

**Meeting of the IDLO Assembly of Parties**  
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**Ms. Birken / EBRD**

*Transcribed as delivered*

Thank you very much. Thank you Mr. president and madam Director-General for this invitation and for the opportunity to attend this assembly and participate in the discussion today. Yes indeed, we are very good partners of IDLO I've worked together I think for the last ten years on a number of judicial capacity programs in Kirgizstan, Montenegro, Mongolia, Tajikistan, and more recently also in Jordan and you know we anticipate doing many more things together. EBRD has recently looked at its policies of dialogue as sort of program and looked at how we can be more targeted, more focused on support to countries and we sort of have a three-pronged approach. We have, we are going to give-you know- going forward trying to put more emphasis on our country diagnostics. We have a lot of operational experience because most of our work is investing in the private sector in our reaches of operation. So we are trying to extract more diagnostics out of that experience in addition to new work that's done by economists. Then we assess how the diagnostics would impact on private sector investments of the type that we do, we do try to bring the both the operation side, policy side of the bank together. And then the last point is to make sure we have government buy-in. Now this is either through our country strategy document that is approved by the country and approved by our board on a project-by-project basis through MOU's of letters of intent. The legal transition program is a program that sits under the office of General Counsel is supporting policy within the EBRD and it's really a critical part of the policy agenda. It's been sort of operating since 1995 and actually is most established policy dialogue as a group if you like within the EBRD. And so what we do within the legal transition program is sort of four different things. We do standard setting and share international experience and I think this is an end other speakers have mentioned as well. It is important to do sort of regional

comparison. You all may know the World Bank doing business report that ranks countries in terms of doing business and it's really interesting, I have first hand experience on how countries you know, get very competitive and anything they can do. For example, by improving their legal systems or judicial systems to get up the list in those very important, it's a real motivator. So I think that element of competition I've seen in also we work with our countries it is important in sort of countries can see what their neighbors are doing and this is how we are sharing our international experience and standard. The second part is diagnostics again, so we really have to understand where the gaps are and where we can make most of our impact. We do a lot of technical assistance projects. They are very focused in areas where we have expertise. I think in total our budget for this year is about 9 million dollars- I'm sorry, euro. Of it, 7 is coming from our donor funds and our shareholder funds and about 2 million is bank funded. And then the fourth part is our knowledge dissemination. We are trying to learn lessons in our work and sort of share that after we have done our projects and also in the more emphasis of course now on measurement of results which is still very difficult to do in many projects and that we are sort of trying to get better at that. Just sort of briefly, three factors that I think will help the success of our program and I think of any program in sort of legal reform- and again I think nothing new I've sort of heard other speakers mention these same points- it's critical to bring knowledge. So it's important to not only know, understand international framework sort of best practice, but also the national laws in particular subject area. I think that when we do the counter parties in other countries they really expect us to know, knowing not sort of putting a program together. You know, we need to know our areas of expertise. Another second point is focus. Now, I've found that when we spread ourselves too thinly and try to do too many things it sort of loses it loses sort of- you know- kind of don't get the (unknown) visibility and we don't have the impact so we tend to benefit from repetition so when we have done a program in a country we try to use it, do it elsewhere and sort of apply lessons learned in one country in another. And I think it has served us very well to have, you know that, focus. And a third part and I think everyone has mentioned is the need to continue collaboration with other stakeholders and this is for us very strongly also private sector participants, you know, but it's law firms, in house lawyers. You know, just to understand we're in their

countries in their sectors. We're the guests. Where can we help? So that what we do is actually practical. And then of course, government agencies and they constantly change so that is very difficult stay in touch and work with our countries and develop our programs. Civil society was mentioned very critical as well. And of course the last is other development organizations. You know, we work with the World Bank for example, the UNDP and other programs. It's very important we coordinate and we sort of all have our own sort of strength and see where we can complement each other. And in this regard of course we look forward to continued cooperation with IDLO. Thank you.