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# THE CONSCIENCE OF EUROPE

*50 years of the European Court of Human Rights*



PUBLICATION JANUARY 2011

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# The Conscience of Europe: 50 years of the European



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE COURT

One of the purposes of this book is remembrance. The European Court of Human Rights is a human institution, dedicated to the protection of human beings. The protection of human rights is a noble calling, and many have served it nobly at Strasbourg. This book looks back to the inception and growth of the Court, the people who composed it and who came before it, and the events and achievements that go to make up a fascinating institutional story.

The book also looks ahead to what the future may hold. Some of the proposals made at various points in the past ten years are set out, up to and including the milestone conference at Interlaken in February 2010. Growth and adaptation are vital qualities in all living things. I hope that the contents of this book, which tell of an enduring commitment to the protection of fundamental human rights, will encourage and inspire the present generation to whom the future of the European Convention on Human Rights is entrusted.

Beyond the institutional and legal dimensions, the Court's history is also to be told through the personal recollections of those who were part of it for a time. Several contributors have shared some of their personal recollections of their time at Strasbourg. Through these, the reader will learn some of the lore that has built up in an institution that has reached the half-century mark.

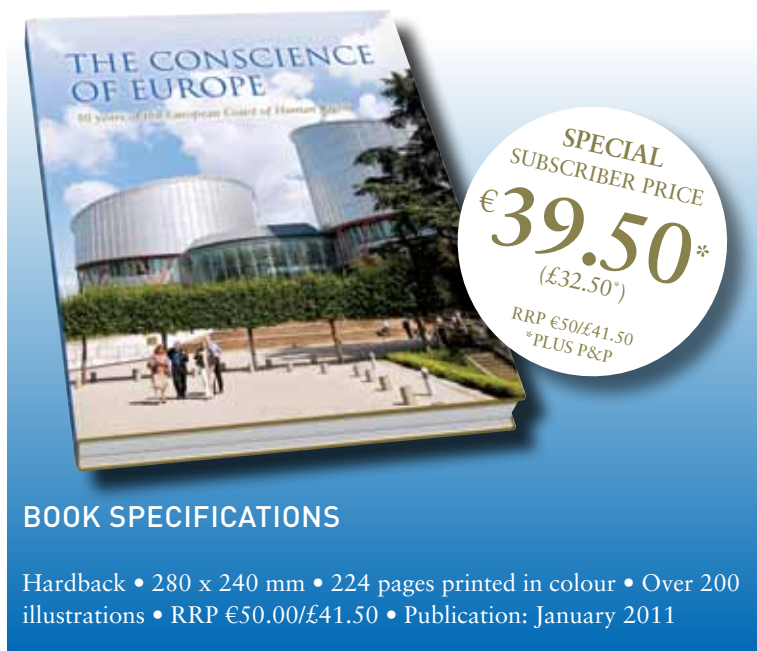
Jean-Paul Costa



## ABOUT THE BOOK

This book, designed to mark the Court's fiftieth anniversary in 2009 and the Convention's sixtieth in 2010, does not purport to be a full and complete history of the institution. Nor is it a treatise on the Court's procedure and case-law, on which many publications already exist. Rather, being intended for the general reader wishing to increase his or her knowledge of the Court as an institution, it steers a course between an academic commentary and a purely introductory guide. It groups a variety of individual contributions, on topics generally selected by the authors themselves, round a skeleton retracing the main relevant events over the last half-century.

This publication has been made possible by a generous contribution from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.



## BOOK SPECIFICATIONS

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# European Court of Human Rights



## ABOUT THE GENERAL EDITOR

After reading law at University College, Oxford, Jonathan Sharpe was in private practice as a solicitor, firstly with Messrs. Freshfields in the City of London and then in Monte Carlo. He joined the staff of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in 1972 and was, from 1976 to 1993, a member of the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights and then, until 1998, the Council's Deputy Director of Administration. Since then, he has been the Deputy Secretary General of the International Commission on Civil Status.

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## THEMES AND TOPICS

### The history of the Court

- The birth of the European Convention on Human Rights
- The Convention's institutions
- The Convention system
- Protocols Nos. 11, 14 and 14 *bis*
- A half-century of statistics

### The Court today

- The Court's organisation and procedures
- Sample cases
- The execution of judgments

### Some notable people in the Court's history

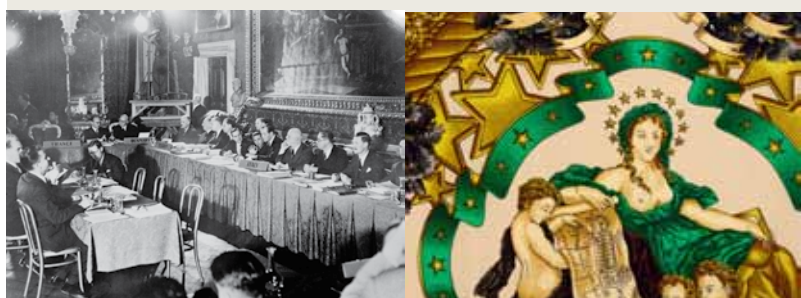
- Presidents of the European Court of Human Rights
- Presidents of the European Commission of Human Rights
- Court Registrars and Commission Secretaries

### The institutions' buildings

- The previous human rights building
- The new building

### Achievements and options for the future

- The achievements of the Strasbourg Court
- The future
- The Interlaken High Level Conference



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