



4th Congress of the World Conference on Constitutional Justice
"The Rule of Law and Constitutional Justice in the Modern World"

Wednesday, 13 September 2017
Vilnius, Republic of Lithuania

Closing remarks
by

Mr Dainius ŽALIMAS, President, Constitutional Court, Republic of Lithuania

Dear President of the Venice Commission,
Dear Colleagues, Honourable Judges,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The discussions over the recent days showed that this Congress proved to be a perfect ground for international-level dialogue.

I believe that we have also succeeded in finding a common, mutually understood, language on many issues relating to our topic – the rule of law. Let me highlight a few insights stemming from our five sessions. Firstly, the experience of our courts confirms that the substantive concept of the rule of law has become the dominant concept. According to this concept, the rule of law includes respect for human dignity and human rights. Secondly, we have faced and continue to encounter similar challenges to the rule of law and, eventually, we have made efforts to cope with these challenges in a similar manner, i.e. by preserving the established core elements of the rule of law and upholding respect for and dialogue with international tribunals. Thirdly, we agree that an essential element of the rule of law is the binding force of our courts' decisions on all state bodies. Fourthly, as constitutional courts and equivalent bodies also decide cases that concern the interests of individuals, we should ensure there is direct or indirect individual access to the constitutional courts and equivalent bodies. Finally, the independence of constitutional courts and equivalent bodies remains crucial in order to carry out the duties enshrined in our constitutions for the interest of maintaining the rule of law. We face a number of challenges to this independence, and I hope we will be able to tackle them.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I congratulate the Constitutional Council of Algeria, who will host the 5th Congress of the World Conference on Constitutional Justice in 2020! I express my commitments on behalf of our Court to share our experience and to provide assistance in organising this event.

Finally, I would like to finish by extending my sincere gratitude to all who made our Congress successful! Let me thank Mr Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission, and both our Secretaries General, Mr Schnutz Rudolf Dürr and Ms Ingrida Danėlienė, and their excellent teams! I thank all of you for participating in this dialogue in Vilnius and for your interesting discussions and productive work! Let me express my gratitude to the chairs of our five sessions, all the key-note speakers, respondents, as well as rapporteurs, for their roles in our discussions! Indeed, let me also express my gratitude to interpreters for their performed mission of having built bridges between people who speak different languages in order to made our dialogue possible!

Thank you once more for being here! I hope you have enjoyed staying in our country!
