



## **IAJ Presidency Committee Statement**

The International Association of Judges is the largest international association of national judges' organizations, bringing together 92 associations from all around the world.

The main goal of our organization is to protect and promote the independence of the judiciary and of every national or international judge, because without independent judges there can be no democracy and no state ruled by law.

As the Governing Board of our association, it is our duty to warn not only our members, but also society in general about the course of events and actions which jeopardize the principles upon which our societies were built after Second World War and after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Recently, all around the globe, we are witnessing unfortunate actions and attempts to put judges - nationally and internationally - under threat, and to narrow and ignore judges' role, which inevitably will also affect each and any citizen in a civilized society. The most recent and serious action has been that judges of the International Criminal Court (ICC) are threatened with sanctions including property blocking and visa bans. The ICC was established by 125 nations through the International Treaty called the "Rome Statute". Under this Statute, all States Parties have an obligation to cooperate fully with the ICC in its investigation and prosecution of crimes under the Rome Statute. The ICC is the cornerstone of the international justice architecture, created to prevent atrocities that deeply shock the conscience of every human being and which are sometimes beyond human imagination.

Such sanctions dangerously weaken the international justice architecture as a whole and are a threat to the protection of human rights by judges around the world.

To conclude,

The foundation of a democratic society is the Rule of Law, which does not mean simply rule by a majority, but a majority doing all that the Constitution allows and requires to do in order to protect the rights of citizens.

For these reasons, we are calling upon our colleagues not just to promote and safeguard these principles, but also to explain to citizens that they are guardians of the Rule of Law as the only guarantee that their rights and the rights of society will be protected.

Rome, February 18<sup>th</sup> 2025.