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PRESS RELEASE

'Scientific Proof in Criminal Justice'

The Ministry of Justice is organising a conference on 'Scientific Proof in Criminal Justice',

on Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th October 2008 at the *Cité Internationale* in Lyon

These two days of talks are aimed at measuring the diversity of national systems of finding scientific proof in criminal justice, its use in criminal proceedings and the roles of the various players in the trial (judges, prosecutors, lawyers). The conference is also aimed at drawing up solutions on a European scale in order to share and develop know-how and improve coordination of the national approaches.

Scientific proof is becoming increasingly important in criminal investigations. Several factors govern the success of the investigation and proceedings:

- **Thoroughness and quality in how crime scenes are used**: on-site observations immediately after the offence is discovered,
- **Choices made on handling the traces and clues found**,
- **The way in which such proof is integrated in the criminal procedure** so that it may be discussed during the proceedings.

Recent scientific progress has opened up new fields of criminal investigation thereby renewing investigation techniques (ballistics, using fingerprints and DNA, detecting explosives, etc.).

Differences in **practices** and **technical standards** within Member States may, however, prevent the use of means of proof. The use of such new techniques also implies increasingly qualified specialists and considerable human and material resources that are not necessarily available at purely national level.

At a time when the European Judicial Area is being created, it is therefore poignant to consider how to improve sharing scientific advances in criminal justice within the EU and the means available in terms of structures and know-how in this field.

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