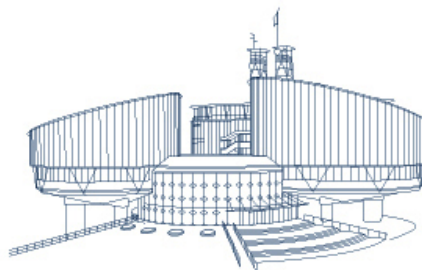


PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS WINS AWARD FOR PROTECTING JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

ECHR 258 (2026) 19.10.2026

Press release issued by the Registrar of the Court



The European Court of Human Rights has been awarded the Judicial Independence Award 2026 by the International Association of Judges (IAJ).

Commenting via video message yesterday, Mattias Guyomar, the Court's President, said that the Court has for more than seven decades been a beacon to protect the rule of law and judicial independence. He emphasised that it is currently all the more important to stand with judges, given the attacks and pressures they are facing, and thanked the IAJ for recognising the Court's work in defending peace and the European legal order.

Ana Maria Guerra Martins, Judge in respect of Portugal, attended the award ceremony yesterday in Lisbon to receive the award on the Court's behalf.

Walter Barone, President of the IAJ, expressed the association's appreciation for the Court's essential contribution to the safeguarding of dignity, justice and the rule of law, declaring that the Court's work continues to be a cornerstone for the protection of individual freedoms and democratic values in Europe.

The award was created to honour individuals and institutions for their actions to promote and protect the independence of the judiciary. The IAJ is a professional, non-political, international organisation encompassing 93 national associations or representative groups, from five Continents. Its main aim is to safeguard the independence of the judiciary.

Among the other winners this year are: the association Speak Up for Justice and Dr. Fernando Cruz Castro, former President of the Supreme Court of Justice of Costa Rica.

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The European Court of Human Rights was set up in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe member States in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights.