

Judges Sanita Babre, Edgars Biezais, Ieva Serafimova and Dainis Slišāns give judicial oath before the President of Latvia at Riga Castle

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On 22 July a swearing in ceremony took place at Riga Castle, during which the judicial oath before the President of Latvia Egils Levits was given by judges of district (city) courts – Sanita Babre, Edgars Biezais and Ieva Serafimova, while Dainis Slišāns gave the judicial solemn promise.

Remarks by the President of Latvia Egils Levits:

“Honourable new judges!

Today the whole of Latvian society can witness a transformation taking place within the Latvian judicial system. It is symbolically marked by the newly appointed President of the Supreme Court and Prosecutor General. A new era has begun in the judicial system of Latvia, and it is crucial that this regeneration of the system take place. You, our new colleagues, are part of this regeneration.

All of you already have experience within the judicial system, but not yet in the position of a judge. You have seen how the system works and this experience is extremely important in your new capacity in that very system. We see a rejuvenation taking place not only in the leadership of the judicial system, but within the system itself, which has been supplemented with systemic improvements. An economic affairs court is set to be established, various amendments have been made to the criminal procedure and other laws. All of this has been done in the name of improving the functioning of the judicial system.

The work of the judicial system is continuous and it should not be subject to revolutionary upsets. That is something more suited to state administration, where it is sometimes perhaps even necessary. The judicial system must guarantee stability, yet stability

does not equal stagnation. The difference between these two concepts has to be made explicitly clear: stability, not stagnation. When does stability not lead to stagnation? If the judicial system is constantly being improved. It is self-improvement, for which the judicial corps, including all of you, are collectively responsible. It is, of course, also the duty of the legislature to constantly improve the functioning of the judicial system; a duty that the legislature is indeed performing, and quite actively of late, in fact. You are standing on the threshold of this evolutionary phase, which can sometimes develop rather rapidly, and I would say that in this case evolution is taking place much faster than usual.

Your previous experience has already shown you and you will continue to see in your future office as judges, where improvements are needed – in the work of a judge and in the system as a whole. I urge you to take an active part in the judicial self-government. The trust placed upon you also demands certain activity. You have been entrusted with continuously improving the state of Latvia, specifically its judicial system, which you are now a part of.

I wish you all the best in your future work, and especially to devote careful thought to every single word of the judicial oath. It is not merely one sentence of an oath. Every word in it has a deep meaning, and that meaning must be contemplated. Nothing is superfluous. May that be your food for thought in your new post in the judicial system. Thank you!"



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