



**On May 23, every year, Medel pays tribute to the memory of Giovanni Falcone, as a symbol of the many judges and prosecutors who lost life or freedom due to their courageous commitment to justice.**

Rule of law and democracy face a global threat.

We are witnessing serious violations of human rights, international and humanitarian law: in Europe the war continues, as does the terrible violence against the Ukrainian civilian population; the images coming out of the Gaza Strip describe unacceptable conditions of violence and suffering, with mass civilian casualties and deliberate starvation, in which the population and the most vulnerable people, as children, are desperately trying to survive.

The institutions, as the ICC and the ICJ, that are supposed to promote the protection of rights, prevent future atrocities, and ensure justice for victims are subject to increasingly frequent attacks by authorities, that threaten to destroy what the international community has built over the years in order to guarantee universal values of justice and the highest protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

In its statement on May 6<sup>1</sup>, MEDEL sounded the alarm about the situation of the rule of law in the United States, where are reported ad hominem attacks on individual judges who make unpopular decisions, thus endangering their security and undermining the independence of the courts.

We are dealing with an increasing number of contexts in which judicial institutions, national, European and international are perceived solely as obstacles to the unrestrained exercise of power, and where the authorities create - with public statements and media campaigns - a climate of hostility against those judges and lawyers who operate as servants of an independent justice.

In its last statement<sup>2</sup>, MEDEL recalled that the most recent developments in Turkey mark a further intensification of the repression of dissent, using any available tool, including prosecution by a justice system that is no longer independent.

Murat Arslan, President of Yarsav and Václav Havel Human Rights Prize laureate in 2017, unjustly deprived of his personal freedom for his commitment to rule of law and independent justice, was arbitrarily sentenced to ten years in prison; despite the presence of all the

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://medelnet.eu/medel-statement-on-the-escalating-attacks-on-the-rule-of-law-in-the-united-states/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://medelnet.eu/medels-voice-for-rule-of-law-in-turkiye/>

requirements for conditional release, this has been denied on several occasions and Murat is thus still arbitrarily detained.

The example of Murat, who continues his fight for the rule of law from his prison cell in Sincan, reminds us that only where there is an independent justice can there be the guarantee of a fair trial and an effective protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, and that independence of the judiciary is the cornerstone of any free and democratic society.

On the day marked as the *Alert Day for the Independence of Justice*, MEDEL calls on democratic institutions and the national and international community:

- to remove all obstacles to the existence of a true international justice; to take all necessary steps in order to support the international system of justice; to protect it from any attempt to undermine its independence and its role in ensuring accountability for the most serious crimes;

- to exercise the utmost vigilance to ensure that situations threatening the security and freedom of judges, prosecutors and lawyers cease and the principle of separation of powers is respected;

- to ensure the conditions for effective and independent justice to be restored in all contexts where authoritarian drifts have deprived individuals of the guarantees of due process, and turned the courts into instruments of oppression;

- to take all necessary steps so that Murat Arslan and all those unjustly detained in Turkey are finally given back their freedom and rule of law and independent justice are restored.

**May 22, 2025**