



STATEMENT ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDEL

We want a future where the righteous are powerful.

Murat Arslan, President of YARSAV

Message sent from prison, in Turkey, to the 40th anniversary of MEDEL

In June 1985, a group of visionary judges and prosecutors gathered in Strasbourg and founded MEDEL, an association that had among its goals *“the establishment of a common debate among magistrates from different countries to support European community integration, in view of the creation of a European political union”, “the defence of the independence of the judiciary in the face of every other power as well as of specific interests”, “the democratization of the judiciary”, “the respect, in all circumstances, of the legal values specific to the democratic state based on the rule of law” or “the proclamation and the defence of the rights of minorities and of differences, and in particular the rights of immigrants and the most deprived, in a perspective of social emancipation of the weakest”.*

At the time, these objectives seemed like almost utopian proclamations of principle. Today, however they are more important than ever. We are living in times of degradation of democracy and the rule of law, of regression in citizens' rights and guarantees, of destruction of international law. Times of massive attacks by authoritarian forces willing to prevent a real democracy to rise up, to prevent the people to act as citizens exercising their fundamental rights. The edifice of peace and prosperity that we thought had been built on solid foundations after the nightmare of war now sees its foundations shaking.

In June 2025, gathered in Strasbourg, the members of MEDEL pay tribute to the vision and courage of its founders and of all the judges and prosecutors who followed their path over the past forty years.

And in times of doubt and threats to fundamental rights and freedoms, no better tribute can be paid by the 25 associations from 17 European States that compose MEDEL today than to reaffirm even more vigorously their commitment and endeavour to fight for the values that were enshrined in its statutes 40 years ago.

MEDEL will keep committed to build an increasingly united Europe, where through constant dialogue between magistrates the rights of citizens are guaranteed and respected, whether against political power or against any specific interests that threaten them.

MEDEL will keep committed to stand up for human dignity, promoting and protecting the rights of all: migrants, the economically disadvantaged, minorities, those discriminated because of gender, social status or sexual orientation.

MEDEL will keep committed to advocate for a democratic and efficient judiciary that is only and solely at the service of citizens and their rights, without distinction of class, origin or resources.

MEDEL will keep committed to defend an independent judiciary and the rule of law, tirelessly supporting and defending independent magistrates wherever and whenever they are threatened or attacked.



Respect for fundamental rights, democracy and freedoms is the common ground that sustains just, supportive and inclusive societies. It was to build this common ground that MEDEL's founders dreamt it and created it. It is this common ground that we pledge to continue building.

Strasbourg, 04 June 2025