Sir Nicolas Bratza, judge in respect of the United Kingdom, today elected President of the European Court of Human Rights

The European Court of Human Rights has today elected Sir Nicolas Bratza (British) as its new President. He will take office on 4 November 2011.

The President was elected by secret ballot by the Court’s 47 judges.

Sir Nicolas Bratza succeeds Jean-Paul Costa (French), whose mandate will come to an end on 3 November 2011, because he has reached the age limit fixed by the European Convention on Human Rights.

Sir Nicolas was born on 3 March 1945. He studied law at the University of Oxford. After qualifying as a lawyer, he was appointed Junior Counsel of the Crown and then Queen’s Counsel. In 1993 he was elected a Bencher at Lincoln’s Inn and subsequently appointed a Recorder at the Crown Court. He was made a High Court judge in 1998. Sir Nicolas was a member of the European Commission of Human Rights between 1993 and 1998. He has been a judge at the European Court of Human Rights since 1 November 1998 and Section President since 2001 (he was also Section President between 1998 and 2000). Since 19 January 2007 he has also been Vice-President of the Court.

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The European Court of Human Rights was set up in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe Member States in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights.