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To

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

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The Romanian Magistrates' Association (AMR), a non-governmental, apolitical, national and professional organisation of judges and prosecutors, declared “of public utility” by Government’s Decision No. 530/2008, with its headquarters in Bucharest, Regina Elisabeta Boulevard No. 53, sector 5 (email: amr@asociatia-magistratilor.ro member of the International Association of Judges (IAJ-UIM) and of the European Association of Judges (EAJ-AEM) since 1994, represented by Judge PhD Andreea Ciucă, as president, sends the following

**OPEN LETTER
on the tragic situation of the families of judges and prosecutors in Afghanistan**

In nearly three decades of existence, AMR has been involved in many humanitarian actions, under the aegis of “Magistrats with you and for you”. The actions were carried out both at internal and external level and were aimed at: helping people affected as a result of floods; helping people in certain regions in need of medical treatment for chronic or acute diseases; helping families with children who could not provide them with minimum living conditions; donations for the provision of medical equipment to hospitals; actions in the field of refugee rights, etc.

Currently, AMR is running a financial support campaign for the 7 refugee families from Afghanistan that have been residing in Bucharest for 5 months. There are 46 people (of whom 16 children) forced to leave their country because of the life-threatening regime. These people, including judges, have lost their social status, their assets, their income. However, through the involvement of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they preserved their lives. We are aware of the effort that Romanian diplomacy made [as presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the interview of 6.09.2021, <https://www.g4media.ro/culisele-extragerii-colaboratorilor-romani-din-afganistan-agonia-a-20-de-afgani-care-au-ratat-intrarea-in-aeroport-pentru-cativa-metri-cu-consulul-roman-salvat-de-vesta-antiglont-sub-tirul-talibanil.html>].

The 7 refugee families were also helped financially by colleagues from the Bucharest Court of Appeal and the courts from its area of jurisdiction. They donated money and goods to them.

The International Association of Judges (IAJ-UIM) communicates with member associations on issues related to the object of activity, according to the statutes. In the context of the crisis situation of Afghan judges and prosecutors, the IAJ informed AMR of the following:

- There are 8 families, meaning 44 people (judges, prosecutors, 1 military), who demand to be rescued from Afghanistan because their lives are endangered. They are forced to hide and live from day to day, deprived of what is necessary for daily living. Some of them have a passport and others are in the process of obtaining it. They could apply for a visa for Pakistan or Iran. But the key issue is the reception

of these people as refugees after the expiry of the visa they would obtain in these countries. They submitted requests which were forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- There are 8 other families, meaning 42 people (judges, prosecutors, 1 police officer) who have passports and visas from Pakistan or Iran: 3 families are in Afghanistan and are hiding, in poor conditions, demanding to be rescued; 4 families have managed to leave Afghanistan and are in Pakistan, and one family is in Iran. However, visas for Pakistan or Iran soon expire. These visas were granted for 60 days. If the Romanian Embassy in Islamabad will not grant them visas for Romania, all these people will find themselves in the tragic situation in which they will have to return to Afghanistan.

Having regard to your openness to the situation of the people in the Afghan judiciary and their families, in the context of the grave violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Having regard to the fact that, in the absence of urgent action, the lives of the former are in danger,

Having regard to the fact that both courts and AMR have been involved in financially supporting the Afghan refugee judges and prosecutors,

We ask you to take the necessary steps, first of all for granting visas to the 4 families in Pakistan and the family in Iran, so that they can come to Romania.

We know that visa granting is a component of the policy in this area and we do not intend to interfere with the work of the executive in this field.

At the same time, however, we cannot ignore the tragic situation in which Afghan judges and prosecutors and their families are, in the circumstances in which there is a breach of human rights and fundamental freedoms. They are willing to give up everything to save their lives.

Yours sincerely,

The Romanian Magistrates' Association (AMR),

by Judge PhD Andreea Ciucă, as president

