

Study visit to London for the opening of the United Kingdom's Judicial Year

05/10/2023



First President Christophe Soulard travelled to London, accompanied by a delegation from the *Cour de cassation*, on 2 and 3 October 2023, to attend the Opening of the Legal Year Ceremony and to set up a programme of enhanced cooperation with the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom.

First President Christophe Soulard, accompanied by President Sandrine Zientara, Director of the Documentation, Studies and Report Department, Judge referee Edouard Rottier and Clémence Bourillon, Head of the International Relations Department, attended the Opening of the Legal Year of the United Kingdom Ceremony at Westminster Abbey. This ceremony brings together judges, registrars and barristers from across the UK.

The First President then met with representatives of the various Franco-British networks of which the Cour de Cassation is a member, in particular Sir Simon Picken, Justice at the High Court, and Professor Catherine Pedamon, President of the English and Welsh section of the Franco-British Legislation Society. These fruitful discussions were an opportunity to reiterate the Cour de cassation's commitment to the exchange of case law and best practice and to maintaining close bilateral relations in the context of the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union.

On 3 October 2023, a bilateral meeting was held between the delegation of the Court of Cassation and the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom, including The Right Honourable the Lord Reed, President of the Supreme Court, The Right

Honourable Lord Hodge, Deputy President of the Supreme Court, The Right Honourable Lord Hamblen and The Right Honourable Lord Stephens. This working meeting was divided into two round tables on topics of common interest and highly topical for both courts:

- Transparency and judicial communication;
- The use of new technologies by the courts, and the judicial use of artificial intelligence.

Despite the fact that the two courts operate in very different ways and have very different legal cultures, the work carried out together enabled the community to identify the challenges facing the supreme courts in terms of accessibility of justice, public understanding and confidence and, more specifically, the advantages and dangers of artificial intelligence in the field of justice.



The meeting was an opportunity for the Cour de cassation to share its experience in these areas and to learn from the thoughts and best practices of the British Supreme Court, which is highly innovative in terms of judicial education and Court's openness to civil society. It also helped to understand the working methods of the Supreme Court, in particular by meeting the Judicial Assistants, who form a real team around the Supreme Judge.

As a model of enhanced cooperation, as called for in the First President's international strategy, this study visit enabled the principle of regular working discussions between the two courts to come.

