

On 14 May 2024, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the British Embassy in Turkmenistan have signed a Contribution Agreement to support a project "Increasing the capacity of the Boards of Lawyers in Turkmenistan," which is planned to be implemented jointly by the UNDP and the Boards of Lawyers in Turkmenistan.

The project aims to enhance the capacity of the Boards of Lawyers in Turkmenistan to provide legal aid in accordance with international standards, particularly the UN Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems (December 20, 2012), the Basic Principles Concerning the Role of Lawyers (Havana, 1990), and the Standards of Independence of the Legal Community adopted by the International Bar Association (New York, September 7, 1999), among others.

Special attention will be given to assisting the Boards of Lawyers in establishing a National Chamber of Lawyers in Turkmenistan. This aims to represent and safeguard the interests of lawyers, coordinate the activities of the Boards of Lawyers across regions and Ashgabat city, ensure high-quality legal assistance by lawyers, and address matters impacting the legal community's interests. This includes concerns regarding the allocation of state budget funds for compensating lawyers acting as defense counsel in criminal proceedings, appointed by investigative authorities or the court. Additionally, UNDP will also assist in digitizing the Boards of Lawyers' operations in Turkmenistan.

The project will contribute to the implementation of a special section of the National Human Rights Action Plan for 2021-2025 titled "Improving the system of Boards of Lawyers", which aims to improve the legislation regarding the legal profession and access to legal services, ensuring equality of parties in legal proceedings.

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