

FOUR YEARS ON

What has become of Tunisia's Constitutional Promise?



Panel Debate
Brussels | 26 February 2018

EUROPEAN
ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

DEMOCRACY
REPORTING
INTERNATIONAL

WHEN: 26 February 2018, 15:00 – 18:40 (followed by a reception)

WHERE: European Endowment for Democracy, Rue de la Loi 34, 1040 Brussels (9th floor)

BACKGROUND NOTE

On 26 January 2014 the Tunisian Parliament adopted a new constitution triggering much enthusiasm among the Tunisian public and the international community. Widely considered as the most egalitarian and democratic constitution in the region, the Tunisian Constitution's bill of rights guarantees fundamental human rights and freedoms for all Tunisians regardless of gender, political conviction or religious belief. In addition, the constitutional provisions on decentralised government, independent judiciary and free media outline an ambitious political reform agenda for the following years of Tunisia's democratic transition.

Four years later, it is time to ask to what extent the constitutional promise has been fulfilled? While the security situation in the country has improved, the economy remains weak and the implementation of the Constitution has turned out to be a protracted process with many setbacks. The introduction of a decentralised system of government might prove to be a Herculean task for Tunisia's young democracy and its institutions.

Democracy Reporting International (DRI) and the European Endowment for Democracy (EED) invite you to a debate on what has been achieved in Tunisia since the adoption of its Constitution, what the outlook is and what role the EU and its member states can play in supporting Tunisia's democratisation process.

Within the framework of the event, DRI will present its latest Constitutional Monitor of Tunisia.

AGENDA



15:00 – 15:15 | Registration and welcome coffee

15:15 – 15:20 | Welcome words by **Jerzy Pomianowski**
Executive Director, European Endowment
for Democracy

15:20 - 15:30 | Presentation of **DRI Constitutional Monitor of Tunisia**

SESSION I | 15:30 - 17:00

Stocktaking – four years of the 2014 Tunisian Constitution

What is foreseen in the Tunisian Constitution and what has been achieved in terms of political, legal and judicial reform? What is the next reform challenge awaiting?

What is the socio-economic balance sheet of the Tunisian reform process?

What have been the biggest successes and the biggest shortcomings of the constitutional implementation process?

How has the Constitution shaped the political system in Tunisia?

Speakers:

Bochra Belhaj Hmida | Member of Parliament
Chafik Sarsar | Professor at the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, University Tunis El Manar
Samir Dilou | Member of Parliament

Moderator:

Joost Hiltermann, MENA Program Director,
Crisis Group

SESSION II | 17:10 – 18:40

Civil society and human rights outlook on the Tunisian Constitution

How does the Tunisian civil society, especially the stakeholders who played an important role in the drafting of the new Constitution, perceive the extent of implementation of the Constitution? What are the achievements and flaws? What should have been done better and what can still improve?

How has the framework for the civil society changed over these four years and how does the civil society operate in the current conditions? What are the greatest challenges the civil society faces?

What reforms should be carried out to bring Tunisian legislations both in line with the Constitution and international human rights standards?

What threats exist today to the Tunisian democratic process and how can they be countered?

What can the international community do to further support Tunisia in its democratic transition?

Speakers

Amine Ghali | Director, Al Kawakibi Democracy Transition Center
Jaouhar Ben Mbarek | Founder and Managing Director, Dostourna
Lobna Jeribi | Founder and President, Solidar Tunisia

Moderator:

Adam Styp-Rekowski, Tunisia Country Director,
Democracy Reporting International

18:40 – 19:40 | Networking reception