

## Effective Legal Aid: Ensuring Equal Access to Justice for All A Follow-up on the Buenos Aires Declaration

*Side Event - 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*

Tuesday, 23 May 2017

1:10pm – 2:00pm

Vienna International Centre, Room M2

In 2012, the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus the UN Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems (UNPG), recognizing that 'legal aid is an essential element of a fair, humane and efficient criminal justice system that is based on the rule of law and that it is a foundation for the enjoyment of other rights, including the right to a fair trial.' Since that time, the international community has made great strides in working to ensure those in need have access to criminal legal aid, yet millions of people worldwide are still deprived of this basic right.

This side event will discuss efforts to ensure access to legal aid in criminal justice systems in the context of the Buenos Aires Declaration, the outcome document of the Second International Conference on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems. That conference, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina in November 2016, brought together over 200 experts from more than 50 Member States and provided a vital platform to continue the dialogue on enhancing access to legal aid across the globe.

The event will focus attention on global challenges in ensuring equal access to quality, effective criminal legal aid services, and will provide an opportunity for Member States to learn of recent developments in ensuring access to legal aid and to discuss national and regional experiences and approaches. It will also address the ongoing need for technical assistance, close cooperation, and sharing of information, including through strong linkages to national, regional and global efforts, in order to overcome challenges to effective delivery of legal aid services to the poor. Finally, it will discuss the steps that need to be taken to guarantee the continued implementation of the UNPG and to achieve the aspirations and objectives set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Goal 16 Target 3, 'Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.'

*Distributed at this event will be free copies of 1) the UNDP/UNODC Global Study on Legal Aid (English only); 2) the ILF's publication Measuring Justice: Defining and Evaluating Quality for Criminal Legal Aid Providers (English only); 3) the UNODC Model Law on Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems with Commentaries (English only); and 4) copies of the Buenos Aires Declaration (in all six official languages of the UN; and in Portuguese, kindly provided by the Office of the Public Defence of the Union, Brazil).*

### Programme

#### Opening Remarks and Moderation

**Ms. Valérie Lebaux**

*Chief, Justice Section, UNODC*

#### Key aspects of the Buenos Aires Declaration and challenges in creating a global network of legal aid providers

**Mr. Nicolás Laino**

*Federal Public Defender, Office of the Federal Public Defender General of Argentina*

#### Legal aid - on the way to a common standard in Europe

**Mr. Sebastian Kreiner**

*Prosecutor and Desk Officer, Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, Germany*

#### Pursuing effective legal aid in the Brazilian federal penitentiary system

**Mr. Eduardo Nunes de Queiroz**

*Federal Public Defender, Office of the Union Public Defender of Brazil*

#### Developments in Africa in the context of global developments on legal aid

**The Honourable Dunstan Mlambo**

*Judge President of the Gauteng Division of the High Court of South Africa, and Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Legal Aid South Africa*

#### Discussant

**Ms. Jennifer Smith**

*Executive Director, The International Legal Foundation (ILF)*