

Workshop: Advancing the Establishment of the International Legal Aid Network

Vienna International Center, United Nations
Monday 22nd – Wednesday 24th

26th Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

The International Legal Foundation, the Office of the Federal Public Defender of Argentina, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime invite representatives of interested Member States to a workshop aimed at advancing the establishment of the International Legal Aid Network.

Last year, at the 25th Annual CCPCJ, 17 countries co-sponsored¹ the resolution “Promoting legal aid, including through a network of legal aid providers,” calling for the establishment of national, regional and international specialized networks of criminal legal aid providers. In the year since, promising steps have been taken toward establishing the International Legal Aid Network (ILAN), including consultations with representatives of governments, legal aid providers, academics, and other stakeholders around the form, function, and funding of the network. Pivotal, the participants of the second International Conference on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in November 2016, introduced ideas for ILAN to the more than 200 participants from more than 50 countries, soliciting their feedback and support for carrying forward the CCPCJ resolution’s vision for an international cooperation network. From the conference, the *Buenos Aires Declaration* calls for establishing a working group on launching ILAN, and directs institutional donors, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector to provide the resources and support necessary for the establishment, administration, and organization of the network.

Building upon this progress, at this year’s CCPCJ we invite the co-sponsors of last year’s resolution—who have already been crucial to ILAN’s progress so far—to come together to hear more about the work that has been done, and to collectively discuss their goals and ideas for ILAN’s short- and long-term development. This input is invaluable to make sure ILAN reaches its maximum potential for positively impacting access to justice, rule of law, and meaningful access to quality legal aid for the poorest and most vulnerable among us.

¹ Co-Sponsoring Member States included: Argentina, Israel, the United States of America, Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Finland, Guatemala, Norway, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Italy, Kenya, Thailand, El Salvador, Serbia, and Japan.