



Position Paper

For the creation of a World Week of Legal Professions and its registration at the United Nations—
January 2012

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Presented by the International Union of Judicial Officers (UIHJ)
January 2012

The International Union of Judicial Officers (UIHJ) is an international organization created in 1952. It now has 72 member countries and organizations involved in cooperation agreements.

The headquarters of the UIHJ is set in Paris. The UIHJ account the permanent secretariats and delegations based in different continents.

The UIHJ is a member of the Economic and Social Council of the UN in New York. It also has representative offices in Geneva, Vienna and Amman.

The UIHJ aims to represent its members in international organizations and ensure cooperation with national professional bodies. It provides for the improvement of national procedural law and international treaties. It seeks to promote the ideas, projects and initiatives to the progress and the rise of the status of an independent judicial officer.

The UIHJ is still involved in the structuring of the judicial officers including his involvement in the creation and development of national professional organizations in anticipation of their accession to the UIHJ.

It participates in expertise missions with governments and international organizations.

It encourages wherever possible the creation of a body of judicial officer consisting of high-level professional jurists, fulfilling the dual function of agent in charge of the service of judicial and extra-judicial documents and the enforcement of judgments.

As regards enforcement law, the UIHJ intends to use its experience and influence to ensure effective enforcement of court decisions wherever possible.



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The UIHJ is involved in the work of the Hague Conference on Private International Law, including the development of agreements relating to the service of documents and enforcement.

The UIHJ is associated with consideration on the implementation of treaties, directives and regulations for the constitution of the European area of justice. It participated in the drafting of the Recommendation Rec (2003) 17 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe member states on enforcement of court decisions as well as the Guidelines of 17 December 2009 of the Commission for the Efficiency of Justice of the Council of Europe (CEPEJ) for better implementation of this recommendation.

As an extension of the Treaty of the Organization for Harmonization Business Law in Africa (OHADA) to standardize enforcement procedures in 16 countries in West and Central Africa, the UIHJ has undertaken a major training project for judicial officers justice, but also to all lawyers wishing to enhance their knowledge by organizing series of seminars and conferences in most of the countries concerned.

As part of its political guidelines, the UIHJ wants to develop and strengthen cooperation with all international organizations representing stakeholders of the legal world.

For the Council of Europe, "*For judicial public services to function well, a constructive dialogue is called for, not only within the different court services, but also between those principally involved - Ministries of justice, courts, public prosecutor's offices, legal and judicial professions and legal assistants*¹."

The UIHJ has been organizing for the past four years the World Day of the Judicial Officers in each of its member states.

The success with the litigants and the media of that day encouraged the UIHJ to pursue a wider international action. Indeed, the aim is have adopted by the UN a World Week of the Legal Professions.

The UIHJ believes that in an area largely dominated by global economy, it is important that lawyers fulfill their role in strengthening the presence and prestige of the law.

Naturally, this project should be supported by the largest number of Legal professions: Judicial Officers, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, notaries, clerks...

¹ Website of the Council of Europe, Judicial Professions – <http://www.coe.int>



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February 20 was declared by the UN World Day of Social Justice. During the celebration of this day on February 20, 2011, Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the UN, estimated that *"Social justice is more than an ethical imperative, it is a foundation for national stability and global prosperity. Equal opportunity, solidarity and respect for human rights -- these are essential to unlocking the full productive potential of nations and peoples"*.

What would the social justice without the legal professions?

One of the ideas which formed the basis to create a World Day of Social Justice is that social justice is fundamental to peaceful coexistence and prosperity of men within nations and between nations themselves. It seems appropriate to express how much this social justice is inseparable from the judicial professions, without which it is only a concept.

A World Week of the Judicial Professions would allow all states to celebrate it by leading at national level practical activity - professional and/or inter-professional - to promote the Legal professions and their role in development and human dignity.

The UIHJ is eager to involve all the organizations of the legal professions in this great project and invites them to join in to achieve it.



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