



November 2005

GREECE

1. What is the title, rank and position of the Legal Adviser?

The Legal Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was created in the 1920s. It consists of two sections: the section of Public International Law and the section of European Law. Each one has its own head who is a senior Legal Adviser. Both are directed by the 'Special Legal Adviser'. The Legal Department reports directly to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. A Bureau for International Treaties is located within the premises of the Section of Public International Law.

2. What are the principal functions of the OLA?

The principal functions of the Legal Department is to provide legal advice to the Ministers and the Political and other Departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This involves advice on questions of Public International Law and European Law. Legal Advisers act as Agents for the Government before international Tribunals including the International Court of Justice and the European Court of Justice. They also attend international conferences and meetings as head or members of the Greek delegation thereto.

3. Please give a brief description of staff employed by the OLA, including overseas staff

There are around thirty lawyers in both sections, eleven of which in the section of Public International Law. A limited number of legal advisers may be posted abroad, especially in Brussels.

4. Briefly describe the organisation and structure of the OLA

Within each section Legal Advisers may be asked to respond to any request concerning issues involving International Law. However in practice each Legal Adviser specializes on certain issues (such as Human Rights, the Law of the Sea, Diplomatic Immunities etc).

There are four ranks within Legal Advisers in descending order: the Special Legal Adviser, Legal Advisers, Deputy Legal Advisers, and Assistant Legal Advisers ('Rapporteurs').

5. What is the OLA's place within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs?

The Legal Department is an independent Department within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see also reply to question no 1).

6. What are the main contacts of the OLA within Government?

The Legal Department offer advice on international law issues within the Government and are consulted by other Ministries on such issues. They cooperate with the Government Legal Service (the 'State Legal Council') who deal with questions of domestic law and represent the country before the European Court of Human Rights. The Legal Department also retains close links with

the Scientific Council operating in the Ministry which consists of academics and other experts who may be asked to provide legal opinions on matters of interest to the Ministry.

7. Please describe the relations of the OLA with lawyers in private practice, academics and legal institutions

The Legal Department retains close contacts also with universities and other legal institutions and its members are often invited to participate in various events such as conferences, seminars, meeting, lectures etc. They may also organize such events at their own or the Ministry's initiative. Members of the Legal Department are also encouraged to write articles or books on issues of International Law.