



**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JUDGES
UNION INTERNATIONALE DES MAGISTRATS
UNIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE MAGISTRADOS
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG DER RICHTER
UNIONE INTERNAZIONALE DEI MAGISTRATI**
PALAZZO DI GIUSTIZIA - PIAZZA CAVOUR - 00193 ROMA - ITALY

17 December 2020

Dear Colleagues,

The 2020 calendar year is coming to an end and I write to wish you well for the coming year and to thank you for the work you have done during the pandemic. We were not prepared for the challenges that have confronted us in 2020 and each of us has been strained and tested: as individuals, as members of our community; as friends and relatives, and as officers of the law.

The stability, strength and acceptance of the legal system is crucial during times of mass public stress. The need to protect our health from an unseen virus comes at a cost to freedom and of great stresses in the ordinary working of the legal system. The public in such times needs its judiciary as a visible and continuous guarantee that freedoms are lost only temporarily and only to the extent necessary by the public emergencies. The public needs to feel confident in the law continues to be applied with rights enforced and upheld.

We usually wish each other well at this time of year for the festive season and the coming new year. For some it is a time of family gathering and religious observance; for others it is a time of respite from long days of work. Most of you this year have worked under extreme and difficult conditions. We are all looking to 2021 with new hopes for better days and return to what we may have taken for granted.

On behalf of the IAJ I am pleased to extend best wishes and also an expression of gratitude for all that you have done as judicial officers. The community is better for that work and with all of them we look to 2021 for renewed vigour and vitality.

Yours

Tony Pagone

President, International Association of Judges