



**Council of Europe**  
United Kingdom Chairmanship



The Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law

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**EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW**  
**(VENICE COMMISSION)**

in co-operation with  
the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom and  
the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law

under the auspices of the United Kingdom Chairmanship  
of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

**CONFERENCE ON**  
**“THE RULE OF LAW AS A PRACTICAL CONCEPT”**

Lancaster House, London  
Friday 2 March 2012 (9h00 to 17h30)

**PROGRAMME**

*Please note that the Conference will not be open to the public. Participation is upon invitation only.*

**Registration**  
(9h00-9h30)

Participants are invited to register at the main entrance of Lancaster House.  
Coffee and tea will be available.

**Opening remarks**  
(9h30-10h15)

**Chair: Professor Sir Jeffrey Jowell KCMG QC, Director of the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law and former UK member of the Venice Commission**

Mr Dominic Grieve QC MP, Attorney General, UK  
Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers, President of the UK Supreme Court and Chair of the Bingham Centre's Council  
Mr Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission  
Mr Keith Whitmore, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

**First Session**

***The Rule of Law as a Goal for the XXI Century***  
(10h15-11h45)

**Chair: Dame Rosalyn Higgins DBE QC, President of the British Institute of International and Comparative Law, former President of the International Court of Justice**

Keynote speech: Mr Ronald Dworkin, Frank Henry Sommer Professor of Law at New York University and Professor Emeritus of Jurisprudence at University College London

The common core of the Rule of Law and the Rechtsstaat: Mr Kaarlo Tuori, Professor of Jurisprudence at University of Helsinki, Vice-President of the Venice Commission

The rule of law in action: Mr Serhiy Holovaty, Professor of Jurisprudence, Taras Shevchenko University of Kyiv, member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, former Ukrainian member of the Venice Commission

Discussion and conclusions by the Chair

*Coffee break*

**Second Session**

***The quality of the laws***  
(12h15-13h30)

**Chair: Ms Angelika Nussberger, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights, former German substitute member of the Venice Commission**

Law-making principles under the rule of law: Mr Sergio Bartole, Emeritus University of Trieste, Italian substitute member of the Venice Commission

The interaction between the parliament and the government in the law-making process:  
Mr Jean-Claude Colliard, President of University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne, former member of the Constitutional Council, French member of the Venice Commission

Discussion and conclusions by the Chair

*Lunch at Lancaster House*

### **Third session**

#### ***Preventing arbitrariness*** (15h00-16h15)

**Chair: Lord Mance, Judge at the UK Supreme Court**

The control of executive discretion in implementing laws in order to prevent arbitrariness:  
Ms Slavica Banić, Judge at the Constitutional Court of Croatia, Croatian substitute member of the Venice Commission

Executive Discretion in the field of freedom of assembly: Ms Finola Flanagan, Office of the Attorney General of Ireland, Irish member of the Venice Commission

Discussion and conclusions by the Chair

### **General discussion**

#### ***The Rule of Law as a Practical Concept*** (16h15-17h00)

**Chair: Mr Jan Helgesen, First Vice-President of the Venice Commission, Professor, University of Oslo**

### **Conclusions** (17h00-17h20)

Mr Jan Helgesen, First Vice-President of the Venice Commission, Professor, University of Oslo

Professor Sir Jeffrey Jowell KCMG QC, Director of the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law and former UK member of the Venice Commission

### **Closing remarks** (17h20-17h30)

Mr Richard Heaton, First Parliamentary Counsel and Permanent Secretary, Government in Parliament Group, Cabinet Office