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## EUROMED JUSTICE III PROJECT

### INTERMEDIATE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

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Brussels, 19 June 2013

#### PRESS NOTE

The Directorate-General Development and Co-operation - EuropeAid of the European Commission is pleased to announce that the Intermediate Regional Conference of the EuroMed Justice III Project took place **in Brussels (BE) on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2013**.

This Project of regional scope is addressed to the following ENPI South partner countries: the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, the Arab Republic of Egypt, Israel, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Lebanon, the Kingdom of Morocco, Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic (formally part of the project even if there is a partial and temporary suspension of the EuroMed Justice III project in terms of Syrian participation), the Republic of Tunisia and Libya, as new ENPI South beneficiary country of the Project.

This project, of a 3-year duration (September 2011-september 2014), and with a EU-funding amounting to **5 Million euros**, aims at fostering cooperation on judicial issues between the ENPI South partner countries and the EU Member States, as well as between the ENPI South actors themselves, hence contributing to the development of a Euro-Mediterranean area of Cooperation on Justice. It revolves around three main components: **Access to justice and legal aid - Resolution of cross-border family conflicts - and Criminal and penitentiary law**.

The Intermediate Regional Conference was officially launched by Mr Michael KOEHLER, Director Neighbourhood, Directorate-General Development and Co-operation EuropeAid, European Commission. This conference offered an opportunity to present the results of the first implementation phase of the project as well as the research reports, handbooks and the documents called "Euromed fiches" drawn up by the expert working groups under the 3 main project components. On this occasion the working methodology and the timeline and contents of the activities that will be developed during the second phase of the project lifecycle were also presented to the audience.

The event was attended by representatives of 8 ENPI South Partner Countries, as well as by a Member of their Permanent Representation in Brussels; 13 delegations of the EU MS, i.e. National Focal Points from the EU Member States, also joined the event.

Furthermore, the EC, various European Agencies and International Organisations operating in these fields, such as Eurojust, the EJM, EJTJ, ENCJ, the CCBE, The Hague Conference, etc, also sent representatives to this conference.

The following results were presented during the Conference:

Component I: Access to Justice and Legal Aid.

- a) The Research Report 1: Procedural Simplification in the ENPI South partner countries.
- b) The Handbook which identifies and describes possible approaches and best practices to improve access to justice and legal aid.
- c) The Handbook describing approaches and best practices in the use of new technologies for the case management, circulation of documents, data collection in the legal field and communication of case law to the public.

Component II: Resolution of Cross-border Family Conflicts.

- a) The Research Report 2: Overview of the current situation in the ENPI South region and comparative review of national experiences in the field of resolution of cross-border family conflicts.
- b) The Handbook on good practices concerning the resolution of cross-border family conflicts, with special focus on cross-border disputes concerning parental responsibility.

Component III: Criminal and Prison Law.

- a) The “Euromed fiches”: a tool equivalent to the so-called “fiches belges”.

All representatives of the ENPI South partner countries expressed their satisfaction regarding the first phase of the project and pledged their commitment to the implementation of its second phase. They also agreed with the contents, methodology and aims of the project presented to them, several of them stressing the adequacy and coincidence of the project contents with the legislative reforms and improvement of their Administration currently going on in their respective countries.

The meeting was closed by Mr Antonino CREA, Head of sector Migration, Justice, Police, European Commission, EuropeAid Development and Co-operation Directorate-General, Unit F4 - Regional programmes Neighbourhood South.