**The Need for Constant Vigilance:**

**The Role of the Legal Professions in Maintaining Democratic Values**

09:00 Registration

09:30 **Opening**

*Representative of the Belgian Council of State*

*Jean-Philippe Rageade, Director of ERA*

09:45 **Keynote**

*Michael McGrath, Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection\**

*\*invited*

10:15 Discussion

10:30 Coffee break

11:00 **Roundtable Discussion: “Our Strengths”**

* The role of European institutions in safeguarding the rule of law (such as the European Courts, CCJE, Venice Commission, ERA, ENCJ, and legal associations)
* The importance of the independence of the legal professions
* The importance of public trust in the democratic institutions and the legal order

*Gabriele Juodkaite-Granskiene, judge of the Supreme Court of Lithuania (nominated by ENCJ)*

*Patrick Gielen, secretary general of UIHJ*

***TBD*** *(nominated by CCBE)*

***TBD*** *(nominated by ACA-Europe)*

12:30 Lunch Break

14:00 **Short Presentations: Challenges and (Re)actions**

The decreasing public trust: the legal professions in a polarised (sometimes violent) society

***TBD*** *(nominated by CCBE)*

How the legal professions can help maintain the resilience of our institutions

***TBD*** *(nominated by EAJ / Network of Presidents of Supreme Court)*

Ethics and accountability: how to increase public trust

*Marc Schmitz, President of UEHJ*

Public awareness and education: do the legal professions have a role in this?

***TBD*** *(nominated by AEAJ)*

15:10 Coffee Break

15:30 **Roundtable Discussion: “Independence of the legal professions”**

* What are the threats to the independence of the legal professions?
* How can legal actors respond to political pressure?
* The resources of the judicial system (incl. the remuneration)
* What can you do as a judge, a lawyer, or a judicial officer to protect the democratic values?

*Milda Treige, Director of ENCJ*

*Walter Szöky (President of E.U.R.)*

***TBD*** *(nominated by CCBE)*

***TBD*** *(nominated by EAJ / Network of Presidents of Supreme Court)*

16:45 Closing Remarks

*Viktor Vadász, deputy director and director of programmes of ERA*

17:00 End of the conference