

[DRAFT]



**PROGRAMME ON "STRENGTHENING THE RULE OF LAW IN THE ARAB STATES –
PROJECT ON MODERNIZATION OF PUBLIC PROSECUTION OFFICES"**

SECOND REGIONAL MEETING

RABAT – MOROCCO

24 – 25 FEBRUARY 2006

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Background:

The Public Prosecution Office stands on the front line in the fight against the attacks resulting from the major developments that occurred to the Arab societies, which evolved into a rapid growth of the criminal case. This resulted in a huge burden to the Prosecution Offices to protect the individuals and the society and secure their safety and security against increasing hazards that most of the prosecution offices failed to face; in addition one should take into consideration the huge effect that the Public Prosecution Offices through the practice of their missions on shaping the public opinion and the individual's opinion towards the government and its organizations especially the judicial sector.

These facts led to the choice of the Public Prosecution Offices, as a result of being an effective organization in the judicial penal system, to be the subject of the development projects noting that the establishment of an effective, independent and transparent Public Prosecution Office participants in assuring justice, laws respect as well as a guarantee for the protection of human rights.

As a result, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – Programme on Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR) launched during the year of 2002 an initiative for the “Modernization of the Public Prosecution Offices in the Arab States” in order to develop the role of the public prosecutors in strengthening the Rule of Law.

The preliminary and preparatory works, which was finalized by the Morocco Conference in March 12/13, 2004 succeeded in developing this initiative to become a clear reform project defined by its scope and aims and based on a complete working plan which was discussed and approved during a workshop held in Cairo-Egypt on May 17/18, 2005.

The project aims to develop the Public Prosecution Offices work in four pilot countries: Egypt, Morocco, Jordan and Yemen, through developing their human and material/physical capacities, creating communication ties between the prosecution offices and the civil society, establishing of regional and international cooperation networks for the Public Prosecution Offices, and updating the basic laws that organize the work of the public prosecution and criminal procedures.

Project Implementation Mechanism:

This project relating to the Public Prosecution Offices shall be implemented in 3 phases as follows:

Phase I: The accomplishment of the first phase shall be declared at the closing of the first regional meeting to be held in Rabat on the 24th and the 25th of February 2006.

During this phase, the working units that will be in charge of implementing the project activities in the pilot Arab countries level and on the region level have been established. Additionally, a national expert has been appointed during this phase in each of the pilot countries. The expert performed a stocktaking study in the country where he was appointed and a survey to the state of the Public Prosecution Office and ended up in elaborating a comprehensive and detailed national working strategy for each of the pilot countries after holding national workshops to the members of the national working units in order to discuss and approve the national working strategy.

In addition to the above, a website for the Project was designed and a framework for the Arab Center for Criminal Studies which is going to be a regional criminal research center based in Amman-Jordan was set.

Phase II: During this phase, the projects and activities identified during the first phase in the national working strategy shall be implemented.

During this phase also, the launching of the website on the internet web and the establishment of the Arab Center for Criminal Studies as well as the determination of its working strategy will take place.

Phase III: During this phase the updating of the website will take place, further to a general assessment to the project's activities and outcomes, in addition to elaborate a plan to accomplish and pursue the modernization and building activities, thus leading to transfer the acquired knowledge and expertise to the other Arab countries.

Rabat Meeting:

The regional meeting to be held in Rabat- Kingdom of Morocco on the 24th and the 25th of February 2006 constitutes a separating line between the first and the second phase.

A presentation of the works accomplished during the first phase of the project shall be made during this meeting, notably:

1. A presentation of the results of the stocktaking study accomplished by the national experts in each of the pilot countries.
2. A presentation and a discussion of the national strategies adopted by the national working units.
3. A presentation of the Arab Centre for Criminal Research and the website projects.
4. A presentation of the project aiming at the establishment of an Arab network for public prosecutors pursuant to the recommendations of the Second World Summit of Attorneys General, General Prosecutors and Chief Prosecutors held in Doha-Qatar between the 14th and the 16th of November 2005, and pursuant to one of the pillars of the project on the modernization of Public Prosecution Offices namely, the establishment of a cooperation network on the regional level between the public prosecutors.
5. Various issues of interest under the pillars of the project and that might be developed into reform projects on a later stage, notably:
 - The modernization of the concept and regime of the Public Prosecution Offices work
 - Building the capacity and developing the working tools of the public prosecutors
 - Developing the cooperation between the Arab Public Prosecution Offices and the civil society organizations supporting the fight against crime.
 - Developing the cooperation among Public Prosecution Offices on the Arab and International levels.