



10 March marks the International Day of Women Judges, established by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 75/274 of 2021 to raise awareness of the essential role of women in the judiciary. This day calls us to reflect on the indissoluble link between women's emancipation, the Rule of Law and democracy.

Gender equality is an essential feature of any modern democratic society. But it is not enough to celebrate the achievements while denouncing the obstacles still to be overcome to fully ensure equality and equal opportunities.

Our reflection must unfortunately be set against the current backdrop of dramatic events that have brought back to Europe and the world the devastation of war, the violence and persecution of oppressive regimes, the erosion of democracy and freedoms.

In these contexts, women are paying the price of a systemic assault on their rights. By denying their identity and dignity, oppressive regimes make a further step towards the control of the entire society and the imposition of their obscurantist vision.

On this day, we want to draw attention to what is happening in Ukraine, where women are experiencing the unspeakable violence and suffering of war; in Iran, where women are the first target of repression and obscurantism; in Afghanistan where, after the Taliban seizure of power, women are risking their very survival every day and are persecuted for their contribution to the building of a legal system providing protection to individual rights.

When they manage to flee, women put their lives at risk. In recent days a new tragedy at sea has occurred in Italy, with a heavy toll including women forced to leave their country to ensure a better future for their children.

Women continue everywhere to carry on a bold struggle for their rights and freedoms. This is a struggle for democracy, for peace, for all of us.

MEDEL will always stand by them and by those who - having been forbidden to be judges, lawyers and public prosecutors in their own country - continue to uphold the rule of law with their courageous testimony.

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