

The Role of an Independent Judiciary:

*Implementation of Criminal Justice
and Commercial Law Reforms*

Final Report

“Courts of Ultimate Appeal”

Fourth Annual International Judicial Conference

September 28 - October 3, 1996

Washington, DC

**Final Report
on the
International Judicial Conference**

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In accordance with the requirements of The Center for Democracy's grant for partial funding of the International Judicial Conference awarded under the authority of Contract No. CCN-0007-C-00-4003-00 between the ARD/Checchi Rule Of Law Program and the Agency for International Development, the following report of program performance for the grant period is submitted for your review and information.

Summary

On September 28, 1996, the justices from the Supreme and Constitutional Courts of the NIS arrived in Washington, DC, to participate in the 1996 International Judicial Conference. On September 29 and 30, The Center for Democracy provided transportation and guides for cultural excursions around the city. On the afternoon of September 30 the justices toured the Media Center at the Federal Judicial Center. That evening, the conference officially opened with a reception for all participants, sponsors, and colleagues at the U.S. Supreme Court.

On October 1 and 2, 65 justices from the NIS, Eastern and Central Europe, Western Europe, and North America gathered at the Federal Judicial Center to discuss "The Role of an Independent Judiciary: Implementation of Criminal Justice and Commercial Law Reforms."¹ Specific agenda topics included "The Role of the Judiciary in Democratic Societies During Stages of Transition: Comparative European Models," "Issues of Interpretation of Commercial and Criminal Laws," "Court Organization," and "International Issues and Obligations." The conference participants were welcomed by U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno. Key participation by U.S. Supreme Court Justices Stephen Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg contributed significantly to the success of the conference.

¹ Note: All conference proceedings were interpreted simultaneously in Russian, French, and English and recorded on audiotape.

