



# POLITICAL ACTORS AND STUDENTS IN MOROCCO

Alleviating violence in university campuses



## WHO ARE WE?

The Cordoba Foundation of Geneva (CFG) is an **independent** non-profit organisation working on peace promotion. We focus on tensions and polarisations in all societies where Muslims live, and aim to enhance theoretical and practical conflict transformation resources in Muslim majority countries. Founded in 2002, we promote a **methodology of conflict transformation** adapted to and accepted by local peace actors, parties to conflict and communities. With **15 years of experience**, the CFG is well-established in Geneva, Switzerland, and has developed unique access and networks in the Muslim-majority world. **Our multi-cultural, diverse team** of dedicated professionals has enabled us to build relations in both the Western policy and Muslim-majority worlds, guided by our core values of **Non-violence, Inclusiveness, Impartiality, Empathy** and **Independence**.



*View of Hassan II Mosque, Casablanca, December 2017*

## CONTEXT

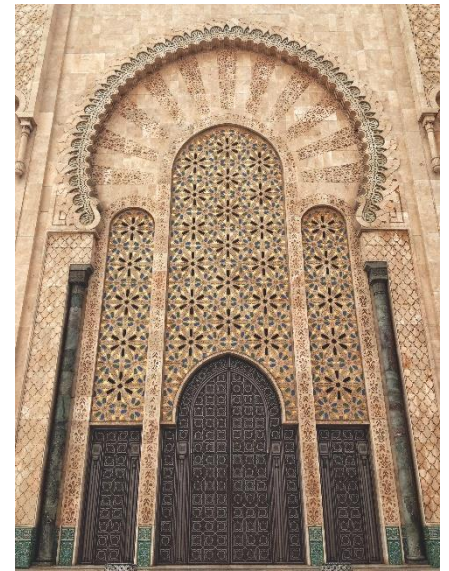
2017 marked a **year of tension** and crisis in Morocco, despite the slight changes in governance that have been made with the drafting of a new constitution following the 2011 uprising, aimed at **meeting the revolutionary** aspirations inspired by the Tunisian revolution.

In line with these political changes, the CFG has carried out **several initiatives** bringing together actors with different ideological backgrounds to **dialogue** and to **develop working relations**. These efforts stem from our analysis that the entrenched ideological polarisation between 'Islamist' and 'Secularist' actors jeopardises the potential for developing a nationally-relevant democratic system that responds to the aspirations of people in the region.

Since March 2017, **three mediation-based projects** in Morocco have contributed to bridging the ideological divide between different actors by focusing on concrete areas and shared issues.

## GOALS

- ✓ **Address** widespread instances of ideologically-motivated violence between university students with Islamist, Secularist and identity-based references.
- ✓ **Promote** the establishment of context-appropriate, student-led peace mechanisms to monitor and respond to potentially violent incidents in universities.



*Doors of Hassan II Mosque,  
Casablanca, April 2018*

## APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

In December 2017, the CFG initiated a **pilot mediation process** between ideological and politically-affiliated students' groups in the University of Rabat – Morocco's largest and oldest modern university. In a sensitive context characterized by high levels of violence on university campuses, we have **facilitated safe mediation spaces** for an inclusive and diverse group of student representatives.



*Street art, Rabat, April 2018*

## RESULTS

- ✓ Local and international experts and participants have openly discussed the causes and consequences of this conflict, developing **shared understanding** and **constructive solutions** for transforming the violence;
- ✓ The CFG has provided **Arabic-language training** in conflict transformation theory and practical skills, supporting participants in the development of peace-promotion mechanisms;
- ✓ Participants have undertaken **individual mediation initiatives** in their local contexts, for example between Amazigh, Sahraoui and Islamist students' groups in Marrakech;
- ✓ Student participants have shared these discussions within their own constituencies, publicly urging for **open dialogue** between all student groups, irrespective of ideological differences.

**To support us and for further information, please contact:**

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