

Dear Judges

Esteemed Colleagues

I truly believe that for years to come the present March will be remembered.

In a total apolitical manifestation, judges from all over Europe decided to gather here in Warsaw.

Never so many countries, so many judiciaries from so diverse juridical cultures, converge on a single day, to a single place, with such a clear purpose:

To state that is our duty as judges of European Union to apply European Law without any restrictions – whatsoever – from other branches of State.

To uphold Judicial Independence.

To affirm a total commitment for Democracy.

To present solidarity to our Courageous Polish Colleagues.

All international organizations in European Judiciary are unanimous.

The Network of Presidents of Supreme Judicial Courts of the European Union declared:

The proposed legislative changes in Poland would affect the independence of judges and would allow the dismissal of judges who question judicial reforms.

The Consultative Council of European Judges explained:

The judges are currently making enormous efforts to preserve their independence, not as their personal privilege but for the benefit of the population of Poland (...). It is indispensable for the authorities in Poland to discontinue the attacks on the most foundational values of our democracies.

The European Network of Councils for the Judiciary alerted with vigour:

Without judicial independence the European Union will – eventually – cease to exist as a common space for Democracy and the Rule of Law.

The board of ENCJ called upon everyone in the European Union to defend the independence of judges and thus defend the European Union.

The Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers of United Nations firmly speak out: the so-called judicial “reform” in Poland should be stopped by the Polish authorities in the interest of their fellow citizens and in obedience of democratic rules. And make no mistake: we are running out of time.

And today the presence of all of you, dear Colleagues, represents the most absolute and definitive statement by judges in Europe, in defence of Democracy.

In a last call to save the independence of judiciary in Poland, the European Association of Judges, representing Judges Associations in 44 countries, wrote an open letter addressed to the President of the European Commission, urgently asking:

- to use all possible means to urge the Polish authorities to re-establish the principles of the rule of law;
- to file a motion before the European Court of Justice in order to apply interim measures. They are not only necessary but inevitable.

Let me finish quoting a phrase of Cicerus stated centuries ago: “more is lost by indecision than wrong decision. Indecision is the thief of opportunity.”

The European authorities must listen to the voice, humble but resilient, serene but determined, of the Polish Judges, of the European Judges.

WE, judges, who defend on each day, in each court, the Rule of Law instead of the Rule by Law.

WE who apply the Rule of Law and not the Rule of Men.

The day has arrived. The time is now.

The judges have spoken.