

University of Social Development
Summer Session
Rabat, 27-28 November 2017

"Civil society and its new challenges"

Concept note

For a long time, along the previous eras, concerning civil society in Morocco and in countries with a similar social configuration and level of development, certain recurrent issues have become central, each according to the nature of the context.

Initially, for a long time, prevailed the question of the possibility or not of a civil society within the social structures of the country, the existence of conditions encouraging its emergence, or impeding it.

There was a second moment, as in a chronological perspective of a more in-depth study of the problematic, in which a questioning was given, focusing more on aspects related to place, nature, consistency, role, impact both quantitatively and qualitatively of the civil society. Similarly, the relationship between civil society and the general societal environment, and in particular the political and institutional context, was already strong. The question of the articulation of the civil to the political, the economic, the social and the cultural, was making its way. The problematic of the autonomy of organizational strategies and those of action of the civil society then took a special shape.

A third axe seems to emerge on the eve of the Arab Spring, giving way to a new wave of concerns about the legal framework of associations and other civil society organizations, finance, associative life, governance, the general associative status and the special statutes relating to various categories of associations, the partnership between the State and associations, the relationship with local and regional authorities, etc.

All these questions had to be new in scope, not only because of the new constitutional

framework, but also for the situation created by the appearance of heavy political and social facts, which sometimes constitute real breaks: by the prospect of a broader and more frank development of participatory democracy, in interaction with an evolution of representative democracy, the problem of representation of civil society in central, regional and local governance institutions, impact on the structuring of the civil society of the developments of the digital universe, the rise of social movements, the place taken by the transnational ...

The question of the place and role of associations in the development, monitoring and evaluation of public policies is now more clearly outlined, and behind this orientation is the fundamental question of its transition from the status of civil society as a subject of public policy to that of civil society as an actor of public policies, either in its own right (co-decision) or associated with one title or another (consulting, concord, mediation,...).

In this perspective of maturation of civil society, it is important to multiply the light, to diversify the angles of approach, to deepen the levels of analysis, enrich the public debate ... In order to carry out an inventory, explore the central dimensions of civil society today, prospect future development, CERSS with the support of the Ministry in charge of Relations between the Government and Parliament and civil society, organize an international symposium in the context of its summer university 2017 in Rabat on 15 and 16 November.

Program

First day

Morning

08: 30 - 09: 00: **Welcoming participants**

09: 00 - 09: 30: **Opening session**

- Message from the Minister Delegate to the Head of Government in charge of relations with Parliament and civil society;

- Message from the Director of CERSS;

09: 30-11: 45:

First session: The conceptual and theoretical elaboration of civil society today and its relationship to the political-administrative system;

11: 45 - 12: 05: Coffee break

12: 05 - 13: 30:

Second session: Civil Society and Building the Rule of Law: Human Rights, Public Space, Democracy;

13: 30 - 15: 00: Lunch

Afternoon

15: 00-16: 45

Third session: Civil Society at the Spectrum of International and Regional Organizations;

16: 00 - 17: 20: Coffee break

17: 20-19: 15:

Fourth session: The challenges of mobilizing civil society: Networks, poles; national and international groupings and coalitions;

Second day:

Morning:

9h - 11h:

Fifth session: Comparative national trajectories of civil societies: some examples (Brazil, Vietnam, India, Mali, Senegal, Egypt, Algeria Finland);

11: 00-11: 15 Coffee break

11: 15 - 13: 15: **Thematic workshops:**

- Civil society and SDGs;
- Civil society and women;
- Civil society and youth;
- Civil society, social networks and media;

Afternoon :

15h - 16h:

Closing session and reading reports