

G8 Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative
7th Forum for the Future Process
DRAFT: CIVIL SOCIETY RECOMMENDATIONS
Ottawa, 7 November 2010

Background

The recommendations presented below are the result of a collaborative consultative process among civil society partners from across the BMENA region. This year's Forum for the Future process included three regional preparatory workshops, and six national seminars—three of them successfully completed, and three more to take place in the upcoming weeks. As a result of a productive dialogue—both during and after these workshops and seminars—civil society partners have distilled the main outcomes of these events into five clearly stated, feasible, practical, action-based recommendations that we hope will encourage collaboration between governments and civil society to address key challenges and opportunities in the BMENA region.

Statement of Principles

Participants renewed their commitment to strengthening the basis for democracy, consultation and cooperation in the region, and broadening the scope of participation in politics, public affairs, and decision-making. Participants further acknowledged the role of freedom of expression, judicial independence, equality and accountability before the law, observing integrity in applying the law in achieving political, social and economic development.

Recommendations

1. Based on the results of the Doha Workshop on "Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts and Democratic Transition," civil society recommends that governments and civil society establish a regional centre on **conflict resolution and democratic transition**, undertaking research, capacity building, early warning, and to develop a feasibility study for this project.
2. Civil society partners recommend that governments provide adequate funding, and develop policies to **support science, technology and innovation, and foster entrepreneurship**, recognizing that these are crucial elements of dynamic social and economic development.
3. As a result of the findings from the Istanbul Workshop on the "Private Sector's Role in Social Responsibility," civil society recommends that governments create favourable fiscal and legislative frameworks that incentivize **corporate social responsibility**.
4. Based on the findings of the Beirut Workshop on "Youth Activism and Civic Engagement," civil society recommends that concrete steps be taken to **create youth exchange programs** with the support of G8, BMENA and other partner governments, possibly benefitting from the experience of other exchange programs such as the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Program.
5. As a result of a key recommendation from last year's Forum for the Future process, civil society partners continue to work towards the establishment of the **Gender Institute**, and to take concrete implementation steps in coordination with supporting governments. Therefore, civil society calls for the **expansion of political support to the Gender Institute's** efforts to promote

the social, political, cultural and economic rights of women, and to operate independently and effectively.