

Dear Madame President,

Dear Colleagues and Distinguished Guests,

It was a great pleasure to me to receive invitation from your organization to this London's Intermediate meeting of Fédération des barreaux d'Europe. As the First-Vice president of the CCBE and its upcoming President in the year 2018 I am welcoming the idea to meet with your presidency and secretary general on at least a yearly basis or even more often, the next meeting to be happening in Brussels in January next year. I think it is also of vital importance to make exchanges of views and informing each other on ways of our common endeavours. This is to be happening on regular basis as when we can read in FBE's and CCBE's essential documents - the Statutes and our resolutions and/or positions adopted- we can find we have a lot in common and our goals are very often coinciding. It is because we both serve the idea of rule of law, fair and independent administration of justice and especially the lawyers throughout Europe safeguarding core principles of the profession that are seen in all democratic societies as the cornerstones of rule of law. Our guard, our „night watch “, if you wish is lasting for a long, long time, in case of CCBE we are quickly approaching 60 years anniversary of our birth in 2020, but weirdly enough our being on a watch seems to be rather infinite, as there is always something to have concerns about. As an example: Just couple of days ago we received annoying news from PANA committee of the European Parliament which had a vote on document called „ Recommendation to the Council and the Commission following the inquiry on Money Laundering, Tax Avoidance and tax Evasion“. The adopted version that will apparently be submitted to the EU Parliament assembly contains number of worrying advise to the Commission and the Council, as regards not merely, so called intermediaries, but lawyers and their self-regulatory bodies. The PANA committee clearly disregarded the clear voice of CCBE commenting immediately on the original draft wording that already included number of disputable, ambiguous, and ill-founded interpretations and recommendation , putting at stake LPP / Professional secrecy, and exhorting to exclude Bars and Law Societies from their controlling power within AML regulatory Framework, wanting to introduce only direct reporting of STR (suspicious transaction reports) to the state bodies (FIUs) without any prior intervention of the Bars.

Thanks God, we can also receive from time to time good news for the present and future standing of the lawyer's profession. Such an example is the work started by the Council of Europe on the European Convention on the profession of lawyer. The first motions had begun already in second half of 2016 within the members of Parliamentary Assembly /PACE/ inviting the Committee of Ministers to initiate work on drafting this Convention. Since that time unexpectedly great deal of work had been done. The rapporteur of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights Ms. SABIEN LAHAY-BATTHEU with her team generated huge progress on synopsis and the work quickly goes ahead. CCBE is keen of being engaged in this work as we consider that such a document is extremely needed in order to respond to the attacks against the role of lawyers which have grown over the recent years and we see as

necessity to have binding document to guarantee the rights pertaining to our profession and reflecting its important role in society. We drafted and published quite a comprehensive contribution on the proposed principles of the convention, which also reflects some of the items embodied to the introductory memorandum elaborated by the rapporteur. As there will be yet a number of opportunities to show our endeavour and support during the public hearings in Strasbourg we hope that FBE will come a join these initiatives and will even foster our efforts to convince governments and all the stakeholders to adopt the Convention as it may be important not only for all European lawyers, but also as good way to bring together the neighbouring countries surrounding EU and even wider territory administrated Council of Europe.

Dear Colleagues, I am looking forward to be present tomorrow at the meeting of the Bar Leaders where we can discuss in more details all the potentials of joint work on our common initiatives as we cannot remain divided in these turbulent times. There is strength in being united.

I will conclude by saying that the European Union is going through a challenging period – especially with regard to the strong emphasis being put on security rather than freedom. Also, populism in politics endangers adherence of fundamental rights pertaining to performance of our duties as counsels and representatives of the citizens and legal entities. The populists often distort and disparage the role of lawyers in society often benefiting from public misunderstanding or flawed assumption of our role. Let me reiterate one quotation attributed to Benjamin Franklin: „Those who surrender freedom for security will not have, nor do they deserve either one”. The close co-operation of our organizations and not only us but also all other international organizations representing lawyers is needed now more than ever.

Thank you for your attention and good luck and full success to your conference.

(FBE Congress, November 2017, LONDON)