

Welcome address, 4 September 2023

Your Excellency, the President of the Hellenic Republic,

Dear Rector,

Dear President of the Council of State,

Dear Judges,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to be here today. The Conference on Judicial Renaissance is the result of the fruitful synergy of the Law School of our University with the Council of State, based on a Memorandum of cooperation, and with the National Judicial Council. It is a sign of openness of our Law School to judicial and other institutions in Greece and beyond.

Indeed, we have recently signed Memoranda of cooperation with the Court of Audit, the Authority of Protection of Personal Data, the Agency of Intellectual Property, and the Greek National Commission of Human Rights. At the international plane, we participate in two networks of prestigious Law Schools of EU countries and the United Kingdom, through which we have put in place an extensive programme of exchanges of professors and students. We have also created two LLM programmes in English and one in French, together with the Bordeaux Law School. Furthermore, our Law School is participating very successfully in 13 international Moot Court Competitions in International Law, EU Law, Roman Law, etc.

The present Conference brings together eminent judges and professors from very different legal and cultural backgrounds:

the civil law tradition and the common law system. The programme of the Conference aims at creating bridges between our respective legal cultures by focusing on some of our most important common values: judicial ethics and judicial independence, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law; as well as values and lessons emerging from the writings of some of the greatest figures of Ancient Greece. Philosophy and music – classical music as well as contemporary Greek composers - are also part of the programme.

Let me warmly thank, first of all, H.E. President Katerina Sakellariopoulou for her support and inspiring introductory speech. Furthermore, I would like to express my deep appreciation to all distinguished speakers as well as to our co-organisers for their hard work to make this Conference happen. I thank more particularly President Benes Aldana, Professor Keith Fischer and Mrs Konstantina Vagenas from the National Judicial College, as well as President Evangelia Nika and Councillor Vassilis Androulakis from the Council of State. From the Law School, may I thank more particularly Professors George Dellis and Spyros Vlachopoulos, as well as the Secretariat and the group of students for their most valuable assistance.

Last but not least, may I warmly thank and congratulate our Rector and host in this marvellous neo-classical building, Professor Gerassimos Siassios, who has just begun his mandate and wish him all the best for the years to come!

Thank you very much for your kind attention!