

## INVITATION

# Joint CCBE – Council of Europe – OBF – OVB – Brussels Bars Reception: “The importance of the legal profession in maintaining the rule of law”



Friday  
04 April 2025

16.00  
19.00

Fondation universitaire,  
11, Rue d'Egmont | 1000 Brussels



**RSVP by Thursday 27 March** by contacting [event@ccbe.eu](mailto:event@ccbe.eu) | *Places are limited.*

## Guest speakers



**Marko Bošnjak**

President of the European Court of  
Human Rights (ECtHR)



**Frédéric Krenc**

Belgian Judge to the ECtHR

## Background

The legal profession plays a fundamental role in upholding the rule of law, ensuring access to justice, and safeguarding human rights. Lawyers serve as essential defenders of individual rights and as a cornerstone of democratic societies. For the same reasons, in Europe and around the world, they are facing increasing threats, harassment, and undue interference in their work, undermining the very principles of justice and the rule of law<sup>1</sup>.

Ensuring therefore that lawyers can operate independently and without improper interference is essential to preserving the rule of law. In this context, the adoption of a Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer by the Council of Europe marks a significant milestone in reinforcing the protection of the legal profession. As the first binding international legal instrument dedicated to safeguarding the independence and security of lawyers and their professional associations, the Convention provides an important tool to strengthen the role of lawyers in maintaining the rule of law.

Ultimately, protecting lawyers is not just about defending their individual rights—it is about ensuring that justice can be served, that individuals can access legal assistance without intimidation, and that democratic values remain strong. A legal profession that is free to carry out its duties without improper interference is a prerequisite for a fair and functioning justice system.

In this context, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) is hosting a high-level reception to highlight the vital role of the legal profession in upholding democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law, and to discuss the importance of reinforcing the safeguards that protect it.

<sup>1</sup> See [CCBE report on threatening behaviour and aggression towards lawyers \(2024\)](#)

## Programme

### Moderator



**Imbi Jürgen**

CCBE Vice-President

### 16.00 – 16.15 | Welcome and registration

#### 16.15 | Welcoming speech



**Thierry Wickers**

CCBE President

#### 16.20 | Keynote addresses



**Marko Bošnjak**

President of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)



**Frédéric Krenc**

Belgian Judge to the ECtHR

#### 16.45



**Andriy Zayats**

Ambassador, Head of the Council of Europe Liaison Office to the European Union

#### 16.50



**Laurent Pettiti**

Chair of CCBE European Convention Working Group

### 16.55 – 17.30 | Q&A with the participants

#### 17.30 | Closing remarks on behalf of the Belgian and Brussels Bars



**Peter Callens**

President of the Orde van Vlaamse Balies

### 17.35 – 19.00 | Reception



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