



**MENA-OECD  
GOVERNANCE  
PROGRAMME**

المملكة المغربية  
الجمهورية



GOUVERNEMENT DU  
ROYAUME DU MAROC

## **Concluding Remarks**

### **Session 2: Regional reform achievements and the way ahead**

#### **Ministerial Panel A: Public Governance**

---

## **2009 MENA-OECD MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE**

MENA-OECD Governance Programme

H.E. Mr. Mohamed Abbou, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister in charge of the Modernisation of the Public Sector, Kingdom of Morocco

H.E. Mr. Chris Hoornaert, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the OECD

**Marrakech, Morocco**

**23 November 2009**

1. Participants thanked the Kingdom of Morocco, in particular H.E. Mr. Abbas El Fassi, Prime Minister, for hosting the ministerial conference and taking over the chairmanship of the MENA-OECD Initiative. They expressed their gratitude to the Arab Republic of Egypt, notably H.E. Dr. Ahmed Darwish, Minister of State for Administrative Development for his visionary leadership in the past years.
2. Participants recognised that successful reforms of the public sector have been undertaken in many MENA countries in recent years. Ministers emphasised that the MENA-OECD Governance Programme has a multiplier effect towards bilateral co-operation and has provided valuable input to their reform roadmaps. Achieving good governance outcomes requires constant efforts. Participating countries reconfirmed their reform commitment and renewed their support to the MENA-OECD Governance Programme which has proven even more relevant in times of economic uncertainty.
3. In the past five years, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme has contributed to enhance public sector performance, transparency, and accountability in MENA countries. The MENA-OECD Governance Programme has supported gradual progress with governance reforms, a precondition for an improved environment for social and economic development in the MENA region. By increasingly addressing cross-cutting issues such as citizen participation, gender, and green growth, the programme's regional policy dialogue has become a decisive tool for promoting understanding and common policy standards between MENA and OECD countries.

**The Chairs summarise the discussions in the Panel on Public Governance as follows:**

4. Participants reconfirmed their strong political commitment to the MENA-OECD Governance Programme. Participants welcomed the close co-operation between the MENA-OECD Governance and Investment Programmes. Participants recognised that the MENA-OECD Governance Programme is demand-driven and relies on the principles of shared ownership, reciprocal and voluntary commitment. In the past five years, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme has succeeded in building a partnership between MENA and OECD countries, based on mutual trust, mutual learning, a common language and common policy standards.
5. Participants recognised that the MENA-OECD Governance Programme supports reform progress on the national and regional level. Participants welcomed that the regional activities have been continuously adapted to the reform needs and targeted to the priority challenges identified by MENA governments.
6. Participants welcomed the inclusion of cross-cutting issues such as gender, green growth, civil society participation and territorial development in the discussions of the MENA Ministerial Conference and the Governance Forum. Participants consider the integration of these cross-cutting issues in the programme of work as crucial to ensure a comprehensive approach to governance policies.
7. Participants expressed their support to the Programme's working methods and instruments for policy implementation:
  - a) **Regional policy dialogue:** Participants acknowledged that the regional Working Groups and networks provide a unique mechanism for dynamic policy dialogue and capacity building. They welcomed that the MENA-OECD Governance Programme brings together representatives from MENA and OECD countries and provides a platform for addressing governance issues, including political sensitive topics as for example corruption in the public sector.

- b) **Establishing regional training and capacity-building centres:** Participants noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in implementing the regional training and expertise centres on Public Policy Evaluation in Rabat, on Regulatory Quality in Tunis, on Tax and Financial Management in Cairo.
  - c) **Joint Learning Studies and Peer Reviews:** Several participating MENA countries expressed their strong interest in conducting Joint Learning Studies and Peer Reviews. Participants recognise Joint Learning Studies and Peer Reviews as helpful tools to review public management policies and to improve the outcome of reform projects.
  - d) **Monitoring and Benchmarking:** Participants very much appreciated the evaluation and monitoring efforts underway that seek to support MENA countries in measuring and monitoring progress with public governance reforms. They welcomed that the Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development presented the OECD Progress Report on Public Governance Reform in the Middle East and North Africa. Participants expressed that the dissemination of good practices is an important element of the Programme strategy that has to be continued. They also expressed interest in including MENA countries in future OECD benchmarking studies such as the recently released OECD Publication “Government at a Glance”.
8. Participants adopted the Ministerial Declaration and by this:
- a) Endorsed the **Regional Charter for Quality in Regulation** in view of contributing to an enabling regulatory environment promoting sustainable economic growth in MENA Countries;
  - b) Mandated the Programme:
    - i. to implement the strategy for women’s involvement in public governance drafted by the **Gender Focus Group** and invited this group to pursue its activities;
    - ii. to explore the **creation of a new Focus Group on Public Governance for Green Sustainable Growth and Regional Development;**
9. Participants also approved several key documents, notably:
- a) The assessment report of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme;
  - b) The framework for future activities of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme.
10. Participants stressed the importance of further adapting the Programme to MENA countries needs in view of increasing the impact of the Programme on policy outcomes. Participants suggested in particular that future activities of the Initiative support MENA countries in:
- a) Strengthening government’s capacity to design, implement, and evaluate public policies;
  - b) Benchmarking public sector modernisation;
  - c) Enhancing policy coherence by co-ordination of reforms in the different policy areas and across levels of governments;
  - d) Increasing efforts to involve non-governmental actors;
  - e) Better communicating policies and reforms to citizens;
  - f) Increasingly addressing issues related to political development, covering the aspects of local democratic governance and the involvement of non-governmental stakeholders, including the media;

- g) Increasingly address the justice component of governance. In this regard, the United States suggested organising a Ministerial Meeting on Justice in 2010.
11. Participants welcomed the announcement of some upcoming activities, among others:
    - a) the reinforcement of the Good Governance for Development support to the implementation of the Palestinian National Plan;
    - b) the Italian proposal to improve the dissemination of best methodologies, knowledge and practices on public sector innovation, through an international initiative aimed at delivering high quality e-learning activities to build regional and local capacities;
    - c) the implementation of a Peer Review on Electronic Government in Egypt, with the support of the Italian Government;
  12. Participants look forward to the next Steering Group Meeting, which is scheduled to take place in spring 2010 in Paris. The next Steering Group Meeting will provide participating MENA and OECD countries with the opportunity to agree on a detailed programme of Work for the period 2011-13
  13. Participating countries thanked the OECD Secretariat for the continued support to the MENA-OECD Governance Programme.