

Statement

The Maghreb Press second Forum

Hammamet, 28-30 May, 2014

We, journalists, newspaper publishers and media professionals from the Maghreb countries, meeting within the framework of the second Forum of the Maghreb media held from 28 to 30 May 2014 in Hammamet, after the analysis and assessment of the Maghreb media situation, agreed that there are major threats impeding our profession in the Maghreb which are mainly:

- The lack of economic viability of media companies which results from the weakness of material possibilities, the missing of initiatives for the pooling of their financial and technical means, and from the decline of readership, the use of advertising as a mean of pressure on the media, etc...
- The precariousness of the socio-economic conditions of journalists in the Maghreb;
- The aggressions and physical attacks of journalists in political contexts which are sometimes uncertain and characterized with speculations of extremist forces ;
- The inadequacy of the legal and legislative frameworks for the exercise of independent journalism serving the Maghreb citizens' right for good-quality information;
- The absence of a joint monitoring and solidarity body in the Maghreb;

In this context, participants we agree to:

1/ Set up without delay the Maghreb Press Observatory in compliance with the recommendations of the 1st Hammamet Forum held on January 24, 2013. The observatory shall have a standing secretariat in charge of completing all legal and administrative procedures required for the rapid launching of the Maghreb Media Observatory activities;

2/ The General Secretariat shall work for the establishment of all required relationships with Maghreb and European institutional partners for an effective implementation and urgent launching of the Observatory's activities.

3/ The participants reaffirm their attachment to the process launched by the 1st Hammamet Forum initiated by the European Union Delegation in Tunisia and reiterate their deep gratitude to Her Excellency Mrs. Laura Baeza, Ambassador and Head of the European Union Delegation in Tunisia, for her personal and institutional commitment in favor of the democratic transition and freedom of the media processes in the Maghreb.

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Secretary General of Maghreb Media Observatory