



COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME  
EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

## **Resolution on Judicial Ethics**

*Adopted by the Plenary Court on 23 June 2008*

The European Court of Human Rights,

Having regard to Article 21 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which sets forth the criteria for judicial office;

Having regard to Rules 3, 4 and 28 of the Rules of Court, which develop these criteria;

Considering that it is appropriate, in the interests of clarity and transparency, to articulate the principles underlying these criteria, without prejudice to the interpretation or application of the provisions referred to above;

Considering that the principles set forth in this text should enhance public confidence in the Court, which is an international court for the protection of human rights;

Adopts the present resolution on judicial ethics:

#### **I. Independence**

In the exercise of their judicial functions, judges shall be independent of all external authority or influence. They shall refrain from any activity or membership of an association, and avoid any situation, that may affect confidence in their independence.

#### **II. Impartiality**

Judges shall exercise their function impartially and ensure the appearance of impartiality. They shall take care to avoid conflicts of interest as well as situations that may be reasonably perceived as giving rise to a conflict of interest.

#### **III. Integrity**

Judges' conduct must be consistent with the high moral character that is a criterion for judicial office. They should be mindful at all times of their duty to uphold the standing and reputation of the Court.

#### **IV. Diligence and competence**

Judges shall perform the duties of their office diligently. In order to maintain a high level of competence, they shall continue to develop their professional skills.

## **V. Discretion**

Judges shall exercise the utmost discretion in relation to secret or confidential information relating to proceedings before the Court. They shall respect the secrecy of deliberations.

## **VI. Freedom of expression**

Judges shall exercise their freedom of expression in a manner compatible with the dignity of their office. They shall refrain from public statements or remarks that may undermine the authority of the Court or give rise to reasonable doubt as to their impartiality.

## **VII. Additional activity**

Judges may not engage in any additional activity except insofar as this is compatible with independence, impartiality and the demands of their full-time office. They shall declare any additional activity to the President of the Court, as provided for in Rule 4 of the Rules of Court.

## **VIII. Favours and advantages**

Judges shall not accept any gift, favour or advantage that could call their independence or impartiality into question.

## **IX. Decorations and honours**

Judges may accept decorations and honours only where such acceptance does not give rise to a reasonable doubt as to their independence or impartiality. They should inform the President of the Court beforehand.

## **X. Scope of this resolution**

The principles set forth above apply to the members of the Court and, where relevant, to former judges and *ad hoc* judges.

### *Final provisions*

In case of doubt as to application of these principles in a given situation, a judge may seek the advice of the President of the Court. The President may consult the Bureau if necessary.

The President may report to the Plenary Court on the application of these principles.