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CDL-JU(2015)003

Or. Engl.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

Venice Forum – users' guide

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Introduction

The Venice Commission co-operates closely with constitutional courts and equivalent bodies in its member, associate member and observer states.

Together with the public CODICES database¹, the restricted on-line Venice Forum provides a permanent link between Constitutional Courts and equivalent bodies. It is a platform where liaison officers, appointed by Constitutional Courts or Courts with equivalent jurisdiction can exchange information. The full Venice Forum contains several elements:

1. The **Newsgroup** enables the Courts to actively share information with the other courts, e.g. to make on-line announcements on changes in their composition, on key judgments handed down and to make various requests to other Courts.
2. The Constitutional Justice Media **Observatory** provides on-line news articles that refer to the work of the Courts.
3. **Libraries:** (a) one electronic library contains all documents of the World Conference on Constitutional Justice (WCCJ). (b) Another library contains the full replies to the questionnaire for the 3rd Congress of the World Conference (including replies on the independence of the constitutional courts and the key-note speech on this topic).

The above parts are available to all courts working with the Venice Commission, including those within the framework of regional agreements (the Venice Commission concluded several such agreements with language based or regional groups of Constitutional Courts – French speaking, Portuguese speaking, Arab countries, in Africa, Southern Africa, Ibero-America, New Democracies).²

In addition, two more parts are available to the courts represented in the Joint Council on Constitutional Justice (JCCJ). These are the constitutional courts or equivalent jurisdictions in the Venice Commission's member States, associate member States and observer States of Venice Commission³.

4. The **classic Forum** enables Courts to make specific requests for information on case law to all the other Courts. The classic Venice Forum dealt effectively with requests covering questions ranging from children's rights, access to information and privacy, parliamentary immunity, ethical standards and the integrity of judges to assisted suicide.
5. The **Interim Bulletin** enables the liaison officers to follow the progress made with their contributions to the Bulletin on Constitutional Case-Law in real time, which includes access to all the stages of production (proof-reading the original version of the contribution submitted in either English or French, checking the headnotes and indexing to ensure that the Systematic Thesaurus was applied correctly, translating the contributions into the other language, parallel proof-reading of the translation).

¹ www.CODICES.CoE.int.

² http://www.venice.coe.int/WebForms/pages/?p=02_Regional.

³ <http://www.venice.coe.int/WebForms/members/countries.aspx> (South Africa and the Palestinian National Authority have a special status equivalent to that of the observers).

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Other liaison officers also have access to the contributions of their peers during all these stages.

The Venice Forum is available at <https://cs.coe.int/team21/veniceforum>. This site is restricted and only liaison officers for which the Secretariat of the Venice Commission has set up an account can access the Forum. In order to obtain the password (which expires every two months for security reasons) the password reset procedure must be followed, which is set out in the appendix to this guide.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat should you have any difficulties in accessing the Venice Forum as a liaison officer.

1. Newsgroup

The Newsgroup allows the liaison officers and the Secretariat to inform the users of the Venice Forum about current events regarding their respective courts (e.g. appointment of a new President or judges, adoption of an important decision, organisation of a conference etc.) and to ask other liaison officers questions.

The Newsgroup appears right after you have logged on to the Venice Forum:

The screenshot shows the Venice Forum interface. On the left is a navigation menu with the following items: Venice Forum / Forum de Venise, WCCJ Documents, WCCJ Seoul photos, WCCJ Seoul documents, **Newsgroup / Groupe de discussion**, Classic Forum / Forum classique, Constitutional Justice Observatory / Observatoire de la Justice constitutionnelle, Interim Bulletin, Venice Commission site restricted / Site de la Commission de Venise restreint, and Courts (log on before) / cours (se loguer avant). The main content area is titled 'Newsgroup / Groupe de discussion' and features a search bar and a list of items. The list has columns for 'Title', 'Created By', and 'Modified'. The items are as follows:

Title	Created By	Modified
Nomination de nouveau Président du Conseil constitutionnel du Burkina Faso	yalfredconstant@gmail.com	16 février
WCCJ: The Constitutional Court of Kuwait joins / La Cour constitutionnelle de Koweït adhère	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf	1 février
Indonesia – The New President and Vice President of the Constitutional Court / Indonésie – Les Nouveaux Président et Vice-Président de la Cour Constitutionnelle	dewi.savitri.778@gmail.com	14 janvier
WCCJ: 3rd Congress / 3e Congrès – photos	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf	31 octobre, 2014
WCCJ: The Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Costa Rica joins / La Chambre constitutionnelle de la Cour suprême de Costa Rica adhère	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf	17 octobre, 2014
WCCJ – Documents	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf	10 octobre, 2014
Three judges appointed at Constitutional Court of Jordan	AL-KHARABSHEH Nizar	8 octobre, 2014
Mr Tănase has been re-elected President of the Constitutional Court of Moldova / M. Tănase réélu Président de la Cour constitutionnelle de Moldova	GERWIEN Tanja	7 octobre, 2014

In order to add a new message (to 'post'), click on the link "New" :



Then, fill in the boxes 'Title' and 'Body' (for example):

Newsgroup / Groupe de discussion - New Item

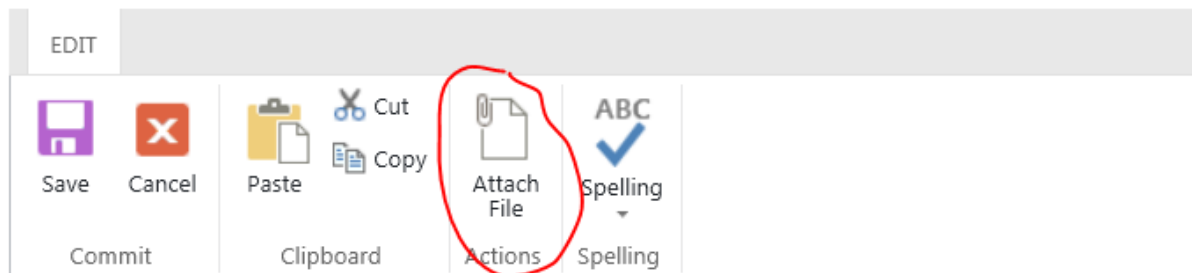
A screenshot of the "New Item" form in a newsgroup interface. At the top, there is a grey bar with the word "EDIT" in white. Below this is a toolbar with several icons: a purple floppy disk for "Save", a red square with a white 'X' for "Cancel", a yellow clipboard for "Paste", a pair of scissors for "Cut", a document with a plus sign for "Copy", a document with a paperclip for "Attach File", and a blue checkmark for "Spelling". Below the toolbar, there are two input fields. The first is labeled "Title *" and contains the text "[country] - Constitutional Court - new President / Cour constitution". The second is labeled "Body" and contains two lines of text: "The judges of the Constitutional Court elected Justice xxx as the new President of the Court." and "Les juges de la Cour ont élu M. le juge xxx président de la Cour constitutionnelle."

You can leave the box 'Expires' empty. You may post information in either English or in French, however posting in both English and in French will reach a wider audience.

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You can upload text files (e.g. a judgment) or images by clicking on the "Insert" tab.

Newsgroup / Groupe de discussion - New Item



Title *

Body

Once you have entered the relevant information into both boxes, click on 'Save'. Your 'post' will then be visible immediately to all the users of the Newsgroup.

Every Friday at 15:00 CET, an 'alert' message will be sent to all liaison officers informing them about any new 'posts' which were added during the week.

2. Constitutional Justice Media Observatory

The Constitutional Justice Media Observatory presents information on Internet news articles relating to constitutional courts and courts with equivalent jurisdiction. The Secretariat finds the information presented on this page via Google™ Internet searches (alerts) for keywords such as "constitutional court".

The Venice Commission cannot vouch for the accuracy of the reports. The Observatory does not purport to provide a complete picture of any decision or the development of constitutional justice in general.

The Secretariat is ready to add any additional information provided by the Court concerned or to remove an alert upon its request.

Observatory

- Venice Forum / Forum de Venise
- WCCJ photos Seoul
- WCCJ Documents
- Newsgroup / Groupe de discussion
- Classic Venice Forum / Forum de Venise classique
- Constitutional Justice Observatory / Observatoire de la Justice constitutionnelle**
- Interim Bulletin
- Documents
- Venice Commission siterestricted / Site de la Commission de Venise restreint
- Courts (log on before) /

Page Viewer

Constitutional Justice Media Observatory **Observatoire médias d**

For internal use only. This page presents information on news agency dispatches and press articles relating to constitutional courts and equivalent bodies. The Venice Commission cannot vouch for the accuracy of the reports. This overview does not purport to provide a complete picture of any decision or the development of constitutional justice in general. Usage interne unique me constitutionnelles et inst véracité des contenus. C développement de justic

The purpose of presenting the information in the observatory is not to present the contents of any decision but only to provide an alert that a decision has been given. **Le but de la présentati contenu des décisions**

The information presented is the result of Internet searches in the English and French languages. The Commission is ready to add any additional information provided by the Court concerned or to remove an alert upon its request. L'information présentée e Commission est prête à retirer une alerte à la der [Liens vers des éléments](#)

[Link to previous items \(before 2012\)](#)

Country / Pays	Date	Topic (E)	Thème (F)
Dominican Republic / République Dominicaine	13.02.2015	The CC bolsters Dominican Republic's alien regularization plan	La CC renforce le plan de régularisation des étrangers
Burkina Faso	12.02.2015	Kassoum Kambou appointed Chairman of the Constitutional Council	Kassoum Kambou nommé Président du Conseil constitutionnel

In order to access information on a specific country, enter CTRL+F in your browser and search for the first occurrence of the country.

3. Libraries

Two libraries present information on the World Conference on Constitutional Justice (WCCJ). The library entitled "WCCJ Documents" contains the documents produced for the Bureau (files names CDL-WCCJ) and for the General Assembly (files named CDL-WCCJ-GA). In order to access this library click on "WCCJ Documents" in the menu to the left of your screen:

DocLib

Venice Forum / Forum de Venise

WCCJ Documents

- WCCJ Seoul photos
- WCCJ Seoul documents
- Newsgroup / Groupe de discussion
- Classic Forum / Forum classique
- Constitutional Justice Observatory / Observatoire de la Justice constitutionnelle

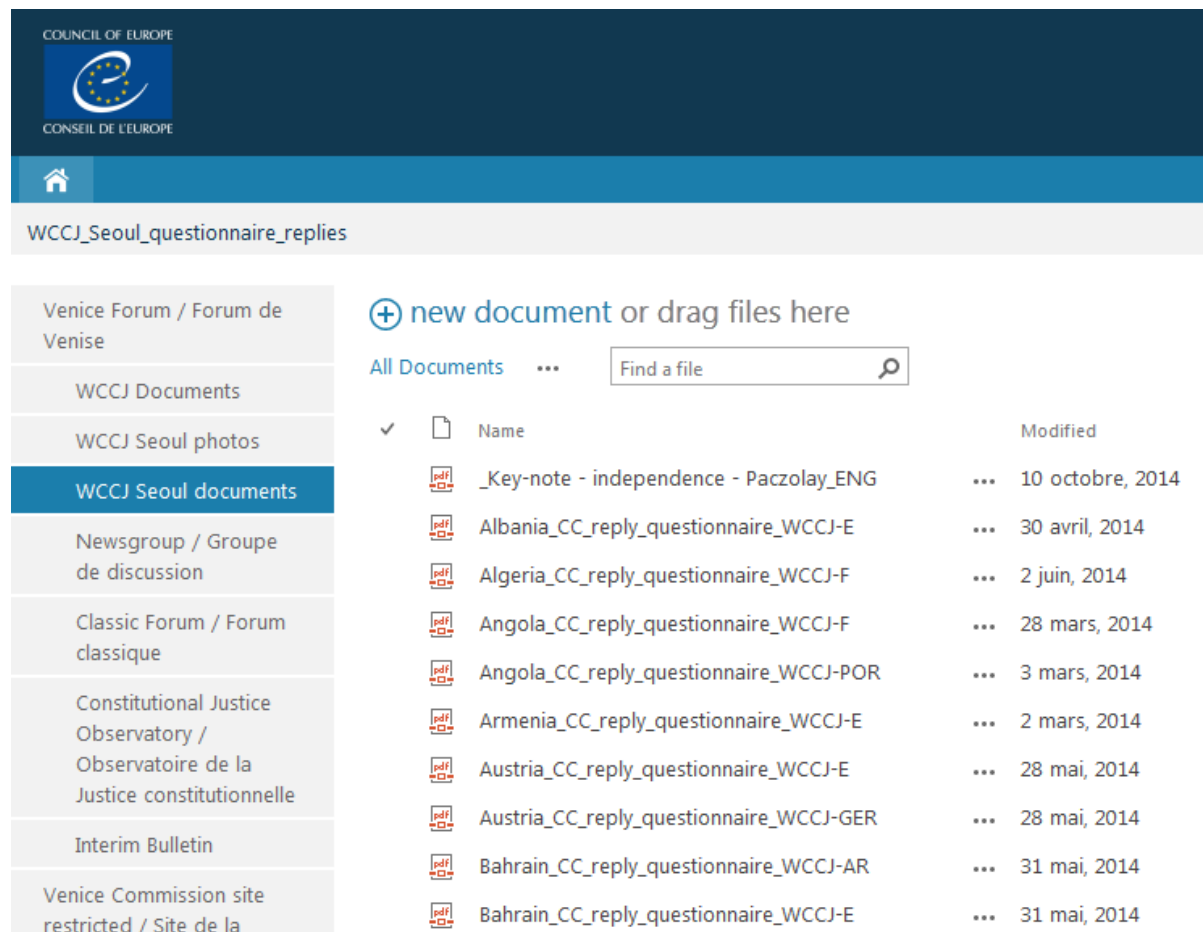
+ new document or drag files here

All Documents ... Find a file

✓	Name	Modified	Modified By
<input type="checkbox"/>	CDL-WCCJ(2011)001-AR	13 novembre, 2013	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf
<input type="checkbox"/>	CDL-WCCJ(2011)001corr-rus	13 novembre, 2013	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf
<input type="checkbox"/>	CDL-WCCJ(2011)001-e	13 novembre, 2013	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf
<input type="checkbox"/>	CDL-WCCJ(2011)001-ESP	13 novembre, 2013	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf
<input type="checkbox"/>	CDL-WCCJ(2011)001-f	13 novembre, 2013	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf
<input type="checkbox"/>	CDL-WCCJ(2011)001-ger	13 novembre, 2013	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf
<input type="checkbox"/>	CDL-WCCJ(2011)001-por	13 novembre, 2013	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf
<input type="checkbox"/>	CDL-WCCJ(2012)001ann rev-e	5 days ago	DÜRR Schnutz Rudolf

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The library entitled "WCCJ Seoul documents" contains the replies to the questionnaire prepared for the 3rd Congress of the WCCJ, together with the key-note speech for session V on the independence of the Constitutional Court. To access this library, click on "WCCJ Seoul documents" in the menu to the left of your screen:



The screenshot shows the Council of Europe website interface. At the top left is the Council of Europe logo. Below it is a navigation menu with the following items: Venice Forum / Forum de Venise, WCCJ Documents, WCCJ Seoul photos, WCCJ Seoul documents (highlighted in blue), Newsgroup / Groupe de discussion, Classic Forum / Forum classique, Constitutional Justice Observatory / Observatoire de la Justice constitutionnelle, Interim Bulletin, and Venice Commission site restricted / Site de la. The main content area features a '+ new document or drag files here' button, a search bar labeled 'Find a file', and a table of documents. The table has columns for 'Name' and 'Modified'. The documents listed are:

✓	Name	Modified
	_Key-note - independence - Paczolay_ENG	10 octobre, 2014
	Albania_CC_reply_questionnaire_WCCJ-E	30 avril, 2014
	Algeria_CC_reply_questionnaire_WCCJ-F	2 juin, 2014
	Angola_CC_reply_questionnaire_WCCJ-F	28 mars, 2014
	Angola_CC_reply_questionnaire_WCCJ-POR	3 mars, 2014
	Armenia_CC_reply_questionnaire_WCCJ-E	2 mars, 2014
	Austria_CC_reply_questionnaire_WCCJ-E	28 mai, 2014
	Austria_CC_reply_questionnaire_WCCJ-GER	28 mai, 2014
	Bahrain_CC_reply_questionnaire_WCCJ-AR	31 mai, 2014
	Bahrain_CC_reply_questionnaire_WCCJ-E	31 mai, 2014

Please note that the documents in both libraries are only accessible as "read-only". This means that the liaison officers can access them, but cannot make any alterations. If a change to a document needs to be made, please contact the Secretariat.

4. Classic Forum

The classic Venice Forum enables a liaison officer to make quick requests for information to all other liaison officers participating in the Joint Council on Constitutional Justice. The classic Forum works through e-mail exchanges and the Venice Forum has an archive that contains all previous requests made since the establishment of the classic Forum in 1997. It is therefore a rich source of information on case-law and other aspects of the work of constitutional courts.

Examples of topics dealt with in the classic Forum are questions ranging from children's rights, access to information and privacy, parliamentary immunity, ethical standards or the integrity of judges to assisted suicide. Even practical questions such as the judges attire have been discussed in the Forum.

The liaison officer from the requesting Court sends an e-mail to the Secretariat of the Venice Commission which is, in turn, forwarded to all other liaison officers. The replies are then sent to

the requesting liaison officer. A copy of the reply is sent to the Secretariat which archives it on the Venice Forum site.

Click on “Classic Forum” in the menu on the left side of your screen to access the classic Forum:



You will then see the list of previous requests in alphabetical order (sorted by country abbreviation ALB – Albania, AUT – Austria, CHI – Chili, CZE – Czech Republic, ECH – European Court of Human Rights etc.).

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You can click on each request to see the archive of all messages sent and received relating to this request. If the reply came in an attachment to the message sent, a link to the attachment is also available:

@@

Radoslaw_Puchta
06/03/2014 16:30:25
Dear Ms Matochová,

Please find attached a short memo regarding our recent jurisprudence on :

Best regards,

Radoslaw Puchta
Liaison Officer *ad interim*
Constitutional Tribunal of Poland

Link to attachment: ([Poland](#) - [docx](#))
Link to attachment: ([K_1_12_en.pdf](#))
Link to attachment: ([SK_11_11_en.pdf](#))

@@

Kristi_Aule_Parmas
04/03/2014 14:15:25
RE: **Question:**

The list of requests in the Classic Forum is sorted by country and by date. When you click on “Link to the Alphabetical Index”, a list of alphabetical keywords will appear:

Act, appeal, no longer in force during proceedings	2001_09_26 GEO Loss o
Act, unconstitutional, lack of implementing provisions	2006_12_06 EST Proced
Action, vexatious, sanctions, number of cases	2008_01_28 SLO Sanctio
Actions, unlawful, investigation bodies, damages	2000_04_27 LTU Damag
Adultery, punishment, law	2007_10_25 KOR Punish
Age, retirement, adjustment and equality	2013_04_19 POL Adjust
Agreement, state and private company, approved by resolution of government	2009_10_28 LTU Constit
Agreements, investment, international, national law, status	2002_01_11 MKD Statu:
Allowance, President’s spouse, former	2014_01_09 LTU Annuit
Ambassador, appointment, conditions	2007_03_02 MKD Appo
Anonymity, parties, constitutional complaint	2005_03_29 SLO anonym
Anonymity, parties, judgment, policy	2010_06_25 RSA anonym

When you A click on the link to the right of the keyword, the replies to this request will appear.

A specific user’s guide explains the functioning of the Classic Forum (CDL-JU(2008)001rev⁴). The main rules provide that a request should relate to a case pending before the requesting court and that it should seek information (at least in part) on the case-law of the other Courts.

5. Interim Bulletin

The liaison officers for Courts participating in the Joint Council on Constitutional Justice contribute to the printed Bulletin on Constitutional Case-Law three times a year. This Bulletin is published by the Venice Commission in English and in French. The contributions reach the Secretariat in one of the two languages, they are first proof-read for formal coherence (sub-titles, etc.), then on substance, for linguistic correctness and the proper use of constitutional terminology and whether the “headnotes” express the main points of law (*Leitsätze, massime*) in an abstract manner. The contributions are then translated into the other language and the translation is again proof-read by native language lawyers.

⁴ <http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-JU%282008%29001rev-e>.

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These steps take several months to complete and the liaison officers can monitor the progress made with of their contributions in the 'interim Bulletin'. In order to access the interim Bulletin, click on the link "Interim Bulletin" in the menu on the left of your screen:



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Interim-Bulletin

Venice Forum / Forum de Venise

WCCJ Documents

WCCJ Seoul photos

WCCJ Seoul documents

Newsgroup / Groupe de discussion

Classic Forum / Forum classique

Constitutional Justice Observatory / Observatoire de la Justice constitutionnelle

Interim Bulletin

Venice Commission site restricted / Site de la Commission de Venise

INTERIM BULLETIN

List updated on / liste mise à jour le 07.03.2015 time: 22:00:21 Bulletins:

[2014_3](#)

[2014_2](#)

[2014_1](#)

Bulletin: 2014_3

Armenia / Arménie: [arm-14-3-e.doc](#) (20.01.2015)

Austria / Autriche: [aut-14-3-e.doc](#) (25.02.2015)

Azerbaijan / Azerbaïdjan: [aze-14-3-e.doc](#) (25.02.2015)

Belgium / Belgique: [bel-14-3 f \(partie 2\).doc](#) (24.02.2015)

Belgium / Belgique: [bel-14-3-f \(partie 1\).doc](#) (24.02.2015)

Bosnia and Herzegovina / Bosnie - Herzégovine: [bih-14-3-e.doc](#) (30.01.2015)

Belarus / Bélarus: [blr-14-3-e.doc](#) (02.02.2015)

Brazil / Brésil: [bra-14-3-e \(part 1\).doc](#) (02.02.2015)

Brazil / Brésil: [bra-14-3-e \(part 2\).doc](#) (02.02.2015)

Bulgaria / Bulgarie: [bul-14-3-f.doc](#) (14.01.2015)

Chile / Chili: [chi-14-3-e.doc](#) (02.02.2015)

Please note that the interim Bulletin presents the contributions as they are being processed, but the interim Bulletin is not a database. The same contributions are also available in the section “Précis being processed” of the public CODICES⁵ database where they are fully searchable as part of CODICES:

The screenshot displays the CODICES database interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for Contents, Document, Results, Bookmarks, Add BM, Email it, Settings, and Help. Below this is a search form. The left sidebar shows a tree view of the database structure, with 'Précis being processed / Décisions abrégées en cours de traitement' highlighted in red. The main content area shows the details for 'AUT-2014-3-003', including its citation, keywords from a systematic thesaurus, keywords from an alphabetical index, headnotes, and a summary.

AUT-2014-3-003

a) Austria / b) [Constitutional Court](#) / c) / d) 08-10-2014 / e) G 97/2013 / f) / g) / h) [www.i](#)

Keywords of the Systematic Thesaurus:

[2.1.1.4.4.](#) Sources - Categories - Written rules - International instruments - **Europ**
[5.2.1.](#) Fundamental Rights - Equality - **Scope of application.**
[5.3.32.](#) Fundamental Rights - Civil and political rights - **Right to private life.**
[5.3.39.](#) Fundamental Rights - Civil and political rights - **Right to property.**

Keywords of the alphabetical index:

[Private life](#), burial / [Equality](#) / [Property](#), [right](#), scope.

Headnotes:

Neither the right to respect for private life, nor the general principle of equality deny the Sta structure. The very personal right to give instructions as to the treatment of his or her body a

Summary:

Under the Vienna Act on Dead Bodies and Burials (*Wiener Leichen- und Bestattungsgesetz*) until the day of the mourning ceremony (burial).

Conclusion

The Venice Forum is an easily accessible and versatile tool that has been created to provide liaison officers with a means to rapidly exchange information between each other. The Secretariat encourages the liaison officers to use this tool actively for the benefit of all Courts.

⁵ www.CODICES.CoE.int.

Appendix – password reset procedure

Password reset procedure

It is necessary to (re)initialise your password either when you access the restricted sites of the Venice Commission for the first time or when the password has expired two months after the last reset procedure.

In order to (re)initialise your password, first read the instructions below:

1. go to the Council of Europe Seagma site for access control
2. on that page, click on "Reset password"
3. enter your e-mail address:
4. copy the security code into the box to the right, e.g. "7fk8c" for an image such as:



5. click the Reset button

Link to the Council of Europe Seagma site for access control, where you can follow the four points above: <http://www.seagma.coe.int>

You will then receive an e-mail (example below):

From: noreply-seagma@coe.int

Subject: Council of Europe-Reset password/Conseil de l'Europe-Réinitialisation mot de passe

-English-

Hello,

You have asked for a password reset allowing you to access the Council of Europe's restricted sites.

To confirm that you are the person requesting the password reset allowing you to access the Council of Europe's restricted sites, please click on the following link:

[Reset](#)

If you are not the person requesting this reset, you may delete this message.

This email is sent from a technical address, thank you to not reply.

If you have any question, please contact your correspondent at the Council of Europe.

Regards,

Directorate of Information Technologies

Council of Europe

In this message, click on the "Reset" link and you will receive another message, which gives you the new password, e.g.:

From: noreply-seagma@coe.int

Subject: Council of Europe-Reset password/Conseil de l'Europe-Réinitialisation mot de passe

-English-

Hello,

You have asked for a password reset allowing you to access the Council of Europe's restricted sites.

Here is your new password

Password: *****

To change your password please, click on the following link:

[Change password](#)

This email is sent from a technical address, thank you to not reply.

If you have any question, please contact your correspondent at the Council of Europe.

Regards,

Directorate of Information Technologies

Council of Europe

By clicking on « Change password » you can change this password for a different one, which is easier to remember.

When you enter the password, please type it manually or, when you wish copy it from the e-mail, make sure that you copy only the visible characters and not any additional character (space) at the end of the line.

We are sorry for these complicated procedures, which are part of the general Council of Europe access control system.