

NEWSLETTER of the EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform

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YOUR VIEWS



EU Special Representative for Central Asia, Ambassador Peter Burian

EU SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR CENTRAL ASIA WELCOMES SHIFT TOWARDS ECONOMIC LEGISLATION IN SECOND PHASE OF EU-CENTRAL ASIA RULE OF LAW PLATFORM PROJECT

Nine months after he was appointed, Ambassador Peter Burian sat down with the Team Leader of the EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project. In an extensive [interview](#) he notes that there is an improved momentum in relations with the EU, as evidenced by the updated [EU Central Asia Strategy](#) which reflects ideas and suggestions directly provided by the Central Asian countries. He found that Central Asian countries consider the EU to be an important and credible partner at a time when the region is facing formidable security and economic challenges.

He welcomes a trend towards commercial issues in the second phase of the EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project and believes it is wise to address rule of law and governance issues in areas where governments have a vested interest, particularly in the economic sector. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan for example, are both eager to attract foreign direct investment to help overcome challenges in their economies. It would be important to initiate real changes, such as improving transparency and the accountability of authorities dealing with business-related licenses. Transparent and fair regulations, as well as functioning and reliable state institutions to safeguard the application of these regulations, are

essential to establish an attractive business climate.

Other challenges remain for the region, including security threats, returning migrant workers, economic uncertainty and—last but not least—the impact of climate change and the poor management of natural resources. The Ambassador also encouraged the Project to work on challenging the widespread belief that civil society often works to destabilise governmental institutions, and on further strengthening the capacities of NGOs and media in the region.



Kyrgyzstan Deputy Prime Minister Mrs. Gulmira Kudaiberdieva

EU-SUPPORTED “ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT” YOUTH INITIATIVES

Kyrgyzstan Deputy Prime Minister Mrs. Gulmira Kudaiberdieva is in charge of the State Programme on Juvenile Justice, a high priority for the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. It is a new and unique policy among the Central Asian states. [In her interview](#), Mrs Kudaiberdieva explains that the Programme was established to enable the government to comply with the requirements of the Kyrgyz Constitution, its Code for Youth and other legislation protecting the rights and interests of children. The Kyrgyz Republic is also keen to respect its obligations under related international conventions it has ratified.

The main objective of the Programme is to develop an adequate and fair juvenile

The EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform:

The Rule of Law Platform acts as a coordination mechanism to facilitate policy dialogue and promote the measures needed to encourage and support legal and governance reforms in each of the Central Asian countries. It is supported by the EU through the [Regional Programme for Central Asia 2014-2020](#)

justice system. The EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project launched an initiative that helped bring the Programme to fruition.

The Ministry of Education and Science, continues Ms Kudaiberdieva, has been asked to develop a training programme on “Offence, crime and responsibility” for schools, and in this regard, the initiative that is being implemented by the EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project provides an efficient mechanism to provide legal information to pupils and tell them about rule of law and how to protect their rights.

The EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project has assisted in developing the interactive modules which teach young people on the way to deal with challenges such as drug pushers, sexual harassment, or extortion of funds, and how and where they can get assistance.

Ms Kudaiberdieva underlines the importance of the EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project’s initiative, “one of the most important undertaken to improve awareness of citizens about their rights and increase the legal culture of the population”.

Contact us:

We welcome your feedback and ideas for this newsletter. Please contact Xavier Barré - barre@ruleoflaw.eu <http://ruleoflaw.eu/>



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*Pierre-Olivier Sûr,
President of
the Paris Bar*

VOICES FOR CIVIL RIGHTS – PIERRE OLIVIER SÛR

In a [video interview](#) the President of the Paris Bar until January 2016, Mr Pierre-Olivier Sûr, shares his views on why the fair trial and lawyers, particularly defence lawyers, are a fundamental part of a democratic system, and why the defence of their independence is one of the key elements funding civil liberties.

Over 500 lawyers throughout the world are being sued, imprisoned, even killed, defending the same values, he notes. The bar is a family, continues Mr Sûr, ready to support its members all over the world, and he has done his best to play this role of defense of civil rights during the mandate as President of Paris Bar.

During the Presidency of Mr Sûr, the Paris Bar has been invited by the EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project to cooperate to the "Initiation to law for the pupils of Kyrgyz schools" in October 2015. Also, the Paris Bar signed partnership agreements with the

Bar of Almaty, and the Bar of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project introduced the Bars and incentivised them to sign Partnership agreements which provide a framework for promoting exchanges between the bar associations and their members by creating contacts and organising special projects and training sessions that benefit members and clients.

The EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project is already foreseeing the involvement of the Paris Bar in its future activities on issues such as civil rights, defence rights, status of lawyers, detainees right to counsel, and others.

RECENT EVENTS

TURKMENISTAN WORKS TO COMPLY WITH EUROPEAN CHARTER OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNANCE

The EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Project held a seminar on local self-governance in Ashgabat on 17 December 2015, in support of the constitutional reform announced by the President of Turkmenistan in 2014.

The ongoing reform aims at increasing the powers and capacity of elected local government bodies.

Experts from the EU and various Central Asian countries discussed the

principles of local democracy and shared their experience in implementing local government creation and reform. At the outset of the seminar, the participants approved a communiqué which agreed on a range of resolutions acknowledging the importance of ensuring community participation, the financial autonomy of the local elected representatives on and providing local services that meet the need of the communities. It also identified support needed to help them comply with the European Charter of Local Self-Government, thereby providing concrete tools for sustaining the EU's efforts to promote decentralisation and local democracy in Turkmenistan.

CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITE UPDATES

In early 2016, many pages of our web site <http://ruleoflaw.eu/> were updated. Please check out in particular the new Project presentation, and work plan per region and country. This includes a presentation by Latvia, the EU Rule of Law's Initiative new Member State partner.

New sections on the website include:

- Voices for civil rights
- Regional dialogue on rule of law
- 5th Ministerial Conference in 2016
- Flagship Platform activity "Initiation to law for pupils of Kyrgyz Schools"



30 high-profile representatives attend the seminar in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Next on the Rule of Law Platform agenda

March 2016

- ✓ Training seminar for judicial experts, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

April 2016

- ✓ Training seminar on the responsibilities of private and public enforcement officers, Almaty, Kazakhstan
- ✓ Seminar on the development of civil society, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
- ✓ Seminar on administrative procedures and administrative court procedures, Astana, Kazakhstan