**ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ Γ. ΕΡΩΤΟΚΡΙΤΟΥ**

**KICK-OFF MEETING ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΟΣ HELP ΤΟΥ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΕΥΡΩΠΗΣ ΜΕ ΘΕΜΑ PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVATE RIGHTS**

**ΑΝΩΤΑΤΟ ΔΙΚΑΣΤΗΡΙΟ**

**21 ΟΚΤΩΒΡΙΟΥ, 2019**

Αγαπητοί Φίλοι,

Παρακαλώ να μου επιτρέψετε, από αβρότητα και μόνο προς τους ξένους προσκεκλημένους μας, να μιλήσω στα Αγγλικά.

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Supreme Court 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 Data Protection.

The idea to adopt the Programme, came, back in February 2017, from Judge Elias Georgiou and Mrs. Tatiana Termacic who at the time was, if I remember correctly, the Head of the Human Rights National Implementation Division of the Council of Europe.

Since then the Supreme Court appointed Elias Georgiou as our HELP Focal Point in Cyprus. Elias was later trained as a HELP Trainer as was Mr. Nicolas Tsardellis.

Today’s event is the first distant learning programme that our School organises.

We hope it will be successful because it will pave the way for many more distant learning courses to come, especially those organised by HELP.

The reason we place emphasis on distant learning, and especially the tailored-made programmes of HELP, is because we have been convinced that this type of training is the most suitable format for training, given the busy schedule of Judges and Lawyers in Cyprus.

Since the initial conception of the idea, back in 2017, it took us almost 3 years to prepare the ground for today’s Kick-Off meeting.

The event is also important because it is a joint event of Judges, Lawyers from both private practise and the Attorney General’s Office, as well as Legal Officers of the Supreme Court.

As Ana-Maria Telbis will explain later on, the HELP Programmes are aimed to assist justice and legal professionals in Human Rights. They aim to encourage effective domestic human rights implementation, for which there are increasing important challenges.

I would like to thank the Council of Europe for all the support, encouragement and assistance they are giving us especially Mrs. Eva Pastrana Head of the HELP Unit and Ana-Maria Telbis, the HELP Project co-ordinator, who is here with us today and who assisted us in preparing today’s meeting.

I also thank Mrs. Irini Nicolaidou, the Commissioner for Personal Data, Mrs. Elena Zachariadou, the Representative of the Law Office of the Republic and Mrs. Tatiana Synodinou who accepted our invitation to address and speak at today’s meeting.

Special thanks go to the staff of the School who made sure that everything will be ready for today’s meeting.

Last but not least I would like to thank Elias Georgiou who worked extremely hard to make possible today’s meeting. Without his help, we would not have done it alone. Of course his work does not stop here. He and Mr. Nicolas Tsardellis will be your tutors throughout the course.

I wish you a fruitful exchange of ideas about the HELP Programme on Data Protection and I wish all the participants a successful completion of the course, in April next year.

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