



Ministry of Justice

ITALY

**IDLO ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW
ORGANIZATION**

Address by Minister of Justice – Hon. Andrea Orlando

Rome, 24 November 2015 h 12,30

Mr. President, Ms. Director General, Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

I am particularly pleased to intervene at the closing of this IDLO Assembly, the only International Organization entirely committed to promoting the rule of law and creating a culture of justice on a global scale.

I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm Italy's commitment to promoting the rule of law. We consider this principle, together with the promotion of human rights, the support for democratic institutions and effective governance, the

fight against crime and corruption, to be the fundamental elements of the cross-cutting “justice” pillar, for the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

Italy has always striven for the affirmation of these principles recently reiterated in the Doha Declaration adopted by the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice of April 2015.

In this view, we believe that IDLO’s role receives a renewed impetus from an increased awareness of the international community about the importance of the principles I just mentioned.

From today’s interactive debate clear signs have emerged to give further impetus to IDLO’s activities, through a renewed strategy for the promotion of the “Rule of Law”, greater access to justice - especially in post-conflict and transition situations - protection of vulnerable groups such as women and children and support of gender equality and human development.

The rule of law must be, above all, part of our daily culture and practice. In this regard, it is undoubtedly necessary to work to translate the principle of the Rule of Law from an abstract concept into concrete results to significantly improve people’s lives.

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Italy considers it a priority to foster progress and innovation in this respect, in terms of legislation and organization, to make the best use of resources and thus promote legal certainty, the knowledge of laws and therefore equal access to justice by citizens.

As to criminal law, Parliament and the Italian Government have undertaken to adjust legislation to combat organized crime to cover lacunae and make enforcement strategies more effective. We introduced the offence of self-laundering in our legislation and strengthened the tools for the recovery of assets (seizure and confiscation) to better follow the economic flows resulting from crimes, preventing them from being re-invested in the legal economy thus distorting competition, and reusing the assets taken from criminal groups for social purposes.

The efforts against the Mafia are accompanied by the commitment to fighting corruption, a potential lever through which criminal organizations can infiltrate the social and economic fabric of a State.

Even the threat of fundamentalist terrorism, dramatically re-emerged in recent days, urges us to fine-tune the response by justice and police bodies, but also by the reactive members of civil society to combat online hate speech. At legal level, Italy adjusted

its legislation to Security Council Resolutions, to address in particular the new threats posed by foreign fighters, radical propaganda, proselytism and violent extremism, strengthening the coordination of investigations and preventing radicalism inside prisons.

Besides criminal measures, I would like to emphasize here the actions taken in the field of civil justice - by promoting specialization of judges and courts, fostering ADR mechanisms, spreading best practices and technological innovation, in order to ensure more efficient and speedy justice services, able to interact with bodies of the economic sector and be up to the expectations of businesses and international investors.

As to the compliance with the rule of law, let me recall the progress Italy achieved to cope with prison overcrowding and reduce the excessive length of judicial proceedings.

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I wanted to present this Assembly with updated elements on the commitment of the Italian Government in these areas.

At the same time, while recalling the initiatives promoted by the Italian Cooperation through IDLO - for example, in relation to the protection of freedom of religion and belief, protection of women from the many forms of violence and support to

professionals working in the field of Justice, mentioned by Minister Gentiloni yesterday – I would also like to renew the support of the Ministry of Justice to the activities of the Organization.

We Consider IDLO an integral part of Rome's international hub and call for increasing synergy and cooperation with other multilateral legal entities we host in Italy; I'm referring to UNICRI, UNIDROIT, ISISC - International Institute of Higher Studies in Criminal Sciences and the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo.

My Ministry has a significant history of collaboration with IDLO, also in relation with specific projects involving the sharing of experience and good practices in investigations and in the judicial field derived from the Italian judicial system.

I hope that other areas of cooperation can be developed in the future, through direct contacts and exchange of experiences with the judicial bodies of other countries concerned. In the Italian justice system there are qualified judges who are available to provide training in various subjects; I'm thinking, for example, of measures to freeze assets, the management of cooperating witnesses or the development of IT judicial systems and the territorial organization of justice services.

In this respect, I would like to mention a possible area for cooperation with IDLO, concerning access to documents and knowledge of the legal instruments and court decisions which constitute an essential reference for our citizens.

Ensuring justice means first of all allowing each individual, without discrimination, to know and be able to claim their rights. We must, therefore, strongly commit ourselves to eliminating those barriers which still prevent full and fair access to justice.

This topic originates from the close relationship between sustainable development, transparency of institutions and citizens' participation: a relationship pervading the 2030 Agenda and its objectives, in particular Objective no. 16 specifically dedicated to the Rule of Law.

In this regard, a specific computer programming language could be developed, enabling communication between the different existing systems, improving public access and use of legal documents. Italy has developed experimental applications on legal data processing and I think we could usefully share experiences and results in this field.

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Mr. President,

I firmly believe that the outcome of the debate of this 2-day Assembly will help strengthen IDLO's work to support the rule of law. Italy is always ready to endorse these efforts in every possible way.

Thank you for your attention.