

We, jurists of the Mediterranean Countries, gathered in Naples on the 7th and 8th of October 2017:

- aware of the fundamental role played by attorneys, judges and other jurists, men and women, for the protection of the rule of law, the promotion and protection of human rights and the development of democracy;
- aware of the urgent need of reasserting international law, the rights of peoples and the fundamental principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, as well as the ideals and aspirations which formed the very basis of the struggle against Fascism;
- alarmed by the proliferation of attacks on the independence of attorneys and judges, as well as their own freedom and security due to the exercise of their functions, as demonstrated by the recent, blatant episodes in Egypt and Turkey;
- concerned about the growing obstacles placed by individual Countries in the international observation of criminal trials, where attorneys and judges become defendants;
- alarmed by the spread of hate episodes based on racial, religious and sexual differences, and by the attempts made by several actors to build walls rather than bridges of dialogue between the different cultures facing the Mediterranean;
- alarmed by the disavowal by Mediterranean Governments of all international obligations assumed with the ratification of international treaties and conventions on the protection of human rights, now secondary to economic and political interests;
- alarmed by the growing violations of the fundamental rights of migrants and persons requesting international protection, trafficked, exploited and tortured by common and organized criminality and security forces, confined in administrative detention camps under inhuman conditions, where women and girls suffer unspeakable acts of rape and violence;
- aware of the need to promote, support and hope for effective action against the massive, global, economic inequalities deriving from the growth of international finance and foreign debt, which hinder the achievement and fulfillment of human rights;
- wishing to establish closer co-ordination between jurists in all Mediterranean Countries, in order to affirm peace, self-determination, democracy, fundamental rights and to provide a response to any form of human rights violation practiced by private groups or institutions, in particular all forms of Fascist, racist, terrorist and sexist oppression.

We commit ourselves for the time to come to work for the full achievement of Our Goals through the application of all relevant progressive principles and rules of international and national law in the following areas:

1. Self-determination and democracy: opportunities for all peoples, including those currently subject to colonial domination and territorial occupation, to freely express their will and to decide their destiny, free of external interference and empowered to construct bottom-up democratic participation.
2. Peace: abolition of weapons of mass destruction – and, in particular, nuclear weapons – from the entire Mediterranean area; complete abolition of foreign military bases and peaceful settlement of conflicts according to the principles and procedures set out in the United Nations Charter; blocking arms trade with countries in war or responsible for grave human rights violations.
3. Rule of law: effective safeguards for attorneys and judges, allowing them to exercise their functions without the risk of facing forms of persecution by State organs or terrorist groups and without suffering obstacles to their activity based on wealth, gender or sexual orientation. Promotion of effective international mechanisms for the protection of fundamental rights and the repression of international crimes.
4. Abolition of any form of discrimination and violence against women and girls and putting a stop to the criminalization of people with different sexual orientations; support of the activity of attorneys, judges and jurists pursuing the eradication of all forms of gender discrimination, for a common struggle to overcome historical prejudices and assert the leadership of women in the promotion and defense of fundamental rights.
5. Migration: for the full protection of the rights of migrants and persons requesting international protection and the uncompromising struggle against racism, the opening of new access routes to and ways of integration in Europe and the elimination of detention camps where migrants and asylum seekers are being held in several Countries, such as Libya. For a battle against the remote causes of the phenomenon, which are set in conflicts, human rights violations, environmental degradation and growing poverty.
6. Environmental protection: promotion of co-operation – both intergovernmental and between peoples – to defend the heritage of humanity and adopt effective policies in the agricultural, industrial and energy fields, in order to protect biodiversity and prevent and contrast environmental degradation and climate change.
7. Struggle against organized crime, which is strongly interconnected with the power of finance, and judicial protection of the victims.
8. Defense of natural commons necessary in order to satisfy fundamental rights, and recognition and development of emerging (urban and digital) commons, as an expression of democratic self-government and of a new legal order,

Judges and attorneys are – if they exercise with responsibility, dignity and awareness their key functions – human rights defenders, and every attack against

them shall be considered a threat to the rights of the people they defend, and a violation of the freedom of all people, undermining the basis of the Rule of law.

On the basis of these strongly held beliefs, we launch from Naples the idea of a permanent observatory to facilitate the coordination of all initiatives for protecting judges and attorneys, human rights defenders and promoters of democracy and of the rule of law in Mediterranean Countries.

We conclude by reaffirming our firm commitment to make the Mediterranean the sea of peace, democracy, gender equity, intercultural dialogue, environmental protection, and the safeguard of human rights of every kind.