

PRESS RELEASE

Siracusa- March 13, 2018- The Specialisation Course on “*The Exercise of Defence Rights in International Investigations within the European Union*” officially starts on March 15 at the headquarters of the Siracusa International Institute for Criminal Justice and Human Rights (Siracusa, Italy).

The Course is part of the Siracusa Institute’s *International Defence Counsel Training Programme*, which is specifically designed for national and international defence lawyers and jurists dealing with international crimes, including crimes of a transnational nature.

Since the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, the harmonization of the various national laws in the field of criminal law is progressively increasing. Even though the EU is unlikely to adopt an overarching EU criminal law or a common criminal procedure code in the short term, EU criminal legislation has substantially changed many aspects of existing national criminal law systems. This happened in particular areas such as defining serious crimes, setting up safeguards for suspects and victims and enhancing police and judicial cooperation. Against this background, the specialization course will be attended by numerous lawyers, consultants and jurists coming from Italy and around the world, including – among others- France, Greece, Portugal, Lebanon and Chile. The course will mainly focus on instruments and procedures related to complex investigations as well as on defence techniques in international legal cooperation in European criminal law matters.

The opening ceremony, which will be on Thursday March 15 at 9:15 a.m., will be attended by Judge **Jean-François Thony**, President of the Siracusa International Institute, Mr. **Andrea Chmielinski Bigazzi**, Director of the Training Programme, Mr. **Peter Csonka**, Head of Unit of the Directorate-General Justice and Consumers of the European Commission and Mr. **Frédéric Baab**, National Member for France at Eurojust.

The *Programme* is organised in partnership with the *Union Internationale des Avocats* (UIA), the *Association Internationale de Droit Pénal* (AIDP), the International Criminal Court Bar Association (ICCBA-ABCPI), the International Criminal Justice Consortium (ICJC), the African Bar Association (AFBA), the Italian *Scuola Superiore dell’Avvocatura* (SSA), the French *Conseil National des Barreaux* (CNB), the American Bar Association (ABA) through its Center for Human Rights and International Criminal Court Project, the Beijing Normal University (BNU), and the *Centre d’Etudes sur la Sécurité Internationale et le Coopération Européennes* (CESICE).

For all info, please visit the dedicated website: internationaldefencecounsel.siracusainstitute.org

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