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Dear Professor Matt,

Thank you for your recent letter.

I read the European Criminal Bar Association's views concerning the Commission's proposed Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime with interest.

The proposed Directive will improve the standing of victims in criminal proceedings. It will ensure that victims are better recognised and treated with respect and dignity, that they will be better protected from intimidation, repeat victimisation and secondary victimisation during proceedings and have better access to quality support and better access to justice. Without this EU-wide application of a minimum level of rights for victims, mutual trust among our justice systems is not possible.

However, the proposed rights for victims of crime will not be exercised at the expense of the rights of suspects, accused persons or defendants. Together with our ongoing actions to improve the procedural rights of the defence, our proposals on victims will raise the standards of fundamental rights for everyone affected by criminal proceedings – whether victim, accused or detainee, whilst ensuring that any limitation of these rights occurs only where necessary and proportionate.

I invite the European Criminal Bar Association to work closely with Directorate-General Justice on future proposals regarding both the procedural rights of the defence and the victims and thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely,



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