



THE BAR
OF IRELAND
The Law Library



Mr Leo Varadkar TD
An Taoiseach
Government Buildings
Upper Merrion Street
Dublin 2
By email taoiseach@taoiseach.gov.ie

21 July 2017

Re: Serious threat to the independence of the judiciary in the Republic of Poland

Dear Taoiseach,

We write to express the concerns of lawyers in Ireland and across Europe at legislative changes which we believe will seriously threaten the independence of the judiciary in the Republic of Poland.

This threat to the autonomy and independence of courts is not only an internal problem of Poland. It has consequences for the international legal community as well and affects directly the application of European Union law. The right of access to an independent court is one of the primary elements underpinning legal systems of states. It is guaranteed by article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Accompanying this letter, for your information, is a letter sent on 18 July 2017 by the President of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), Ruthven Gemmell, to the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda, in which the latter is urged to avail himself of the right of veto in relation to the legislative measures which threaten the independence of the judiciary in Poland. The Bar of Ireland and the Law Society of Ireland are active members of the CCBE and we endorse all of the contents of the CCBE President's letter.

It is our hope that you and the other members of the Government of Ireland share our concerns and that you will make the strongest of representations to the Government of Poland accordingly.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Paul McGarry SC
Chairman
Council of The Bar of Ireland

Stuart Gilhooly
President
Law Society of Ireland