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*Session: “Tools to Promote Effective Access to Justice”*

Honorable colleagues,

At first let me thank the organizers for the excellent organization of this very important event and the invitation to participate in it. It's an honor and pleasure for me to be a part of this significant network and share my experience in the mentioned field.

I am Anahit Manasyan – a member of the Commission on Evaluation of the Performance of Judges, a newly elected member of the Professional Commission on Constitutional Reforms of the Republic of Armenia, as well as an Associate Professor at the Chair of Constitutional Law of Yerevan State University. I will share my experience on specialization of the Armenian judges in ecological matters based on my presented activities. As a member of the Commission on Evaluation of the Performance of Judges me and my colleagues evaluate the decisions of individual judges, methodology of holding the court sessions by them. This experience shows that it would be preferable to have an internal specialization of judges on ecological matters. In Armenia there are two specialized courts – Administrative Court and Bankruptcy Court. Ecological matters are considered by the Administrative Court. There are no internal specializations among the judges of the Administrative Court, and any of them can consider any issue under the jurisdiction of the Administrative Court, including ecological matters. Noting the heaviness of the discussed sphere and topic, I consider that it would certainly be more efficient to have internal specializations among Administrative Court judges for considering the ecological matters. This requires also legal amendments in the corresponding legal acts, including the Judicial Code. As far as I know there have been some discussions on having internal specialization of judges of the Administrative Court on particular cases.

It is also very important to have proper training courses on various issues of ecological law and judicial procedures. This is an extremely important precondition for having proper administration of justice in all the spheres, including the discussed one. As a previous Vice-Rector of the Justice Academy of the Republic of Armenia, I also tried to work on inclusion of such courses in the curricula of the Justice Academy with colleagues. In the result a course on ecological law was included in the curricula. In my opinion, this is not enough. There should be various courses designed specially for these issues. In particular, in case we establish an internal specialization for judges on ecological matters, there should certainly be necessary to have special courses designed for the judges of this specialization.

This was my brief presentation on internal specialization of judges in Armenia. In case you have any questions on the issue, I will be happy to answer them.

Thank you for your attention!