

LAUDATIO: PROF. ROBERT ANDERSEN

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished guests,

IT IS an honor and a privilege for me as a Supreme Court Justice to share with you my thoughts on the life and achievements of an exquisite member of the European Group of Public Law family, Professor Robert Andersen.

“All great things are simple, many of them can be expressed in a single word; justice, honor, duty, mercy, hope” as Winston Churchill had once said. This quotation impulsively occupied my mind when I once again ran through my notes and memories of Professor Andersen, of his long admirable career as a judge and an academic. Outstanding performance and great distinction came along in his life early on; when choices motivated by personal inclination, enriched with and supported by scientific interest, led his way to initially study Greek and Latin humanities at St. Lewis Institute in Brussels and then applied economics and law at UCL, where he obtained his doctorate in law and was further aggregated to teach.

By choice and not by chance, Professor Andersen combined theory and practice. Advocate of the Brussels Bar early on, he was nominated as Counselor of the State in 1987. He managed an outstanding career in a difficult and demanding field of action, reaching the top office in 2005 when he was elected *Premier Président* of the Council of State. An outstanding judge no more than an ex-

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cellent academic, he progressed in a harmonious balance of excellent coexistence and interaction of practice with theory. He managed his academic career in a multilevel unique way and he explored to the limits several scientific areas.

Among numerous scientific works, please allow me to mention only a few; those that strongly link Professor Andersen to capacities serving simultaneously justice and academia: “Les instruments juridiques à la politique des prix”, “L’avant projet de loi sur la concurrence et le rôle du pouvoir judiciaire”, “Le juge et les activités économiques des pouvoirs publics”, “Les procédures devant la Cour d’arbitrage”, “Crise du juge et contentieux administratif en droit belge”, “Le juge de l’excès de pouvoir et la mise en balance des intérêts en présence”, “Le recours en annulation devant la Cour d’arbitrage”, “La responsabilité de l’administration fiscale”, “Le Conseil d’Etat et le principe d’égalité en matière fiscale”, “Le juge et la théorie de l’acte clair”, “La sécurité juridique de la section de la législation du Conseil d’Etat”, the outstanding “Le Conseil d’Etat - Chronique de jurisprudence” (de 1994 jusqu’en 2012), “Le recours en révision devant le Conseil d’Etat vers une protection juridictionnelle commune en Europe”, “La section de législation du Conseil d’Etat”, among numerous others. He reached the top in academia and was nominated Professor of Law in 1989. On the way, he met and interacted with important scholars that inspired his charismatic personality to be expressed to its fullest reaching undoubtedly high levels of scientifically innovative productivity.

Professor Andersen has received a great number of important distinctions; that is until today - and there is time to come: Officier de l’ordre de Léopold II, Commandeur de l’ordre de Léopold, Grand Officier de l’ordre de la Couronne, Grand Officier de l’ordre de Léopold, Grand-croix de l’ordre de la Couronne, Titulaire de la Médaille d’Or. In such a prestigious framework of outstanding recognition how would my humble *laudatio* manage to contribute even a small additional value? Let it be only because it is presented in front of you, our unique family of intellect, of scientific unity in diversity, as an explicit expression of the unanimous agreement to praise his flawless importance; the importance of a man whose existence has contributed to the creation of the European Public Law

Organization as an ever-expanding and ambitious attempt from its very beginning, where the dream and the aspired vision of the few - among them the leading figure of Professor Robert Andersen - became the great achievement of the many; all of us today!

According to Albert Einstein, "Imagination is more important than knowledge as knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand while imagination embraces the entire world and all that we'll ever be able to know and understand". However, Professor Andersen's continuous effort and contribution to the development and expansion of the European Public Law Organization was not only due to his existing charismatic ability to foresee its creation. Much more than this, it was a matter of personal choice; he committed himself in dedicating his life along with the great towards the achievement of a cause larger than life, a cause meant to develop and expand becoming a symbolic gesture of science and civilization in unity for the generations to come: the European Group of Public Law, the European Public Law Organization.

Cher Professeur,

En présentant ce bref éloge que la Direction de notre Organisation m'a fait le grand honneur de me demander de prononcer ce qui m'a fait grand plaisir, je voudrais vraiment vous remercier de votre contribution infatigable en prenant ces fortes initiatives qui ont abouti à la création et au développement de notre grande famille de droit public. C'était un grand honneur pour moi de cordialement avoir prononcé aujourd'hui quelques mots pour un grand juriste. Un juge de plus haut niveau et un professeur excellent d'une extrême attitude intellectuelle et conceptuelle. Je crois que surtout et sans aucune doute vous êtes un vrai philosophe du droit. Un ami authentique de l'esprit des valeurs européennes qui est incontestablement reconnu et estimé dans l'espace européen sinon international du droit public. On vous remercie!