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REPORT

**INFORMATION ON TECHNOLOGIES IN THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA**

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When the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Bulgaria was established in 1991, there was only one electric typewriter at our disposal. During the past 15 years all working posts were equipped with computer sets renovated three times. These working posts were joined up into a network and the employees have been trained for the new tasks. Being connected with the governmental communication network, the Constitutional Court is provided with unlimited access to the state and other institutions in the capital, to the other bodies in the country and to all countries in the world through telephone, fax and e-mail. The access to Internet was also provided and an Internet site of the Court was created. This development raised new conditions of work in all sections, offered significant facilities and aroused the requirements.

Before sharing with you the unpretending experience of the Constitutional Court in these fields, I shall propose a definition for what do the information technologies represent like. IT are technologies for production, storage and communication of information through the using of computers and microelectronics. Following this set up, I shall try to report in a few words how the above-mentioned hardware is used in the Bulgarian Constitutional Court.

In the first place all the documentation on the cases is created on computer and it is preserved on technical carrier. This allows easy corrections of the documentation and easy following out of its development in any particular stage of the case. The administrative and organizational management also uses the means and the methods of the information technologies – for instance – keeping an eye on the moving of the documentation, using products for operational control of the international activities of the Court, of the accounting and technical services sub-system.

The information on the cases saved on a technical carrier is a ready material for its polygraphic reproduction in a format of an annual publication entitled “Decisions and resolutions of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Bulgaria”

The information technologies play a significant role in the communication of the Court with the medias. On every stage of the legal proceedings – after a motion is filed, after the hearings for admissibility of the motion and after the rulings of the Court on the merits of the dispute – the information is dispatched by e-mail to the Bulgarian telegraph agency, to the National television, to the National radio, to other electronic or printed medias. At the same time this information is loaded on the Internet site of the Court and sent to the State Gazette. Undoubtedly all this provides high level of accuracy and rapidity of the delivery of the texts.

The Internet site of the Constitutional Court is estimated as very useful in particular as it includes the full texts of all decisions and resolutions adopted by the Court from its foundation till the present, summaries of the decisions in English, French, German and Russian, retro systematic by various indexes and also a general information about the creation of the Constitutional Court and the development of its activities. Included as well are texts of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Constitutional Court Act, the Rules on the organization and activities of the Constitutional Court, biographic notes with photos of the constitutional judges, visualized chronicle for the international and others events. The utilization of our Internet site can be estimated by the following data. Since its putting into operation in October 2001 the site has been approached by about 55 thousand visitors, half of them from the country. The rest are divided between Europe and from the other continents. The analysis indicates that the site is visited comparatively intensively including from abroad. Here we ought to notice that the using of information through the Internet in general as well finds increasing application in our routine work.

The adoption and application of the information technologies provoked significant changes in the organization and the style of work of all sections and employees. Sometimes these changes were a real challenge concerning the rapidity of creation and of the implementation of the information; furthermore they change the approach and attitude to requirements of speed and precision. The same phenomenon is valid also for the using of sophisticated contemporary communication techniques, which offer convenience, but set up new requirements including knowledge of at least one of the official languages of the European institutions.

Information technologies essentially contribute to the integration processes, running between the Republic of Bulgaria and the European Union and between the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Bulgaria and the corresponding institutions, whose representatives participate in this conference.