



### **The International Day of Women Judges, *March 10th, 2024***

MEDEL celebrates the International Day of Women Judges by highlighting once again women's commitment to justice and the-Rule of Law.

Everywhere, women have brought a democratic change within the judiciary: a new idea of equality that fostered progress in the culture of fundamental rights; a new understanding of openness and representativeness - and a higher democratic legitimacy - of judicial systems across the world.

While celebrating achievements and setting new goals to pursue by strengthening the presence and the role of women in the judiciary, this year, too, March 10 shall break the silence on those contexts where obscurantist and authoritarian regimes have swept away equality.

Among these, Afghanistan remains the ultimate example of a brutal crackdown imposed on women and girls, depriving them of their fundamental rights and freedoms. International sources stress that today Taliban restrictions on women and girls amount to persecution, with the exclusion from public life – as well as from education and work – causing an incommensurable harm to their physical and mental health<sup>1</sup>. Women judges, prosecutors and lawyers have been removed and systematically excluded from the legal system. Because of their contribution to the establishment of an independent judiciary, their lives are now in constant danger.

MEDEL calls therefore on the international community to take all initiatives to ensure that silence does not fall on these contexts, to restore fundamental rights and freedoms for all women, and to protect those who are risking their life for their commitment to justice and the Rule of Law.

***March 10, 2024***

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the UN Secretary-General "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security" 28 February 2024; Briefing to the UN Security Council by the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, 6 March 2024