

FOREWORD

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Guest Editors

This special edition of the *Mediterranean Journal of Human Rights* is dedicated to a selection of the dissertations produced by students who successfully completed the Mediterranean Master's course in Human Rights and Democratisation in November 2002.

The Mediterranean Master's is one of the regional human rights programmes funded by the European Commission and is mainly intended for nationals from MEDA countries, although lately a few students from other regions have also followed the course. In the three years it has been in existence the course has produced over 100 graduates and has gained a reputation in all the Euro-Med region and beyond. This post-graduate course is co-ordinated by the University of Malta on behalf of a network of universities and human rights institutions, and receives the financial aid of the European Commission.

The Master of Arts in Human Rights and Democratisation is a one-year full-time course in which an interdisciplinary approach is adopted. The course acknowledges the strong link existing between democracy and the promotion of human rights and therefore focuses on the integration of human rights and democratic principles. In this way, the programme is of great importance to the future of the Mediterranean and efforts to create co-operation therein.

The first semester is dedicated to offering a comprehensive overview of human rights principles from the operational and policy-oriented views. Later, in the second semester, the students are given the opportunity to specialize in an area of human rights by traveling abroad and conducting research into an approved subject under the supervision of an appointed tutor. A taste of the result is the contents of this volume of the journal.

The *Mediterranean Journal of Human Rights* shares a strong link with the Master of Arts programme and it therefore seemed fitting to select five dissertations and publish them as a special

edition of the journal. The dissertations contained herein are summarized pieces from the original 25,000 word works. Through this publication, it is augured that the significant contribution made by this programme will be more easily ascertainable and appreciated.