



INTERNATIONAL  
OBSERVATORY  
FOR LAWYERS

# Activity Report of the IOLD

Presented at the IOLD's General Assembly on  
Octobre 21st, 2019

## EDITORIAL

Dear Friends,

The International Observatory for Lawyers in Danger has never been more active than it has been in the past year.

It issued 34 alerts for lawyers who have been threatened, worried, imprisoned or even killed, almost everywhere in the world and on all continents. It sent 7 observation missions, and carried out 15 teaching and cooperation missions with other organizations.

We took in and exfiltrated three lawyers, who were seriously threatened, and for whom it took every step to ensure they were granted refugee status, found work and were housed.

The IOLD has also been enriched by many members, since the beginning of the year it was joined by the bars of Rovereto, Verona, Lille, Port au Prince and Modena.

It is alerted all over the world. He has built relationships with all major humanitarian organizations. Today, we are the main organization that provides assistance to lawyers, who are unfortunately in ever-increasing numbers at risk.

Its website has been visited more than 19,000 times.



As I conclude my term as President, I must say how proud I am to have been in charge of it during these two years. To have been able to carry the voice of this observatory to Africa, Asia, Central America and Europe was a great honor.

Even if we rarely get them released, the lawyers, to whom we try to assist, always know this one day or another, and it is a real comfort for them and their families.

I'm passing the baton with great confidence to my successor; and I would like to thank Anne Souléliac in particular, the true linchpin of the Observatory, to whom it owes much of its success.

Basile ADER

Vice-Bâtonnier of the Paris Bar



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## I. Introduction

The International Observatory for Lawyers in Danger (IOLD) has been mandated to ensure the physical and moral integrity of lawyers throughout the world and the conditions of practice of the profession.

Involved directly with colleagues in danger, the Observatory provides them with legal assistance but also moral and material support when the threats against them make such measures necessary.

The Observatory has already achieved concrete results for the lawyers it has supported. The effectiveness of this protective instrument made available to the entire legal community, and through them, to the citizens they defend, will be all the greater if its existence is known and recognized. It is therefore up to the professional orders, like each lawyer, to be able to disseminate information relating to the Observatory and its mandate, and to request it when a colleague is in a situation of danger.

The Observatory also encourages members of civil society to send it any information relating to the situation of lawyers worldwide. In 2018 and 2019, the Observatory participated in numerous joint mobilization actions with NGOs. Thus, OIAD is a founding member of the French platform of human rights NGOs acting at the international level.

The Observatory's methodology:

Each case brought to the attention of the Observatory shall be dealt in accordance with the following procedure:

- Verification of the reality of the facts;
- Cross-referencing of available information;
- Evaluation of the situation by the Observatory;
- Transmission to partners for advice;
- Implementation of adequate means

The seriousness of the threat is assessed on the basis of criteria relating to the lawyer's situation: obstacles to the exercise of the profession, suspension of professional practice, violation of physical and moral integrity, death threats, detention, death penalty sentences, etc.

Certain situations may lead the Observatory to conduct investigations through field missions. The purpose of the latter is to assist and protect the threatened lawyer, but also to collect information from professional organisations and lawyers themselves, in order to produce the most accurate "country" report possible and to establish concrete recommendations.

Experience has shown that these missions are also an opportunity to identify new cases that receive little or no media coverage.



The Observatory does everything possible to ensure the effectiveness of the missions and to obtain a real effect on the given situation. Teams of lawyers are appointed to ensure the quality of fieldwork and its follow-up. Missions are generally carried out by several lawyers in order to guarantee their safety.

Finally, the Observatory respects its principle of specialization, namely that it is dedicated to the protection of lawyers. In this context, it may join other human rights defenders' organizations. It mobilizes and sensitizes other national and international actors who are part of public institutions or civil society.

The Observatory notes that States remain primarily responsible for building a free and secure environment for the performance of the lawyer's mission.

The more the Observatory's work is recognized and supported within the profession and beyond, the more effective its action will be in ensuring the protection of lawyers at risk.

## II. Accession of new members

Since 2018, OIAD has had the honour of having new members as the Milan Bar in 2018 and the Verona, Rovereto, Lille and Modena Bars in 2019.

### Founding members

- Consejo General de la Abogacía Española
- Barreau de Paris
- Conseil National des Barreaux (France)
- Consiglio Nazionale Forense (Italie)

### Active members

#### French bars:

- Brest bar
- Caen bar
- Hauts-de-Seine bar
- Metz bar
- Montpellier bar
- La Rochelle – Rochefort bar
- Lille bar
- Lyon bar
- Rennes bar
- Rouen bar
- Strasbourg bar
- Tours bar
- Thonon les Bains bar

#### Italian bars:

- Bari bar
- Brescia bar
- Messina bar
- Milano bar
- Modena bar
- Monza bar
- Oristano bar
- Roma bar
- Rovereto bar
- Torino bar
- Verona bar

#### Spanish bars:

- Barcelona bar
- Bizkaia bar
- Cáceres bar
- Lleida bar

- Madrid bar

- Talavera de la Reina bar

Others bar:

- Genève bar (Switzerland)
- Dyarbakir bar (Turkey)
- Cameroon Bar Association

Associate members

- Avocats européens démocrates
- Avocats sans frontières France
- China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group
- Conférence des Bâtonniers
- Conseil des Barreaux européens (CCBE)
- Défense sans frontière – Avocats Solidaires
- Endangered Lawyers –Avvocati Minacciati
- Fédération Nationale des Unions de Jeunes Avocats (FNUJA)
- Institut des droits de l’Homme des avocats européens (IDHAE)
- Lawyers for Lawyers
- Syndicat des avocats de France
- The Arrested Lawyers Initiative
- Union des Jeunes Avocats d’Aix-en-Provence (UJA)

### III. Press releases and alerts

The media coverage of situations, when it is safe for the lawyer concerned, is one of the main tools at the disposal of the IOLD. It is carried out in two ways: either publicly, when possible - it takes the form of alerts published on the Observatory's website and relayed on social networks - or, in a more confidential way, by addressing the authorities directly affected (national, European and/or UN authorities).

#### 1. Algeria

On May 29, 2018, the IOLD issued a press release concerning Mr Noureddine Ahmine following his acquittal. In 2014, the lawyer defended a man whose brother died following an attack in which the police allegedly participated instead of defending him. However, Mr. Noureddine Ahmine's client withdrew his complaint in 2015, and the lawyer was then charged with contempt and production of false evidence. After being heard by the investigating judge in May 2016 and October 2017, the lawyer was nevertheless acquitted at first instance in

May 2018, for lack of evidence, after several postponements of hearings.



The IOLD issued an updated alert on May 20, 2019 and July 24, 2019 concerning Salah

Dabouz, an Algerian lawyer known to have defended prisoners during the events in



Ghardaïa as well as followers of Ahmadism, a minority movement in Islam. He was the president of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADDH).



In 2018, he was given suspended prison sentences for "insulting Islam".

Me Dabouz was arrested on 7 April 2019 for protesting against the arrest of one of his clients, Kamel Eddine Fekhar. He was finally released the next day but was placed under judicial supervision. The lawyer must then appear three times a week before the

investigating judge in Ghardaïa. This control is all the more damaging to Mr. Dabouz's freedom since Ghardaïa is 600 kilometers from his place of residence and work.

The National Union of the Bar Association announced the "boycott of judicial activities throughout the national territory" on April 8, 2019, denouncing a violation of the rights of the defence guaranteed by the Algerian Constitution.

On May 17, while taking part in demonstrations in Algiers for a democratic transition, Salah Dabouz was beaten up by the police and arrested. He was released later that day.

The judicial review to which he was subject ended on 24 July 2019, but the lawyer who had started a hunger strike on 8 July 2019 decided to continue it as a protest against the irregular procedures he faced.

## 2. Azerbaijan

On June 6, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mr. Emin Aslan.



Known for his involvement in freedom of information cases, Mr. Aslan was kidnapped in front of his fiancée on June 4, 2018. The next day, the Department of Organized Crime, known for its use of torture, claimed to detain the lawyer, while he was sentenced to 30 days' detention by a local court. Mr. Aslan was not able to consult his lawyer during this period.

## 3. Bolivia

The Consejo General de la Abogacía Española sent a letter on June 1, 2018 on behalf of the IOLD to the Ambassador of

Bolivia to Spain expressing its concern about the situation of lawyer Nelson La Madrid. According to the information received, the risk is related to his work as legal

representative of the Guaraní indigenous communities of Tatarenda Nuevo and Yumao, located in the province of Santa Cruz. The latter are opposed to the implementation of the Rositas hydroelectric project, carried out by the Empresa Nacional de Electricidad de Bolivia (ENDE) on their territory without prior, free and informed consultation, a right enshrined in the Political Constitution of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

The IOLD echoed the concerns expressed by the prominent human rights organisation Frontline Defenders about the death threats received by the lawyer and the harassment

he has reportedly been subjected to since his involvement in the trial. This situation already occurred in the past as part of his work to defend the rights of Guaraní communities.



#### 4. Burkina Faso

On May 22, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert in support of lawyer Mamadou Traoré.

The former President of the Bar was accused of participating in the failed coup in September 2015 and appeared before the military court.

The procedure was marred by numerous irregularities, including the lack of consultation with the President of the Bar and his indictment without notification of the alleged facts.

In this regard, the UEMOA and OHADA Bar Conferences denounced the clear

violation of the rights of Mr. Mamadou Traoré, who was unable to benefit from the assistance and control of the regularity of procedure by the current President of the Bar, in accordance with Article 6 of UEMOA Regulation No. 05.

In addition, the IOLD expressed concern about the appointment of judges sitting on the Military Tribunal, derogating from constitutional rules and infringing on the right to a fair trial.

#### 5. Cameroon

On March 3, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Cameroonian lawyer Michelle Ndoki following her arrest.

Michelle Ndoki, active in an opposition party, had been hiding since her participation in the violently repressed demonstration day on 26 January, during

which she had been wounded following police fire.

At the time of her arrest, no documents justifying her arrest were presented, neither arrest warrants nor warrants to bring her in. The Cameroonian authorities claimed that she was trying to flee to justify her arrest. She is currently being prosecuted for



hostilities against the country, rebellion, insurrection, contempt of the President of the Republic, meeting and demonstration, gathering, political character, complicity in the degradation of public or classified property, destruction and attempted illegal emigration. She faces the death penalty.



On September 18, 2019, the IOLD published an article on the situation of lawyers in Cameroon, in particular to express its support for the Cameroon Bar Association. The latter adopted a resolution on August 31 announcing a five-day strike from September 16 to 22. Cameroonian lawyers denounce, among other things, the difficult access to their clients in places of detention and in the courts, particularly with regard to persons detained incommunicado.

## 6. China

The situation of lawyers and, more generally, human rights defenders in China is extremely worrying. Since 2015, the year of the "709 crackdown", which corresponds to the mass arrest of more than 200 lawyers and activists, the government has shown increasing severity towards dissidents. Lawyers, as promoters of civil liberties, are often referred to as enemies of the nation by state bodies; the adoption of new laws regulating the profession has also made it possible to strengthen the authorities' control over lawyers' activities by dissuading them from engaging in so-called "sensitive" cases.

On March 4, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mr Jiang Tianyong, a Beijing lawyer who has defended Tibetan militants

The lawyers also denounce the failure to respect the fundamental principles of the right to a fair trial, despite the fact that they are guaranteed by the various international texts ratified by Cameroon. Finally, the signatories of this resolution denounce serious and recurrent violations of the practice of the legal profession, in particular physical violence by law enforcement officials and arbitrary arrests.

On March 21, 2019, the IOLD signed a communiqué with ten other organisations to Emmanuel Macron on the occasion of the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping from 24 to 26 March 2019, on the occasion of the 55th anniversary of the establishment of Franco-Chinese diplomatic relations. In this communiqué, the signatory organisations asked the French President to raise the issue of human rights in China with his counterpart.

In addition, the IOLD has issued numerous alerts regarding Chinese lawyers.

or Falun Gong practitioners, persecuted by the regime since 1999.

Jian Tianyong had his professional licence withdrawn in 2009 by the authorities. In



November 2016, the lawyer disappeared; he was tried in 2017 and sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment. While he was due to be released on 28 February 2019, Jiang Tianyong was unaccounted for for two days. His family and supporters who were waiting for him when he was released from prison, were notified by the authorities that the lawyer had been "taken", without further clarification. Two days later, a video conversation with his wife in exile in the United States confirmed that Jiang Tianyong had been able to return to his parents' home. However, his freedom

appears to be restricted as police officers are stationed outside his home and follow him on all his travels - a common practice in China, according to Amnesty International.



On May 22, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mr Xie Yanyi, a lawyer practising in Beijing, who defended Falun Gong practitioners and revealed in 2008 the Chinese government's attempt to install a surveillance tool in all computers sold in the country.



The IOLD signed a joint statement initiated on January 28, 2019 by the China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group (CHRLCG) concerning Mr. Wang Quanzhang.

Mr. Xie Yanyi was arrested during the "709 crackdown" in 2015 and charged with "ethical violations"; during his trial, Xie Yanyi could not be represented by the lawyer chosen by his family.

During the subsequent detention, he was subjected to torture. His family has also been pressured by the authorities, who have, for example, forced their landlord to terminate their lease.

In April 2018, Xie Yanyi noticed that her professional licence was registered as "void" on the website of the Beijing Office of Justice. Xie Yanyi was summoned to a hearing before the Beijing Bar on 16 May 2018 and was assaulted by police officers outside the building on his way there. First grounded by the police, the lawyer and his wife were held for several hours after the hearing.

The latter has distinguished himself through the defence of Falun Gong practitioners, and through his activism, which has led him to write investigation reports on the human rights situation in the country.

His activities led him to be sentenced on January 28, 2019 to 4.5 years' imprisonment



and 5 years' deprivation of his political rights for "subversion of state power".

Wang Quanzhang was arrested in August 2015 and detained incommunicado until his trial, which was held in camera. The CHRLCG reports acts of torture suffered by the lawyer during his detention.

On June 1, 2018, the Consejo General de la Abogacía Española sent a letter on behalf of the IOLD to the Chinese Ambassador to Spain, expressing its concern about the

situation of lawyers Gao Zhiseng, Yu Wensheng and Jiang Tianyong.



## 7. Colombia

On December 5, 2018, the IOLD, together with other organizations, sent a letter to the President of Colombia with a copy to the national authorities and representatives of international organizations expressing their concern about the situation of lawyer Daniel Prado.



The other organizations that promoted and sent the letter were as follows: Colombian Caravana UK Lawyers Group; Lawyers for Lawyers; Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada; Fundación Abogacía Española; Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Bizkaia; Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales; International Union of Lawyers; ABColombia; Federation des Barreaux d'Europe.

The above organizations have been informed of threats against Daniel Ernesto Prado Albarraín. Mr. Prado, lawyer and member of the Colombian NGO Comisión

Intercelesial de Justicia y Paz (CIJP), which represents several victims in the emblematic case of the "12 Apostles". In this case, Santiago Uribe Vélez, brother of former President and current Senator Álvaro Uribe Vélez, was accused of co-founding in Antioquia the paramilitary group known as the 12 Apostles, a group that allegedly committed several crimes against humanity.

Daniel Prado has been the victim of attacks because of his work as a lawyer for victims of human rights violations. These incidents include shots fired in his office, attempted burglaries in his office and an attempt to loosen the screws on the wheels of the car that the National Protection Unit (UNP) had entrusted to him as part of its protection measures. After the issuance of an arrest warrant on 19 February 2016 against Santiago Uribe Vélez, the main suspect in the "12 Apostles" case, threats and harassment against Daniel Prado increased considerably, as did threats and harassment against witnesses and judicial officials involved in the case.

On March 13, 2019, the IOLD, together with other organizations, sent a letter to the Director of the National Protection Unit with a copy to the national authorities and representatives of international organizations, expressing their concern about the situation of lawyer Adil Meléndez.



The other organizations that promoted the letter and sent it were as follows: Colombian Caravana; UK Lawyers Group; Lawyers for Lawyers; Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada; Fundación Abogacía Española.

In 2017 and 2018, Mr. Meléndez filled corruption charges against the mayor of San Onofre, in the Sucre department. He also spoke of the presence of paramilitary groups in the region and the threat they pose to local communities and in particular to

victims of illegal land grabbing and human rights violations. Mr. Meléndez represents victims in some 30 cases of illegal land grabbing in order to obtain compensation and justice before the national courts. In addition, he represents the families of more than 100 victims who were reportedly killed by paramilitaries in Sucre, Montes de María and Córdoba.

The addressee of the letter was the Director of the National Protection Unit because, according to information received, in December 2018, Adil Meléndez's armoured vehicle was withdrawn by this organization and, in its place, he would have received an ordinary car. Mr. Meléndez had received an armoured vehicle in recognition of the serious risk to which he is exposed as a human rights lawyer. In 2006, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) granted Mr. Meléndez precautionary measures, urging the Colombian Government to take the necessary measures to protect his physical integrity and allow him to carry out his work.

## 8. United States

On May 22, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert following the travel ban in the United States of Belgian colleagues, on the grounds that

they had defended individuals prosecuted for terrorism in Belgium.

## 9. Egypt

On January 30, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mr Massoum Marzouk, an Egyptian human rights lawyer.

He openly opposed President al-Sissi's government, both legally (including the cancellation of a treaty transferring the islands of Tiran and Sanafir to Saudi Arabia

in 2016) and politically, for publicly calling for a referendum on the regime's political action in August 2018. It was following this position that Mr. Marzouk was arrested at his home, which was also searched, on the orders of Mr. Abbas Kamel, head of internal intelligence and former chief of staff of

President al-Sissi. No warrant was provided to justify the arrest and search. As for Mr. Marzouk's place of detention, it has been kept secret for several days.

Massoum Marzouk has been held in Torah prison (Cairo) since 23 August 2018. Placed in solitary confinement, the 73-year-old lawyer is in danger of death: suffering from an abdominal hernia, his condition continues to deteriorate. However, the authorities refuse to allow him to be operated on in accordance with the prison doctor's recommendations - which seems to be a method used by the Egyptian authorities to eliminate their opponents, some of whom have been in "provisional detention" since 2014.

The Consejo General de la Abogacía Española sent a letter on its behalf and on behalf of the IOLD to the Ambassador of

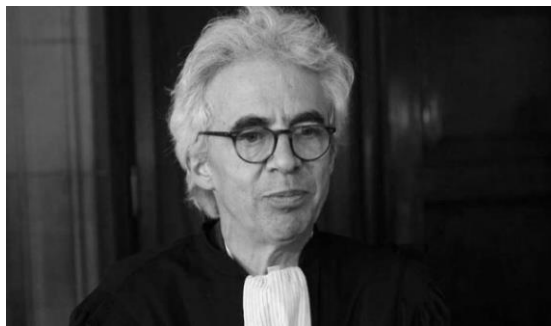
Egypt to Spain on the occasion of the Threatened Lawyer Day on 24 January 2018, to express its concern about the situation of the legal profession in that country.

On May 21, 2019, Mr. Marzouk's lawyer, Mr. Khaled Ali, announced that his client would soon be released, a decision confirmed by the prosecutor's office and which also concerns 4 other political prisoners.



## 10. France

On February 21, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Me William Bourdon. The latter is a French lawyer specialising in criminal law, more specifically in business law, and communication law. He was Secretary General of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) before founding the Sherpa association in 2001.



In 2008, he represented Transparency International in the "ill-gotten property" case, and obtained the conviction in 2017 of

Teodorin Obiang Nguema, the eldest son of the President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

In February 2019, the Malabo Court issued an arrest warrant against 16 people, including Me Bourdon and Daniel Lebègue, former president of the French section of Transparency International. This arrest warrant, which concerns allegations of money laundering and terrorist financing assistance, is considered by ten anti-corruption organisations as part of a retaliation operation.

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On February 1, 2019, the IOLD adopted an alert concerning Mr Marjam Ghaem, following insults and death threats made against him. Marjam Ghaem is a lawyer registered at the Mayotte Bar and practising in particular in foreigners' law.

## 11. Guatemala

The Consejo General de la Abogacía Española sent a letter on its behalf and on behalf of the IOLD to the Attorney General of Guatemala to support the adoption and implementation of the "Protocol on the Investigation of Crimes Committed against Human Rights Defenders" (April 27, 2018).

The IOLD issued an alert on July 24, 2019 concerning lawyer Quelvin Jiménez. He is a lawyer in Guatemala and defends the rights of indigenous peoples against land grabbing by mining companies in particular. These activities as human rights defenders have led to numerous death threats and intimidation attempts.

The IOLD has therefore joined Amnesty International in calling on the Guatemalan authorities to take the necessary measures to ensure the safety and protection of the lawyer,

as well as judicial measures to investigate the attacks on Quelvin Jiménez, in complete impartiality and independence.



## 12. Honduras

On March 15, 2019, the IOLD sent a letter to the President of the Republic of Honduras with a copy to the national authorities and representatives of international organizations expressing their concern about the situation of lawyer Víctor Fernández. On March 19, these concerns were made public through an alert.



Víctor Antonio Fernández Guzmán is a prominent human rights lawyer in Honduras

who has been the victim of repeated attacks and threats to his personal and professional integrity.

Following several serious and urgent situations arising from his work, Víctor Fernández received in 2013 the precautionary measures 416-13 by IACHR Resolution 12/2013 and he benefited from the precautionary measure 112-16 granted by Resolution 8/2016, at the same time.

Despite this, Fernández and his team at the Movimiento Amplio por la Dignidad y la Justicia (MADJ) have been subjected to various threats throughout their professional careers, particularly since November 27, 2017, in the context of the electoral fraud reported in Honduras. Since then, more than 30 attacks of all kinds took place: threats, unlawful searches, surveillance and violations





of freedom of expression, torture, cruel and degrading treatment, selective executions, kidnappings, arbitrary detentions, surveillance, harassment, hate campaigns and

criminalization, leaving 14 of its members in danger, including 3 who have been permanently displaced from their territory.

On July 25, 2018, the IOLD sent a letter to the President of the Supreme Court of Honduras requesting the protection and respect of all due process guarantees in the case opened by the murder of Berta Cáceres and the effective application of precautionary measure No. 112-16 taken by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights-CIDH.

On 23 August 2018, another letter was sent to the Office of the Attorney General requesting due process in the Berta Cáceres case.



### 13. India

On August 3, 2018, the IOLD issued a statement regarding the assassination of Mr. Ajit Nayak, an Indian lawyer, president of the Dandeli City Council and an environmental activist. An active member of the Kali Bachao Andolan movement (Movement for the Preservation of the Kali River, against industrial pollution), Mr. Nayak was particularly opposed to the implementation of the reforms of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority in the city of Karnataka.

On July 27, 2018, as he was leaving his office in Dandeli, Mr. Nayak was stabbed by three men who fled. One of the perpetrators was

subsequently arrested and confessed to the murder, which was allegedly motivated by a case of corruption related to the allocation of land along the Kali River. This murder led to strikes by lawyers in several cities in Karnataka State.



### 14. Iran

Iran seems to have recently begun to step up repression against human rights lawyers. The IOLD was alarmed by the Iranian

authorities' limitation of the rights of defence in a statement dated 13 June 2018. While the Constitution (article 35) and the Regulations on Criminal Procedure (article



48) guarantee in principle the freedom of the parties to choose their lawyer, an exception is provided for in a "Note to article 48" on national security matters. It is on the basis of this Note that the authorities have published a list of 20 state-approved

lawyers, to whom persons accused of crimes related to national security are obliged to have recourse for their defence. This list concerns the province of Tehran but similar lists should be adopted in other provinces.

On February 25, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mr Amir Salar Davoodi, a lawyer currently imprisoned *incommunicado*.

Mr Davoodi has defended many political prisoners and members of ethnic or religious minorities; he is very active on social networks and is openly opposed to the regime's policy.

On November 20, 2018, Mr. Davoodi was arrested (without a warrant) while his home and office were searched. Although the exact charges against him have still not been communicated, his case has been referred to a section of the Revolutionary Court dealing with crimes related to national security.

Since his arrest, Mr. Davoodi has been kept in solitary confinement; he has not been allowed to consult his lawyer or prison doctor and has only been allowed visits from his parents. His place of detention was also kept secret for a time.



On June 18, 2018 and March 12, 2019, the IOLD also issued alerts concerning Ms. Nasrin Sotoudeh, an Iranian lawyer who has long been subjected to fierce repression by the authorities.



She was imprisoned between 2010 and 2013 for defending political prisoners, and cannot leave the country until 2022. Her

commitment, particularly to women's rights (for defending Iranian women who opposed the mandatory wearing of the hijab), earned her the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize in 2012 and the Ludovic Trarieux Prize in 2018.

Nasrin Sotoudeh was arrested on June 13, 2018 at her home. Detained *incommunicado* since that date, she had learned of her sentence, in her absence, to 5 years' imprisonment. More recently, around 11 March, Nasrin Sotoudeh was informed by the Office of Enforcement of Sentences of Evin Prison (Tehran) of his conviction, for a total of 7 counts, to 33 years' imprisonment and 148 lashes. Her husband, Reza Khandan, was sentenced in January 2019 to 6 years' imprisonment, in particular for posting news of his imprisoned wife on Facebook. The

repression of Iranian lawyers is accompanied, more generally, by interference by the executive branch of government, which leads

to restrictions on the independence of the judiciary.

## 15. Kazakhstan

On May 17, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Ms Botagoz Jardemalie, a Kazakh lawyer registered with the New York Bar and a political refugee in Belgium. After defending Mukhtar Ablyazov, an opposition figure in Kazakhstan currently in exile in France, Botagoz Jardemalie became a target of the regime.

Faced with the risk of reprisals, she was granted political asylum in Belgium in 2013, where she nevertheless had to be placed under surveillance because of the threats she faced.



In 2013, Interpol issued an arrest red notice against Botagoz Jardemalie at the request of Kazakhstan; however, this notice was cancelled by the organization for non-compliance with the rules on political abuse. The lawyer's situation has taken a turn for the worse as her brother, Iskander Yerimbetov, was arrested on November 13, 2017 and placed in pre-trial detention, which appears to be an attempt to put pressure on Ms Jardemalie. According to his lawyers and several human rights organisations, Mr. Yerimbetov was allegedly tortured, which was subsequently confirmed during visits by Zhemis Turgmagambetova and Yevgeniy Zhovtis, respectively Executive Director of the organisation "Charter of Human Rights" and Director of the Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and the Rule of Law.

On June 27, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Sergey Sizintsev, a Kazakh lawyer, who was struck off at the request of the Ministry of Justice by the Petropavlovsk court.



According to the official complaint, the lawyer allegedly performed two functions simultaneously, which is prohibited by the Kazakh Law on Professional Activities of Lawyers and Legal Aid of 2018. However, according to lawyer Sergey Sizintsev, this cumulation is entirely authorized. The reasons for his expulsion are said to be linked to his speeches and in particular his criticism of the previously mentioned new law of 2018. According to many lawyers, this law would be in contradiction with international standards on the independence of the legal profession as it would allow the executive to influence and

control who is allowed to practise law and disciplinary proceedings against lawyers. Since the application of the 2018 law, several lawyers have been victims of disciplinary

proceedings amounting to retaliatory measures.

## 16. Maldives

On September 12, 2017, the IOLD issued an alert after the Ministry of Justice suspended 56 lawyers in the Republic of Maldives for signing a petition filed with the Supreme Court calling for the rule of law to be applied.

The signatory lawyers were suspended after meeting in the Supreme Court to file the petition.

This mass suspension for an indefinite period, before the opening of an investigation for contempt of court, interference and pressure on the judicial system, concerned more than a third of the lawyers of the Republic of Maldives, and affected many opponents of the regime as well as the lawyers of the leader of the opposition, Mohamed Nasheed.

## 17. Moldova

On May 26, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Ms Ana Ursachi, a Moldovan human rights lawyer.

She is known for her involvement in highly political issues, for example defending Vyacheslaw Platon-Kobalyev and Sergiu Cibotari, opponents of the oligarch Vladimir Plahotniuc. Ana Ursachi has been the victim of a major defamation campaign by government media since a report was published in 2016 accusing her (as well as her ex-husband and a third person) of being involved in the murder of a teacher 20 years earlier.

The lawyer went into exile in Poland. On 29 March 2018, the Central Court of Chisinau,

at the request of the Prosecutor, issued an arrest warrant against Ana Ursachi, confirmed by the Court of Appeal on 17 April. It should be noted that the hearing took place in the absence of counsel for Ursachi, Iulian Rusanovschi and Eduard Rudenco.



## 18. Latvia

On May 31, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning lawyer Martins Bunkus, who was murdered on 29 May 2018 by two unidentified armed men in a suburb of the capital city Riga.

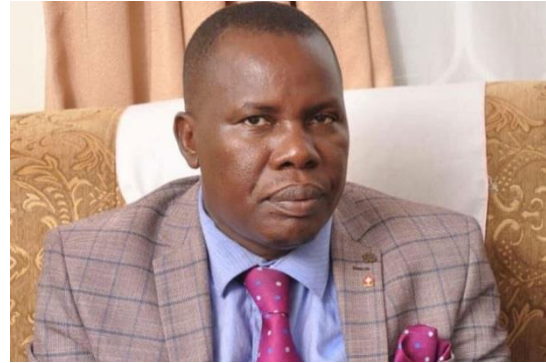


## 19. Uganda

On August 4, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Ugandan lawyer Patrick Mugisha, who was arrested at his workplace by the Internal Security Organization (ISO) and held incommunicado for five days.

He was finally released on August 4, 2019, after the Uganda Bar Association (ULS) strongly mobilized for their colleague. The ULS president called on ISO Director Colonel Frank Kaka Bagyenda, in a letter date August 3, 2019, to stop kidnappings,

intimidation, harassment and arrests of Ugandans and in particular lawyers.



## 20. Palestine

On July 31, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning the French-Palestinian lawyer Salah Hamouri. Mr Hamouri is a former prisoner of conscience who spent 6 years in Israeli prisons; he became a lawyer and investigated for the Addameer association, which defends the rights of Palestinian political prisoners.



Placed in detention on August 23, 2017 "for investigation" but without being notified of any charges, Salah Hamouri was then given a 6-month administrative detention order, even though a court had decided to release

him on parole on August 29. On September 5, the administrative detention order was suspended by the Jerusalem Court, which at the same time restored the execution of the sentence imposed on the lawyer in 2005, i.e. 3 months' imprisonment that had not been served by Salah Hamouri because of his release in the context of a prison exchange.

After the prosecutor appealed against this decision, the administrative detention of Mr Hamouri, accused of belonging to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, was extended by 6 months.

In an Opinion of 25 April 2018, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights described Salah Hamouri's detention as arbitrary (Opinion No. 34/2018). He was released in September and is currently in France with his family.

## 21. The Netherlands

The IOLD issued an alert on September 19, 2019 regarding the murder of Dutch lawyer Derk Wiersum.

He was defending a key witness in a trial against the most wanted criminal in the Netherlands in a major drug case. The lawyer was shot dead in a street in Amsterdam by a young man who fled on foot.

The IOLD has expressed its deepest condolences to the family of Derk Wiersum and the Dutch Bar Association, but also its

shock at this intolerable attack on a lawyer, which has affected the entire profession.



## 22. Peru

On November 28, 2018, the IOLD sent a letter to the President of the Peruvian Judiciary and a copy to the national authorities expressing its concern about the situation of lawyer Juan Carlos Ruiz Molleda.



The lawyer Juan Carlos Ruiz was the subject of a complaint dated October 2, 2015 by the Ministry of Health of Peru (MINSA) and the National Institute of Health (INS), according to information received. This complaint accuses the lawyer of using an allegedly false medical report attached to a 2015 publication that relates the serious socio-environmental situation in Espinar province, in the department of Cusco (Peru). After having passed through various Peruvian judicial authorities, Juan Carlos Ruiz was charged on 11 June 2018 by the Public Prosecutor's Office with using a forged document with a penalty of two years' imprisonment and an accessory fine of 30 to 90 days.

## 23. Philippines

On June 7, 2018, the IOLD issued a statement concerning remarks by Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte. In a context marked by numerous extrajudicial executions since Duterte came to power in June 2016, the Supreme Court had voted to

remove Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno, who was in the government's sights for opposing some of its controversial proposals. This decision resulted in a statement by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Diego

García-Sayán, who pointed to the threat to the independence of justice in the Philippines, to which Rodrigo Duterte replied: "Tell him not to interfere with the affairs of my country. He can go to hell".

The IOLD wished to express its indignation at these remarks concerning a United Nations special procedure that is of great value, both in the particular context of the Philippines and at the global level in the face of the multitude of threats faced by lawyers.



On September 17, 2019, the IOLD and 150 national or international bar associations and lawyers' and legal professionals' organizations from 49 countries joined Lawyers for Lawyers' call for the increasing attacks on lawyers in the Philippines and the oppressive working environment they have faced since the beginning of President Duterte's mandate.

The petition, initiated by Lawyers for Lawyers and co-signed by 151 organizations, calls on the Government to adequately protect the safety and independence of lawyers and to end the culture of impunity in which these attacks took place. It also calls on the Philippines authorities to comply with the Basic Principles on the Role of the United Nations Bar Association.

## 24. Qatar

On June 1, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mr. Najeeb al-Nuaimi, a former Qatari Minister of Justice and a lawyer heavily involved in defending the detainees at Guantanamo Bay.



Between 2011 and 2012, the lawyer also defended Mohammed Rashid al-Ajami, a Qatari poet sentenced to life imprisonment and secured his release in 2016.

In February 2017, Mr. Al-Nuaimi discovered that a travel ban had been issued a month earlier against him by the Attorney General, although no charges had been brought against him. After the Qatar Court of Appeal revoked the prohibition order, it was nevertheless subsequently renewed and continues to restrict Mr. al-Nuaimi's freedom of movement.

## 25. Russia

On May 4, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mark Feygin, a lawyer known in Russia for defending 17 prisoners and members of a group.

On December 6, 2017, following a complaint against him by blogger Anatoly Shariy for violating lawyers' code of ethics regarding obscene comments made on social networks, the Moscow Chamber of Lawyers struck Mark Feygin down for "violation of ethics and rules of conduct on the Internet" (an offence then recently adopted).

As Mr. Feygin argues, this decision appears to be unlawful in that it occurs approximately 9 months after the complaint was made, whereas section 18 of the Code of Ethics for Lawyers requires that the decision

be rendered within 6 months of the disclosure of the subject matter of the Mark Feygin's disbarment appears to have been politically motivated (notably by the lawyer's involvement in the defence of the Ukrainian journalist Roman Sushchenko, then detained in Moscow).



## 26. Serbia

On August 5, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Dragoslav Ognjanovic, a Serbian lawyer who was murdered outside his home on the evening of July 28, 2017.



Mr. Ognjanovic was known to have defended former Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, tried for war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, as well as a prominent member of the drug trade in Serbia and Montenegro. The Serbian Bar Association and the Belgrade Bar Association, which announced a week of strike action in protest, stated in a joint statement issued the day after the murder that the latter "most radically demonstrates the conditions under which lawyers practice their profession in Serbia".

## 27. Singapore

On August 21, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mr. M Ravi, a lawyer involved in the defence of Malaysian death

row inmates. On August 19, the Singapore Attorney General notified human rights lawyer Mr Ravi (Ravi Madasamy) that he



had filed a complaint against him with the Singapore Bar Association for "breach of the administration of justice". A complaint that could have the effect of preventing him from continuing to practice his profession.

The lawyer Mr Ravi is reportedly prosecuted for his work on behalf of death row inmates in Malaysia. He is known throughout the world for his tireless advocacy against the death penalty. He currently represents Nagaenthran Dharmalingam, sentenced to death on account of mental disorder, who has been in prison for ten years, including eight years on death row.

Following a statement by the lawyer in Malaysia at a press conference on 23 July 2019, the Singaporean authorities filed a complaint against him for "violation of the administration of justice", which could also be followed by charges of contempt of court.



## 28. Chad

On May 29, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert following the attempted assassination of Doumra Manassé, a lawyer registered in the

Chadian Bar and his clients, on May 22 in Doba.

## 29. Thailand

On May 23 2017, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Sirikan Charoensiri, a Thai lawyer who defended fourteen students who were members of the New Democracy Movement, who had demonstrated peacefully to mark the first anniversary of the military coup in May 2014 and who had been arrested in June 2015 for "sedition". She is also co-founder of the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights collective.

On February 2, 2016, Ms. Charoensiri was summoned by the police for opposing the search (without a warrant) of her car and the seizure of her clients' mobile phones, which she had secured in the vehicle. First accused of refusing to comply with police orders and withholding evidence, as well as false

charges against the police (for denouncing police actions during the search incident), Sirikan Charoensiri later became the first Thai lawyer to be charged with "sedition" by the junta. The hearing before the prosecutor has been postponed several times; the lawyer faces up to 15 years in prison.



### 30. Tunisia

On May 19, 2017, the IOLD published an alert concerning Me Najet Laabidi, a Tunisian lawyer specialising in the defence of human rights, who represented several victims of torture before the Tunis Military Court in the so-called Barraket Essahel case.



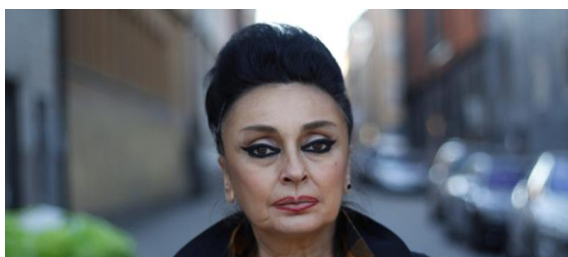
This case concerns 244 arrests and acts of torture suffered in 1991 by 244 military

personnel accused of plotting a coup d'état against President Ben Ali. The judicial consequences of this case were marred by multiple procedural irregularities. For defending her clients, Me Najet Laabidi was charged with defamation and sentenced in absentia to 1 year in prison on October 12, 2016. This procedure follows a complaint filed against the lawyer by Ms. Leila Hammami, President of the Permanent Military Court of First Instance of Tunis. In May 2017, the 8th Criminal Chamber of the Court of First Instance confirmed Najet Laabidi's conviction, reducing his sentence to 6 months' imprisonment.

### 31. Turkey

Turkish lawyers are no exception to the waves of repression that have swept through entire sectors of Turkish society (media, justice, professors, associations, etc.) since the attempted coup d'état in July 2016. Many lawyers have been arrested and imprisoned, sometimes after collective trials resulting in very harsh sentences.

On May 23, 2017, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Ms. Eren Keskin, a lawyer and member of the Turkish Human Rights Association, which in 1997 founded a legal aid office for women who have suffered sexual abuse in Turkish prisons by the national security forces.



Eren Keskin has been accused on numerous occasions of "denigrating the Turkish state" for having repeatedly denounced the abuses committed against the Kurdish minority. In 1995, the mere use of the word "Kurdistan" in an article earned her 6 months' imprisonment. The number of cases brought against the lawyer for her commitment to human rights amounts to more than 100; this judicial harassment is in addition to the death threats and physical attacks she has suffered.

The IOLD again issued an alert concerning Me Eren Keskin on May 29, 2019. Indeed, on 21 May 2019, she was again sentenced to 3 years and 9 months' imprisonment for "propaganda on behalf of a terrorist organisation", again for her support of the newspaper Özgür Gündem. At the hearing on 21 May 2019, Eren

Keskin said, *"I support freedom of thought and expression. I became editor-in-chief because I supported freedom of publication. I don't think I've committed a crime. Nor do I believe that this thought is a crime. I ask for my acquittal"*.

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On July 7, 2017, the IOLD also issued an alert concerning the arrest of Idil Eser, Director of Amnesty International Turkey, and ten other persons, including three lawyers: Şeyhmuz Özbekli, Günel Kurşun and Nalan Erkem.

The raid, carried out during computer security training at a hotel in Istanbul, took place less than a month after the arrest of Taner Kiliç, lawyer and President of Amnesty International Turkey, who was suspected of belonging to the movement of preacher Fethullah Gülen.

The conditions of detention of these new prisoners, who join the ranks of the

hundreds of thousands of people who are or have been subjected to repression by the Erdoğan regime, are of serious concern: they have not been allowed to consult their lawyers or to inform. These arrests also take place in a context where numerous cases of torture of detainees have been reported.



On January 29, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mr Selçuk Kozağaçlı, a lawyer and president of the Association of Progressive Lawyers, several of whose members have been prosecuted for "belonging to a terrorist organization".

Me Kozağaçlı was arrested on November 8, 2017 and placed in pre-trial detention; he is also being prosecuted for the above-mentioned reason. His arrest followed an intervention at the General Assembly of the Ankara Bar Association on October 16 2017, during which the lawyer denounced the

systematic acts of torture and therefore suspected members of the Gülenist movement were subjected to it.



On May 18, 2018, the IOLD also issued a statement concerning the conviction of 13 lawyers of the Samsun Bar Association, who had been arrested in August 2016 following the attempted coup

d'état in July 2016. Their conviction by the 3rd High Court of Assizes of Samsun is based on charges of belonging to an armed terrorist organisation (Article 314-2 of the Criminal Code) and of establishing and directing such an organisation (Article 314-1 of the Criminal Code). The statement highlighted the problem of the lack of clear criteria for the definition of a "terrorist organization", a vague definition compounded by the extensive interpretation of these provisions by judges. As a result, human rights organisations, through their opposition to the Turkish state, are in a position to be included in the scope of criminal provisions relating to the fight against terrorism.

On April 5, 2019, the IOLD published an alert concerning Mr. Can Atalay, a lawyer arrested several times in connection with the demonstrations in Gezi Park (2013) as well as on the occasion of demonstrations targeting development projects. Can Atalay defended the Order of Architects, which challenged the transformation of Taksim Square (a transformation that gave rise to the 2013 protest movement). Until 5 March 2019, the lawyer was unaware of the charges against him; it turned out that the prosecutor had taken up, by reclassifying them, facts for which Can Atalay had already

been tried in 2019. The lawyer is therefore accused of having tried to "overthrow the government" and faces life imprisonment. The hearing is scheduled for June 24 and 25, 2019.



Finally, on June 20, 2019, the IOLD issued an alert concerning the arrest of 7 persons, including 4 lawyers, at the Office of People's Rights (Halkın Hukukuk Bürosu, HHB).



The prosecutor decided to limit access to the file for the applicants and their lawyers, while many documents and computer tools were seized on the premises of the HHB, which was the subject of 4 searches in less than 2 years.

This search is part of a growing crackdown on lawyers in Turkey, including members of the HHB and/or the Progressive Lawyers Association (ÇHD) who are regularly arrested and intimidated.

## 32. Ukraine

On January 29, 2018, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Iryna Nozdrowska, a

Ukrainian lawyer and human rights activist whose body was found dead in a river near



Kiev on January 1, 2018. Iryna Nozdrowska had then disappeared several days earlier; she had previously been heavily involved in preventing the release of a man who, driving under the influence of alcohol, had killed the lawyer's younger sister - a sensitive case insofar as the man was a judge's nephew. However, his request for release was rejected by the Kiev Court of Appeal on December 27, 2017. Mr. Nozdrowska had received death threats on several occasions, during

the trial and just before his disappearance, at the hearing on December 27, 2017.



On January 30, 2019, the IOLD also issued an alert concerning Emil Kurbedinov, a Crimean lawyer who defended the Crimean Tatars, among others, and who was disbarred.



Russian Federation in Crimea; it was based on convictions under anti-terrorist laws (he had published on social networks a photo of a meeting of a legal organisation in Ukraine but banned in Russia, which led to a conviction for "disseminating symbols belonging to a terrorist organisation"). This striking off leads, within a period of 3 months, to the forfeiture of the status of lawyer. It constitutes a serious interference, insofar as Russian legislation authorises the executive to control the Bar only in cases involving the conformity of its activity with its statutes, which is not the case here.

The latter was the result of a directive from the division of the Ministry of Justice of the

### 33. Vietnam



On May 23, 2017, the IOLD issued an alert concerning Mr. Nguyen Van Dai, a prominent Vietnamese lawyer and founder

of the Committee for Human Rights in Vietnam and the group of former dissidents imprisoned "Brotherhood for Democracy". On 6 March 2007, Nguyen Van Dai and Lê Thi Cong Nhan, also a lawyer, were arrested for publishing documents on the Internet that were qualified by the charge of "anti-government propaganda threatening national security". Nguyen Van Dai was then sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment (reduced to 4 years on appeal) followed by 4 years' house arrest.

In 2015, while on his way to a meeting with a European Union delegation, Nguyen Van Dai was arrested again and imprisoned for 3 years. Upon his release in June 2018, he was

placed on a plane and forced into exile in Germany.

On January 29, 2018, the IOLD also issued an alert concerning Me Vo An Don, a lawyer who has been involved in the defence of many dissidents. While representing Nguyen Ngoc Quynh, a dissident blogger whose conviction was upheld on appeal in late November 2017, the lawyer was disbarred by the Phu Yen Provincial Bar on 26 November. This decision was motivated by the fact that Vo An Don allegedly "abused his freedom of speech" by giving "interviews to the foreign press with

fabricated information", according to a state newspaper. Mr. Vo An Don narrowly escaped disbarment in 2014, after imprisoning five police officers for torture and murder.



## IV. Mission reports

### 1. Rapport sur la mission de soutien aux avocats mexicains

On August 2, 2018, the IOLD published the report of a mission to support Mexican human rights lawyers. This mission was carried out by Patricia Bárcena, Deputy President of the Bar Association of Bizkaia (Spain), Ana Bermejo, member of the Council of the Bar Association of Bizkaia, Mikel Córdoba, Head of the Defence of Defence Department of the Foundation of the National Council of Spanish Bars, and Jose Maria Prat, President of this Foundation. The Mexican section of International Peace Brigades organized this mission and accompanied the international observers on their visit.

The observers met with representatives of the Mexican executive and judicial authorities, as well as diplomatic representatives of Spain, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and France.

This mission had several objectives:

- ✓ Consolidate a network of Mexican and Spanish legal experts to monitor the situation of human rights defenders in Mexico and provide technical support in landmark cases and access to international protection mechanisms;
- ✓ Take stock of the implementation of laws on torture and enforced

disappearances, as well as the strategies of human rights organisations in the face of the Internal Security Act[this law, passed in December 2017, provides a legal framework for the army's presence on the streets to fight organised crime, and extends the powers of the military (to the detriment of those of the police) in the event of a threat to the country's internal security. In addition, this law provides for the competence of the army to control and neutralize resistance groups, including social demonstrations, although the legislator has decided not to consider the latter as threats to internal security];

- ✓ Identify advocacy strategies to ensure that the Mexican authorities recognize the legitimacy of the strategic advisory and litigation work carried out by human rights defenders;
- ✓ Give greater visibility to the situation of human rights defenders in Mexico and make recommendations on this subject to the main national and international actors.

### 2. Missions in Turkey

#### a. KCK 2 trial

On November 22, 2011 in Istanbul, and in 15 other Turkish cities, 46 lawyers, a journalist, a secretary and a lawyer's driver were arrested and 36 of them imprisoned.

They were all prosecuted for participating in a terrorist organization, a prevention based on the fact that between 2005 and 2011, lawyers intervened in the defence of



Abdullah Oçalan, leader of the PKK, one of the founders and leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK, Partiya Karkêren Kurdistan), a considered terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union among others. Preventively detained for several months, they were finally released in April 2014, and sent back to the 19th Chamber of the

Istanbul Court following the abolition of the SILIVRI Special Court, which had begun to try them.

The IOLD was represented at the following hearings in Istanbul:

- ✓ Hearing of November 14, 2016
- ✓ Hearing of March 9, 2017
- ✓ Hearing of July 6, 2017
- ✓ Hearing of March 5, 2019

## **b. CDH trial**

23 lawyers have been prosecuted since 2013, on the basis of the Anti-Terrorism Act. They are accused of belonging to a terrorist organization. These lawyers are all part of a lawyers' association, called the "Progressive Lawyers' Office - PLC", with about 2000 members (out of about 85000 lawyers in Turkey, including 55000 in Istanbul. The trial resulted in 13 searches; 9 of them were detained (5 for 9 months and 4 for 14 months). They are all part of the defence

team of the 46 lawyers prosecuted in another trial, known as KCK2.

The IOLD was represented at the following hearings in Istanbul:

- ✓ Hearing of the CHD trial of 23 May 2018;
- ✓ Hearing of the CHD trial on 24 October 2018;
- ✓ Hearing of the CHD trial on March 6, 2019.

## **c. Report on the observation mission of the "Propaganda" trial in Turkey**

Audience observation is a preferred mode of action for the IOLD when possible. The presence of IOLD observers during hearings involving lawyers who are judicially concerned about the legitimate exercise of their profession not only allows the IOLD to closely monitor their situation and demonstrate its solidarity, but also sometimes has a concrete impact on the course of the trial, any violation of the rights of the defence or fair trial principles being immediately reportable.

The IOLD was represented by Ms. Elena Esposito at the hearing on 8 November 2018 of the "Propaganda" trial held before the High Criminal Court of Istanbul. Ms. Esposito is an Italian lawyer who is a member of the Italian Democratic Lawyers'

Association. Its observation mission was conducted jointly with other international observers from France and the Netherlands.

This mission is part of a framework in which the independence of the legal profession is far from guaranteed: international observers have learned via Turkish colleagues that the Ministry of Justice systematically objects to the registration in the Bar Register of certain applicants considered to have ideas hostile to the government.

The "Propaganda" trial concerns in particular 18 Turkish lawyers who are being prosecuted for publicly protesting, on 15 September 2015, against violations of fundamental rights committed in the city of Cizre against the population between 4<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> September of the same year. This





protest brought together about 100 lawyers, including the 18 accused, who are being prosecuted for "terrorist propaganda". Three of them were in pre-trial detention at the time of the trial.

The charge is based on two grounds: on the one hand, Article 7 § 2 of the Anti-Terrorism Act No. 3713 of 1991, which criminalizes "propaganda for a terrorist organization", and on the other hand, Article 32 of Act No. 2911 of 1983, which prohibits the participation in unauthorized demonstrations.

Several procedural flaws were raised at the initial hearing on 10 May 2018; during the hearing on 18 November, it can be noted that the President of the Court read only the "most relevant parts" of the indictment, as he himself stated.

In accordance with the request of most of the accused, the Court decided to postpone the hearing to 19 February 2019, while the request to drop the charges was dismissed.

It should be noted that at the hearing on 19 February, the case was referred to 22 May 2019.

### 3. Report on the observation mission to Honduras in the context of the Berta Cáceres murder trial

In 1993, Berta Cáceres co-founded the Citizen Council of Honduras Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (COPINH), an organization dedicated to the protection of the environment and the indigenous Lenca people. Its commitment led it to fight against the Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam project, in particular, from 2006. In 2009, the day after the coup d'état that deposed President Manuel Zelaya, Berta Cáceres was included in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' list of threatened persons. She has regularly received death threats, and was finally murdered on March 3, 2016.

At the time of the trial, 8 accused were appearing under the material element of the crime. The team of lawyers defending Berta Cáceres' family and the team representing COPINH both denounced numerous procedural irregularities: unjustified use of secrecy by the Attorney General's office, theft of documents, irregularities in the investigation, and above all, lack of an adequate investigation concerning the sponsor(s).

The main objective of the criminal process monitoring mission was to guarantee the

rights of victims through effective monitoring of compliance with international standards in this area.

To achieve this objective, it was essential to:

- ✓ Establish a qualified observation mission composed of a list of international experts who would monitor the process and work continuously with stakeholders;
- ✓ Ensure that Honduran justice complies with international instruments;
- ✓ Organize regular meetings with the parties, civil society and public institutions;
- ✓ Make visible the work of lawyers in danger in the defence of human rights.
- ✓ Issue a legal report on what has been observed, through a joint report with all the organizations composing the mission.

The observation mission was composed of 17 different organizations<sup>1</sup>, including the

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<sup>1</sup> Centro de Asistencia Legal a Pueblos Indígenas (Nicaragua) ; Centro de Acción Legal para los Derechos Humanos (Guatemala) ; Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos, Centro por la Justicia y el Derecho



Fundación de la Abogacía Española (Spain), the American Bar Association (United States) and the International Commission of Jurists.

The Guatemala Human Rights Commission was responsible for the dynamics and organization of the follow-up meetings with the ongoing support of Lawyers Without Borders Canada throughout the period of the hearings. In this way, it was possible to collect the necessary data to have a more structured and understandable view of the case.

Before travelling to Honduras, Blanca Ramos and Gonzalo Sáenz, as representatives of the Fundación de la Abogacía Española and the Observatory, followed the case and received contextual information from various sources.

The agenda of the meetings included meetings with institutional leaders such as the Ambassador of Spain to Honduras, the Political Attaché of the European Union Delegation in Honduras and the General Coordinator of the Technical Cooperation Office of the Spanish Agency for Cooperation and Development.

Meetings were also held with representatives of civil society, including representatives of the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) and Laura and Berta Zúñiga Cáceres, daughters of Berta Cáceres.

It was not possible to organize a meeting with the Public Prosecutor's Office, but it was possible to meet with the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the latter being the only remaining financier of the Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam construction project.

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Internacional et Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación (Honduras) ; Corporación Colectivo de Abogados José Alvear Restrepo (Colombie) ; Comisión Internacional de Juristas, Federación Internacional de Derechos Humanos et Organización Mundial Contra la Tortura (International) ; Due Process of Law Foundation, Guatemala Human Rights Commission, Promise Institute for Human Rights de UCLA, National Lawyers Guild et International Committee et American Bar Association (États-Unis) ; Impunity Watch (Pays-Bas) ; Observatoire International des Avocats en Danger (Espagne/France/Italie/Paris) ; Plataforma Internacional Contra la Impunidad (Genève) ; Fundación de la Abogacía Española (Espagne).

## V. Events

### 1. International day of the Endangered Lawyer

Since 2009, the European Democratic Lawyers' Association has been organising, in collaboration with the "Threatened Lawyers' Day Foundation" and other lawyers' and bar associations, Threatened Lawyers' Day in as many cities, countries and continents as possible.

The purpose of this international day is to draw the attention of civil society and public authorities to the situation of lawyers in a particular country, in order to raise awareness of the threats faced by lawyers in the exercise of their profession.

This year, the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Day of Lawyers in Danger, dedicated to lawyers in Turkey, was held. In 2012, the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition already shed light on this same country, which is one of the countries in the world where lawyers are most threatened. Judicial observation missions are organised as well as the accompaniment of colleagues forced into exile.

A dressed rally is often organised to encourage the European authorities to react vigorously to attacks on the rule of law and democratic principles.

The next day will be devoted to Pakistan.

#### a. 2018 edition dedicated to Egypt

For its 8<sup>th</sup> edition, the International Day of the Endangered Lawyer was dedicated to Egyptian lawyers.

In January and February 2011, a series of demonstrations of unprecedented scale took place across the country until the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak. The new legislative and presidential elections were won by the Freedom and Justice Party, a political emanation of the Muslim Brotherhood. However, the government remained in power for only a short time due to major demonstrations against the elected president, Mohamed Morsi, criticising dictatorial abuses. The army's turnaround against it led to the establishment of a transitional government. Egypt has been experiencing a period of unrest caused by political instability and tensions, particularly between opponents and supporters of the former president.

In May 2014, Abdel Fattah al-Sissi, already considered the de facto leader of Egypt, won

the presidential election. The overthrow of power was accompanied by a wave of repression within civil society, including lawyers. Indeed, while the situation of lawyers in Egypt has deteriorated significantly since the independence of the country has been ruled by authoritarian military regimes, since the seizure of power by General Al-Sissi (torture, censorship, arbitrary detention, unfair trials, travel ban, etc.).

In addition, the 2002 Associations Act allows the government to dissolve associations, confiscate their assets, refuse to appoint certain members to the board of directors, and block their funds of foreign origin. On the basis of these provisions, in 2016, the Egyptian authorities launched a major crackdown on civil society and non-governmental organizations that receive foreign funds "with the aim of promoting the national interest".

The so-called "foreign financing" case directly affected several lawyers whose assets were frozen and who were banned from leaving the country. Recently, lawyer Azza Soliman was nominated for a human rights award, but was unable to leave the country to attend the ceremony due to a travel ban. Young human rights lawyer Tarek Hussein had to spend several months in detention, as did lawyer Khaled Ali. Lawyer Mahienour El-

Massry, awarded the Ludovic Trarieux Prize in 2014, was detained for several weeks for participating in a demonstration deemed illegal, before being acquitted on appeal.

The IOLD, in collaboration with the CNB and the Paris Bar Association, produced a report on the situation of lawyers in Egypt, which included a presentation of nine lawyers under repression by the Egyptian regime.

<https://www.protect-lawyers.com/oiad-content/uploads/2018/01/journee-internationale-de-lavocat-en-danger-.pdf>

On 24 January 2018, the Paris Bar and the CNB organised the launch of a video clip showing the difficulties faced by lawyers and communicated thanks to very large banners on the facades on the Seine side of the bar house. They also participated in the rally

held at 11:30 am near the Egyptian Embassy in Paris. In the evening, a debate was organised as well as the screening of the film "Le Caire confidentiel" at the Maison du Barreau.



#### b. 2019 edition dedicated to Turkey

The 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Day of the Endangered Lawyer focused, for the second time after 2012, on Turkish lawyers, who have been in a difficult situation for many years.

Since the 1990s and the murder of several lawyers in Turkey, the situation has not improved. In 2011, about 50 lawyers were arrested for defending Abdullah Öcalan, founder of the Kurdistan Workers' Party

(PKK), who was arrested in 1999 and sentenced to life imprisonment in 2002. Some of his lawyers have been detained for more than two and a half years; their trials are still ongoing. In January 2013, another mass arrest affected the Progressive Lawyers' Association (CHD): 22 lawyers were detained for 9 to 14 months. These two waves of arrests were followed by new operations against 12 lawyers in 2016. Two

lawyers of the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) have been imprisoned for more than 6 months; other members of this association are still under investigation.

The July 2016 coup attempt began to strengthen repression of lawyers; according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, by 2017, 570 lawyers had been arrested, 1470 were facing prosecution, and 79 had been sentenced to long prison terms. These lawyers are generally accused of belonging to or supporting terrorist groups or the Gülen movement. The decrees adopted during the state of emergency allowed the government to dissolve lawyers' organisations such as the Progressive Lawyers' Organisation (ÇHD), the Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) or the Mesopotamian Lawyers' Association (MHD). Criminal proceedings against lawyers have serious consequences: prohibition to represent their clients in certain political cases, judicial control with a travel ban, etc. In 2018 alone, more than 100 lawyers were convicted.

On the occasion of the 2019 International Day of the Lawyer in Danger, demonstrations in dress took place in several French cities. In Paris, it took place in front of the Turkish Embassy, in the presence of

Marie-Aimée Peyron and Basile Ader, respectively President and Vice-Presidents of the Paris Bar.



The Lyon Bar Association conducted the demonstration in front of the Turkish Consulate. Actions were also held in Istanbul, Antalya, Bordeaux, Montpellier, Brussels, Madrid, Barcelona, London, Aberdeen, Rome, Venice, Vienna, Berlin, Hamburg, Amsterdam, The Hague, New York, Vancouver, Athens, and Manila.

The IOLD, in collaboration with the other organizers of this International Day, contributed to the drafting of a report on the situation of Turkish lawyers, which contains a presentation of the cases of seven colleagues undergoing repression by the regime in Erdoğan.

[http://www.protect-lawyers.com/oiad-content/uploads/2019/01/wa\\_bdp\\_avocat-en-danger\\_a4.pdf](http://www.protect-lawyers.com/oiad-content/uploads/2019/01/wa_bdp_avocat-en-danger_a4.pdf)

## 2. Conference on Turkey and the ECHR (Berlin, March 5, 2018)

On March 5, 2018, a conference was held in Berlin on the effectiveness of the remedies offered by the ECHR to Turkish citizens who have suffered violations of their rights since the attempted coup d'état in July 2016. This conference, which brought together more than 70 judges, lawyers, academics and NGO representatives, was organised by the

German Bar Association (Deutscher Anwaltverein), the European Association of Jurists for Democracy and Human Rights, the Law Society of England and Wales, the Lawyers for Lawyers Association and the International Observatory of Lawyers in Danger.





This conference was structured in two parts: the first concerned the question of whether the HRE Court provided effective remedies for injustices in the Turkish judicial system, in particular in the context of the state of emergency; the second concerned the strategy that the Court should adopt in response to the tens of thousands of cases in which Turkish citizens were unable to assert their rights before the Strasbourg Court because of blockages due to the rule of

exhaustion of domestic remedies (Article 35 ECHR). The conference also addressed the legal problems posed by the broad definition, or even the absence of a formal definition, of terrorism, a crime on which the Turkish authorities rely heavily to suppress any challenge.

A report was published at the end of this conference, available at the following address:

<http://www.protect-lawyers.com/oiad-content/uploads/2018/05/dav-conference-report-turkey-and-the-ecthr-march-2018.pdf>

### 3. New York Bar Conference (New York, June 13, 2018)

The IOLD participated in the Global Law Week organized by the New York State Bar Association.

The panel was entitled "Lawyers Defending Lawyers: Protection of Lawyers Facing Repression and Government Interference".

### 4. Presentation of the report "Mexico: the permanent crossroads" (June 2018)

The President of the Consejo General de la Abogacía Española, Victoria Ortega, with the president of the Spanish Lawyers Foundation José María Prat, and Ana Bermejo, member of the Board of Directors of the Vizcaya Bar Association, opened the event at which the report "Mexico: the permanent crossroads" was presented on 25 June 2018.

The presentation also took place on 15 June in Bilbao and 28 June in Brussels, at the headquarters of the Vizcaya Bar Association and the Delegation of the Consejo General de la Abogacía Española respectively. Mar Sáiz and Mikel Córdoba, from the Fundación del Consejo General de la Abogacía Española, participated in the presentations.

### 5. Round table on the defence of the defence on the occasion of the European Lawyers' Day (October 25, 2018)

Launched in 2015 by the CCBE, the European Lawyers' Day aims to raise public awareness of the importance of the role of lawyers in society. Celebrated on 25 October, the European Lawyers' Day 2018

aimed to show the investment of lawyers and Bars in protecting the rule of law. A conference was organised at the CNB and provided an opportunity to hear the testimony of the "Arrested lawyers

initiative", an organisation of Turkish lawyers who are refugees in the European

Union and who document the repression of the Turkish regime against lawyers.

## 6. Intervention at the New York State Bar Association (June 2018)

At the International Legal Forum held in St Petersburg in May 2019, Richard Sédillot addressed representatives of the Federal Chamber of Lawyers of the Russian Federation to raise the issue of lawyers in danger. On this occasion, the activities of

the IOLD were presented, arousing a strong interest from the audience. Following this conference, some members of the audience expressed their interest in joining the Observatory, regretting that they could not join individually.

## 7. Spanish Bar Association Conference on the Defence of the defence in Colombia (Madrid, November 16, 2018)

The event entitled "For the Right to Defend Rights in Colombia" took place on 16 November in the meeting room of the Consejo General de la Abogacía Española and included a round table discussion on the challenges faced by social leaders, human rights defenders and lawyers after the signing of the Peace Agreement in Colombia.

The event was moderated by lawyer Irene de Prada and the indigenous leader and

member of the Association of Indigenous Councils of Northern Cauca (ACIN), Raúl Ibáñez, the lawyer of the Inter-Church Commission for Justice and Peace in Colombia, Daniel Prado, the magistrate of the National High Court, José Ricardo de Prada and the lawyer and legal advisor during the peace period in Havana, Enrique Santiago.

## 8. Conference of the Consiglio Nazionale Forense on lawyers in danger (Rome, January 24, 2019)

On the occasion of the International Day of the Endangered Lawyer (January 24), a conference was held at the headquarters of the Consiglio Nazionale Forense (CNF) in Rome, during which Ms Benan Molu, a Turkish lawyer specializing in international law, discussed the situation of lawyers in her country. This conference, in which the IOLD participated, was opened with an address by Me Andrea Mascherin, President of the CNF.

Roberto Giovane di Girasole, member of the CNF's International Relations and Mediterranean Commission, and Barbara Spinelli, of the Italian Association of Democratic Lawyers (ANGD), presented a manual of which they are the authors, on international trial observation missions, such as the one held at the trial of 18 Turkish lawyers in Istanbul on November 8, 2018, whose report is available on the IOLD website.

## 9. Public hearing of the European Parliament on attacks against lawyers (Brussels, February 19, 2019)

On February 19, 2019, a public hearing was held at the European Parliament (Brussels) concerning the dangers faced by lawyers. The hearing was organised by the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights, chaired by Mr Pier Antonio Panzeri, who stated: "Any attack against a lawyer or the legal profession constitutes an attack against justice and the fundamental principles of the rule of law".

This event was organised on the initiative of the CCBE and in particular thanks to the action of Mr. Patrick Henry, President of the CCBE Human Rights Committee. The International Observatory for Lawyers in Danger and the Rights Practice association participated in this event.

Mr. Patrick Henry spoke out against the increase in attacks on lawyers and recalled the crucial role of the profession in defending the rule of law.

Mr. Richard Sédillot, Vice-Chairman of the European and International Affairs Committee of the National Bar Council and representative of the IOLD at this public hearing, presented the situation of lawyers in Turkey.

The hearing was also an opportunity to hear the testimony of Ms. Botagoz Jardemalie, a Kazakh lawyer who is a refugee in Belgium and whose brother is currently in prison; she denounced the harassment of Kazakh lawyers and the widespread use of torture in the regime's prisons.

Mr. Fuad Agayev, an Azerbaijani lawyer disbarred in his country, explained the use of disciplinary procedures by the authorities in Azerbaijan.

The situation of Chinese lawyers, and in particular our colleague Wang Quanzhang, was mentioned by Nicola Macbean, Director of The Rights Practice.

## 10. Participation in the day organised by the Law Society of England and Wales on the situation in Turkey (January 24, 2019)

The various professional organisations involved in the organisation of this day had decided to highlight once again the situation of our Turkish colleagues, as it is so dramatic. A meeting was organised by the Law Society in London in order, once again, to consider the conditions for collaboration between the various bars and organisations involved in the

defence of our colleagues. The IBA, the Norwegian Bar, Lawyers for Lawyers, the IOLD, the English Bar Human Rights Committee and the Geneva Bar Human Rights Commission were present.

This meeting made it possible to draw up a coordination plan to optimise our support for the Turkish lawyers being prosecuted.

## 11. Speech at the Legal Week in St Petersburg (May 2019)

At the International Legal Forum held in St Petersburg in May 2019, Richard Sédillot addressed representatives of the Federal

Chamber of Lawyers of the Russian Federation to raise the issue of lawyers in danger.





On this occasion, the activities of the IOLD were presented, arousing a strong interest from the audience. Following this conference, some members of the audience

expressed their interest in joining the Observatory, regretting that they could not join individually.

12. Assembly of the Red de Defensoras (Network of Human Rights Defenders) at the headquarters of the Spanish General Advocacy Council (Madrid, February 25, 2019)

On February 25, 2019, a meeting of the network of more than 20 organisations working in the field of the defence and protection of human rights was organised. It is a space of articulation between the different entities within which the work of the IOLD has been actively promoted and disseminated and has served to identify actions in favour of the legal profession in danger. This meeting made it possible to

evaluate the work carried out to date and to take operational and strategic decisions with a view to consolidating the functioning of the network, the validity and usefulness of which are unanimously acknowledged. In the first quarter of 2019, the Fundación de la Abogacía Española, in collaboration with Amnesty International, undertook to revitalize the activities developed within the network.

13. 37th round of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue (Brussels, April 1 and 2)

President of the IOLD Basile Ader participated on April 2, 2019 in the round table: "Policies and practices for the promotion and protection of human rights in

China and the EU" during which he was able to present the particularly difficult situation of lawyers defending freedoms in China.

14. Presentation of the report of the judicial observation mission of the Berta Cáceres trial by the Spanish General Advocacy Council (Madrid, April 9, 2019)

Laura Zúniga, coordinator of the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH), and Blanca Ramos, President of the Bar of Pamplona, presented on 9 April, the report of the IOLD observation mission and the Fundación Abogacía Española which was organised in Honduras to monitor, observe and assist the trial of the murder of

Honduran human rights defender, Berta Cáceres. Gonzalo Sáenz, from Fundación Abogacía, also participated in the presentation of the report and this observation mission with Blanca Ramos. The event took place at the headquarters of the Consejo General de la Abogacía Española in Madrid.



On this occasion, the various irregularities observed during the process were presented. In addition, updated information was

provided on the legal and social context of the Central American country.

## VI. Direct assistance to lawyers forced into exile

In 2018 and 2019, the Observatory accompanied several colleagues who were forced into exile and applied for refugee status because their continued presence in their country of origin posed a serious threat to their lives. This is a particularly difficult situation because these lawyers often have to leave overnight and in a few hours they often find themselves with very little money, no profession, no housing, in a country whose language they do not speak. In this type of situation, the management of the Observatory is often multiple and requires a large investment from the team.

The support is above all material. It is important to ensure that the lawyer has enough money to cover his or her first expenses. In such cases, the Observatory can immediately release cash financial assistance since the lawyer does not yet have a bank account in the host country. Support can also be medical and social. The most complicated problem is that of housing, particularly in Paris. The Observatory does not have the financial means to cover housing costs in the long term. Of course, the support is also legal in the context of the refugee status application.

### 1. Support for a Honduran lawyer

During its observation mission to Honduras from June 11 to 18, 2017, the IOLD delegation was able to meet with a young Honduran lawyer. A well-known activist known for her commitment to human rights, she has been persecuted and defamed on several occasions for her professional, social and political activity. The OIAD representatives on site were able to observe the security and prevention measures that it was obliged to take in order to try to ensure its protection.

On December 22, 2017, the lawyer arrived in Paris and requested France's protection as an asylum seeker. The IOLD was able to assist the young lawyer in her administrative procedures, in particular by writing to the Director General of OFPRA to express its

support throughout the procedure and to support her asylum application.

The IOLD was also able to provide financial and moral support during this very difficult period when she was not receiving any institutional support or income. She was integrated into the English-language program of the Paris Bar's international internship program, which allowed her to benefit from one month of training at the Bar School and two months of internship with the Paris Bar's international department.

Today, the young lawyer has obtained her refugee status in France and has been registered at the Sorbonne University. She has been able to start making a living again in the Paris region and remains in contact with the IOLD.

### 2. Support for a Sudanese lawyer

The IOLD also provided assistance to a Sudanese lawyer in September 2018. This

young colleague from Darfur was persecuted in his country of origin for two reasons. As a



member of the Fur ethnic group in Sudan, he was identified as a rebel and an opponent of the government. On the other hand, as a lawyer, he mobilized to defend a fellow Sudanese lawyer specializing in the defense of human rights. His professional card to practice law was withdrawn by the President of the Sudanese Bar Association, which is part of the Ministry of Justice, as a reprisal.

When he was able to return to practice, he agreed to defend a commercial company in a conflict with the Sudanese government, a highly sensitive issue. It was in this context that the Sudanese lawyer was abducted by men from the intelligence and military security service. He was then sequestered and tortured for more than two weeks. He was then released, but when asked to give false testimony against his client, he refused to violate his principles and had no choice but to flee his country.

The lawyer arrived in France in October 2017 after a dramatic trip to Libya, then through

the Mediterranean to Italy, where he had to leave his forcible imprints. Under the Dublin Regulation, he was under constant threat of removal to Italy until 17 August 2018, a country that had signed removal agreements with Libya and Sudan.

The IOLD then supported the lawyer by sending a letter to the Prefect of Quimper asking him to postpone this expulsion and allow him to submit an asylum application in France on humanitarian grounds in accordance with Article 17 of the Dublin 3 Regulation.

Finally, as the Italian proceedings did not flourish, the lawyer was able to file an asylum application in Quimper on September 15, 2018.

On December 4, 2018, this lawyer was granted refugee status for 10 years. He is learning French and will resume his studies in France.

### 3. Support to two Pakistani lawyers

The IOLD provided support in the context of the asylum application to two Pakistani lawyers persecuted in the course of their legal practice, like many others in Pakistan.

One of them finally obtained refugee status before the National Court of Asylum. The second lawyer is awaiting the decision.

### 4. Support for a Syrian lawyer

The IOLD provided support to a Syrian lawyer who arrived in Paris on June 19, 2019. She filed her asylum application in France on June 27, 2019 and presented herself to the IOLD on 10 July 2019, which decided to support her in her various medical, social and legal procedures.

She's been a lawyer since 1998 and began defending prisoners of conscience in 2002. She has defended pro bono ethnic groups or religious communities (Mashaal Tammo,

Mahmoud Issa, Michel Kilo, the child Mosaab Hariri...).

Very involved in the revolution (she was the first woman arrested and imprisoned in this context), she has worked since the beginning of the revolution in 2011 at the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights.

Pending the processing of her asylum application, the lawyer was sent to an accommodation centre near Chambéry in

Savoie, but the Observatory continues to provide her with both moral and financial support, as she is now very isolated. The IOLD also sent a letter to the Director of OFPRA in support of his asylum application and provided for assistance from a lawyer to prepare his case. Finally, the IOLD solicited the Bar of Chambéry, which, under the impetus of its president, mobilized the Bar of Chambéry so that solidarity and support could be organized around this lawyer. This on-site support was essential at a time when the lawyer's morale was at its lowest due to the isolation she was in at the centre. The colleagues of the Chambéry Bar Association took turns to take her out to dinner and visit

the region. They managed to get her to have a bike and get around. The accommodation center is not connected to a public transport network and is 5 km from the first city.

In September 2019, the lawyer was summoned to OFPRA to present her life story. The IOLD was able to organise a meeting with an Arabic-speaking lawyer so that she could be as well prepared as possible for her interview. His entire file was then assembled at the IOLD headquarters, so that all the documents that could support and confirm his life story could be gathered. According to the lawyer the next day, the interview at OFPRA went very well and IOLD remains attentive following her case.



## VII. Communication

### 1. The website

The IOLD has strengthened its external communication, in particular by finalizing its website and making every effort to

develop the various language versions. English is currently the most widely used language after French.

### 2. Creation of the twitter account

Since July 2018, the Observatory has had its own twitter account @ProtectLawyers with 350 subscribers. The objective is to increase this number, in particular by being retweeted more regularly by our members.



### 3. The Newsletter

By now using the Mailjet platform, the presentation and distribution of IOLD newsletters has improved. Disseminated every two months, they serve as a reminder of the main information of the IOLD. The newsletter is translated into Spanish and Italian and we have been systematically

implementing English translation since July 2019. The distribution of this newsletter has been extended beyond our members to include diplomatic representatives, journalists and NGOs in order to promote the work of the IOLD.

### 4. Interview

The IOLD has organized interviews on French television channels, giving greater visibility to the work of the IOLD, and in particular to reach the general public.

The President, Basile Ader, had the opportunity to explain the role of the

Observatory and the situation of lawyers under threat around the world on France24, on July 5, 2019 during an interview of about ten minutes.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0P3EHKBX64Y>).

## VIII. Other initiatives

The IOLD is a founding member of the Platform of French NGOs involved in the defence of human rights at the international level.

The Human Rights Platform "PDH" is a group of French NGOs working internationally to promote and defend human rights. Its creation is the result of the observation that there is no network in France offering a permanent space for exchanges and collaboration between French NGOs working on these issues at the international level. It allows members to increase their visibility, representation, networking and mutual reinforcement.

Many activities are planned within the framework of the Human Rights Platform, including the facilitation of working groups

between members. In 2018, six thematic working groups were set up within the PDH: Membership of new members; External relations; External communication; Financing and economic model; Research and advocacy; Exchanges of practices and training. At the last General Assembly, the IOLD was elected to the Bureau.



