Article 16
Hearing by videoconference

1. If a person is in the requested State and has to be heard as a witness or an expert witness by the competent authorities of the requesting State, the requested State may enable testimony or a statement to be taken from that person by those competent authorities by videoconference, if such hearing is necessary for the proceedings of the requesting State. The requesting and the requested States shall consult, if necessary, in order to facilitate resolution of legal, technical or logistical issues that may arise in the execution of the request.

2. The following rules shall apply to the hearing by videoconference unless otherwise agreed between the requesting State and the requested State:

(a) the authority of the requested State will identify the person to be heard specified in the request, and invite the person to facilitate his or her appearance;

(b) the hearing will be conducted directly by, or under the direction of, the competent authority of the requesting State in accordance with its own laws and the fundamental principles of the law of the requested State;

(c) the authority of the requested State will be present during the hearing, where necessary assisted by an interpreter, and will observe the hearing. If the authority of the requested State is of the view that during the hearing the fundamental principles of the law of the requested State are being infringed, it will immediately take the necessary measures to ensure that the hearing continues in accordance with the said principles;

(d) at the request of the requesting State or the person to be heard, the requested State will ensure, if necessary, that the person is assisted by an interpreter; and

(e) the person to be heard may claim the right not to testify which would accrue to him or her under the laws of either the requesting or the requested State. Other measures necessary for the protection of the person as agreed upon between the authorities of the requesting and the requested States will also be taken.

Article 17
Obtaining of items

1. The requested State shall obtain items. The requested State shall employ coercive measures, including search and seizure in order to do so, if such measures are necessary and the requesting State provides the requested State with information justifying those measures under the laws of the requested State.

2. The requested State shall make its best efforts to make possible the presence of such persons as specified in a request for obtaining items during the execution of the request.

Article 18
Bank accounts

1. The requested State shall confirm whether a natural or legal person that is the subject of a criminal investigation holds or controls one or more accounts in the banks specified in the request.

2. The requested State shall provide the specified records, documents or reports of the specified accounts, the records of banking operations which have been carried out during a specified period through the accounts specified in the request, or identified in accordance with paragraph 1 and the specified records, documents or reports of any sending or recipient account.

3. The obligations set out in this Article shall apply only to the extent that the information is in the possession of the bank keeping the account.

4. The requested State may make an execution of a request in paragraphs 1 and 2 dependent on the conditions it applies in respect of requests for obtaining items.