



**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**

### **Statement in support of Judge Anas Hmedi**

The International Association of Judges (IAJ/UIM) has been informed that our colleague, Judge Anas Hmedi, President of the Tunisian Judges Association, has—following the criminal hearing of 2 April 2026—been sentenced to one year’s imprisonment.

In its declaration of 1 April 2026, the IAJ had already expressed its denunciation and condemnation of a proven and consistent pattern of serious procedural violations in the proceedings against Judge Hmedi, violations that fundamentally undermined the rule of law and the guarantees of a fair trial. The prosecution was initiated in clear disregard of the principle of judicial immunity, without valid authorization from a legitimate judicial body, and despite pending legal challenges that should have led to the suspension of the proceedings.

The very basis of the criminal case is deeply questionable, as it relies on a complaint lacking direct personal knowledge or harm, raising serious concerns of manipulation and instrumentalization of criminal justice mechanisms. Equally troubling was the repeated and unjustified transfer of the case between jurisdictions, in apparent violation of the principle of the natural judge. Such actions—including the relocation of the case to courts far from Judge Hmedi’s place of residence—strongly suggest forum manipulation and a departure from basic guarantees of judicial impartiality.

The rights of the defence have been systematically disregarded. Judge Hmedi was denied the opportunity to be properly heard during the investigation, deprived of effective access to the case file, and summoned under conditions incompatible with the minimum guarantees necessary to prepare a defence.

The IAJ has already observed that the context in which these proceedings were initiated and conducted raised—and continues to raise—serious concerns that the prosecution may constitute a form of retaliation for Judge Hmedi’s legitimate activities as President of the Tunisian Judges Association, particularly in connection with his role in representing judges and expressing positions on matters affecting judicial independence.

Following the above-mentioned sentence, the IAJ recalls that judges fully enjoy the right to freedom of association, in accordance with international standards expressly referred to in the declaration of 1 April 2026, as well as in previous statements issued by the IAJ Presidency Committee and by the African Group of the IAJ.

The IAJ therefore once again:

- expresses its full and unconditional support for President Anas Hmedi and for the entire Tunisian Judges Association in this difficult moment, in which violations of the rule of law are affecting the Tunisian judiciary—the bulwark of the rights of Tunisian citizens against any form of abuse;
- calls upon the Tunisian authorities to restore the rule of law and to refrain from any form of retaliation against judges for their legitimate associative activities;
- underlines the importance of safeguarding the independence and impartiality of the judiciary.

The IAJ will continue to monitor this case by all appropriate means, including a possible on-site visit, and will bring the above-mentioned violations to the attention of national and international bodies.

This statement, like the previous ones, is being brought to the attention of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, as well as the relevant United Nations human rights mechanisms.