

WELCOME ADDRESS

BY CHRISTIAN MESTRE

**PROFESSOR AT ROBERT SCHUMAN UNIVERSITY,
PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY**

*Presidents of the International Commission on Civil Status,
Secretaries General of the Commission,
Professors and dear colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen,*

The Robert Schuman University is particularly honoured and pleased to welcome you today at this Colloquy organised to mark the 50 years of existence of the International Commission on Civil Status.

As President, I am very happy to be your host in these premises. Our University has a long tradition of work in the area of private international law and is honoured to count amongst its teachers several eminent specialists in that subject. I welcome with great pleasure Professor Danièle ALEXANDRE, Professor André HUET and Professor Georges WIEDERKEHR who are with us for this occasion. And let me address a very special welcome to Mr Jean-Marc BISCHOFF, both for his teaching and activities in the field of private international law in our University and for the role he played in the International Commission on Civil Status, of which he was the Secretary General for many years.

I much appreciate the fact that my distinguished colleagues are present because, alongside my duties as President, I am also in charge of the Advanced Studies Diploma (DEA) in international law. Whilst in many universities public international law is separated from private international law, we have the good fortune at Robert Schuman University of treating international law as a single subject -with the special feature of being a mixed subject- even though students can choose between specialisation in public international law and specialisation in private international law.

Besides private international law and the specialists I have just mentioned, I must, in view of the topics you will be discussing throughout today, add that family law is also – and now I am speaking under the eagle eye of a very great specialist, Professor Jean HAUSER, – an area in which our University enjoys a very high reputation. All of us remember the work carried out with such distinction by a colleague who left us too early, Professor Danièle HUET-WEILLER. I would also like to record the work accomplished in our University in the field of family law by Professor Frédérique GRANET and at the same time congratulate and thank her for her efforts in organising this Colloquy.

I much regret that I shall be unable to attend the whole of your meeting, but today is a very eventful day for our University in that we have the good fortune of hosting two more colloquies this afternoon and also receiving a delegation accompanying the Rector of Prague University. I shall have to await the publication of the Proceedings in order to share with you – at one remove – the views and ideas that will be exchanged today. I reiterate my regrets and wish you all an enjoyable visit to our University and fruitful discussions during this Colloquy.