


Hague Conference Publishes New Principles for Judicial Communication

The Hague Conference on Private International Law has announced the publication of the General Principles for Judicial Communications.

This document represents the latest version of Emerging Guidance  regarding the development of the International Hague Network of Judges and a set of General Principles for Judicial Communications within the context of the Hague Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (hereinafter the “1980 Hague Child Abduction Convention”) and the International Hague Network of Judges, including commonly accepted safeguards for direct judicial communications in specific cases.

The creation of the International Hague Network of Judges specialising in family matters was first proposed at the 1998 De Ruwenberg Seminar for Judges on the international protection of children. It was recommended that the relevant authorities (e.g., court presidents or other officials as is appropriate within the different legal cultures) in the different jurisdictions designate one or more members of the judiciary to act as a channel of communication and liaison with their national Central Authorities, with other judges within their jurisdictions and with judges in other Contracting States, in respect, at least initially, of issues relevant to the 1980 Hague Child Abduction Convention. It was felt that the development of such a network would facilitate communications and co-operation between judges at the international level and would assist in ensuring the effective operation of the 1980 Hague Child Abduction Convention. More than 15 years later, it is now recognised that there is a broad range of international instruments, both regional and multilateral, in relation to which direct judicial communications can play a role. The International Hague Network currently includes more than 80 judges from more than 55 States in all continents.

The General Principles for Judicial Communications are work in progress, as

they could be improved in the future. Comments and suggestions from States, interested organisations, or judges, especially members of the International Hague Network of Judges, are always welcome.