

# Press Release



## CCBE: “International law is not optional – it must be defended”

### European lawyers call for urgent action to protect the global justice system



During its Standing Committee meeting on 27 March 2026, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), representing more than one million lawyers across 46 countries, adopted a strong and unequivocal **statement** on the protection of international law and justice, warning that the global legal order is facing increasing and unprecedented pressure.

At a time of rising geopolitical tensions, growing disregard for legal obligations, and mounting pressure on international courts and legal professionals, the CCBE issues a clear message: the rule of law must prevail over power.

The CCBE expresses serious concern over attempts to undermine international judicial institutions, including intimidation, political pressure, and measures targeting judges, prosecutors, and lawyers. Such actions, it warns, strike at the very heart of justice and threaten the principle that no one – no State, no authority, no individual – is above the law.

The statement also highlights that sovereignty is not a political convenience – it is the cornerstone of international law. It guarantees equality among States, protects them from coercion or interference,

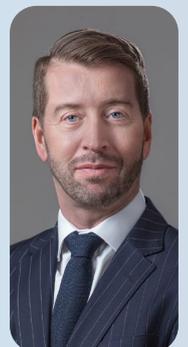
and underpins peaceful coexistence. Any pressure, unilateral measures, or disregard for territorial integrity weakens the international legal order, erodes trust, and threatens global stability. Upholding sovereignty is inseparable from upholding international law itself – without it, justice and cooperation cannot endure.

The statement underlines that international law is not a political convenience. It is the foundation of justice, cooperation, and peace. When it is weakened, we all bear the consequences.

The CCBE emphasises that defending international law is a shared responsibility. Courts alone cannot uphold it. It requires commitment from States, institutions, and the legal profession alike. *“The erosion of the international rule of law does not begin with collapse, but with indifference to its weakening.”*

In this regard, **CCBE President, Roman Završek**, stated:

*“The strength of international justice is not defined or measured by treaties or institutions alone – it is tested in moments of pressure, in the courage to uphold the law when it is most under threat.”*



**About the CCBE** | [ccbe.eu](https://ccbe.eu)

The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) represents the Bars and Law Societies of 46 countries, and through them more than 1 million European lawyers. Founded in 1960, the CCBE is recognised as the voice of the European legal profession by the European institutions, as well as leading international organisations.

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