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Palazzo di Giustizia - Piazza Cavour - 00193 Roma - Italia

## Statement

### President of the European Association of Judges

In an unprecedented initiative, last January 30<sup>th</sup>, the President of the European Association of Judges joined the President of the Network of the Presidents of the Supreme Judicial Courts of the European Union, Mr. Jean-Claude Wiwinius, President of the Supreme Court of Luxembourg, and the President of the European Network of Councils for the Judiciary, Mr. Kees Sterk, member of the Netherlands Council for the Judiciary, for two separate meetings with the Vice President of the European Commission for Values and Transparency, Mrs. Věra Jourová, and the Commissioner for Justice, Mr. Didier Reynders.

The meetings took place on European Commission headquarters in Brussels.

The simple circumstance of the three major representatives of the European Networks of Judges in Europe assembled for these meetings with members of the College of Commissioners shows the grave concern, deeply shared by European Judges, regarding the debacle of Judicial Independence in some Member States of European Union with the recent terrible example of Poland.

The meetings with the Commissioners represented an excellent occasion for an open discussion, in a very friendly atmosphere, on the crisis of Rule of Law and on the ways to inverse this deplorable situation. It was transmitted by the representatives of the European Commission their own-shared concerns on this crucial topic and their commitment to uphold the basic principles enshrined by Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union.

Regarding the future it was agreed on strengthening the cooperation between the European Commission and our three Networks coordinated as one, in order to concretely safeguard an independent judiciary in all Member States of EU.

The European Association of Judges reaffirms its promise to uphold Rule of Law in the present difficult moment and clearly states that a European Union without Judicial Independence will cease to exist as such.

**José Igreja Matos**

(President of the European Association of Judges)