



FONDATION RENÉ CASSIN



FRIEDRICH NAUMANN  
STIFTUNG Für die Freiheit.  
Middle East and North Africa

UM6P

University  
Mohammed VI  
Polytechnic



## 1ST RABAT SESSION

# “ELECTORAL PROCESSES AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW”

**Duration / Period: 6 jours / 6 days / from June 8 to June 14, 2026**

**Location: Mohammed VI Polytechnic University – Rabat Campus**  
Rocade de Rabat-Salé, Rabat  
Tel. +212 525 073 100  
Web : <https://um6p.ma/>

**Partners:** Fondation René Cassin – Institut international des droits de l’homme (FRC), Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF), Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P), National Human Rights Council - Morocco (CNDH).

**Language:** English

## **I. Context and Justification**

In recent years, public international law has been subject to profound challenges, with violations of fundamental rights and freedoms on the rise. Electoral processes around the world have also been marked by increasing challenges in a global context of political transformations and the weakening of certain democratic gains. Although elections remain a fundamental pillar of democratic governance, their organization and credibility continue to face significant issues, particularly with regard to transparency, inclusiveness, and respect for fundamental rights. These developments occur in a context where, despite the existence of a dense body of international human rights instruments, their effective implementation remains uneven and, at times, contested.

Thus, the 2026 report of the V-Dem Institute paints a worrying picture: democracy is declining globally and has returned to levels last seen in the late 1970s. In 2025, the world counts 92 authoritarian regimes compared to 87 democracies. For the first time in 20 years, there are fewer democracies than autocracies worldwide. Moreover, nearly three quarters of humanity (74%) live under an autocratic regime. This situation highlights the urgent need to strengthen legal and institutional frameworks to ensure electoral processes comply with international human rights standards.

Indeed, democracy constitutes a fundamental universal value at the heart of the United Nations system. In this perspective, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as the organization of periodic, free, and transparent elections, are essential pillars of any democracy. Participation in public and political affairs plays a central role in strengthening democratic governance, the rule of law, social cohesion, and economic development. It also constitutes a key lever for the promotion and protection of human rights. Participation-related rights contribute to the empowerment of individuals and groups and play a decisive role in combating marginalization and discrimination. They are also closely linked to other fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of peaceful assembly and association, freedom of opinion and expression, as well as the right to education and information.

In this regard, the link between electoral processes and human rights is intrinsic. As emphasized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, particularly in its Article 21(3), the legitimacy of public authorities is based on the expression of the will of the people through regular, free, and fair elections. Nevertheless, the mere holding of elections cannot, in itself, guarantee governance that respects human rights. Such governance must be embedded within a broader framework grounded in the rule of law, the separation of powers, and the effective protection of fundamental freedoms. In this respect, despite the existence of a solid international normative framework—particularly reflected in the adoption of international conventions and the establishment of both regional and international jurisdictions—the

effective realization of human rights remains uneven worldwide and faces growing contemporary challenges.

The Fondation René Cassin – Institut international des droits de l’homme (FRC), the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF), the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P), and the National Human Rights Council of Morocco have therefore chosen to dedicate the first edition of their off-site training in international human rights law to the theme “Electoral Processes and International Human Rights Law.”

This session, structured around core courses and thematic courses tailored to regional and local contexts, aims to provide participants with an in-depth understanding of international and regional human rights instruments, as well as the methods for applying them effectively in an electoral context. It also seeks to integrate the protection of human rights at every stage of the electoral cycle, while strengthening the knowledge and skills necessary to use international and regional protection mechanisms. The program emphasizes continuous learning through the exchange of professional expertise and discussions on operational challenges faced by participants. Each day will conclude with case studies, offering a practical and applied approach to issues related to electoral processes and international human rights law.

## **II. Objectives**

### **a) General Objective**

To strengthen participants’ knowledge and capacities regarding international norms and standards related to electoral processes and human rights.

### **b) Specific objectives**

- Understand the fundamental principles of international human rights law applicable to elections;
- Analyze the different stages of the electoral process in light of international standards;
- Identify risks of human rights violations in electoral processes;
- Strengthen skills in electoral observation and documentation of violations;
- Promote the inclusion of minorities in electoral processes;
- Raise awareness of cyber threats and interference affecting elections;
- Encourage collaboration between electoral stakeholders and human rights defenders.

## **III. Expected Results**

At the end of the training:

- Participants have a strong command of international standards applicable to elections.

- Participants are able to identify and analyze human rights violations in an electoral context.
- Participants will effectively integrate the protection of human rights into their daily practices, thereby contributing to the promotion of peace and to strengthened democratic governance in Morocco through a better understanding of these rights.
- A regional network of trained and committed stakeholders on electoral issues and human rights will be established, fostering cooperation and the exchange of expertise.

#### **IV. Methodology**

The session, organized over six days, is based on a pedagogical approach combining lectures and exchanges with participants during practical case study sessions at the end of each day.

The training will be delivered by a diverse panel of high-level experts from academia, international organizations, civil society, as well as legal practitioners and criminal justice professionals from Europe and the MENA region.

#### **V. Location and date**

Courses will take place from Monday, June 8 to Saturday, June 14, 2026 at the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University – Rabat Campus, Rocade de Rabat-Salé, Rabat. Web: <https://um6p.ma/>.

#### **VI. Target Groups**

This training session is intended for:

- ❖ Judges, lawyers, court clerks, and other members of the judiciary, legal professions, and any other professionals dealing with human rights,
- ❖ National and international civil servants,
- ❖ Electoral observers,
- ❖ Members of national institutions,
- ❖ Advanced-level students in legal, political, human, and social sciences,
- ❖ Teachers, researchers, and journalists,
- ❖ Members of NGOs working on human rights protection, civil society actors, and specialized researchers.

The session is open to all interested individuals from the Middle East and North Africa sub-region.

## **VII. Desired Profile**

- a) Hold a degree corresponding to at least three (3) years of university studies or an equivalent qualification;
- b) Demonstrate experience in the field of human rights;
- c) Have a good command of English, both spoken and written.

## **VIII. Application deadline**

Application deadline: **May 7, 2026.**

IMPORTANT: Due to the limited number of available spots, the organizers will review and select applicants. To ensure equal treatment of all applicants, this selection process will take place after the application deadline of May 7, 2026.

Admission decisions will be communicated via email starting May 13, 2026.

Candidates admitted to the program will have three days to finalize their registration by paying the registration fee.

## **IX. Administrative Registration & Payment of Registration Fees**

Fee: €100 / 1100 MAD.

The registration fee includes lunches, coffee breaks during the training days and accomodation at the Rabat Campus.

Travel costs from participants' city of departure to Rabat are to be covered by the participants. For those who do not wish to stay in on-site housing, please note that participants are responsible for their own travel to the training location. The organizers of the training session will not provide a shuttle service from the city of Rabat to the Rabat campus of Mohammed VI Polytechnic University.

Registrations are made exclusively online via the following link:

<https://www.iidh.org/en/rabat-session-june-2026/>

## **X. Certification**

At the end of the session, a multiple-choice evaluation test will be organized to assess the knowledge acquired:

- Participants who meet the requirements will receive a certificate of achievement;

- Others will receive a certificate of participation.

#### **CONTACT PERSON FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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