

Farewell Statement

2023 CCBE President Panagiotis Perakis

Dear colleagues,

Just a few words, as my mandate, together with the year 2023, is coming to its end.

Our organisation, the CCBE, the European lawyers' organisation, has already proven to be **strong and resilient**, during the pandemic, under the leadership of **Ranko Pelicarić** and **Margarete von Galen**, succeeding the immediate adaptation to these unprecedented conditions in the most effective way.

In 2022, under **James Mc Guill**'s presidency, the CCBE showed its immediate reflexes with the prompt and clear reaction to the Russian invasion in Ukraine and the continuous support to our Ukrainian colleagues. Plus, we returned to our usual working mode, enriching our functions with the experience from the COVID period, reducing costs and gaining efficiency.

In 2023, the CCBE tried to make **a step forward**:

- To increase its visibility and make its presence in the European justice landscape really indispensable.
- To strengthen even more our relationships with the European institutions.
- To build tighter relations with our members, as well as with other large lawyers' organisations, such as the ABA, the IBA, and the UIA.

We went **everywhere our assistance was needed**, as in Portugal or in Poland, supporting our members and **fighting for the rule of law**, everywhere needed **to make our voice heard and our profession respected**.

We organised successful workshops, training programmes and many events, having on the top of them the high-level event for European Lawyers' Day at the European Parliament on 23 October.

We were very **present in the global discussion on AI**, and we followed very actively other big issues of our times, like in the fields of climate change or migration. And, of course, we continued working effectively for the adoption of **the Convention** of the Council of Europe for the protection of our profession.

We have been extravert but without forgetting our own improvement. We have focused more on our **young colleagues'** needs, we have modernised our internal function introducing more **transparency** and changing our bye-laws, we have overpassed difficult situations through the most **democratic proceedings**, and we have started the necessary discussion about our **strategy** for the future and the **strengthening of our finances**.

All the above has been achieved thanks to the continuous contribution of our members, the work of our experts and **the top quality of our staff** under the direction of our Secretary General **Simone Cuomo**; plus, of course, the Presidency's collective work. As CCBE President, I want to **thank all of them** for their work and their contribution.

I am confident that the year 2024 will be even more successful. Under **Pierre-Dominique Schupp**'s presidency, the European voice of the profession will become stronger, and the CCBE will continue to serve the 1.1 million European lawyers and defend their **independence**, the rule of law and the fundamental rights.

As my mandate is coming to its end, I just want to say how **honoured** I feel to have been the CCBE President.

I wish **a merry Christmas and a happy new year with health and love for everyone and justice for all**.

Panagiotis Perakis