



Mission in Kosovo

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo has been entrusted with the lead role in matters relating to institution- and democracy-building, rule of law, and human rights in the region. The Mission forms a distinct component of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and is responsible for, among other things, training police, judicial and civil administrators; furthering the development of a civil society; supporting media development; organizing and supervising elections; and, monitoring, protecting and promoting human rights.

ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

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Kosovo Law Centre

The Kosovo Law Centre (KLC) was established by the OSCE in June 2000. The ultimate goal in creating the Centre was to cultivate the professional skills of local legal talent in order to establish a locally run, independent and sustainable NGO that embodies, develops and promotes democratic principles, multiculturalism, high ethical standards, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Since its establishment, the KLC has served as a legal think-tank devoted to the implementation of these principles.



The KLC is overseen by a Board of Directors who meet approximately every three months. Currently the Board is composed of six members which include representatives from the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society, a minority representative and the Director of the KLC.

Research and Analysis

The KLC employs lawyers specialised in civil, criminal, public administration, and human rights issues. It provides commentaries on the applicability of prior and post-1989 local laws and regulations. It drafts comments and opinions on planned legislative acts and their conformity with international and local law. KLC lawyers also hold seats in various working groups dealing with legal issues.

The compilation of the applicable laws is one of the most important projects of the KLC, as there is a general problem of access to the legislation in force. The KLC is therefore translating, publishing and disseminating important parts of the applicable law. In 2000 the Centre published three compilations: C.I (Penal Code and Penal Procedure), C.II (Traffic Safety, Family Law, and Court Regulation), C.III (Property). Recently the fourth compilation (Administrative Law) was published, and the Centre is in the process of publishing two more volumes. The KLC plans to continue to produce compilations on other specific legal issues.

Kosovo Legal Studies serves as the KLC's own law journal. The publication includes articles prepared by KLC lawyers and outside experts on different problematic issues, overviews of court cases, and overviews and references to legal books and other materials of interest. The KLC published the first edition of the journal in summer 2001, which included articles on domestic violence, legal aspects of the socio-economic transition in Kosovo, reviews of new books, reviews of court cases and other material. The second issue had articles on the European Convention on Human Rights, property law, legal representation, gender issues and others items of importance. Kosovo Legal Studies is published in Albanian, Serbian and English.

During 2001, KLC published the manual on Institutions and Procedures for International Protection of Human Rights in all three languages.

Assisting the Law Faculty Reform

The KLC concentrates on the legal education of future generations. Therefore it is playing a central role in reforming the legal training of law students.

The KLC has been instrumental in working with the Law Faculty at Prishtina/Priština University to change the curriculum to a modern European standard (the Bologna Model), which was agreed



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upon by the University in time for the 2001/2002 academic year. The KLC has been active in finalising the curriculum for legal studies based on the Bologna Declaration, developing a new examination system and improving teaching methods by creating mutual learning through inviting external co-teachers to lecture at the Law Faculty.

In addition, the KLC is providing practical legal clinics. Students are given the opportunity to attend courses covering public administration, civil law practice and criminal procedure. In public administration, sessions were held on the decision making process, administrative disputes, simulated court sessions and other issues. In civil law sessions focused on civil procedure, family, estate and will. In criminal law they covered, investigation, the role of the prosecutor, advocacy issues, and trials. Courses are taught by international and national lawyers. Internationals include: representatives from the OSCE, the European Union Department of Trade and Industry, the United States Department of State and lawyers from the KLC. National are comprised of: judges working in the Supreme Court, the District Courts or the Municipal Courts, lawyers practising in the Kosovo community and lawyers working at the KLC.

Furthermore, the KLC is co-operating with different organisations in obtaining scholarships to bring students abroad to expand their knowledge of law: in particular for those who want to specialise on public international law (including human rights), property or criminal law. The KLC has also established scholarships for students in Prishtina/Priština and exchange programs with law schools in Vienna and Graze in Austria and Utrecht in the Netherlands.

Lastly, the Centre has been working on the renovation of the Faculty library to ensure that modern materials and research sources assist the teaching process. Approximately 1,000 titles were selected to comprise a reference collection. The collection was then electronically catalogued, evaluated and made available to students. Since the reopening of the library in October 2001, the KLC has continued to identify and obtain modern books and journals which the library requires. The revamping of the library was financially supported by the German and Swiss Governments and by the American Bar Association/Central East European Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI).

Seminar and Workshops

The KLC promotes discussion in the legal community on various issues through seminars and workshops.

Since its creation, the KLC and its partners held seminars on: property issues, transformation of socially owned property, trafficking of women, alternative dispute resolution on family issues, role and legal status of the media and legal protection in post conflict Kosovo. All seminars were followed by publications of the presentations and additional essays on the topic.

As part of its Continuous Legal Education (CLE) project, the KLC has also prepared seminars for members of the legal profession on topics such as family law, civil and criminal procedure, criminal law, and administrative law. The purpose of this project is to regularly upgrade the professional knowledge of legal professionals on the selected issues. The project is implemented through short (2-3 hours) public lectures followed by discussions. More legal subjects of the lectures/discussions will be determined based on regular surveys and depending on the availability of experts.

The KLC was mandated by the UNMIK Department of Education and Science to implement the "Ministerial Empowerment Project". The purpose of this project, funded by the World Bank, was to provide basic and specialised training to the new professional staff of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. As of February 2002, future ministerial local core staff members can enjoy courses in the fields of constitutional, human rights and educational law.

Kosovo Law Centre Library

The legal community in Kosovo is facing a serious lack of information sources due to the fact that the libraries are non-existent or badly equipped. Therefore, the establishment of a law library was one of the priorities of the Centre. At the moment, the KLC library contains approximately 3,500 legal journals and books from various Western and South-East European countries. The collection covers all legal branches, regional history and political science, as well as publications from the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The library serves as a focal point for collecting local laws, decrees, regulations, jurisdiction, administrative acts, and their respective translations. It also provides a wide variety of international books with a focus on the region. The library was opened in April 2001.

Training on legal matters and participation in legal working groups upon request

Upon request, the KLC offers its expertise to any legal working group or unit of Kosovo's legal community. The KLC is a member of the Joint Advisory Council on Legislative Matters, which is reviewing draft regulations, which fall under the legislative competencies of the SRSG. Moreover, KLC is also a member of the Diversity Task Force, which was established by the Prime-Minister's Office on Good Governance, Equal Opportunity and Gender.

Staff

The KLC is staffed with national legal advisers working with an OSCE international programme co-ordinator, with a shared management scheme between a national director assisted by an international advisor. In addition to legal staff, the resources at the KLC include a librarian, language assistants and office support.

More information about the KLC can be found in the Centre's web site at: www.kosovolawcentre.org

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