



EUROPÄISCHER
RECHNUNGSHOF

EN

Speech

Luxembourg, 31 May 2018

Speech by Klaus-Heiner Lehne, President of the European Court of Auditors

**Swearing-in of Ms Eva Lindström, Mr Tony Murphy, Mr Hannu Takkula and
Ms Annemie Turtelboom
European Court of Justice, 31 May 2018**

Check against delivery

President Lenaerts,
President Jäger,
Judges and Advocates-General,
colleagues from the European Court of Auditors,
honoured guests,

We have come here today to witness the swearing-in of **Ms Eva Lindström**, **Mr Tony Murphy**, **Mr Hannu Takkula** and **Ms Annemie Turtelboom** as they take up their duties as Members of the European Court of Auditors.

On 25 October 1977, the first Members of the European Court of Auditors were sworn in. This was not a formality then. Nor is it today.

The Treaties provide that Members of the Court of Auditors “shall be completely independent in the performance of their duties, in the *Union’s* general interest”. They are not there as national representatives, although of course their national experience is most valuable to us, but as defenders of the Union’s financial conscience. This is not wording to be taken lightly, all the more so given the existential challenges facing the European Union today, both from outside and from inside.

President Lenaerts, it is an honour for me to be able to participate in today’s swearing-in ceremony by saying a few words about our four new Members.

They have demonstrated their independence, their commitment and their in-depth knowledge in public, in writing and orally, before the direct representatives of our citizens, the European Parliament, and have been appointed, after due consideration, by the Council.

We are very fortunate to have in **Eva Lindström** a very experienced new colleague, notably Budget Director in the Swedish Ministry of Finance, then for seven years Auditor-General, and lastly State Secretary to the Minister for Enterprise and Innovation.

Tony Murphy, you have acquired in-depth expertise at the supreme audit institution of Ireland from 1979 to 1999, then you served at the European Commission in the field of internal audit. Finally we had the pleasure of working with you here in our institution, firstly as Head of a Member’s private office, and then as a Director.

Hannu Takkula, you have extensive qualifications and experience in the field of education in your home country of Finland, and have also worked in the media. You have the double experience of a national and a European parliamentarian – one which I have been fortunate to share. This combined experience is one which gives a unique insight into law-making and policy.

Last but not least, I am delighted to welcome **Annemie Turtelboom**, with a background in economics and extensive teaching experience. For six years you served your country as Belgian Minister for Migration, for Home Affairs and lastly for Justice, and therefore also as a member of the Justice and Home Affairs Council at EU level. After holding senior positions in the Flemish regional government, you returned to the Federal Parliament, focusing particularly on foreign affairs.

Dear colleagues, I believe that part of the strength of the Court of Auditors lies in the diversity of its Members, bringing many different perspectives to our work, from many different walks of life.

The four distinguished colleagues who have recently joined us demonstrate this diversity and this expertise perfectly.

I am also particularly glad that you contribute to making the Court more gender-balanced – we now have six female Members, three of whom are Deans of their Chambers – and this is something we must continue to insist upon in the future.

I speak on behalf of all the Members of the Court of Auditors in wishing you all the best in your new roles, and looking forward to excellent collegial cooperation in the years to come.

President Lenaerts, I would also like to use this opportunity to sincerely thank you and your colleagues for arranging this ceremony in a way which so fits the occasion. It is always a great honour to be able to visit our larger sister institution across the road on occasions such as this one. It amply demonstrates the warm, respectful and supportive relationship which we share.

Thank you.