

## PRESS RELEASE

### CCBE calls for respect for the rule of law regarding the selection of the European Public Prosecutor

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#### CCBE calls on the European Union and its Member States to defend the rule of law with respect to the selection procedure for the EPPO

The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (the CCBE) represents the bars and law societies of 45 countries, and through them more than 1 million European lawyers.

The CCBE has followed developments regarding the creation of a European Public Prosecutor's Office.

The CCBE has always highlighted the need to ensure that fair trials rights, including the presumption of innocence, applies to all investigations with regard to the EPPO. This is a key requirement to balance the functioning and resources of an EPPO with the rights and needs of the defence.

The CCBE has also followed the process regarding the selection of the EPPO. In order to ensure that EU citizens have trust in the new office, it is of the utmost importance that the selection procedure is not interfered with or restricted in any way. It is also essential that each candidate has the possibility to present their candidacy before the EU Institutions.

The CCBE highlights the need for Member States to ensure that issues which impact or restrict the rule of law cannot be tolerated by, or in, any EU Member State. The European Union is a Union which is built on the values of upholding, respecting and defending the Rule of Law. There can be no exceptions.

It is essential that Member States are aware that these are the values upon which the European Union is built on, and Member States must both comply and defend these values.

CCBE President José de Freitas commented that *"In order for the European Union and its Member States to be an example for the importance of the respect and adherence to the rule of law, the European Union and its Member States need to ensure that it defends this principle, and does not tolerate or be influenced by any measures which impact on the principle. The European Union needs to have authority, and be the authority, in upholding the rule of law. This authority can only be claimed if the principle is applied with no exception"*.

#### About the CCBE:

The CCBE represents the bars and law societies of 45 countries and through them more than 1 million European lawyers.

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