



Promotion of the rule of law in the "Triángulo Norte" of Central America

Digital event of the Federal Foreign Office in the context of Germany's 2020 EU Council Presidency

Thursday, 5th of November 2020, 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. CET

Central America is a transit corridor for illegal drugs and irregular migration to the United States of America. The violence, insecurity and impunity associated with this phenomenon characterize the life and daily routine of the population in the countries of the so-called "Northern Triangle": Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. The confidence of local societies in their legal systems has been weakened, and institutions do not sufficiently fulfil their mandate to ensure social and political stability.

The conference aims to create an exchange in the field of rule of law, to discuss challenges to the region's legal systems and approaches to political and institutional stabilization. To this end, the Federal Foreign Office's cooperation project "Promoting the Rule of Law in the Northern Triangle" will be presented and the approaches specifically focused on this goal will be discussed.

This conference will take place as a virtual panel discussion in Berlin and will be broadcasted online. The audience of the event will be experts and representatives from public institutions, scientific institutions, foundations and internationally active organizations, as well as civil society organizations and the interested public.

Itinerary

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| 16.00 - 16.05 | Technical welcome and check in |
| 16.05 - 16.15 | Presentation of the event by Marian Schuegraf , Director for Latin America and the Caribbean
Welcome by Minister of State Nils Annen , Federal Foreign Office

Perspective of the EU: Introduction by Javier Niño Pérez , Deputy Managing Director for America, European External Action Service |

Panel I on independence and integrity in the judiciary

16.15 - 16.45 Presentation of the project "Promotion of the Rule of Law in the Northern Triangle", commissioned by the Federal Foreign Office. The panelists will discuss various aspects surrounding the problem of independence and integrity in the judiciary, with a focus on the following substantive questions:

- What factors guarantee judicial independence? What works well? Where is room for improvement?
- What is the state of independence and integrity in the judiciary in the three countries of the Triángulo Norte?
- What forms of corruption are common in judicial institutions in the region?
- How can judicial integrity be built up step by step and what national and, if necessary, international support is needed for this?
- What are the conditions in the three countries of the Northern Triangle?

Podium:

- Prof. Dr. h.c. **Rudolf Mellinshoff**, former president of the Federal Finance Court of Germany and former judge at the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany
- **Marina de Jesús Marengo de Torrento**, Constitutional Judge, El Salvador (tbc)
- **Haroldo Vásquez**, Vice President of the Asociación Guatemalteca de Jueces por la Integridad, Guatemala
- **Jan-Michael Simon**, Senior Researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Research on Crime, Security and Law

16.45 - 17.00 Discussion and questions from online participants

Panel II on the role of civil society in strengthening the judicial system

17.00 - 17.30 Discussion of various aspects of civil society's contribution to the emergence of integrity in justice and legal security, with a focus on the following substantive questions:

- What is the state of the rule of law in the region? What does civil society think about the judiciary?
- How can civil society contribute to the independence and efficiency of the judiciary?
- What good practice examples can be developed and disseminated?
- What capacities and competences are needed on the part of civil society?

Podium:

- Prof. Dr. **Sabine Kurtenbach**, Lead Research Fellow at the Leibniz Institute for Global and Regional Studies (GIGA)
- **Saúl Baños**, Executive Director of the Fundación de Estudios para la Aplicación del Derecho (FESPAD), El Salvador
- **Carlos Hernández**, Managing Director of the Asociación para una Sociedad más Justa (ASJ), Honduras
- **Ingrid Heinlein**, spokeswoman of the "International" section of the Neue Richtervereinigung e.V.

17.30 - 17.45 Discussion and questions from the online participants

17.45 - 17.55 Conclusion

17.55 Closing words