

**ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ Γ. ΕΡΩΤΟΚΡΙΤΟΥ ΣΤΟ KICK-OFF MEETING ΤΟΥ
ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΟΣ HELP ΤΟΥ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΕΥΡΩΠΗΣ ΜΕ
ΘΕΜΑ “*PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS
AND VICTIMS’ RIGHTS*”**

ΑΝΩΤΑΤΟ ΔΙΚΑΣΤΗΡΙΟ

15 JANUARY, 2021.

On behalf of the Supreme Court of Cyprus and the Judicial Training School it is with great pleasure that I welcome you at today’s kick-off meeting of the HELP Programme on “*Procedural Safeguards in Criminal Proceedings and Victims’ Rights*”.

Unfortunately, given the present circumstances due to Covid-19, we were not able to host this event at the Supreme Court as would have been the case. Joining us today on this online launch event are our speakers, Mr Achilleas Demetriades, President of the Human Rights Committee of the Cyprus Bar Association, Mr Panicos Stavrou, Superintendent and Director of the European Union and International Police, Cooperation Directorate, Mr. Sam Morgan, Head of Political Section at the British High Commission in Nicosia, Mr Paul Harvey Author of the course, Mrs Eva Pastrana Head of the HELP unit of the Council of Europe as well as the HELP team leading this course, our certified HELP tutors and all participants ranging from judges, prosecutors, legal officers of the Supreme Court, lawyers and members of the police force.

Our collaboration with the Council of Europe is not new. It goes back many years.

Recently however our collaboration has become more intense. As many of you might know the Council of Europe was chosen to manage two of our main reform projects, one being the review of our of Civil Procedure Rules.

Under the project we are currently considering, in collaboration with the HELP Programme, to prepare self-training courses on various aspects of the new Civil Procedure Rules. We are convinced that this type of training, is the most suitable format for training, given the busy schedule of Judges and Lawyers in Cyprus.

Our last HELP course that we organized in 2019, was very successful and this became apparent from the very high rating that was given by all the participants.

Eva Pastrana, approached me last September with a proposal to organize and coordinate this tutor-led course in Cyprus. This arose from contacts between herself and representatives from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, following the HELP Annual Conference last year.

On the advice of Judge Elias Georgiou, President of Court, who is our HELP focal point, we decided to increase the number of tutors by two, so that our capacity in future will expand.

Preparations began at full speed and an online Train the Trainers session was promptly organised. As a result, Senior District Court Judge, Sophia Kleopas and District Court Judge, Nicholas Georghiadis became certified HELP trainers to lead the group of judges and prosecutors. At the same time, certified HELP trainers Mr. Nicholas Tsardelis, Soteris Georgiou and Demetris Lohias, will tutor the second group comprised of lawyers and members of the police.

I must thank all the tutors, who, despite their heavy workload, quickly came on board and worked tirelessly in preparing the course. I am sure that they will tutor the course as successfully as Judge Elias Georgiou and Mr Nicholas Tsardelis tutored the last course in 2019.

We are grateful to the UK Government who is funding the Project and especially the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office who through HELP invited us to join the course.

In fact, our association with the Commonwealth Office is long standing and I hope that after Brexit, our historical ties not only will continue but will be strengthened.

Our gratitude and appreciation must also be extended to Mr Paul Harvey, who is the Author of this very interesting course that is being launched today.

I would like to thank the Council of Europe for all the support, encouragement and assistance they are giving us especially Mrs. Eva Pastrana and her team and in particular Mr Lilian Apostol, the HELP Project co-ordinator, who assisted us throughout the preparations for the launching of the course as well as Mrs Ana-Maria Telbis for training the trainers and providing guidance throughout.

Finally, I would also like to thank all of you, the participants, for expressing your interest and eagerness to participate. I am sure you will find this course particularly useful and interesting.

George Erotocritou
Former Judge of the Supreme Court
Director of Reform and Training

Nicosia, 15 January 2021

