



**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JUDGES  
UNION INTERNATIONALE DES MAGISTRATS  
UNIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE MAGISTRADOS  
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG DER RICHTER  
UNIONE INTERNAZIONALE DEI MAGISTRATI**

**PALAZZO DI GIUSTIZIA - PIAZZA CAVOUR - 00193 ROMA - ITALY**

25 January 2026

Excellency,

As President of the International Association of Judges (IAJ) I hereby address you on behalf of the entire Presidency Committee to express our profound concerns about the independence of the judiciary of Israel.

I.

The IAJ was founded in Salzburg (Austria) in 1953. It is a professional, non-political, international organisation, bringing together national associations of judges approved as members by the Central Council. The main aim of the IAJ is to safeguard the independence of the judiciary, which is an essential requirement of the judicial function, guaranteeing human rights and freedom. The IAJ currently encompasses 93 such national associations or representative groups from five continents.

The Israeli Association of Judges (ILAJ), founded in the late 1970s, represents all judges of Israel and is a valued member of the IAJ.

II.

The Presidency Committee of the IAJ was informed by its Israeli member association ILAJ about the bill called “Basic Law: Remuneration of Office Holders in the Branches of Government (Legislative Amendments)” – hereinafter: “the Bill” – which intends to align salaries of judges with those of elected officials of the state of Israel.

Until now, judicial remuneration in Israel has been determined through a separate statutory framework, not by reference to elected officials. Judges’ salaries are anchored in legislation, and updates to judicial remuneration have so far been decided by the Finance Committee of the Knesset in accordance with section 10 (b) of the Israeli Basic Law on the Judiciary (1984) which reads, according to the translation provided by the Knesset: “No decision shall be taken designed to reduce the salaries of judges only”.

In contrast to that, the Bill is aimed at repealing the existing constitutional safeguard in section 10 (b) of the Israeli Basic Law on the Judiciary (1984).

### III.

The Presidency Committee of the IAJ wishes to express its deep concerns over the implications of this Bill on the independence of the Israeli judiciary.

It is well-established by international law and legal principles that

- The independence of the judiciary shall be guaranteed by the State and enshrined in the Constitution or the law of the country. It is the duty of all governmental and other institutions to respect and observe the independence of the judiciary (UN Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary 1985, Principle 1).

- Judicial independence shall be statutory, functional and financial. It shall be guaranteed with regard to the other powers of the State, to those seeking justice, other judges and society in general, by means of national rules at the highest level. The State and each judge are responsible for promoting and protecting judicial independence (CCJE, Magna Carta of Judges (Fundamental Principles), 2010, principle 3).

- Judges exercising judicial functions in a professional capacity are entitled to remuneration, the level of which is fixed so as to shield them from pressures aimed at influencing their decisions and more generally their behaviour within their jurisdiction, thereby impairing their independence and impartiality (Council of Europe, European Charter on the Statute for Judges, 1998, principle 6.1).

- Judges must receive sufficient remuneration to secure true economic independence and, through this, their dignity, impartiality and independence (IAJ, Universal Charta of the Judge, 1999/2017).

Beyond that, as the Council of Europe stressed in the European Charter on the Statute for Judges, none of such provisions can justify modifications in national statutes tending to decrease the level of guarantees already achieved.

Financial security is an indispensable component of judicial independence. The other branches of government, the other powers of the state, must respect and protect that. The proposed Bill fails in that regard.

While the remuneration of judges has so far been set independently from the remuneration of other state officials in order to guarantee and preserve the independence of the Israeli judiciary, the Bill sets aside these established safeguards.

Most concerning is that the Bill is aimed at repealing the existing constitutional safeguard in section 10 (b) of the Israeli Basic Law on the Judiciary (1984) which is supposed to guarantee the economic independence of judges on a constitutional level. This repeal is not a necessary consequence of changing a remuneration mechanism and gives rise to a genuine concern that the arrangement reflects an improper underlying purpose: weakening the judiciary as an institution.

Moreover, the Bill is part of a broader pattern of measures affecting the justice system of Israel, including legislation that has already transferred substantial powers over judicial appointments into political hands.

#### IV.

The Presidency Committee of the IAJ therefore calls upon the Knesset and the Government of the State of Israel

- to refrain from proceeding with the Bill “Basic Law: Remuneration of Office Holders in the Branches of Government (Legislative Amendments)” and
  
- to maintain the existing system to determine judicial remuneration as it is best designed to respect and safeguard the independence of the Israeli judiciary.