

# PRESS RELEASE

## The 2018 CCBE Human Rights Award

29/11/2018

**The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) granted its 2018 Human Rights Award to Polish lawyer, Mikołaj Pietrzak, for his exceptional involvement and continuous work in support of human rights and the Rule of Law.**

During the Plenary Session held in Lille, France, on 29 November, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) granted its 2018 Human Rights Award to Polish lawyer Mikołaj Pietrzak, President of the Warsaw Bar and Chairperson of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.



The aim of the CCBE Human Rights Award is to honour distinguished lawyers or lawyers' organisations that have demonstrated outstanding commitment and sacrifice in upholding fundamental values.

Mikołaj Pietrzak is a prominent human rights lawyer who actively defends the Rule of Law and the rights of lawyers. Since 2016, he has spoken out strongly against violations of the Rule of Law in Poland, against the undermining of the tri-division of powers, against attacks on the independence of the judiciary and in defence of

the autonomy of lawyers and Bar associations, both on the domestic and international stage.

Mikołaj Pietrzak has also represented the National Bar Council in several cases which were important in shaping rulings against the erosion of the Rule of Law and the violation of judicial independence in Poland.

Throughout his career Mikołaj Pietrzak has also litigated, and is still litigating, many important pro-bono human rights cases in Poland, both domestically and internationally, in connection with the prohibition of torture, the protection of the Rule of Law and judicial independence, and other issues relating to criminal law, constitutional law and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In recognition of his work, he was awarded the national Edward J. Wende Award (2014), which pays tribute to lawyers who dedicate themselves to the fight for justice and defence of the public good.

On several occasions, the CCBE has expressed its concerns in relation to the developments in Poland and has urged the Polish President to guarantee the independence of the judiciary and respect for the Rule of Law.

### About the CCBE

The CCBE represents the Bars and Law Societies of 45 countries, and through them over one million European lawyers. More information on the CCBE Human Rights Award and past recipients is available [here](#).

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