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**EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW**  
**(VENICE COMMISSION)**

**SEMINAR**  
**ON “MODELS OF CONSTITUTIONAL JURISDICTION”**  
**Ramallah, Palestine**  
**25-26 October 2008**

**SYNOPSIS**

The Venice Commission organised a seminar on “*Models of Constitutional Jurisdiction*” together with the Ministry of Justice of the Palestinian National Authority in Ramallah (25-26 October 2008).

The participants included, *inter alia*, the Palestinian Minister of Justice, representatives of the Palestinian Bar Association, of the Palestinian Supreme Court, a Professor of Constitutional Law of the Birzeit University and a representative from the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights of the Faculty of Law of the University of Oslo.

The seminar dealt with the possibility of setting up a constitutional court on the basis of a Law establishing a Supreme Constitutional Court adopted in 2006, which had not yet been implemented. The participants discussed various elements of the functioning of a constitutional court, in particular its composition and jurisdiction, taking into account the extremely difficult political situation and the split between the West Bank and Gaza.

During the seminar, the Minister of Justice, Mr Khashan, requested an opinion from the Venice Commission on the Law establishing a Supreme Constitutional Court. The request was made on the basis of the special co-operation status with the Venice Commission granted to the Palestinian National Authority by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 15 June 2008. This status is comparable to that of an observer state and makes it possible for the Palestinian authorities to request opinions from the Venice Commission.