



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

Judicial Seminar 2019

Strasbourg, 25 January 2019

Opening speech by the President Guido Raimondi

Dear distinguished Guests,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to Strasbourg today for this afternoon's Judicial Seminar. Many of you are very familiar with this event; for others it may be your first time at the Court; you are all equally welcome. I would like to thank you for making the journey to join us for the 2019 edition of the Judicial Seminar.

We are at the start of a significant year for the Convention system. 2019 marks 60 years of the Court and 70 years of the Council of Europe! Last November, we celebrated 20 years of the "new" single Court. These anniversaries are a good opportunity to highlight the importance of the work of the Convention system for hundreds of millions of citizens. As we all here know: the Convention system is our joint enterprise.

It is the national courts, together with the European Court of Human Rights, which ensure the protection of the human rights of the Continent's citizens. Last April's Copenhagen Declaration, signed by the 47 Member States to the Council of Europe, underlined the need for dialogue, at the judicial and the political levels, as a means of ensuring a stronger interaction between the national and European levels of the system.

This is why the Judicial Seminar is a very important date in the Court's calendar. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that, together with the Opening of the Judicial Year this evening, it is *the* most important date in the Court's year: it is where we put judicial dialogue into practice in a multi-lateral environment. That is why I am so pleased to see so many of you here today.

Like last year, we have chosen a theme which touches us most personally: the judiciary. However, we will look at the judiciary through a slightly different lens this year: how do we maintain confidence in the judiciary? I hope that the programme this afternoon will allow for an opportunity to hear each other's views on a theme which is no less relevant today than it was a year ago.

However, our programme is not limited to discussion on the judiciary. We will also hear from Judges O'Leary and Eicke on Protocol No. 16, entered into force last August. You may have some questions about the practicalities of this Protocol in action.

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Ladies and gentlemen, before I conclude my remarks, I wish to express my thanks to the three eminent speakers who accepted my invitation to be participate in this year's seminar: Professor Jasna Omejec, Professor Augustin Lazăr and Judge Andreas Paulus. My colleague, Judge Kucsko-Stadlmayer, who is moderating the first session, will be presenting them to you shortly.

I also wish to thank my colleagues in the organising committee who have brought us this year's edition: Judges Ksenija Turković (the President of the Committee), Paul Lemmens, Dimitry Dedov, Iulia Antoanella Motoc, and Gabriele Kucsko-Stadlmayer, as well as the Registry's team. Preparation for this event starts more than six months in advance.

Without further ado, I now pass the floor to Judge Turković, to take us into the substance of this year's Seminar.

Thank you for your attention.