CEELI INSTITUTE
PRAGUE
ADVANCING THE RULE OF LAW

ANNUAL REPORT 2013
MISSION OF THE CEELI INSTITUTE

The CEELI Institute is an independent, not-for-profit, international provider of post-graduate, professional legal education headquartered in Prague, Czech Republic.

Our mission is to develop and train an international network of legal professionals committed to a rule of law. Through innovative training programs and other activities, we work with judges, lawyers, civil society, government officials, and other professionals in countries building laws-based societies to support fair, transparent, and effective judicial systems, strengthen democratic institutions, build respect for human rights, and promote the continuing development of market economies.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Letter from our Founder and Chairman of the Board ........................................ 2  
2. Program Highlights, 2012-2013 ........................................................................ 3  
3. Conference of Chief Justices of Central & Eastern Europe .......................... 4  
4. Central & Eastern European Judicial Exchange Network ............................. 5  
5. Tunisia: Building Judicial Integrity ................................................................ 7  
6. Working with the Anti-Corruption Agency in Tunisia ................................. 8  
7. Anti-Corruption Training for Prosecutors, Investigators & Judges ............. 9  
8. Working with Burmese Legal Associations on Building Practical Advocacy Skills .......................................................... 10  
9. The CEELI Institute’s 2013 Annual Meeting ................................................ 11  
10. Villa Gröbovka ............................................................................................ 12  
11. Welcoming New Leadership .................................................................... 14  
12. CEELI Institute Contributors ................................................................... 15  
13. CEELI Institute Boards & Management .................................................... 17
This past year the CEELI Institute continued to broaden both its reach as well as its substantive mix of training programs and courses. While continuing its historical focus on transitional countries in Central & Eastern Europe, this past year the Institute conducted rule of law training in other parts of the world, including conducting programs in Burma and Tunisia. And one program at the Institute this past year attracted participants from Armenia, Tajikistan, Albania, Tunisia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Moldova, and Bhutan.

The Institute also continues to be a sought-after resource by those promoting the rule of law and democratic values in countries whose transitions are struggling, or regressing. To date, the Institute has welcomed training program participants from more than 35 countries, with recent inquiries coming from as far away as the south Pacific.

With official corruption emerging as one of the most fundamental threats to the rule of law, the Institute has expanded its anti-corruption initiatives, including a unique, nuts-and-bolts training program, “Investigating and Prosecuting Official Corruption,” which is offered annually for prosecutors, investigators, and judges. The Institute has also welcomed the highly regarded International Foundation for Electoral Systems ("IFES") to the Institute as both a sub-tenant and future collaborator on election law projects. The Institute’s Chief Justices Conference has become an annual, independent event and has spawned the Institute’s Judicial Network and its Judicial Integrity Roundtables.

With great dedication and leadership from Quinn O’Keefe, the Institute’s Executive Director, the Institute has become operationally self-sustaining, with annual operating revenues exceeding annual operating expenses. The Institute now also boasts an exceptionally talented staff that has expanded to manage increased levels of activity at the Institute. And, as always, the governing and advisory boards of the Institute continue to provide strong support and thoughtful guidance.

In the coming year, Quinn O’Keefe will become the Vice-Chair of both the U.S. and Czech Institute boards. We are delighted that she will be succeeded as Executive Director by Chris Lehmann, who brings wonderful experience and expertise in rule of law work, including having served in the late 1990s as CEELI’s first criminal law liaison in Ukraine.

I am accordingly pleased to be able to report on the successes and vibrancy of the CEELI Institute. Although challenges remain, the Institute is implementing its important mission more actively and effectively than ever before.

Homer E. Moyer, Jr.
Chair and Founder, The CEELI Institute
The CEELI Institute offers a range of training and exchange programs that promote human rights, support democratic institutions, and help build free market economies. Since our founding in 1999 we have provided post-graduate legal education and exchange to more than 2,500 legal professionals from over 40 countries, including 250 Tunisian judges, 140 Iraqi judges, and most of the Afghan Supreme Court. CEELI Institute instructors volunteer their time and expertise as a pro bono public service. Our programs are intensive, practical, and skills-based.

Programs underway include legal skills trainings for networks of lawyers in Burma; Judicial Integrity trainings for judges in Central & Eastern Europe; strengthening networks among professionals committed to the rule of law in countries resisting or repressing legal reform; promoting judicial independence in Tunisia, including outreach to every judge in Tunisia; and initiation of new programs to develop and enhance the capacity of the Tunisian Anti-Corruption Agency to investigate official corruption. In addition, IFES, the highly regarded International Foundation for Electoral Systems, is establishing a European headquarters at the Institute in anticipation of joint initiatives in election law and practice.
In 2007, the CEELI Institute helped launch the Conference of Chief Justices of Central & Eastern Europe to engage in addressing judicial corruption from the highest levels of the region’s judiciaries. Through roundtables hosted by the CEELI Institute and sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, the chief justices and high court participants developed strategies and best practices for promoting judicial integrity and accountability, relying on their own experiences and input from international experts, including Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Sandra Day O’Connor.

This Conference now has become a stand-alone and sustainable network that meets annually with the continuing guidance and expertise of Friends of the CEELI Institute Board Member, Judge John Walker of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Conference was hosted this year, in June 2013, by the President of the Supreme Court of Montenegro, who welcomed colleagues from seventeen countries across the region for three days of candid, off-the-record discussions. Topics included judicial independence, efficient case management, and examination of the domestic and international pressures affecting the operation of justice.
Expert faculty member, Judge Mark L. Wolf in an interview to RFE/RL said about his experience leading the Network Roundtable: “I am [in Prague] for a very promising program of the CEELI Institute. They have developed, they have begun to form and permit to be forged a network of young judges from more than a dozen Central European, Eastern European, and Balkan countries who are dedicated to establishing impartial judiciaries in their countries. […] I’ve really been impressed by these young judges who may be a minority at the moment, who are in their country working very hard to establish impartial, independent judiciaries. They are now learning from each other’s experiences as part of this network and focus on a very important program.”


In 2012 the CEELI Institute launched the Central & Eastern European Judicial Exchange Network to bring together reform-minded judges and court administrators from across the region. With financial support from the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, we brought together 51 non-high court judges and court administrators from 18 countries. Drawing upon our experience with the Conference of Chief Justices of Central & Eastern Europe, we designed a series of events to build a sustainable peer support network around the issues of judicial integrity and court efficiency. The group’s mission statement is: A Network of Central & Eastern European judges and court administrators, facilitated by the CEELI Institute, who support building a culture of democratic values based on rule of law, judicial independence, transparency and integrity by providing a platform for exchange of expertise and good practice.

CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPEAN JUDICIAL EXCHANGE ROUNDTABLE

In November 2013 the CEELI Institute hosted the Network’s second annual Roundtable in Prague for 34 non-high court judges and court administrators from 17 countries in the region that participate in the Central & Eastern European Judicial Exchange Network. The program centered on best practices for building the public’s confidence in the judiciary and effective anti-corruption efforts as well as on developing governance structures for the Network. Roundtable participants also discussed developing the Network into a self-sustaining entity and established several future objectives for achieving this goal.

The Honorable Theodore Sedgwick, U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia, opened the Roundtable with remarks on the challenges facing the judiciary in Slovakia and strategies that the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava is developing with Slovak stakeholders. Two expert faculty, the Honorable Mark L. Wolf, United States District Judge, and the Honorable Jan Westhoff, Vice-President of the Amsterdam District Court, led Roundtable discussions with several participant judges who served as moderators.
To capitalize on the momentum from November’s Roundtable, the CEELI Institute brought nine Network participants back to the Institute in December for an intensive, one-day strategic planning workshop. Participants at this workshop agreed to form a Network Advisory Board that will take on leadership responsibilities for the Network in 2014, set an overarching theme of Maintaining Judicial Independence for 2014, and adopted a Network mission statement.

BENCHBOOK INNOVATIONS WORKSHOP – BUDAPEST, HUNGARY – JULY 2013

In July 2013 the CEELI Institute and the Hungarian Academy of Justice, National Office for the Judiciary, hosted a workshop for the Central & Eastern European Judicial Exchange Network at the Academy’s facility in Budapest titled, Benchbook Innovations: Improving Benchbook Development and Integration into Practice. The Institute and the Academy brought together participants from Albania, Georgia, Hungary, and Latvia, along with two experienced legal experts for a discussion of best practices and the challenges involved in developing a benchbook. Each participant attended the workshop because he or she is involved in a project to develop or refine benchbooks in his or her home country.

Judge Ilona Ruke of Latvia similarly said, “the lessons I learned became the foundation for a handbook I am developing for judges and other lawyers that practice in cross-boarder proceedings.”

CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPEAN JUDGES SHARE EXPERIENCE IN TUNISIA

Several members of the Central & Eastern European Judicial Exchange Network have now served as trainers in the Institute’s Tunisia Judicial Training program. Not only do the Tunisian judges appreciate learning from the experiences of judges from Central & Eastern Europe, but the Network judges find interacting with their Tunisian counterparts equally enriching.

“What I found most exciting about the experience of being a trainer in Tunisia was speaking to the Tunisian judges. They were so intelligent and very open to discussing the issues they face in their work. For me, it was inspiring and a learning opportunity.” - Judge Mindaugas Simonis, Lithuania
In 2012 our work brought us to Tunisia where the CEELI Institute is part of an extraordinary effort to train nearly one thousand judges on judicial accountability and judging in a democracy. Funded by the Swedish government and in partnership with the International Legal Assistance Consortium ("ILAC") and the International Bar Association ("IBA"), this program brings together judges from all ranks and courts in Tunisia to twice-monthly trainings on how to build the public’s confidence in the judiciary.

The CEELI Institute and the IBA partnership have run the bi-monthly courses since March 2012 with each program consisting of approximately 30 judges. The course stresses the leadership role courts play in society, the importance of judicial independence, and political issues of leadership. Consistent with these ideas, the course provides training in a variety of areas, including the role of a judge in a democratic society, tools required to make courts fair and efficient, judicial independence, ethics, relations with the public and with other branches of government, court administration, human rights principles, and transparency in procedure and decisions. Tunisian participants in the course report the immediate positive impact the training has had on their work on matters such as ethical principles and preparation of judicial decisions.

This course is led by the CEELI Institute’s Director of Special Projects, Joel Martin. Faculty members brought to Tunis have been both extremely well received by the participant judges and uniformly impressed by the Tunisian judges. The faculty has included U.S. Federal District and Appeals Court judges, a former Chief Justice of Sweden’s Supreme Administrative Court, a judge from the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, justices from the High Court in Prague, and judges from a host of courts throughout Central & Eastern Europe.

"Joel Martin’s provocative questions brought the best out of the judges who quickly came forward with their problems and concerns in a spontaneous way. It was a very smart methodology which made participants feel very comfortable and willing to participate in discussions more freely." – Tunisian Judge Training Participant

"I’ve long been devoted to international judicial cooperation and the mutual efforts of judges around the world to teach each other and share with each other their individual experiences. This week here in Tunis has been one of the best I have ever participated in. The concept of the program—bringing the ideals of democracy to the judges of Tunis—has been well received. I found the participants to be especially engaged, thoughtful, and willing to share. The CEELI Institute has done just a magnificent job of marshaling resources and bringing people, judges, to Tunis to assist the judges here in their efforts to move democracy forward." – Judge Andre Davis, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
One man’s stand against corruption in Tunisia sparked the Arab Spring. Now, nearly three years later, that momentum against official corruption continues, and Tunisia’s new government has responded with the establishment of the independent Tunisian Anti-Corruption Agency headed by the internationally renowned Tunisian lawyer Samir Annabi.

Mr. Annabi has an incredible task before him, and he has identified building the capacity of his staff and others in the government charged with investigating and prosecuting official corruption as his first priority. With this in mind, Mr. Annabi observed the CEELI Institute’s “Anti-Corruption Training for Judges, Prosecutors and Investigators” in March 2013. Mr. Annabi’s enthusiastic response to the course led to a request for similar training by the CEELI Institute in Tunisia.

With funding from the Swedish International Development Agency and in partnership with the International Legal Assistance Consortium, the CEELI Institute’s program launched with a series of comprehensive consultations with the Tunisian Anti-Corruption Agency leadership and staff to develop a baseline of their training needs on how to identify, investigate, and build cases for prosecution. In addition, CEELI Institute experts will create a baseline of the training needs of other government actors charged with investigating and building cases for prosecution, such as judges, prosecutors, and investigators.

Based off of the findings of the baseline reports, the CEELI Institute will conduct a series of trainings with the Tunisian Anti-Corruption Agency’s personnel to improve their capacity to prevent and investigate cases of official corruption over the course of three years. The Anti-Corruption Agency and the Institute will also identify and include non-agency personnel in Tunisia who would stand to professionally benefit from a certain training module. Through joint trainings the Agency will build professional working relationships with their colleagues from other government offices and will begin to lead on identifying topics for training and expert guidance.
With a generous grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the CEELI Institute brought together the world’s most experienced anti-corruption prosecutors, forensic accountants, and practitioners to design and teach our newest program, “Anti-Corruption Training for Prosecutors, Investigators and Judges,” that launched in March 2013. The weeklong program included participants from Albania, Armenia, Bhutan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Moldova, Tajikistan, and Tunisia and provided a comprehensive framework for investigating and prosecuting official corruption. It is the Institute’s first tuition-based course and one that we hope to offer on a regular basis, especially as official corruption has emerged as one of the most prevalent and pernicious threats to the rule of law around the world.

Like all CEELI Institute programs, this one relied heavily on participant engagement and interactive teaching techniques. Throughout the program, participants, who included judges, prosecutors, investigators, and anti-corruption agency officials, worked through a hypothetical scenario to develop a case theory and investigative and prosecutorial plans. Faculty drew upon past and present cases to illustrate corruption schemes and successful preventative and investigative techniques. Course materials included a flash drive with a comprehensive electronic library of anti-corruption reference and resource materials, and faculty used participant polling throughout the course.

The Honorable, U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Norman L. Eisen, led a very well-received session on how to prevent official corruption from the top down drawing upon his experiences as lead architect of the Obama administration’s ethics and government reform policy.

Program endorsers also included the International Anti-Corruption Resource Center and the International Bar Association.

I think that the training was very helpful and well organized. As a prosecutor I engaged in similar cases and I expanded my knowledge in the field of fight against corruption. Certainly I believe that, first and foremost, lectures by eminent experts were excellent. I also found that the case study participants contributed to a better understanding of how complicated this type of investigation can be and how an investigation should be developed.

- Svetlanka Bijelic, Prosecutor of Special Prosecutors Office Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina
This summer our work also brought us to Burma at the request of local civil society and lawyers’ networks. After decades of government repression and scrutiny there is a modest opening for lawyers in Burma to organize to promote a rule of law and human rights. To seize this opportunity, the Myanmar Lawyers Networks requested that the CEELI Institute, in partnership with the Burma Center Prague, help to build their members’ practical legal skills through a series of training and exchange workshops. Our workshops with the Myanmar Lawyers Networks launched this August and were an opportunity for the participants to meet with their international and local colleagues to discuss the unique role lawyers can play in advancing human rights and rule of law. We discussed lessons learned from other countries that have undergone similar transitions and how to conduct targeted outreach to educate communities on their rights.

Our funder, the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has renewed its support of this program for an additional two years.

**WORKING WITH BURMESE LEGAL ASSOCIATIONS ON BUILDING PRACTICAL ADVOCACY SKILLS**

**Partnership with the Burma Center Prague**

The CEELI Institute is proud to be working with the Burma Center Prague, a Czech not-for profit that has been promoting Burmese refugee rights in Europe and Asia since 2006 through services and advocacy. In addition to working with legal associations in Burma to build practical advocacy skills, our program and partnership also includes public events in Prague to highlight human rights and rule of law development in Burma today. The first public outreach event was a documentary film event in Summer 2013.
The CEELI Institute’s annual meeting is an opportunity for our boards to meet with distinguished members of the international legal community, local stakeholders, and law reform experts as we evaluate priorities for our rule of law work.

At the CEELI Institute’s annual meeting this July 7-9 in Prague we explored “second generation” rule of law issues, with participants from the international legal community, including stakeholders from Central & Eastern Europe, North Africa, and Southeast Asia. We chose this topic as we have now passed the 20-year mark in law reform initiatives by the CEELI Institute and the predecessor rule of law project that established the Institute, ABA CEELI.

In exploring this year’s theme of “second generation” rule of law promotion, we brought to Prague experts from Central & Eastern Europe, and legal reformers from the Middle East and North Africa to discuss rule of law issues affecting their work today. We held panel discussions on a range of topics, including lessons learned from Central & Eastern Europe, the dynamics in countries now undergoing change, such as Iraq and Burma, and new challenges such as official corruption, one of the most pervasive dangers to the rule of law today.

THE INTERNATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION WAS THE KEY SPONSOR OF THE CEELI INSTITUTE’S 2013 ANNUAL MEETING.
The CEELI Institute is housed in the historic Villa Gröbovka, in the heart of Prague, Czech Republic. The Villa is a Czech national historic building that dates back to 1871, and, in a unique partnership, the CEELI Institute has leased it from the city of Prague 2 for 50 years. In return, the Institute agreed to renovate the building back to its original splendor.

The CEELI Institute completed the Villa’s transformation into a state-of-the-art conference and residential center in June 2008. The renovations were made possible with a seed grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development and key financial support from individuals and corporations, including SKANSKA, Czech Republic that also served as general contractor. The architectural husband and wife team, Michal Hron and Henreta Hronova, skillfully implemented the renovations.
THE CEELI INSTITUTE REGULARLY OPENS THE VILLA TO FELLOW NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PUBLIC

From jazz concerts hosted by the city of Prague 2 to opening our doors for wine fest and hosting the White Lilly Awards, the CEELI Institute is happy to be a part of the neighborhood and not-for-profit community in Prague.
CHRISTOPHER LEHMANN TO JOIN THE CEELI INSTITUTE AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IN APRIL 2014

After two extraordinary and highly productive years as the CEELI Institute’s Executive Director, Quinn O’Keefe is handing over the reins to a new Executive Director, Christopher Lehmann in April 2014.

Chris brings years of experience with the rule of law and with technical legal assistance, coming to us from the Justice Department’s Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance, and Training (OPDAT). As OPDAT’s Acting Principal Deputy Director, Chris managed a staff of over 90 in Washington and at overseas postings, and was responsible for OPDAT’s criminal justice sector reform worldwide. Notably, his responsibilities at OPDAT included developing and raising program funds.

Chris previously served as the DOJ Resident Legal Adviser at the U.S. Embassies in Pakistan and Russia. Moreover, Chris is a CEELI alumnus, having served as CEELI’s first criminal law liaison in Ukraine in the late 1990s.

Previously Chris served as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Eastern District of New York, where he was recognized for his work on organized crime, and, before that, as a trial attorney in the Voting Section of the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. Chris is a graduate of Washington University School of Law and the American University School of International Service.

Chris, a native of Chicago, will reside at the Institute in Prague.

OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS, MAREK SVOBODA

This year we gladly welcomed Marek Svoboda to the CEELI Institute as our new Director of Programs. In this role, Marek will design and manage the Institute’s entire program portfolio and its expansion into other countries in the Middle East and North Africa and Eurasia. Marek is ideally suited for this position as the previous director of human rights programs at People in Need, one of the largest human rights, democracy and governance, and relief not-for-profits in Central Europe. In that capacity he developed and managed a slate of programs that support human rights activists and civil society working in challenging environments such as Cuba, Belarus, Burma, and Libya.

Previous to People in Need, Marek worked for the U.S. Embassy in Prague as its main civil society coordinator.
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