



Support for Renaud Van Ruymbeke

The Case for a System of International Economic Law

Today, globalization has the better of any attempts of control and transparency of financial flows. Legal instruments remain insufficiently restrictive. Offshore financial centers continue to exist. International legal cooperation has made little progress. After the timid political awakening that followed a series of major politico-financial scandals in France, the dust has settled.

However, as early as in 1996, a few European judges launched the Geneva Appeal, aiming at building a more just and secure Europe, in which fraud and corruption would not enjoy significant impunity. Among them, investigative judge Renaud Van Ruymbeke was particularly committed to the creation of a European legal area resting upon a balance between the efficiency of investigations and the guarantee of the rights of the accused.

Today, this magistrate recognized for his independence and strictness, in charge of sensitive international affairs, is placed in the position of the accused. His crime: having attempted to convince - in confidential discussions - a witness claiming to fear for his life, to accept to become an anonymous witness and of not having immediately informed his colleagues about it.

In reality, the threats Van Ruymbeke is subjected to are a smokescreen aimed at forgetting the real stakes in this affair. Those threats also hide the absence of political will in terms of combating corruption and the hindrances placed by the government to the evidence of truth in these matters.

The undersigned judges, observing the worrisome growth of the most serious forms of economic misdeeds, are stunned at the attacks against a magistrate who has been the symbol in this fight and voice their solidarity with their colleague Renaud Van Ruymbeke. They draw the attention of European governments to the need of putting back at the center of their public policies the fight against economic crime. They call on their fellow citizens to recover the ground democracy has lost to financial crime. There is no true democracy without justice equal for all.