

Distinguished guests, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia let me welcome all the participants of the European Penitentiary Training Academy annual meeting and express our gratitude to the organizers of this meeting. Today, as a result of rapid development and growing accomplishments of Armenia in the international arena, a major issue is to have qualified professionals based on international experience. We attach great significance to such events, which equip us with knowledge and provide opportunities for improvement of knowledge and skills.

Now I'd like to introduce the Law Institute of the Ministry of Justice of Armenia and the activity it implements.

The Law Institute of the Ministry of Justice is a state non-commercial organization. It was established on 18 October 1990 by the Republic of Armenia Government Decree "On reorganization of the Institute of qualification improvement of the legal staff of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia". As a result, it was reorganized into the Law Institute of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia upon the RA Government Decree No 224-N of 2003 "On reorganization of the state organization into the "Law Institute of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia".

The institute organizes trainings for the penitentiary servants of the Ministry of Justice, the Judicial Acts Enforcement Service officers, civil servants and notaries – i.e. trainings for almost 3000 employees.

The curricula of the trainings of penitentiary servants and Judicial Acts Enforcement Service officers are elaborated in accordance with group classifications of positions.

Trainings of civil servants are implemented based on the following topics: "Issues on legal guarantees in relevant legal bodies", "Fight against corruption", "Evaluation of regulatory impact".

Trainings for skills improvement on notary activity implementation are organized for notaries and notary candidates. The subjects delivered include "Notary legislation", "Notary ethics", "Administrative legislation", "Criminal legislation".

Training courses for the servants of the state register of legal entities are being organized within the program on "Registration process and service quality".

Taking into consideration increase in the number of foreign prisoners in the Armenian penitentiary institutions, foreign language training course for the employees of penitentiary institutions directly involved in relationship with foreign prisoners have been organized.

In order to raise the efficiency of trainings, our Institute constantly applies innovative teaching programs and methods, active use of IT technologies and software in training processes.

Different didactic materials, films, thematic videos, etc. have been elaborated. Currently, through aggregating the available materials, e-learning programs are being developed. In particular,

1. “Fight against corruption and anti-corruption strategy”
2. Seismic protection in penitentiary system
3. Penalties implementation in prisons that are related to deprivation of liberty.

The Institute has already organized distance/online conferences and different events with some of the penitentiary institutions. At present, works are being carried out to enlarge the scopes of distance learning in order to involve all the penitentiary institutions. The Law Institute of the Ministry of Justice foresees theoretical and possible practical parts of distance learning trainings.

The Law College operates under the Institute. The college carries out vocational education in accordance with the educational standards. Many of its graduates have been recruited in the penitentiary system of the Ministry of Justice of Armenia.

The experts’ working group actively performs its activity under the Law Institute; its main task is to carry out research of the legal systems of Armenia and other countries, to provide expertise on acting laws, to propose recommendations on making amendments in the legal acts of Armenia, as well as to draft new law drafts.

The Institute also publishes legal magazine that is included in the list of scientific periodicals approved by the Commission on Higher Qualification. Among other publications are numerous books on professional improvements, teaching manuals, selections of legal acts, including “Anti-corruption strategy in the criminal system”, “International benchmarks on behavior towards prisoners”, “Selection of legal acts regulating activity of enforcement services”, etc.

The Institute is in close co-operation with international organizations, such as OSCE, USAID, GIZ, RZ, Council of Europe, EU, etc., organizing joint activities. In particular, a number of trainings and seminars were organized, educational documentary and informative films were produced jointly with IRZ and the Council of Europe.

The Institute is in constant collaboration with the National Academy of the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine, Academy of the Ministry of Interior of Belorussia, Penitentiary and experimental training center of the Ministry of corrective works and legal support of Georgia, as well as Academy of sentence performance of the Russian Federation. Cooperation includes mainly educational, scientific activities, trainings of employees, qualification improvement, organization of international conferences, seminars, implementation of joint scientific research projects, exchange of experience of the teaching staff and experts, exchange of teaching materials (curricula, methods), exchange of literature, use of information resources (e-catalogues, and literature repository), exchange of experience in modern teaching methods and other activities of joint interest.

As a result of studying the international experience, musical therapy course is planned for the current year. It will be used specifically for the trainings of the employees of special penitentiary institutions of juvenile prisoners.

In order to ensure the availability of legal literature, the Institute initiated, jointly with all the higher educational institutions of Armenia, creation of electronic library that will include the latest national and international legal literature.

Moreover, this year the new building of the Institute will be ready; it will consist of a hostel, gyms, auditoriums, electronic and training combat shooting ranges.

Concluding my speech, I'd like to once again express my deepest gratitude for organizing this international conference.

Thanks for your attention

A. Asatryan