

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015



# THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY

Our key principles up close

Countdown till the third regional dialogue around EU-Arab Partnership  
30-31 October 2015  
Beirut, Lebanon

EuroMed Non-Governmental Platform  
Plate-forme non gouvernementale EuroMed  
منبر المنظمات غير الحكومية للمنتدى الإقليمي الأورو متوسطي

annd  
Arab NGO Network for Development  
شبكة المنظمات العربية غير الحكومية للتطوير

**solidar**

## DEFENDING CIVIL SOCIETY SPACE IN THE NEW EU-ARAB PARTNERSHIP

**SOLIDAR** together with the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) and the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform is organising the **Third EU Regional conference on the EU-Arab Partnership, from 30-31 October 2015.**

The third regional Civil Society Organisation Dialogue on EU-Arab Partnership, organised prior to the advocacy visit of Arab civil society organisations to Brussels to attend the **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Days**, will bring together 80 representatives from civil society organisations (CSOs) from both shores of the Mediterranean to discuss the future of the EU-Arab relations within a changing context.

**Freedom of association is an enabling right that foster human development and allow for the progressive realisation and full enjoyment of human rights.** However, neighbouring countries are recording alarming growing levels of shrinking space for civil society, violations of freedom of association and expression, criminalisation of labour strikes, and restrictions of the right to access to information and challenges in mobilising financial resources. Civil society remains a key actor in advancing democratisation and stabilisation, and therefore the revised ENP should further strengthen and support its participation and representativeness in national and regional policy-making.

However, and despite the various complications and difficulties that this inclusive approach can face, it is worth mentioning that the promotion of the enabling environment for CSOs in line with Busan commitments is imperative in this regard. CSOs in southern Mediterranean partner countries face various challenges with regards to the legislative framework, political space, access to resources and information and in terms of capacities.

In the light of the kick off the third regional conference, **SOLIDAR insists that the partnership should:**

- **ensure the statutory role of CSOs** during all the cycle of preparation and implementation of the partnership agreements and programmes, including in the design, monitoring, evaluation and implementation of public policies and programmes;
- **ensure a procedural requirement at the bilateral and regional level to ensure timely and transparent consultation and the necessary follow up.** For this, CSOs, as key stakeholders should be present/represented within the monitoring committees of programmes, throughout the cycle of preparation, design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes;
- further develop the **regional Structured Dialogue** through the support of existing networks of independent civil society organisations, trade unions and social actors, by applying a format that allows a **longer-term dialogue partnership.**

**SOLIDAR and its members and partners are organising the European Neighbourhood Days that will take place from 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015 in Brussels. You can register now for our two public events;**

## 'Defending Civil Society Space. EU-Arab Dialogue: Rebuilding relations with European Southern Neighbourhood Countries'

Seminar organised by CONCORD, Euromed Non-Governmental Platform and the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND).

16 November 2015 , 09:30 – 16:30 at the EESC

[Programme](#)

[Online Registration](#)

## 'The EU as a peace promoter in the Middle East and North Africa: between human rights and security'

Roundtable debate organised by SOLIDAR, Euromed Non-Governmental Platform and the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) hosted by Pier Antonio Panzeri , MEP.

17 November 2015, 18:00 – 20:00 at the European Parliament

[Programme](#)

[Online Registration](#)

# EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY DAYS

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**JOIN US** 16- 17 NOVEMBER 2015  
Brussels

With public debates on

Defending Civil Society Space. EU-Arab Dialogue;  
Rebuilding relations with European Southern Neighbourhood Countries

The EU as a peace promoter in the Middle East and North Africa: between human rights and security



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