

30TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE EUROPEAN GROUP OF PUBLIC LAW

SPYRIDON FLOGAITIS*

Your Excellence the President of the Hellenic Republic,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

THIRTY years ago, in the early days of the month of September 1989, the birth of the European Group of Public Law took place in the sacred city of Athens. The event passed unnoticed to the many, but the European Group of Public Law was not meant to appeal to the many, it was conceived to gather in the ranks of a Group of initiative only the excellent. In those days we were just a few of us, but we were determined to invite everyone who would accept to engage in a Group based on the ideas of equality of national sciences and scholars, respect of each other, openness to a dialogue of civilizations, friendship among its members.

That September the first issue of the *European Review of Public Law* was published, the first ever legal periodical which was designed to be multilingual and multicultural. The *Review* was prefaced with the following words:

Living in this century we have the privilege of seeing Europe develop before our eyes. Perhaps by increasing understanding in our field we can participate more actively in its formation in a way that goes to the heart of our institutions and the relations between state and society.

* Professor at the National and Capodistrian University of Athens, Director of the European Public Law Organization

It seems to us today that we can furthermore enhance our efforts in order to give body to the dialogue of cultures - and thus give Europe the place that it deserves, in all dimensions of its Public Law and in all great languages that have formed its legal civilization - within and even outside the European Union, from the Atlantic to the Urals and to the Caucasus.

Though European, this Review will not be oriented solely towards European law. Created by the initiative of European jurists the Review will be open not only to Europe but to discussion of law of other continents as well. The aim is to put onto a scientific basis this most developed comparative legal knowledge.

This evening, at the foot of the eternal symbol of universal civilization, the Acropolis of Athens, on the soil of the Roman Agora of ancient Athens, we are celebrating thirty years of development, achievement, public service, education, research, creation of institutions, in the European Union, in Europe, worldwide.

With the deepest gratitude to the founders, the members and the supporters of this unique *iter*, I would like to thank on behalf of all of us H.E. the President of the Hellenic Republic and Professor Prokopios Pavlopoulos for everything that he has been doing all those years to support and promote this unprecedented project, and ask Professor Sabino Cassese, President of the European Scientific Council of the EPLO, to take the floor.