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**EU-COE JOINT PROJECT: ENHANCING THE CURRENT REFORM OF THE COURT SYSTEM AND
THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AS WELL AS THE EFFICIENCY OF JUSTICE IN CYPRUS**

FINAL CONFERENCE

Modernising the Civil Procedure Rules in Cyprus

PROGRAMME

8th December 2021

Moderator: Mr. George Erotocritou, Former Judge of the Supreme Court, Director of Reform

OPENING SPEECHES (*10 minutes each*)

11.00 - 11.40

Ms. Persefoni Panayi, President of the Supreme Court of Cyprus

Ms. Stephie Dracos, Minister of Justice and Public Order

Ms. Elisa Ferreira, European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms
(Video Message)

Ms. Verena Taylor, Director of Office of the Directorate General of
Programmes, Council of Europe

PRESENTATION OF THE REFORM OF THE CIVIL PROCEDURE RULES IN CYPRUS

11.40 - 13.00 **The reform history and the technical support from the EU**

Mr. George Erotocritou, Former Judge of the Supreme Court, Director of Reform (20 minutes)

The philosophy behind the new Rules - What are the main changes?

Mr. Yiasemis N. Yiasemi, Justice of the Supreme Court, President of the Cypriot Rules Committee (20 minutes)

The importance of the new rules in the context of the “Rule of Law” mechanism

Mr. Daniele Dotto, Deputy Director of Directorate B - Support to Member State Reforms, Head of Governance and Public Administration Unit, European Commission, Directorate General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) (20 minutes)

Presentation of the project achievements

Mr. Tigran Karapetyan, Head of Transversal Challenges and Multilateral Projects Division, Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law, Council of Europe (20 minutes)

13.00 - 13.10 **Closing remarks**

13.10 - 14.00 **Cocktail**

Notes:

- *The conference will be held in English.*
- *The Conference will be filmed/recorded. By attending the event, the participants automatically grant the organizers the right to use the photos / videos that will be taken during the filming/recording.*
- *All health protocols and protection measures against COVID-19 will be adhered to during the Conference.*
- *The conference will be live streamed. The live-streaming link is:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88101998900?pwd=VCtIWGdmTnFyUkx1My92YlZlSGRmdz09>*
- *The Conference is organised by the Supreme Court of Cyprus in cooperation with the European Commission and the Council of Europe*

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THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE EU VIA THE STRUCTURAL REFORM SUPPORT PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND IMPLEMENTED BY THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE IN COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

FINAL CONFERENCE

Modernising the Civil Procedure Rules in Cyprus

CONCEPT

The event is dedicated to the presentation of the history of the reform of the Civil Procedure Rules and the main changes introduced by them; the acknowledgment of the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders (European Union, Council of Europe and Cyprus); the presentation of the project outcomes and accomplishments.

Despite three attempts in the past of modernisation of the Civil Procedure Rules (which have been in place for over 60 years, since 1958), they were not changed and remained a substantial source of delays and inefficiency in civil procedure until the recent Project. This situation has led Cyprus to the last place in the EU Justice scoreboard (annual overview of indicators on the efficiency, quality and independence of justice systems) with regard to the estimated time needed to resolve civil, commercial, administrative and other cases.

In 2016, the Cypriot authorities endorsed a high-level commitment to judicial reforms with a view to improving the court system and strengthening the efficiency of justice. The European Commission - first through its Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS) and later on, through its Directorate General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) - has been supporting the Cypriot authorities and the Supreme Court in this pivotal, multi-faceted and complex reform of the court system through several technical support projects.

In 2018 Cyprus and the EC launched one of the most important projects in the context of the reform process - the “Review of the Civil Procedures Rules”. The support has focused on reviewing the old Cypriot Civil Procedure Rules against modern and more efficient approaches while supporting and carrying out public consultations on the areas of intervention. Also, DG REFORM together with the Council of Europe (COE) supported the drafting of the new Rules, as well as the joint design and approval of the new Rules by the national stakeholders through targeted communication activities. The project was designed so as to ensure a large consultation and engagement of all parties involved.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the Supreme Court in this endeavor, the positive involvement of all stakeholders (including the Judges Association, the Bar Association and the Ministries of Justice and Finance) and the sustained efforts of DG REFORM and the COE, this effort led to the production of new Civil Procedure Rules both in English and Greek languages. They were approved by the Supreme Court of Cyprus on 19 May 2021 leading the way to further improvements in the Justice System in Cyprus.

DG REFORM in cooperation with the COE supported the Cypriot authorities in preparing the ground for the implementation of the new Rules through training offered to all key stakeholders (judges, lawyers, court registrars) held between September and December 2021.

In view of this unprecedented evolution in Cyprus, the Cypriot authorities, along with DG REFORM and the Council of Europe, are organizing a high-level event in order to celebrate and acknowledge the exceptional outcome of this technical support project, which ends in January 2022.