

Good morning.

I feel very honored to be present today with such a distinct panel.

September 2021. Rome.

Elected President of the International Association of Judges (IAJ), the new Presidential Committee defined, under my coordination, 3 priorities for our mandate.

Besides our core mission - a vigorous defense of Rule of Law and judicial independence - a new main concern was recognized.

With the humble responsibility of representing judge's associations (or similar bodies) from 94 countries - undoubtedly the world's largest judges' organization;

Confronted with a background where the globalization of the Law stresses the need of a more engaged and active participation of the judiciary on the international arena;

Knowing the vital moment societies faces today combatting for democracy, against populism and autocracy, in the defense of human rights, including the right to a sustainable planet;

IAJ immediately identified Environment as a decisive topic for us, judges.

"There is no Planet B" was the alluring expression used to enlighten the urgency of this focus and the weight of our strategic option.

Since then, IAJ assumed a larger role in the discussion of conservation of Nature areas.

IAJ was actively present in the Conference Stockholm + 50 and, under the leadership of the Global Judicial Institute on the Environment and its indomitable President Minister Herman Benjamin, the judiciary gained importance in the center stage of environmental policies.

Confronted with a triple planetary crisis, it is fundamental to empower the judiciary. The requirements for an independent and impartial application of water law are obligatory to guarantee a global conservation of Nature being us, the judges, often the last resort for the actualization of rights provided by law.

As stated in Principle 10 of Brasilia Declaration, judges should strive to achieve water justice due process by ensuring that persons and groups shall have effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings and to remedy and redress.

The present Event, proudly sponsored by IAJ, with judges, but also scholars and diplomats, from different juridical cultures and traditions is yet another demonstration of our mutual commitment today in the context of water justice.

Environmental Law certainly exists to protect the planet. But much more than that, its laws, strengthened by an invigorated jurisprudence, appear as a powerful resource to safeguard new-generation fundamental rights; therefore, it is indispensable to know them, to develop them, to enforce them.

Let me reaffirm an unequivocal and determined pledge of judges worldwide to the aims defined by the United Nations in particular SDG 6 “clean water and sanitation for all”.

At the present crossroads, we refuse to be silent in complicity or to wait for others to tackle crucial quandaries.

To quote Samuel Beckett, we will try again. And fail. Fail again. Fail better. And then, tirelessly, we will continue; no matter what.

In fact, dear colleagues, there is no other option to ensure a common future for our communities, for our fellow citizens.