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ABA RULE OF LAW INITIATIVE *Update*

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FEATURED STORY

Increasing Access to Justice in the Russian Federation



Statistics indicate that about 80% of the Russian population cannot afford to pay for legal services. Moreover, most citizens are unaware of the limited free legal services that governmental agencies, ombudsmen, legal clinics and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) offer. To help alleviate the situation, the ABA Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) is supporting the creation of free legal service networks in three pilot regions. The initiatives in St. Petersburg-Leningrad, Ulyanovsk and Nizhni Novgorod will improve access to justice and enhance legal literacy, boosting citizens' confidence in the legal system.

Following the preparation of comprehensive directories and a series of in-country roundtables on free legal aid, ABA ROLI brought an eight-member Russian delegation on a September 25 to October 2 study tour to the United States. [Read more »»](#)

MULTIMEDIA FEATURE

Partnership Serves as the Centerpiece of ABA ROLI 20th Anniversary 

On October 14 in Washington, DC, the ABA Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) celebrated its twentieth anniversary with a night that honored partnership, service and rule of law champions. As part of the evening's festivities, the Honorable Arthur Chaskalson, former chief justice of South Africa, was presented the 2010 Rule of Law Award and the Honorable Sandra Day O'Connor, former associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, was presented a Lifetime Achievement Award. [Read more »»](#)

AFRICA

Computer Lab Opens at Liberia's Sole Law School



The ABA Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) and the United Nations Development Program worked closely with the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law in Monrovia, Liberia, to establish a computer lab that will be used to train law students and faculty in basic computer use and online legal research. [Read more »»](#)

EUROPE AND EURASIA

Trainings Foster Free and Fair Elections in Kyrgyzstan



On October 10, Kyrgyzstan held emergency parliamentary elections, which followed recent political changes and tragic ethnic violence that started with the ousting of former president Kurmanbek Bakiev in April. To support free and fair elections, the ABA Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) worked to enhance the legal community's ability to manage election complaints and to increase public awareness about voter rights. [Read more »»](#)

MULTIMEDIA FEATURE

2010 Rule of Law Award: Remarks by the Honorable Arthur Chaskalson 

[Click here to view the video »»](#)

ASIA

Nepalese Network to Focus on Investigating and Prosecuting Human Traffickers

Though reliable statistics are difficult to obtain, trafficking in persons—specifically for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor within the country and abroad—is a growing problem in Nepal. As documented by the U.S. Department of State, law enforcement officials report that human trafficking is “increasingly dominated by well-organized syndicates that are often family-based and involved in other criminal activities such as drug trafficking.” [Read more »»](#)

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Workshop on Lawyer-Client Relations Held in Tunisia



In September, the ABA Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) program in Tunisia held a workshop on lawyer-client relations. Part of ABA ROLI's continuing legal education (CLE) program, the workshop was hosted in partnership with the Tunisian Bar Association. [Read more »»](#)

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

Sister Courthouse Relationship Established Between Tijuana and San Diego

Despite being physically separated by just miles, court systems along both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border have traditionally faced significant obstacles in working together on issues of mutual interest. With border violence now reaching critical levels and Mexico's state-led efforts towards comprehensive legal reform in full swing, the need for cross-border collaboration is greater than ever. [Read more »»](#)

RESEARCH LOG

Civil Society-Focused Access to Justice Assessment Tool Launched



The ABA Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) recently launched a cross-regional program to help local civil society organizations address obstacles to access to justice. ABA ROLI has developed the *Access to Justice Assessment Tool (AJAT)*, an analytical framework, accompanied by a training manual on research and writing skills, that helps civil society organizations to identify access to justice challenges

ASIA

Small Claims Courts and Barangay Justice Advocates Collaborate to Resolve Disputes

On September 17, the Gerry Roxas Foundation's Barangay Justice Peace Project (BJPP) held an event to celebrate its achievements over the past year. Backstpped by an ABA Rule of Law Initiative's (ABA ROLI's) conflict resolution program and funding support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the BJPP works closely with local government and civil society to reduce violent conflicts by promoting family and community peace. [Read more »](#)



EUROPE AND EURASIA

New Programs to Combat Human Trafficking, Advance Media Rights in Azerbaijan

The ABA Rule of Law Initiative's (ABA ROLI's) latest programs in Azerbaijan will intensify the fight against human trafficking and

and to design a context-appropriate reform program. [Read more »»](#)

EUROPE AND EURASIA

Ukrainian Advocates Adopt Mandatory Continuing Legal Education



In early September, the High Qualification Commission of Advocates in Ukraine adopted a continuing legal education (CLE) regulation, making CLE mandatory for all licensed advocates. Continuing its support of legal profession reform in the country, the ABA Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) assisted the commission in developing the CLE requirements. [Read more »»](#)

promote media rights and freedom of expression. ABA ROLI will work with local partners to implement these multi-pronged initiatives. [Read more »»](#)

ASIA

Constitutional Expert Visits Nepal

As Nepal emerges from a decade-long civil insurgency and grapples with secular democracy after 240 years of Hindu monarchy, its Constituent Assembly (CA), the country's 601-member interim legislature, has been tasked with drafting a new constitution. The CA is working to determine the nation's judicial architecture by April 2011. Critical issues include the types of courts to establish and the scope of their jurisdiction, the extent of the judiciary's independence and the appointment, disciplining and removal of judges. [Read more »»](#)

EUROPE AND EURASIA

Moldovan Lawyers Trained in Trial Advocacy Skills

In early September, the ABA Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) trained 14 Moldovan criminal defense attorneys in trial advocacy skills. The three-day training, which focused on effective opening and closing statements and direct and cross examination, included mini-lectures, demonstrations and a mock trial exercise facilitated by local and international legal professionals. By providing practical examples, Moldovan legal experts explored effective trial advocacy practices under local criminal procedure laws. [Read more »»](#)



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