

# 2018

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The year 2018 was a year of intense Brexit political negotiations between European Union and the United Kingdom on the terms of leave and the shape of their future mutual relations. New challenges for the preservation of the rights of citizens and entrepreneurs, including lawyers, arose in relation to the Brexit negotiations. As a president, I dedicated my best efforts to promoting the most reasonable solutions, both to maintain UK lawyers as an integral part of the legal profession in Europe, and in voicing the need for the mutually most favourable conditions for both EU and UK citizens and businesses on the continent and across the Channel. Certain essential safeguards relating to citizen's rights as well as the recognition of lawyers' professional titles and free provision of legal services had been achieved, but more ambitious achievements still remain to be solved in the future FTA agreement.

Unfortunately, 2018 was also disruptive in terms of the Rule of Law. The EU Commission initiated Rule of Law infringement procedures against Hungary and Poland. CCBE monitored and will be closely watching potential impact of Rule of Law drawbacks not only in these EU member states, but anywhere in EU, as it is highly concerned about any potential erosion of democratic and humanitarian values that might adversely affect citizens' rights, independence of judiciary and lawyers and freedom of exercise of the profession of lawyer, including self-regulation of the Bars.

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Also, in this respect I was very pleased, that in January 2018 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe confirmed the need for a European Convention on the profession of lawyer and recommended this project to the Committee of Ministers. Now it seems this project promisingly continues by a feasibility study and we all do wish that it comes to a successful end. The CCBE was extremely active in promoting the Convention and I had a positive feeling in Strasbourg while the CCBE organised its public hearing on the situation of persecuted and endangered lawyers, that seemingly influenced the positive result of the Assembly's vote.