



Romanian Judges' Forum Association

***Bucharest,
February 10th, 2022***

**TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,
TO MS. URSULA VON DER LEYEN,**

**TO THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
SECURITY POLICY,**

TO MR. JOSEP BORRELL FONTELLES,

Your Excellencies,

We, the Romanian Judges' Forum Association, professional association of Romanian judges, are kindly asking you to provide support for rescuing Afghan judges and prosecutors whose lives are still in danger.

For your Excellency information, in August-September 2021, the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried out operations to evacuate a group of 6 judges and one justice assistant, together with their families, all Afghan citizens, the Romanian state providing them with humanitarian visas.

During September-October 2021, but also later, members of the judicial system in Afghanistan addressed our associations with a desperate call for help in order to be rescued, all these requests being sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Romania.

These persons are in danger because of their official activities and they are therefore in the highest risk categories (judges, prosecutors), these human beings surviving dramatically, being forced to hide and leave their homes, some living in the basements, without the necessary goods.

The Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs has informed us that they will not organize other operation of evacuation, but at the same time the Romanian Embassy in Islamabad refused to grant humanitarian visas.

We mention that the situation of the Afghan applicants for support is as follows:

I. There are 8 families (judges, prosecutors and 1 member of the military staff together with their families-wives/children) on our list (in total 44 persons). Some of them have passports and others are in the process of obtaining passports. If it is necessary, they could apply and get Pakistan or Iranian visas.

But the only way to help these people is to find a third country that wants to receive these persons.

II. We also have on our list other 8 families (members of the Afghan judiciary - judges, prosecutors, policeman - with their families), in total 42 persons. They are also in danger due to their activity (anticorruption, violence against women, internal and external security).

All of them have passports and Pakistan/Iranian visas. Within this group, 4 families have already fled to Pakistan and 1 family is in Iran, being at present in these countries because their lives were in danger (their homes were searched, and they had to live in hiding places). All these families have small children and very poor means of support.

The Romanian Embassy in Islamabad refused to grant visas although we have found accommodation for all these 8 families and we have raised donation in money for supporting them financially. That is why the other 3 families remained in Afghanistan and they are hiding too, waiting for a solution.

The urgency for these families is to find a third country that is willing to take them over. Otherwise, those who are in Pakistan/Iran are risking being returned to Afghanistan because their visas will expire (Pakistan issues visas only for 60 days) and their lives will be in danger.

We have tried hard to find a third country to receive these persons but unsuccessfully.

In this context, we address you a kind request, namely, to consider if it is possible to assist in an urgent way these Afghan citizens at risk and especially those who are in immediate danger of being expelled from Pakistan or Iran.

In the hope of a favourable response, please, receive our highest consideration.

The Romanian Judges' Forum Association

judge Dragoș Călin, co-president,

judge Lucia Zaharia, co-president,



