**Conference of the Supreme Court of Latvia**

**10 October 2025**

**Right to a fair trial: European Convention on Human Rights in dialogue**

**of national courts and the ECtHR**

This year marks a significant event for the Supreme Court of Latvia and the entire Latvian judicial system – the 30th anniversary of the restored cassation instance – the Senate. The restoration of the Senate marked a significant step for the return of the Latvian judicial system to values and rights of democratic Europe. It is therefore equally important to celebrate the 75th anniversary of adoption of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Linking these two events, the Supreme Court is organising an international conference to discuss a key element of human rights protection – the right to a fair trial. The conference will focus on the experiences of the past and the issues of the present – the right to a fair trial ensured by the impartial and independent court in an era when democratic values are being challenged. How for the judiciary to withstand populism and other threats?

The Supreme Court is organising the conference in cooperation with the European Court of Human Rights, because it is only through mutual dialogue that understanding of human rights develops and skills in application thereof improve. The participants of the conference will be the Vice-President and judges of the ECtHR, former Latvian judges of the ECtHR, and colleagues from Estonia and Lithuania.

The audience of the conference will be senators of the Supreme Court of Latvia, presidents and deputy presidents of lower courts in Latvia, members of the Judicial Council of Latvia and other officials whose field of work relates to human rights.

The working languages of the conference are Latvian and English. The conference will be broadcast live.

**Draft agenda**

# 10:00 – 10:30 Opening addresses

# Aigars Strupišs, President of the Supreme Court of Latvia

# Speaker tbc

# Inese Lībiņa-Egnere, Minister of Justice of Latvia

# 10:30 – 10:40 Restoration of the cassation instance and Latvia's return to democratic Europe

# Andris Guļāns, President of the Supreme Court of Latvia in 1994–2008

# Morning session

# 10:40 – 11:00 Keynote speech: Interaction of the European Court of Human Rights and national courts

# Ivana JELIĆ, Vice-President of the European Court of Human Rights

# 11:00 – 11:55 First panel: Case-law certainty and reasoning of judicial decisions

# *Possible topics (raised during discussions, but not necessarily to be followed strictly. The speaker may choose his/her own topic according to the conference theme and the sub-theme of the panel):*

# *\*Uniformity/coherence of case-law; \*Review of judicial decisions that have come into force and res judicata; \*What constitutes a reasoned judicial decision, what arguments the court has to answer and what arguments it may not answer?; \*Whether the court may base its decision on arguments not raised by the parties to proceedings but which it raises on its own initiative?; \*Problems of reasoning of judicial decisions on imposing a sentence of imprisonment; \*Reasoning in judicial decisions in cases where information containing state secrets or other information which cannot be disclosed is to be examined; \*The right to appeal only against the reasons for the judgment*

# *Moderator and speakers tbc*

# 11:55 – 12:10 Break

# 12:10 – 13:05 Second panel: Transparency in the administration of justice and access to rulings

# *Moderator and speakers tbc*

# 13:05 – 14:15 Lunch

# Afternoon session

# 14:15 – 14:35 Keynote speech

# Ineta Ziemele, Judge of the Court of Justice of the European Union, former Judge of the European Court of Human Rights

# 14:35 – 15:30 Third panel: Right to a fair trial – trends and perspectives

# *Moderator and speakers tbc*

# 15:30– 15:45 Summary

# Mārtiņš Mits – Judge of the Constitutional Court of Latvia, former Judge of the European Court of Human Rights

# 15:45 – 16:00 Conclusion

# Aigars STRUPIŠS, President of the Supreme Court of Latvia