



EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS  
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

## **Message from President O'Leary Superior Courts Network (SCN)**

The Superior Courts Network was established by the European Court of Human Rights in October 2015 to enrich dialogue between the European Court and national judicial systems, such dialogue being key to reinforcing subsidiarity in a concrete manner. If the SCN began small and on a test basis in 2015 with two member courts, we are proud that SCN membership has grown to a total of 103 superior courts from 44 member States of the Council of Europe.

The SCN is a unique judicial forum, where knowledge is shared continuously and at an operational level. The European Court explains its jurisprudence in real time, and national courts, in turn, provide this Court with insight into their respective jurisdictions, the latter assisting notably with our comparative work.

While the network has focussed to date on legal subjects, contemporary judicial challenges go beyond substance. The SCN is therefore currently putting in place the necessary support systems to share its extensive *know-how* with SCN member courts on matters of practice and procedure. This will include matters such as document management, effective case-processing, communication strategies and knowledge management as well as related IT solutions. Of course, the SCN will also facilitate the sharing of know-how between member courts themselves.

Given the success of our exchanges with national courts, the Court has decided to broaden the scope of the Network so as to access further sources of knowledge, comparison and inspiration. We have therefore opened the SCN to other international courts and have been proud to welcome the Court of Justice of the European Union and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to the network's exchanges as observer courts. The initial vision for SCN has in fact transformed into a platform for multi-faceted exchanges between this Court, national member courts and the observer international courts, where all courts can source comprehensive knowledge on international human rights standards and related practice and procedure.

This Court is honoured by the trust and confidence placed in it by the SCN member and observer courts and I am personally excited to lend my continued support, as President, to the work of the Superior Courts Network.