

30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE EUROPEAN GROUP OF PUBLIC LAW

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*Mr President,*

I WISH to tell you how grateful the EGPL is for your participation to this celebration of its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Group was founded when scientific societies were mostly national. For example, the German *Vereinigung des deutschen Staatsrechtslehrer*, which was founded, a century ago, in 1922.

The only truly international learned society was founded in 1924, and was the International Academy of Comparative Law.

Only quite recently some scientific societies were established on a bilateral basis. I remember to have been the co-founder of the Spanish-Italian and of the German-Italian public law scientific societies some 50 and 40 years ago.

Only in the last 10 years truly multilateral and multinational learned societies were established. Among them, the International Society of Public Law - ICON.S, that unites public law scholars and practitioners from all over the world.

Why are these multinational learned societies important? For two reasons. The first is very simple: because there are supranational institutions, and therefore there is need to study them.

The second is more complex: because there is a growing need to compare national legal orders, but without being prisoners of a na-

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tionalistic mentality. By that I mean that we cannot think that comparison presupposes diversity. On the contrary, many countries have in common many institutions: think of the French *Conseil d'Etat*, the Scandinavian Ombudsman, the German principle of proportionality, which have been transplanted in many other countries and have become common to many States.

This does not mean that diversity has been replaced by uniformity, because common principles and institutions interact with different social, political, cultural environments and this makes them different.

Even a cursory examination of the topics that have been discussed in the 30 Reunions during this last 30 years in the EGPL makes it clear that the 276 members of the Group have taken seriously the task and have produced an important amount of research useful for the development of public law in the world.

*Thanks again, Mr President, for your presence in this occasion.*