

Beat: Politics

Madrid honors US judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Organized by the WJA

Madrid, 05.07.2021, 18:23 Time

USPA NEWS - The Casa de América in Madrid hosted this Monday an act of tribute to Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg organized by the World Jurist Association (WJA) and chaired by the King of Spain. Felipe VI was received by the president of the Spanish Senate, Pilar Llop; the presidents of the Constitutional Court and of the Supreme Court and of the General Council of the Judicial Power, Juan José González Rivas and Carlos Lesmes, respectively; the Minister of Justice, Juan Carlos Campo; the mayor of Madrid, José Luis Martínez-Almeida; and the president of Cremades & Calvo-Sotelo and president of the World Jurist Association, Javier Cremades, as well as by authorities and presidents of various International Courts and Tribunals.

The King presented a plaque as a tribute to the figure of Judge Ginsburg, her daughter, the professor of Columbia Law School and president of the Jury, Jane Ginsburg, and presented the medals to Maite Oronoz, president of the Court Supreme of Puerto Rico; Rosario Silva De Lapuerta, Vice President of the Court of Justice of the European Union; Luz del Carmen Ibáñez, vice president of the International Criminal Court; Gillian Triggs, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for the Protection of Refugees; Young Hye Kim, Commissioner Judge of the National Human Rights Commission, and Christine Lagarde, President of the European Central Bank.

Christine Lagarde spoke a few words of thanks on behalf of the winners. The ceremony concluded with a meeting of King Felipe VI with the attendees and, later, a lunch took place. In the afternoon, the meeting continued with the celebration of the round table 'Equality and the rule of law: contribution of the International Courts,' with the interventions of the United Nations special rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Diego García -Sayán, and the moderator, Eduardo Ferrer Mac-Gregor, and the participation of the president of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Elizabeth Odio Benito; the president of the International Criminal Court, Piotr Hofmanski; the President of the European Court of Human Rights, Robert Spano; the Vice President of the Court of Justice of the European Union, Rosario Silva De Lapuerta; and the vice president of the African Court of Human Rights and Peoples' Rights, Imani Daud Aboud.

After concluding the round table, the King of Spain presided over the closing of the first day, which began with the interventions of the President of the World Jurist Association and the President of the Republic of Colombia, Iván Duque. To conclude, the Monarch addressed the audience and pointed out that in order for "the Constitution and the laws to be obeyed and to be effective, there must be judges to ensure this. For this reason, in addition to the political, electoral and parliamentary controls, and the same social control by the citizens themselves, controls that are inherent to the democratic State, there must be the jurisdictional control required by the rule of law."

"Hence the fundamental role that the independent judiciary plays: it makes the Constitution and the rest of the legal system effective, protects citizen freedoms, and ensures, in short, that the regulatory system maintains its validity," added Felipe VI. He went on to say that the "firm defense of the Constitution as the supreme norm, his constant concern to interpret it properly - so that it displays its double legal condition of limiting the exercise of power and guaranteeing the rights of citizens - was always linked to its conviction that the Constitution also performs a fundamental political function: to be a true instrument of social integration, an inclusive framework in which society reflects itself, in which political pluralism is guaranteed, and in which hope for a better future be preserved."

"Only by attending to these two fundamental meanings -legal and political- of the Constitution, can the ultimate goals that it pursues be achieved: citizen coexistence in peace, justice, equality and freedom, and where Human Rights are respected with the maximum dignity and effectiveness", concluded the King.

This international meeting of jurists has been organized by the World Jurist Association (WJA) and the World Law Foundation (WLF), created in 2019 after the XXVI World Law Congress (WLC) held in Madrid. This is a meeting prior to the celebration of the XXVII edition of the WLC, which will take place in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia) on December 2 and 3 of this year. "The objective of the WJA is to promote awareness of the importance of the rule of law in society."

On this first day, after her death last September, tribute was paid to the American judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg, recognized for her work in the fight for legal gender equality. In February 2020 she received the World Peace and Liberty Award, awarded by the World Jurist

Association, at the American Bar Association. The King of Spain was awarded the same prize, which is considered the Nobel Prize for Law, in February 2019 during the last World Law Congress in Madrid. Other people who have stood out for promoting peace in the world through Law and who also received the World Peace and Liberty Award were Winston Churchill, Rene Cassin, Nelson Mandela.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-19005/madrid-honors-us-judge-ruth-bader-ginsburg.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Jose A. Martin

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619