



## **Meeting of Parliamentarians and Experts**

### **THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS: ANTI-DEMOCRATIC OR A GUARDIAN OF FUNDAMENTAL VALUES?**

***This Roundtable will consider the role of the European Court of Human Rights in the international human rights system, examining controversies that have arisen in relation to concerns about the impact of its decisions on national sovereignty.***

Chatham House  
The Royal Institute of International Affairs  
10 St James's Square  
London SW1Y 4LE

*London, 12-13 October 2014:* Upon proposal by senior PGA Members from the UK, on 13 October 2014 PGA co-organised with Chatham House (“The Royal Institute of International Affairs”) a high-level Roundtable of Parliamentarians and Experts on the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and its impact on national sovereignty and the protection of fundamental human rights. In order to contribute to the lively debate on this subject-matter, which has taken place in the last few years in the United Kingdom Parliament and society-at-large, this Chatham House meeting benefitted from a comparison with the other regional human rights jurisdiction that has a significant workload, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and from a public presentation of Judge Robert Spano on the behalf of the Strasbourg-based Court.

Regional human rights courts have been at the forefront of legal reform and human rights protection in Europe and the Americas, but controversies have arisen regarding their impact on national sovereignty (judicial, executive and parliamentary/legislative notions of sovereignty). Participants in this Chatham House event analyzed and considered the role of the ECtHR in the international and domestic human rights’ protection system, and addressed existing issues in relation to its jurisprudence and procedures as well as their impact on democratic legislative and compliance processes. The day-long dialogue brought together European and Latin American Parliamentarians from across the political

spectrum, and experts from academia, civil society, government and legal practice to consider the role and future of the ECtHR.

Please find here a detailed report kindly prepared by the Chatham House International Law Programme, in cooperation with PGA, on the discussion and its outcome.

The Address of Judge Robert Spano on behalf of the ECtHR is available at: [http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field\\_document/20141013\\_EuropeanCourtHumanRightsJudgeSpano.pdf](http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field_document/20141013_EuropeanCourtHumanRightsJudgeSpano.pdf).

This meeting has been the second successful cooperation between PGA and Chatham House. For the report of the previous meeting on the Relationship between the UN Security Council and the ICC (2012), please see: <http://www.pgaction.org/activity/2012/chatham-icc-sc.html>

The meetings were held under the Chatham House Rule.

This high-level roundtable discussion was made possible through the kind support of the Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIfE) and was originated by close cooperation between the PGA International Law & Human Rights Programme and the Open Society Justice Initiative.

For more information on this initiative please contact the Senior Programme Officers of the PGA International Law and Human Rights Programme Ms. Maia Trujillo [maia.trujillo@pgaction.org](mailto:maia.trujillo@pgaction.org) and Ms. Leyla Nikjou [leyla.nikjou@pgaction.org](mailto:leyla.nikjou@pgaction.org)