

OIAD

ACTIVITY REPORT



15 May 2023 - 30 April 2024

23/24



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NOTE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS



Vanessa Bousardo

OIAD's Co-President



Vincent Nioré

OIAD's Co-President

The past few years have been marked by significant challenges for lawyers around the world, faced with an increase in authoritarian and repressive regimes, coups d'état, armed conflicts and continued attacks on the independence of our profession. In this context, the OIAD's mission has never been more essential. The persistent impunity and lack of adequate protection measures for lawyers only make our actions all the more urgent and necessary.

Throughout the presidency of the Paris Bar, we have stepped up our efforts to monitor and raise awareness of the conditions of detained lawyers, particularly in Turkey, where our presence at the hearings of the trial of the people accused of the assassination of former Bar President Tahir Elçi marked a high point in our commitment to justice and the defence of lawyers.

The submission of two alternative reports for the Universal Periodic Review to the United Nations Human Rights Council, as well as the strengthening of our cooperation with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, reinforced our role in defending human rights worldwide.

This year, the increase in requests for emergency aid from endangered lawyers underlines the visible impact of our actions. The OIAD supported lawyers in every corner of the world, from Rwanda and Iran to Turkey and Belarus, and launched nearly 50 alerts to mobilise both the authorities and the international community to protect threatened lawyers across Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas.

Our participation in the International Day of the Lawyer in Danger, which this year focused on Iran, was a great success. The unprecedented mobilisation of Bars and Law Societies in Italy, the UK, Spain, France and the USA helped to raise awareness of and commitment to the values embodied by our Observatory worldwide.

In recognition of its unwavering commitment to justice since its creation in 2016, the OIAD was awarded the prestigious Abogados de Atocha prize. This award highlights the growing impact, visibility and importance of the OIAD, as a direct result of the commitment of Bars and individuals involved who bring our mission of solidarity to life and defend the legal profession around the world.

We send you our best wishes for the year to come..

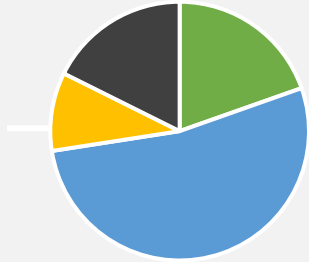


SUMMARY IN PICTURES



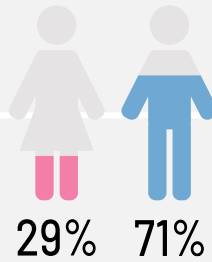
ADVOCACY AND LEGAL CHALLENGES

Total number of alerts and joint statements: 51

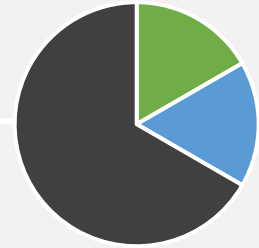


■ Africa ■ Asia ■ Europe ■ America

Percentage of alerts and statements by gender



Total number of communications to the authorities: 6



■ Africa ■ Asia ■ America

NUMBER OF REPORTS SUBMITTED TO THE UN UPR: 2



 Afghanistan (EPU)
 Nicaragua (EPU)

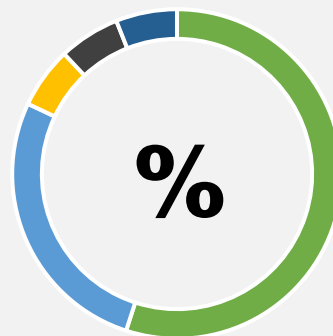
OBSERVATION AND ACTION

Total number of missions: 11



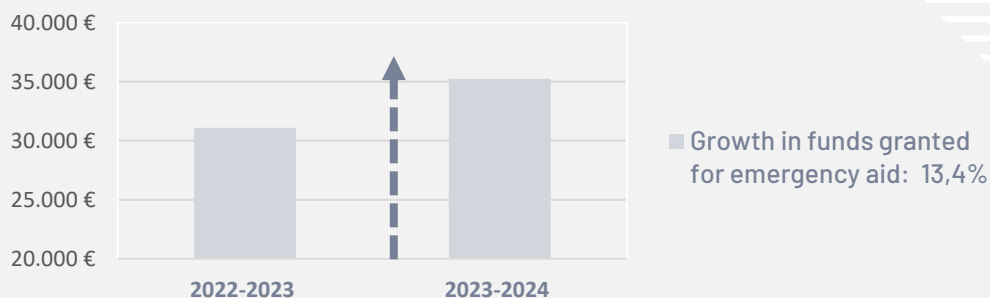
■ Judicial observation
 ■ Observation of the legislative process for lawyers
 ■ Prospection/investigation

Percentage of member Bars participating in IOAD missions:

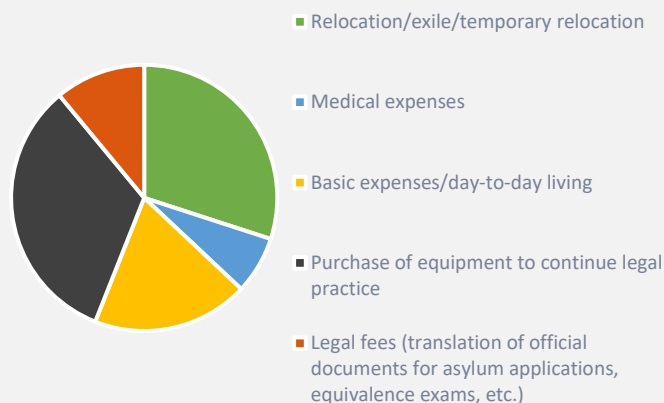
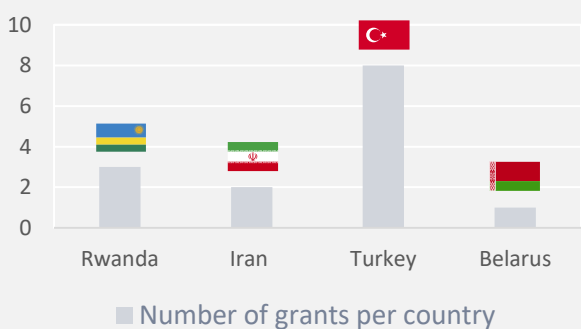


■ Italian Bars ■ French Bars ■ Swiss Bars
 ■ Belgian Bars ■ Spanish Bars

SUPPORT AND AID



Total number of grants awarded: 14



COMMUNICATION

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

2551 emails sent
(Between October 2023 and April 2024)

SOCIAL MEDIA

LinkedIn : +67,15% subscribers
Twitter : +5,6% followers

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



PARTICIPATION IN OTHER EVENTS

2

PRESENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATORY FOR LAWYERS IN DANGER

Launched in 2016, the International Observatory for Lawyers in Danger (OIAD) is a joint initiative of the French National Bar Council (Conseil National des Barreaux) and the Barreau de Paris (both in France), the Consejo General de la Abogacía Española (Spain) and the Consiglio Nazionale Forense (Italy). The OIAD's primary objective is to protect lawyers threatened in the practice of their profession and to denounce situations that infringe the rights of the defence.

The OIAD works to complement defence rights mechanisms in collaboration with established networks, particularly those dedicated to human rights lawyers. With more than 40 bar associations, the OIAD is now a recognised international player defending lawyers at risk.

THE OBSERVATORY'S METHODOLOGY

Since 2023, the Observatory has bolstered its capacity for action by implementing several tools. The OIAD has begun to develop internal best practice guides to verify information and specific requests in order to ensure it responds optimally to the needs of lawyers seeking visibility and support. These guides aim to facilitate the implementation of OIAD action at various stages, in particular for:

1

VERIFICATION

- The OIAD has a special status as a lawyer for the person at risk
- The existence and occurrence of risk



2

ASSESSING THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE RISK

According to criteria relating to the lawyer's situation: obstruction of professional practice, suspension of professional practice, physical and moral harm, death threats, detention, death penalty sentences, etc.



3

USE THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- Advocacy
 - Alerts
 - Recommendations
- Missions
 - Judicial observation
 - Investigations
- Emergency aid
 - Financial assistance
 - Legal assistance



OIAD ORGANISATIONAL CHART

OFFICE

Founding Members: 4
Rotating members: 2

Each year, OIAD is chaired by one of its founding members. The Board, the OIAD's governing body, is composed of the four founding members and two member Bar associations. Currently, the Cologne and Milan Bars are represented on the Board which meets approximately once a month to determine the organisation's strategic and political direction.

SECRETARIAT

Members: 6
Consultants: 2

The secretariat is made up of permanent staff from the founding members and is assisted in its work by two external consultants. It meets once a week and is responsible for implementing the Board's decisions, managing the OIAD's administration, organising observation missions, monitoring legal developments and identifying problem situations encountered by lawyers.

GENERAL MEETING

Active members: 42

The General Assembly is made up of all active OIAD members, 42 to date.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Associations and organisations of lawyers involved in defence can join the OIAD as associate members in order to coordinate actions and be informed of the Observatory's activities. The OIAD currently has a total of 16 associate members.

ACTIVE
MEMBERS: **42**

ASSOCIATE
MEMBERS: **16**



■ France ■ Italy ■ Spain
■ Switzerland ■ Germany ■ Others

This year, we were privileged to welcome four new members to the Observatory: the Vicenza Bar and the Padova Bar as active members, and the Berliner Anwaltsverein e.V. (Berlin Lawyers' Association) and the Association des Juristes Progressistes de Genève (Geneva Association of Progressive Lawyers) as associate members.

During the same period, the Bari and Oristano Bars in Italy, and the Brest, La Rochelle-Rochefort, Thonon-les-Bains and Montpellier Bars in France decided not to renew their membership. We would like to express our gratitude for their previous support and commitment.

FOUNDING MEMBERS

- National Council of Bars and Law Societies (CNB)
- Paris Bar (ODAP)
- Consejo General de la Abogacía Española (CGAE)
- Consiglio Nazionale Forense (CNF)

ACTIVE MEMBERS

FRANCE

- Barreau d'Aix-en-Provence
- Barreau de Caen
- Barreau des Hauts de Seine
- Barreau de Lille
- Barreau de Lyon
- Barreau de Marseille
- Barreau de Nantes
- Barreau de Nice
- Barreau de Paris
- Barreau de Rouen
- Barreau de Strasbourg
- Barreau de Tours

ITALY

- Ordine degli avvocati di Bologna
- Ordine degli avvocati di Brescia
- Ordine degli avvocati di Messina
- Ordine degli avvocati di Milano
- Ordine degli avvocati di Modena
- Ordine degli avvocati di Monza
- Ordine degli avvocati di Napoli
- Ordine degli avvocati di Padova
- Ordine degli avvocati di Roma
- Ordine degli avvocati di Rovereto
- Ordine degli avvocati di Torino
- Ordine degli avvocati di Verona
- Ordine degli avvocati di Vicenza

SPAIN

- Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Barcelona
- Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Bizkaia
- Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Madrid
- Ilustre Colegio de Abogados de Talavera
- Muy Ilustre Colegio de Abogados de Pamplona

OTHERS

- Geneva Bar
- Neuchâtel Bar
- Brussels Bar
- Diyarbakir Bar
- Cameroon Bar
- Lualaba Bar
- Hamm bar
- Cologne Bar
- Ilustre y Nacional Colegio de Abogados de México

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- European Democrat Lawyers
- ASF France
- China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group
- Conference of Bar Presidents
- CCBE
- Défense sans Frontières - Avocats Solidaires
- Endangered Lawyers - Avvocati Minacciati
- FNUJA
- IDHBP
- Lawyers for Lawyers
- SAF
- UJA Aix en Provence
- The Arrested Lawyers initiative
- Union of Young Lawyers of Marseille
- Berliner Anwaltsverein e.V.
- Association of Progressive Lawyers of Geneva

PART 1 - MAKING THE CASE

During the 2023/2024 period, the Observatory communicated on 61 situations of lawyers in danger, representing nearly a 60% increase compared to the previous period. Asia was particularly targeted through OIAD alerts, especially because of the situation of lawyers in Iran.

Publicising situations is one of the OIAD's main advocacy tools. The Observatory communicates in a number of ways according to each lawyer's risk situation:



Publicly (51): In the form of alerts or joint statements published on the Observatory website and relayed on social networks.



Confidentially (10): Through communications addressed to the pertinent authorities (national, regional and/or UN authorities).

THE OIAD BOLSTERS ITS ACTION WITHIN THE SPHERE OF THE UN

The 2023-2024 period was also devoted to consolidating collaboration with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Margaret L. Satterthwaite, who actively responded to requests regarding the cases of Gemma Jones (Equatorial Guinea), German Romero (Colombia) and Claudia Gonzalez (Guatemala).

In addition, for the first time, alternative reports were submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Council as part of the **Afghanistan** and **Nicaragua** Universal Periodic Reviews with a view to formulating recommendations to protect legal defence.



SYSTEMATIC PERSECUTION OF LAWYERS DEFENDING POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ASIA:

Lawyers defending those accused of opposition to the regime are the target of reprisals by the authorities in countries such as Russia, Iran and China. [Read the alerts issued by the OIAD](#)



- IRAN**
- Joint statement Nasrin Sotoudeh
 - Nasrin Sotoudeh (2)
 - Joint press release: Nazanin Salari, Mahmoud Taravat-Ruy and Masoud Ahmadian
 - Farzaneh Zilabi
 - Maryam Arvin
 - Nasser Sagaran
 - Khosrow Alikordi
 - Saleh Nikbakht (2)
 - Arash Keykhosravi
 - Golaheh Vatandoust

- RUSSIA**
- Alexander Nemov and Yelena Milashina
 - Vadim Kobzev, Igor Sergunin and Alexei Liptser
 - Magomed Alamov
 - Aleksey Ladin
 - Alexei Navalny
 - Bakhrom Khamroev

- CHINA**
- Joint statement "709 Crackdown 2.0
 - Li Yuhan
 - Ding Jiayi

- UZBEKISTAN**
- Dauletmurat Tajimuratov

- PALESTINE**
- Diala Ayesh

- PHILIPPINES**
- Maria Saniata Liwliwa Alzate

THE AMERICAS

THE OIAD INTERVENED BEFORE THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (IACHR) TO DENOUNCE THE PERSECUTION OF THE COLOMBIAN LAWYERS OF ASOCOLEMAD:

- «The International Observatory for Endangered Lawyers denounced the harassment and persecution suffered by women lawyers of the Colombian association “Colectivo Mujeres al Derecho (ASOCOLEMAD)” and urges the Colombian authorities and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to adopt precautionary protective measures.

Alfredo Irujo, member of the Observatory’s board, exposed on Monday 6 November 2023, at the public hearing before the IACHR, the reprisals against the members of ASOCOLEMAD in northern Colombia, “victims of surveillance, harassment and persecution since 2014” due to “their professional work in defence of human rights”..»



Alfredo Irujo



GUATEMALA

- Joint statement Claudia González
- Claudia González (2)

COLOMBIE

- Germán Romero Sánchez
- Yessika Hoyos Morales
- Adil Meléndez Márquez

MEXICO

- Oscar Zamudio Campos

NICARAGUA

- Deregistration of 26 lawyers

HAITI

- Alexandre Eddyson, Jean Charles Markenson and Limage Jeppson

EUROPE & AFRICA

BEYOND BORDERS: THE REALITIES OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION IN EUROPE AND AFRICA

In a context marked by corruption and authoritarianism, the OIAD is resolutely committed to highlighting lawyers' fight for human rights beyond geographical borders.

Europe: the powerlessness of lawyers in their fight against authoritarianism

Africa: Witnesses to the unknown, lawyers' fight for human rights in Africa



TURKEY

- Joint release: Didem Baydar Ünsal, Berrak Çağlar, Seda Şaraldı and Betül Vangölü Kozağaçlı
- Bilgi Topçu, Ceren Yılmaz and Fatih Gökce

BELARUS

- Aliaksandr Danilevich
- Maksim Znak

CRIMEA

- Emil Kurbedinov

EGYPT

- Mohamed El-Baer

MOROCCO

- Mohamed Ziane

SUDAN

- Mohammed Ahmed Kudia, Khamis Arabab and Khidir Sulieman Abdelmageed

SENEGAL

- Restrictions on professional practice
- Juan Braco and Babacar

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- Banzu Misongo Effrem

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

- Gemma Jones

ZIMBABWE

- Doug Coltart and Tapiwa

ANGOLA

- Zola Ferreira Bambi

BURKINA FASO

- Guy Hervé Kam

PART 2 - OBSERVATION



The Observatory has played a significant role on the ground by carrying out [various missions in Turkey](#) that focused on [observing trials and carrying out investigations](#) with a view to securing respect for lawyers' rights and the right to a fair trial. [OIAD mission reports](#)

The OIAD also participated as an observer in the meetings of the Committee of Experts in Strasbourg for the establishment of a [Convention for the Protection of the Legal Profession](#), the first binding text aimed at bolstering the security and independence of lawyers in practicing their profession

INVESTIGATIVE MISSION: CONDITIONS OF LAWYERS DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIBERTY IN TURKEY (ÇHD)

From 6 to 10 November 2023, the Observatory, together with 26 other organisations and Bars, took part in a fact-finding mission to Turkey to interview eight lawyers who were arrested and detained in circumstances raising a range of human rights concerns. The delegation also observed two hearings, the first concerning the criminal prosecution of twelve lawyers, all members of the Association of Libertarian Lawyers (ÖHD), and the second reviewing the pre-trial detention of Ms Gülhan Kaya, a prominent human rights lawyer.

The aim of the mission was to "gather first-hand information on the circumstances of the arrest, imprisonment, and trial of lawyers, as well as their conditions and treatment in prison". To this end, the OIAD visited the prisons of Edirne, Kandira and Silivri. The delegation also paid its respects at the grave of lawyer Ebru Timtik who died in custody in 2020 during a hunger strike in support of the right to a fair trial.



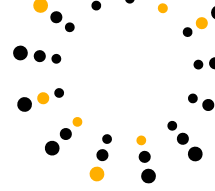
During this fact-finding mission, the observers concluded that although they were able to interview colleagues in detention, much progress remains to be made to ensure the free practice of the legal profession in Turkey. While ratified by the State in 2003, compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights remains largely unsatisfactory, particularly in terms of the right to a fair trial. Meanwhile, Turkey does not appear to respect the individual rights of Turkish people. As the report illustrates, "the use of unlawful wiretapping and reiterated criminal prosecution of lawyers who provide legal

services illustrates a system of harassment and intimidation of lawyers who are simply carrying out their professional duties."

OBSERVATION MISSIONS: ONGOING OIAD MOBILISATION AT THE HEARINGS OF THE TRIAL OF THE ALLEGED MURDERERS OF FORMER BAR PRESIDENT TAHIR ELÇİ

The OIAD has been heavily involved in monitoring the [trial of the alleged murderers of the former president of the Diyarbakir Bar Association, Tahir Elçi](#). Since June 2022, representatives of the Observatory have travelled to Diyarbakir to observe the trial hearings. For the period 2023/2024, [three missions have been organised to Diyarbakir](#) to observe the 7th, 8th and 9th hearings in this trial which appears to be drawing to a close. In anticipation of the final hearing on 12 June 2024, the OIAD is presenting a *summary report* on this emblematic trial.

OIAD REPORT: A LOOK BACK AT THE EMBLEMATIC TRIAL OF FORMER BAR PRESIDENT TAHIR ELÇI'S MURDERERS



BACKGROUND

- **Tahir Elçi** was a fervent human rights defender who was **shot dead** during a public conference **on 28 November 2015**. He was about to make a statement on the destruction in recent months of the historic district of Sur, the old town of Diyarbakir, during fighting between special forces sent by Ankara and Kurdish militants.
- Tahir Elçi **had already been the target of insults and death threats** on social media. He was also targeted by the pro-government media for the positions he took on a television programme during which he stated that the PKK was not a terrorist organisation.
- An **indictment** was issued **against him on 23 October 2015** by the Barkirköy Chief Public Prosecutor for "disseminating propaganda for a terrorist organisation through the press".



BACKGROUND ON THE INVESTIGATION AND LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

28 November 2015

- **Bar President Tahir Elçi was shot** in the head during a gunfight in Diyarbakir.
- The sequence of events in video <https://youtu.be/iBESvMnd6Fs>

17-18 March 2016

On-site investigation began marked by negligence and undue delays.

- The crime scene was open to the public for roughly 5 months, giving the **evidence time to be altered**.
- **The bullet** that killed Tahir Elçi **could not be found**, making it impossible to identify the weapon and therefore the perpetrator of the crime.
- The police recording showed a 12-second gap at the very moment Tahir Elçi was hit, making it **impossible to identify the original shot**.

20 March 2020

Diyarbakir **public prosecutor's indictment**: "Elçi was killed accidentally by three police officers and intentionally by Ugur Yakisir".

- *Actually, Tahir Elçi was only hit by a single bullet.*

Submissions of the public prosecutor:

- A sentence of between 3 and 9 years' imprisonment for 3 police officers (Messrs Mesut Sevgi, Faut Tan and Sinan Tabur) for "manslaughter of former Bar President Tahir Elçi through criminal negligence";
- A sentence of 3 times aggravated life imprisonment for PKK militant Ugur Yakisir for "killing of two policemen", "attempted homicide of a policeman" and the "killing of Elçi with intent".

21 October 2020 - June 2024

10 court hearings before the 10th Diyarbakir Criminal Court.

EUROPEAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION

The Council of Europe is working on an international text to protect the free practicing of the legal profession. The project was initiated by the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe.

This draft European Convention on the Legal Profession aims to **bolster European and international standards for the protection of lawyers** by incorporating the principles essential to their protection into a binding legal instrument.

The Observatory continues to support this initiative by participating in the meetings of the Committee of Experts (CJ-AV), in charge of establishing a convention for the protection of lawyers threatened because of their professional practice. An OIAD Board member participates as an observer at these meetings, enabling the Observatory to put forward recommendations on the draft text.

During the 2023-2024 period, the OIAD actively participated in three CJ-AV Committee meetings.

Each meeting stands as an opportunity to discuss an aspect of the future convention, particularly its scope, its binding nature, the concept of lawyer, the concept and scope of lawyer-client privilege, the nature and scope of the safeguards protected in practicing the profession and the instrument's implementation mechanism.

The work has entered the phase of finalising the draft Convention and its explanatory report. The meeting to finalise the draft texts took place in May 2024.

The Convention should be open for signature by States between December 2024 and May 2025.

The draft Convention, which provides for ratification by non-member states of the Council of Europe once it has entered into force, **could become the first legally binding text establishing international standards for the protection of lawyers, bar associations and their activities.**

The OIAD will remain mobilised throughout the ratification process in order to promote this major instrument for the protection of the profession.





PART 3 - AID & ASSISTANCE

EMERGENCY FINANCIAL AID

Over the 2023-2024 period, thanks to its members' dues, the Observatory was able to grant **14 emergency financial aid packages**, totalling **€35,245**.

The OIAD has supported lawyers from Rwanda, Iran, Turkey and Belarus through the following actions:

Enhancing emergency procedures: OIAD guidelines and practical guide to support lawyers at risk

In September 2023, the Observatory's Bureau adopted guidelines for examining emergency OIAD requests, setting a maximum amount and duration of €5,000 and 3 months. In addition to this document, the Observatory drew up a practical guide to improve the granting and monitoring of aid to lawyers at risk. This initiative aims to improve the processing of applications, identify needs more effectively, and ensure resources are allocated as efficiently as possible when applications are examined by the Bureau.



LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The Observatory has maintained its commitment to providing support and legal advice to lawyers forced to flee and seek asylum in host countries by mobilising a network of partner lawyers working with it and with its affiliated Bars. This enables it to offer assistance on a pro bono basis.

In addition, in collaboration with its members, the Observatory endeavours to use diplomatic networks in the various countries to plead for lawyers at risk and secure embassy intervention to facilitate their evacuation in the event of serious threats.

The OIAD also provided assistance to an exiled colleague, offering him legal advice on how to ensure his physical safety.

Hosain Haydari: a glimmer of hope in a tragic situation



Afghan lawyer Hosain Haydari's case stands as an emblem that perfectly illustrates the work carried out by the Observatory. Persecuted by the Taliban authorities for denouncing the situation of the legal profession, Mr Haydari had to flee Afghanistan to save his life. He arrived in Spain thanks to a visa granted by the Spanish consulate in Iran after intervention by the OIAD and Spain's General Council of the Bar (CGAE).

Since his arrival in Spain, Mr Haydari has been accompanied and received counselling vis-à-vis his asylum application procedure and subsequent family reunification. Thanks to the tireless support of the OIAD and the CGAE, his applications were successful, and he will be reunited with his family in the coming months.



PART 4 - COMMUNICATION

EVENTS

OIAD MOBILISES FOR INTERNATIONAL DAYS

The International Observatory for Lawyers in Danger mobilises for the 14th International Day for Lawyers in Danger: spotlight on Iran



24 January 2024 was marked by unprecedented international mobilisation on the International Day for Lawyers in Danger, dedicated this year to the alarming situation of lawyers in Iran. Bars from all over the world, from France to Italy, and from the United States to the farthest reaches of Asia, joined forces through round tables, conferences and events to highlight the dangers faced by Iranian lawyers in practicing their profession.

To mark the occasion, the Observatory launched a campaign to raise awareness among civil society and the authorities about the threats facing Iranian lawyers. A brochure, a mobilisation kit and a poster were designed and distributed in six languages to maximise the impact of this initiative. In addition, the OIAD shared videos of Iranian lawyers Shirin Ebadi and Hirbod Dehghani-Azar, both of whom gave poignant accounts of the situation of lawyers in Iran.



OTHER INITIATIVES TO DEFEND LEGAL PRACTICE

During the 2023-2024 period, the Observatory mobilised around other initiatives related to the rights of the defence, specifically in the preparation of the International Fair Trial Day (IFTD). This initiative is supported by more than 100 legal associations around the world, all devoted to the right to a fair trial and the serious challenges posed to fair trial rights worldwide.

Since June 2023, the OIAD has been on the IFTD steering committee along with other organisations helping to prepare the day, which focuses each year on a country where fair trial rights are systematically violated. The Philippines will be the target country for 2024, with a conference planned in Manila that will bring together experts in the field and where the prestigious Ebru Timtik award will also be bestowed. [Read the IFTD press release](#)

BOLSTERING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT TO PROTECT LAWYERS AND HUMAN RIGHTS



Bénédicte Graulle and Edmond-Claude Frety, lawyers at the Paris Bar, actively participated in bolstering the Observatory's commitment to the protection of lawyers defending human rights at the European Law Summit in Madrid and at the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Paris. Their participation in these events raised awareness about the challenges faced by lawyers around the world, highlighting the urgent need to strengthen the rule of law and access to justice in contexts that are

sometimes hostile to legal practice.

ENHANCING COMMUNICATION RESOURCES:



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The Observatory provides its members with a monthly newsletter, available in French, English, Spanish and Italian. The newsletter keeps subscribers up to date with the latest news from OIAD, including alerts, press releases and information about the Observatory's missions. Between May 2023 and February 2024, 2,551 dispatches were sent to members.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

The Observatory expanded its network with 67.15% more followers joining us on LinkedIn, and 5.6% more on X.

PART 5 - RAISING THE PROFILE



HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

OIAD 2023 AWARD

In 2023, the Observatory created the OIAD Award, bestowed on a lawyer or a lawyers' organisation working to promote human rights around the world. It aims to highlight and support the work carried out by the award-winners, and also to condemn the dangers they face in practicing their profession.

The 2023 General Assembly gave the award to the Turkish Bars Union for its ongoing support for many lawyers prosecuted in Turkey in connection with their activities.



OIAD HONOURED WITH THE "ABOGADOS DE ATOCHA" 2024 AWARD

On the occasion of the International Day for Lawyers in Danger 2024, marking the 47th anniversary of the murder of the Atocha lawyers, **the Abogados de Atocha Foundation announced it was bestowing its prestigious annual award on the OIAD** for its unwavering commitment to justice since 2016 when it was founded.

This act underlines the importance of OIAD's work in protecting lawyers and advocating for justice, thus perpetuating the legacy of the heroic lawyers of Atocha.

The OIAD would like to thank the *Abogados de Atocha* Foundation for granting us this prestigious award and all of its members and partners for their unwavering commitment to the defence of the defence.

THE FIGHT FOR THE RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS REWARDED AT THE CCBE

The founding members of the OIAD have jointly nominated Chinese lawyers **Chow Hang-Tung, Xu Zhiyong and Ding Jiayi** for the **2023 Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) Human Rights Award**. The award came in recognition of their courage, determination and exceptional commitment to human rights and the rule of law in China.

Xu Zhiyong and Ding Jiayi were sentenced to 14 years' and 12 years' imprisonment respectively for "subversion of state power" in a closed trial on 10 April 2023. This recognition underlines their dedication despite the persecution and repression they suffered for defending these values. Chow Hang-Tung has been held in prison since September 2021, charged under the National Security Law.



OTHER INITIATIVES

"FACES OF FREEDOM": AN EXHIBITION OF THE COURAGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYERS

In collaboration with the Geneva Bar Association, the Judiciary of the Canton of Geneva, the UIA-IROL and the IBAHRI, the OIAD co-organised the presentation of the "Faces of Freedom" exhibition at the Palais de Justice in Geneva from 12 March to 19 April 2024. The exhibition, designed by the UIA, the CNB and the Nantes Bar Association, highlights the crucial role played by lawyers facing persecution due to their legal practice and raises public awareness of the risks they run.

The faces of Alice Nkom, Beatrice Mtweta, Benjamin Ramos, Derk Wiersum, Ebru Timtik, Lin Qilei, Maheinour El Massry, Mohammed Al-Roken, Nasrin Sotodeh, Natalia Matskevich, Rana Habibi, Saif Ul Malook and Selçuk Kozagacli, Waleed Abu Al Khair and Yessika Hoyos Morales offered the public a unique opportunity to discover and understand the crucial role played by these defenders of individual and human rights, and also risks they face in practicing their profession.

PREVIEW OF THE DOCUMENTARY ON COLOMBIAN LAWYER ADIL MELENDEZ: "DESTERRADOS: VOCES DE RESISTENCIA".

On 27 February 2024, the Teatro del Barrio in Madrid hosted the premiere of the **documentary "Desterrados: Voces de Resistencia"**, where a summary was presented of this series about the work and **life of Colombian lawyer Adil Meléndez**.

The documentary was co-financed by the International Observatory for Lawyers in Danger, to support the visibility of Mr Meléndez' work defending the rights of Afro-Colombian communities in the Caribbean region. See the video:

