



**Union Internationale des Avocats**  
International Association of Lawyers  
Unión Internacional de Abogados

« Rassembler les avocats du monde • Bringing Together the World's Lawyers • Reunir a los abogados del mundo »

**Open letter from Mr. Jean-Jacques UETTWILLER, President of the Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA –International Association of Lawyers), to the 28 Presidents and Prime Ministers of the European Council**

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**Mr. Robert FICO**

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**Mr. Miro CERAR**

Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia

**Mr. Mariano RAJOY**

President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain

**Mr. Stefan LÖFVEN**

Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden

**Mr. David CAMERON**

Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

Paris, March 18, 2016

Dear Presidents,

Dear Prime Ministers,

At a time when discussions among the 28 European Union (EU) governments are taking place in Brussels on the agreement on migration between the EU and Turkey, we would like to express our deepest concerns about the outcome of these discussions.

The contents of the agreement have rightly been strongly criticized by several organisations, and also by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who denounced the arbitrary and collective expulsions that would inevitably result from the implementation of the agreement.

The improvements made recently to the agreement and the statements issued by the European Commission, according to which each case would be dealt with individually, are not likely to sufficiently address the criticism expressed, as the agreement continues to raise serious questions about international and European human rights law, since the agreement itself contains the seeds of the greatest violations of these laws.

On March 16, 2016, the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants remarked that European countries, which were instrumental in the adoption of the key instruments for the protection of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, were about to forsake their obligations under international conventions, despite having specifically signed and ratified them. Unfortunately, a painful historical past has enabled us, too late, to understand the devastating consequences of waiving these obligations.

We too share these observations and the growing fear that European countries will abandon their fundamental obligations concerning the respect and protection of the human person, if the signals given and the positions taken by these countries since the start of the migration crisis are any indication.

As lawyers and, naturally, human rights defenders, we cannot remain indifferent to the discussions underway this week within the European Union or to the consequences of the EU-Turkey agreement for the fundamental rights of individuals, as those rights are recognized in particular by the founding texts, such as the Geneva Convention, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

We hope that our concerns, which are shared by a large number of citizens of the 28 European countries concerned, will resonate with your government and that it will not fail to guarantee these rights, the recognition of which must continue to remain an inviolable and definitive achievement.

Respectfully yours,



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Jean-Jacques UETTwiller  
President of the *International Association of Lawyers*