



To:  
The European Association and  
International Association of Judges

date 8 December 2020  
from District Court of The Hague, Bureau International Crimes  
e-mail address bureau.internationale.misdrijven.rb-dh@rechtspraak.nl  
subject Cover Letter to the Witness Protocol,  
Network of Judges International Crimes Cases  
annex Witness Procotol

Dear sir/madam,

We hope this letter finds you well.

Recently the European Parliament launched the research report titled 'Access to Justice in Europe for Victims of International Crimes' in which the Witness Protocol of the District Court of The Hague, The Netherlands, was recognized as a best practice. In cooperation with psychologists the Bureau of International Crimes has developed a Protocol for the hearing of witnesses. The Protocol aims to provide a practical tool to the following objectives:

1. Optimisation of the circumstances of the witness examination so that the witness can speak freely, truthfully and to the best of his/her knowledge;
2. Optimisation of the circumstances so that judges, lawyers and prosecutors can exercise their examination (rights) as well as possible;
3. Prevention of secondary victimisation regarding the witness;
4. Prevention of secondary traumatisation.

As we think the Protocol can be of use for you as a judge and for other Courts, we herewith send it to you. Feel free to take notice of the Protocol. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions for the Protocol, please contact us.

*Network of Judges, International Crimes Cases*

The Bureau of International Crimes wishes to come into contact with other national judges that adjudicate international crimes, to share experiences and to explore the possibility of a network of national judges that adjudicate international crimes. If you are interested, please let us know by sending an e-mail to the above mentioned e-mail address.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the Bureau of International Crimes of the District Court of The Hague,  
Magda Koole and Fien Kok  
Investigative Judge International Crimes / Legal Staff Advisor International Crimes