FIRST PEER-TO-PEER MEETING IN SARAJEVO

ICTY judges meet with 30 colleagues from various courts in BiH

On 10 December in Sarajevo, Judges from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) participated in the first peer-to-peer meeting held in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) under the War Crimes Justice Project (WCJP). The peer-to-peer meeting allowed ICTY Judges and their colleagues in BiH to share their experiences in adjudicating war crimes cases. Around 30 judges from all court tiers in BiH took part, together with Judge Pocar and Judge Moloto from the ICTY. They discussed practices in the areas of disclosure of exculpatory and other relevant material, command responsibility, application of substantive law and working with vulnerable witnesses.

Training of Trainers

The Tribunal commenced the “Training of Trainers” component of the WCJP with a two-day session dedicated to developing the training skills of the staff of the Witness and Victim Support Section (“WVSS”) of the State Court of BiH. During the event, which took place in Sarajevo on 18 and 19 November, the Tribunal’s Victims and Witness Section (“VWS”) worked with their counterparts from the State Court of BiH to assist them in developing the skills and insight necessary to train other witness support personnel from cantonal and district courts throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The aim of the “Training of Trainers” sessions is to strengthen the professional and organizational capacities of identified training providers on both international humanitarian and criminal law and on witness and victim support.

The training sessions focused on giving participants insight into witness support in BiH and included presentations from representatives of local NGOs and Social Welfare Centres on the work, capacity and needs of the current witness support scheme. Furthermore, a peer-to-peer meeting was held between the OSCE, VWS, and the WVSS with the goal of identifying best practices and developing a witness support staff training module.

Judge Moloto Meets BiH Defence Counsel

The Tribunal’s Judge Justice Bakone Moloto led a three-day defence advocacy training in Bijeljina, Bosnia and Herzegovina in October 2010.

This was the first defence training event to take place as part of the WCJP and in cooperation with the Criminal Defence Section of the Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina (OKO) in Bijeljina. An additional training on defence tactics in complex war crimes cases was held on 29 October in Banja Luka.

On behalf of the whole War Crimes Justice Project team, we wish you a happy and prosperous New Year!
Pilot Training a Success

Pilot training sessions for legal professionals were held in Belgrade on 22 and 23 November and in Sarajevo on 2 and 3 December.

Held at the Judicial Academy in Belgrade and the CEST Training Centre in Sarajevo, the sessions targeted legal staff from Prosecution offices and the state courts and legal support staff hired under the War Crimes Justice Project. Training covered useful information and materials available on the ICTY website, including “how to” sessions on conducting research using the ICTY Court Records and Appeals Chambers Case Law Research Tool databases and making requests for legal assistance and for variation of protective measures under Rule 75 (H).

Sessions such as these are aimed at ensuring that institutional knowledge and specialised skills are transferred from the ICTY to regional jurisdictions, thereby enhancing their capacity to handle complex war crimes cases. The next pilot training session will take place at the Judicial Academy in Zagreb, Croatia on 13 and 14 January 2011.

ICTY Delivers 2,500 Pages of Urgent Transcripts in B/C/S

Following urgent requests from the authorities of BiH, Croatia and Serbia for transcripts in Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian (B/C/S), the ICTY has delivered 2,500 pages of public trial transcripts since October of this year. Additional transcripts will be delivered to BiH, Croatian and Serbian authorities on 21 January 2011 with further transcripts to follow in the course of the project. The production of B/C/S transcripts of ICTY court hearings under the War Crimes Justice Project began in July 2010 and will continue until November 2011. This is expected to improve the ability of legal practitioners in the region to access and utilise testimony given before the ICTY.

About War Crimes Justice Project

The War Crimes Justice Project aims to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and materials from the ICTY to legal professionals in the former Yugoslavia, thereby enhancing the capacity of jurisdictions in the region to handle complex war crimes cases. Funded by the European Union, the four-million euro project is being implemented by the ICTY in partnership with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), and OSCE field operations in the region. All project components were designed on the basis of feedback on outstanding needs provided by judicial professionals from the region. Assistance will be delivered in a manner identified by the national authorities as most conducive to them in order to support national ownership and provide sustainable benefits.