Syria	301.422	9,2%
Egypt	325.178	10,0%
<b>Secretariat</b>	<b>1.357.756</b>	<b>41,3%</b>
Advocacy	217.764	6,6%
Communication	283.297	8,6%
Executive Bodies	300.386	9,1%
Administration	335.741	10,3%
Fundraising	90.923	2,8%
<b>Others:</b>	<b>129.645</b>	<b>3,9%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3.284.533</b>	





Breakdown of EUROMED RIGHTS expenses and sources of income in 2015

# Members

## Regular Members

**Algeria** National Autonomous Union of Public Administration Staff (SNAPAP) Group for the Families of the Disappeared in Algeria (CFDA) • Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADDH) **Austria** Bruno Kreisky Foundation for Human Rights **Bulgaria** Center for Legal Aid – Voice in Bulgaria **Cyprus** Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism (KISA) • Mediterranean Institute for Gender Studies (MIGS) **Denmark** The Danish Centre for Research and Information on Gender, Equality and Diversity (KVINFO) • Dignity • Danish Institute for Human Rights **Egypt** Andalus Institute for Tolerance and Anti-violence Studies (AITAS) **Finland** Tampere Peace Research Institute Mediterranean Studies Project (TAPRI) **France** National Federation Solidarity with Women (FNSF) • Education League • Human Rights League (LDH) • Tunisian Federation for a Two Banks Citizenship (FTCR) **Greece** Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) • Greek Committee for International Democratic Society (EEDDA) **Ireland** 80:20 Educating and acting for a better world **Israel / OPT** Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling (WCLAC) • Al-haq • Al Mezan Center for Human Rights • The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI) • B'tselem • Arab Association for Human Rights (HRA) • The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel (ADALAH) • Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) **Italy** Italian Refugee Council (CIR) • Arci Association **Jordan** Mizan Law Group for HUMAN RIGHTS • Sisterhood Is Global Institute (SIGI) • Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS)

**Lebanon** Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH) • Institute for Human Rights (IHR) – Beirut Bar Association • Palestinian Human Rights Organisation in Lebanon (PHRO) **Malta** Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies – University of Malta (MADS) **Morocco / Western Sahara** Adala • Moroccan Organisation of Human Rights (OMDH) • Espace Associatif • Moroccan Association of Human Rights (AMDH) • Democratic Association of Women From Morocco (ADFM) **Spain** Solidarity for Development and Peace (SODEPAU) • Human Rights Institute of Catalonia (IDHC) • Federation of Associations for the Defence and the Promotion of Human Rights (FADPHR) • Accur Las Segovias – Association for Co-operation with the South **Sweden** Kvinna till kvinna **Syria** Damascus Center for Theoretical and Civil Rights Studies • Damascus Center for Human Rights Studies (DCHRS) • The Syrian Organization for Human Rights (SWASIAH) • Comittes for the Defense of Democracy Freedoms AND Human Rights in Syria (CDF) **Tunisia** Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights (FTDES) • Committee for the Respect of Freedom and Human Rights in Tunisia (CRLDHT) • Tunisian League of Human Rights (LTDH) Tunisian Association of the Democratic Women (ATFD) **Turkey** Helsinki citizens assembly • Human Rights Association – Turkey **United Kingdom** Solicitors International Human Rights Group (SIHRG) • Human Rights Centre – University of Essex Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales (BHRCEW)

## Regional Members

European Association for the Defence of Human Rights (AEDH) • Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI) • Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR) • Collectif 95 – Maghreb Egalité • Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS) • African and Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA)

## Associate Members

International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI) • World Organization against Torture (OMCT) • Norwegian Helsinki Committee • Human Rights Watch (HRW) • International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) • Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) • Amnesty International (EU OFFICE)

## Honorary Members

- » Kamel Jendoubi
- » Wadih Al-Asmar
- » Marie Lavrentiadou
- » Emrah Seyhanlioglu
- » Lone Lindholt
- » Eva Norström
- » Iain Byrne
- » Theodoris Papamargaris
- » Driss El-Yazami
- » Bahey El-Din Hassan
- » Annette Jünemann
- » Samira Trad
- » Christina M. Merkel
- » Madjid Benchikh
- » Khemaïs Chamhari
- » Georges Assaf
- » Anna Bozzo-Curti



Blank lined paper with horizontal ruling lines.







EuroMed Rights  
EuroMed Droits  
الأورو-متوسطية لحقوق