

**JUDGES' SEMINAR ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION OF THE CHILD
DE RUWENBERG, 22-25 JUNE 1998**

The following conclusions were reached during the final session of the Seminar during discussion on the subject "Towards International Judicial Co-operation":

1. The recommendation was made that, following the example of Australia, judges attending the seminar should raise with the relevant authorities in their jurisdictions (*e.g.*, court presidents or other officials, as appropriate within the different legal cultures) the potential usefulness of designating 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 own jurisdictions and with judges in other states, in respect, at least initially, of issues relevant to the operation of the *Hague Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction*.
2. In accordance with the objectives of the Grotius programme of the European Union, a number of judges outlined their plans for passing on the information and experience gained during the seminar to judicial colleagues in their several jurisdictions.
3. A short newsletter would be circulated on a regular basis (perhaps twice yearly) by the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law to judges attending the Seminar, with a view to the exchange of information concerning judicial co-operation in matters of international child protection. The information would include any changes in personal contact details, notes on developments concerning relevant international instruments (*e.g.*, new ratifications and accessions), reference to significant national developments (*e.g.*, case law, procedural or organisational changes, judicial conferences/seminars, etc.), and examples of successful practice in international judicial co-operation. The network would be made available to other interested judges.
4. There was broad support for the view that efforts should be made to ensure greater judicial participation in the work of the Hague Conference on Private International Law, both in the development of new international instruments and in the periodic reviews of their practical operation.
5. There was agreement that the seminar had been of practical value in promoting mutual understanding and in forwarding the objective of more effective international judicial co-operation in matters of international child protection. It was recommended that further seminars of this kind be organised periodically (every three or four years).