



PRESS RELEASE

23 April 2014

Meeting of the Working Group on Judicial Capacity in the framework of the EU Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia in Brussels

BRUSSELS – In the framework of the Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia established by the EU and led by France and Germany, the project «Rule of Law Platform – Central Asia» funded by the EU will hold a **“Meeting of the Regional Working Group on Judicial Capacity” on 24 April 2014 in Brussels**. It will gather high-level representatives of the Ministries of Justice, Supreme Courts, General Prosecutor’s Offices, Lawyer’s Associations, NGOs and academics from Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and the Council of Europe (Commission for the Efficiency of Justice – CEPEJ and Group of States Against Corruption – GRECO).

Organised back-to-back with the Second Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Rule of Law Platform (April 25, Brussels), the Working Group meeting is aimed at deepening the dialogue and exchanges of best practices on justice reform and their implementation by the Central Asian partner states. Experts from the EU and Central Asia will explain the importance of sound strategy programmes for judicial reform, contributing to a more efficient administration of justice and creating the conditions necessary for guaranteeing a fair trial.

In furtherance of the Third Joint Ministerial Communiqué in the area of judicial reform (6-7 December 2012, Brussels), the participants to the Working Group meeting will elaborate recommendations aimed at facilitating the introduction of international standards of justice reform in support of the upcoming legal and judicial reform programmes of the five Central Asian States, emphasizing the importance of a public dialogue between State institutions and the civil society.

The meeting will be chaired by Ambassador Riina Kionka, Head of Central Asian Division (EU) and attended by Mr. Janos Herman, the new Special Envoy to Central Asia. Mrs. Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative declared on April 9 that Mr. Herman has been appointed “*to ensure the continued engagement [of the EU] in Central Asia*”.

A key element of the EU-Central Asia Strategy for a New Partnership, the “Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia” project constitutes the overarching regional framework for enhanced cooperation in the rule of law area, aimed at supporting legal reforms in Central Asia and the sharing of EU experience. Under the auspices of the Rule of Law Initiative, the Rule of Law Platform regional project acts as a support mechanism to facilitate policy dialogue and promote the measures contributing to legal reforms in each of the Central Asian countries.

Time and date: 24 April 2014, 9.30 – 17.00 (Registration will start at 9.00).

Venue: Berlaymont Building (Meeting room Jean Rey), Rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Brussels, Belgium

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