

TAB 6



## Report to Convocation January 28, 2016

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### Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee/ Comité sur l'équité et les affaires autochtones

**Committee Members**  
Julian Falconer, Co-Chair  
Janet Leiper, Co-Chair  
Dianne Corbiere, Vice-Chair  
Sandra Nishikawa, Vice-Chair  
Raj Anand  
Fred Bickford  
Suzanne Clément  
Teresa Donnelly  
Robert Evans  
Avvy Go  
Howard Goldblatt  
Marian Lippa  
Isfahan Merali  
Barbara Murchie  
Gina Papageorgiou  
Susan Richer  
Raj Sharda

**Purpose of Report: Information**

**Prepared by the Equity Initiatives Department**

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## COMMITTEE PROCESS

1. The Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee/Comité sur l'équité et les affaires autochtones (the "Committee") met on January 14, 2016. Treasurer Minor, Committee members, benchers Janet Leiper, Chair, Dianne Corbiere, Vice-Chair, Raj Anand, Fred Bickford, Suzanne Clément, Teresa Donnelly, Robert Evans, Avvy Go, Howard Goldblatt, Marian Lippa, Isfahan Merali, Barbara Murchie and Susan Richer attended. The Honourable Julie Thornburn, Superior Court of Justice, Andrée-Anne Martel, Executive Director of the Association des juristes d'expression française de l'Ontario ("AJEFO"), Julie Lasonde, Louise Hurteau, Law Society of Upper Canada representative on the AJEFO Board, Kathleen Lickers, representative of the Indigenous Advisory Group, and Paul Saguil, Chair of the Equity Advisory Group ("EAG"), also participated. Staff members Robert Lapper, Grant Wedge, Julia Bass, Sophia Sperdakos, Juda Strawczynski, Sabreena Delhon, Orli Giroux Namain, Susan Tonkin, Geneviève Proulx, and Hyacinth Khin also attended.

FOR DECISION

**HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING GROUP REQUEST FOR INTERVENTIONS**

2. That Convocation approve the letters and public statements in the following cases:
  - a. Lawyer Pu Zhiqiang – China – letter of intervention and public statement presented at [TAB 6.1.1](#).
  - b. Lawyers Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal – India – letter of intervention and public statement presented at [TAB 6.1.2](#).
  - c. Lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw– Myanmar/Burma– letter of intervention and public statement presented at [TAB 6.1.3](#).
  - d. Lawyer Khalil Ma'touq – Syria – letter of intervention and public statement presented at [TAB 6.1.4](#).
  - e. Lawyer Razan Zaitouneh – Syria – letter of intervention and public statement presented at [TAB 6.1.5](#).
  - f. Lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan– Vietnam – letter of intervention and public statement presented at [TAB 6.1.6](#).
  - g. Lawyer Nguyen Van Dai- Vietnam – letter of intervention and public statement presented at [TAB 6.1.7](#).
  - h. Lawyer Buzurgmehr Yorov – Tajikistan – letter of intervention and public statement presented at [TAB 6.1.8](#).

**Rationale**

3. The request for interventions falls within the mandate of the Human Rights Monitoring Group (the “Monitoring Group”) to,
  - a. review information that comes to its attention about human rights violations that target members of the profession and the judiciary, here and abroad, as a result of the discharge of their legitimate professional duties;
  - b. determine if the matter is one that requires a response from the Law Society; and,
  - c. prepare a response for review and approval by Convocation.

**Key Issues and Considerations**

4. The Monitoring Group considered the following factors when making a decision about the conviction of human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang:
  - a. there are no concerns about the quality of sources used for this report;

- b. the Law Society of Upper Canada intervened in this case in September 2014 and has intervened several times in the cases of lawyers in China, most recently in July 2015;
    - c. the conviction of human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang falls within the mandate of the Monitoring Group.
5. The Monitoring Group considered the following factors when making a decision about the harassment against human rights lawyers Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal:
  - a. there are no concerns about the quality of sources used for this report;
  - b. the harassment against human rights lawyers Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal falls within the mandate of the Monitoring Group.
6. The Monitoring Group considered the following factors when making a decision about the persecution of human rights lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw:
  - a. there are no concerns about the quality of sources used for this report;
  - b. the persecution of human rights lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw falls within the mandate of the Monitoring Group.
7. The Monitoring Group considered the following factors when making a decision about the disappearance of human rights lawyer Khalil Ma'touq:
  - a. there are no concerns about the quality of sources used for this report;
  - b. the Law Society of Upper Canada intervened in this case in October 2012 and July 2013 and has intervened a number of times in respect of human rights issues in Syria;
  - c. the disappearance of lawyer Khalil Ma'touq falls within the mandate of the Monitoring Group.
8. The Monitoring Group considered the following factors when making a decision about the abduction of human rights lawyer Razan Zaitouneh:
  - a. although there is only one source for this report, the report has been signed by nine human rights organizations. There are no concerns about the quality of the source used for this report;
  - b. the Law Society of Upper Canada intervened in this case in February 2014 and has intervened several times in respect of human rights issues in Syria;
  - c. the abduction of human rights lawyer Razan Zaitouneh falls within the mandate of the Monitoring Group.

9. The Monitoring Group considered the following factors when making a decision about the attack on human rights lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan:
  - a. there are no concerns about the quality of sources used for this report;
  - b. the attack on human rights lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan falls within the mandate of the Monitoring Group.
10. The Monitoring Group considered the following factors when making a decision about the attack, arrest and arbitrary detention of human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai:
  - a. there are no concerns about the quality of sources used for this report;
  - b. the Law Society of Upper Canada intervened in a case related to the arrest, detention and harsh sentence of lawyers Nguyen Van Dai and Le Thi Cong Nhan in August 2007.
  - c. the arrest and arbitrary detention of human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai falls within the mandate of the Monitoring Group.
11. The Monitoring Group considered the following factors when making a decision about the detention of human rights lawyer Buzurgmehr Yorov:
  - a. there are no concerns about the quality of sources used for this report;
  - b. the detention of human rights lawyer Buzurgmehr Yorov falls within the mandate of the Monitoring Group.

## **KEY BACKGROUND**

### **CHINA – CONVICTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER PU ZHIQIANG**

#### **Sources of Information**

12. The background information for this report was taken from the following sources:
  - a. BBC;
  - b. CNN;
  - c. Foreign Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom;
  - d. Human Rights Watch;
  - e. Lawyers for Lawyers;
  - f. The Guardian;
  - g. The New York Times; and
  - h. U.S. Department of State

## Background

13. The following report served as the basis for the Human Rights Monitoring Group's intervention in the case of Pu Zhiqiang in September 2014.
14. Pu Zhiqiang is a prominent civil rights lawyer in Beijing, lawyer to Ai Weiwei, and advocate for abolishing the administrative detention system known as "Re-education Through Labor."<sup>1</sup> Pu Zhiqiang was detained by police on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014, after attending a seminar that discussed the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre.<sup>2</sup>
15. CHRLCG [China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group] notes that, although the seminar concerned a sensitive topic, Pu Zhiqiang was exercising his Article 35 Chinese constitutional rights, guaranteeing freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration.<sup>3</sup>
16. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014, police formally arrested Pu Zhiqiang for the crimes of "creating a disturbance" and "illegally obtaining personal information."<sup>4</sup> His niece, Qu Zhenong, also a lawyer, accompanied him to the seminar and is also reported to have been arrested.<sup>5</sup>
17. Pu Zhiqiang was allegedly not given appropriate access to legal representation. His lawyer, Zhang Sizhi, was unable to visit him in custody until a month had passed.<sup>6</sup> According to his lawyer, Pu Zhiqiang now faces "many and broad" allegations.<sup>7</sup>
18. Reports indicate that Pu Zhiqiang continues to be detained without trial and suffers ill-treatment due to a lack of sufficient accommodation of his diabetic condition. He has reportedly been given access to insulin, but suffers swollen legs due to prolonged interrogations lasting up to ten hours nearly every day.<sup>8</sup> Applications for Pu Zhiqiang's release on medical grounds have been denied.<sup>9</sup>
19. Pu Zhiqiang's continued detention and ill-treatment evidences mounting government pressure against Chinese rights lawyers. Amnesty International, The Law Society of

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<sup>1</sup> "China: Free Lawyer, Drop Charges", *Human Rights Watch*, online:

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/06/14/china-free-lawyer-drop-charges> [*Human Rights Watch*].

<sup>2</sup> "China: End persecution of prominent human rights lawyer", *Amnesty International*, online:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/china-end-persecution-prominent-human-rights-lawyer-2014-06-13>.

<sup>3</sup> "China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group condemns Haiding District Public Security Bureau for abusing public authority and suppressing civil rights, and demands immediate release of Pu Zhiqiang" *China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group* online: <http://www.chrlawyers.hk/en/content/20140507>.

<sup>4</sup> *Human Rights Watch*.

<sup>5</sup> "President of Law Society expresses concern regarding two lawyers in China", *The Law Society of England and Wales*, online: <http://international.lawsociety.org.uk/node/14008> [*Law Society*].

<sup>6</sup> Tania Branigan, "Chinese rights lawyers warn of crackdown after arrest of Pu Zhiqiang", *The Guardian* (17 June 2014), online: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/17/chinese-rights-lawyers-crackdown-arrest-pu-zhiqiang-ai-weiwei>.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Human Rights Watch*.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

England and Wales, and other organizations listed in this report believe that authorities continue to detain Pu Zhiqiang in an attempt to silence lawyers who work on sensitive civil rights issues.<sup>10</sup> On June 27, 2014, The Law Society of England and Wales intervened by issuing a formal letter addressed to Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang. The Law Society of England and Wales noted that “the arrest appears to be part of government suppression of Human Rights lawyers and activists which has involved a large number of detentions recently.”<sup>11</sup> The Law Society of England and Wales also reminded the Prime Minister of China’s obligations under international law. These groups are calling for his immediate release.

## Update

20. According to the U.S. Department of State, on 22 December 2015, “Mr. Pu was convicted and given a three-year suspended sentence, following 19 months of detention, on vague charges of ‘inciting ethnic hatred’ and ‘picking quarrels and provoking trouble.’”<sup>12</sup> The charges are related to social media posts questioning government policy, which were posted online between July 2011 and May 2014.<sup>13</sup>
21. Reports indicate that although Pu Zhiqiang has been released, the verdict will prevent him from ever practising law again.<sup>14</sup> Pu Zhiqiang could also face further harassment from authorities.
22. Pu Zhiqiang’s case draws attention to the plight of human rights defenders in China. In July 2015, the government detained more than 300 lawyers and legal assistants.<sup>15</sup>

## INDIA – HARASSMENT AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYERS SHALINI GERA AND ISHA KHANDELWAL

### Sources of Information

23. The background information for this report was taken from the following sources:
  - a. Front Line Defenders;
  - b. Lawyers for Lawyers; and
  - c. The Law Society of England and Wales

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<sup>10</sup> *Law Society.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/12/250836.htm>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/12/13/china-free-prominent-lawyer-pu-zhiqiang>

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/23/world/asia/conviction-of-pu-zhiqiang-affirms-chinas-determination-to-muzzle-rights-lawyers.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/23/world/asia/conviction-of-pu-zhiqiang-affirms-chinas-determination-to-muzzle-rights-lawyers.html?_r=0)

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/21/asia/china-lawyer-pu-zhiqiang-verdict/>

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

## Background

24. Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal are human rights lawyers and the founders of the Jagdalpur Legal Aid Group (JagLAG), an organization that provides free legal aid to Adivasi people in Bastar, Dantewada, Kanker, Sukma and Bijapur.<sup>16</sup> According to Front Line Defenders, “A number of Adivasi’s have been harassed and accused of having connections to the violent movement linked to the Communist party known as Maoists or Naxals”.<sup>17</sup> JagLAG has also worked on cases involving human rights abuses by police.<sup>18</sup>
25. Reports indicate that on 6 October 2015, the Bastar Bar Association passed a resolution prohibiting any lawyer who is not registered with the local Bar Council from practising in the Jagdalpur courts. The resolution prevents Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal, both registered with the Delhi State Bar Council, from representing clients in Jagdalpur.<sup>19</sup> According to Lawyers for Lawyers:

All lawyers practising in India are registered with the regional Bar Council, which is a statutory body with legal authority to set its own rules regarding the criteria to practice law in that region. The Bar Council of the Chhattisgarh region, which includes Bastar, allows outside lawyers to practise in the region under the condition that their legal credentials are countersigned by a local lawyer. A local Bar Association, such as the Bastar Bar Association, has no authority to overrule the regional Bar Council regulations and to prevent a lawyer from practising in any court in the country under the Section 30 of the Advocates Act of India. The recent resolution of the Bastar Bar Association thus appears to be unlawful.<sup>20</sup>

26. Human rights organizations believe that the resolution is intended to inhibit Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal’s work as lawyers for JagLAG. Both lawyers have faced repeated harassment as a result of their work in the region.<sup>21</sup> In a letter to the Prime Minister of India, the Law Society of England & Wales notes, “The personal threats and lodging of anonymous complaints appear to be further attempts to intimidate and harass these human rights defenders.”<sup>22</sup>

## MYANMAR/BURMA – PERSECUTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER KHIN KHIN KYAW

### Sources of Information

27. The background information for this report was taken from the following sources:

a. Council of Bar and Law Societies of Europe;

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/29909>

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.advocatenvooradvocaten.nl/fr/11240/india-harassment-against-human-rights-lawyers/>

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> <http://communities.lawsociety.org.uk/download?ac=15401>

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

- b. Front Line Defenders; and
- c. Lawyers for Lawyers.

## Background

28. The following information has been reported about human rights lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw.
29. Khin Khin Kyaw is a member of a legal team that is representing more than 50 students who participated in the March 2015 protests to oppose Myanmar's National Education Law. The students have been detained and "face charges related to unlawful assembly, rioting, harming public servants, and public mischief."<sup>23</sup>
30. Reports indicate that following the March 2015 protests, Khin Khin Kyaw filed a motion seeking to hold high-ranking police officials responsible for excessive use of force. According to information gathered by The Council of Bar and Law Societies of Europe:

...while Khin Khin Kyaw was representing her clients in court on 1 September 2015, the judge arbitrarily refused to accept a minor amendment to the legal motion submitted by the lawyer. In response, the individuals in the courtroom loudly accused the judge of being biased. On 15 September 2015, Khin Khin Kyaw was charged with 'disrupting the court', and her trial began on 14 October 2015. We understand that she is now facing up to six months in prison and the revocation of her license to practice law.<sup>24</sup>

31. Human rights organizations believe that the trial against Khin Khin Kyaw is an attempt to prevent her from representing the student protestors.

## SYRIA– DISAPPEARANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER KHALIL MA'TOUQ

### Sources of Information

32. The background information for this report was taken from the following sources:
- a. Al Jazeera;
  - b. Council of Bar and Law Societies of Europe;
  - c. Human Rights Watch (joint statement with other organizations); and
  - d. The Law Society of England and Wales.

### Background

33. The following report served as the basis for the Human Rights Monitoring Group's intervention in the case of Khalil Ma'touq in July 2013:

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/29942>

<sup>24</sup> [http://ccbe.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/NTCdocument/HR\\_Letter\\_Myanmar\\_Kh1\\_1449219194.pdf](http://ccbe.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/NTCdocument/HR_Letter_Myanmar_Kh1_1449219194.pdf)

34. Khalil Ma'touq is a long time and prominent human rights lawyer in Syria, and is also the director of the Syrian Centre for Legal Studies and Research. Khalil Ma'touq is known for providing legal assistance to victims of human rights violations in Syria, including the defense of hundreds of political prisoners, prisoners of conscience and journalists.
35. On October 2, 2012, Khalil Ma'touq and his friend and assistant Mohammed Thatha left Khalil Ma'touq's home in a suburb of Damascus, for work in the city. However the two men did not arrive at the office and it is believed that they were detained at a government controlled checkpoint en route to work. It is believed that Khalil Ma'touq was arrested as a direct result of his human rights work. Shortly before his arrest, Khalil Ma'touq had travelled to France to receive medical treatment, which may also have roused the suspicions of Syrian authorities.
36. Since their disappearance, the families of Khalil Ma'touq and Mohammed Thatha have been unable to discern their whereabouts. Their phones remain turned off, and despite repeated requests for information, Syrian authorities continue to deny that they two men are in custody. This ongoing denial heightens worries that the men are being subjected to torture and ill treatment in detention, which is reportedly rife in Syrian prisons.
37. Khalil Ma'touq has been in detention for more than 243 days, despite the fact that Syrian law only allows detention for the purposes of investigation for a maximum of sixty days. Following the expiration of the sixty day detention period in February 2013, a group of Syrian lawyers contacted the Attorney General in Damascus to demand the release of Khalil Ma'touq. The Attorney General replied that Khalil Ma'touq was not being held in detention. However recently released detainees confirmed that they had seen Khalil Ma'touq in State Security Branch 285 while they themselves were in detention. In April 2013, Khalil Ma'touq's lawyer was reportedly informed by a Syrian State Security officer that his client had been transferred to an Air Force Intelligence branch in late March. These developments continue to raise serious and pressing questions about Khalil Ma'touq's health and safety.
38. In late May 2013, people close to Khalil Ma'touq and Mohammed Thatha received a tip-off indicating that Khalil Ma'touq was indeed in detention and that his health was severely deteriorating. The situation is especially troubling as Khalil Ma'touq suffers from severe lung disease, which requires regular medication and constant monitoring. It is unknown whether Khalil Ma'touq is able to receive any medical care for his serious condition.
39. This is not the first time that Khalil Ma'touq has been sanctioned for his human rights work. He had previously summoned for interrogation by authorities, and was also banned from travelling between 2005-2011 as a result of his work at the Syrian Centre for Legal Studies.
40. The arbitrary arrest and detention of Khalil Ma'touq is part of a widespread pattern of enforced disappearance and repression of lawyers in Syria. It is estimated that at least 37 lawyers are currently detained in Syria. Since anti-government protests erupted in

March 2011, upwards of 1,300 individuals have reportedly died in custody, and many more have been subjected to torture and ill-treatment in Syrian detention centres and prisons. Several human rights organizations have condemned Syria's ongoing persecution, harassment and imprisonment of human rights lawyers during the discharge of their legitimate, peaceful legal duties and human rights work.

### Update

41. The whereabouts of Khalil Ma'touq are still unknown. The state continues to deny that he was arrested.
42. October 2015 marked the third anniversary of his disappearance.<sup>25</sup> Human Rights Watch notes that Khalil Ma'touq continues to be held "...despite calls by the international community to end the practices of enforced disappearances and torture and other ill-treatment in detention facilities in Syria. UN Security Council Resolution 2139 of February 2014 demanded the release of all those arbitrarily detained, a call reiterated by a UN Security Council Presidential Statement issued on 17 August 2015."<sup>26</sup>
43. According to reports, since Syria's civil war broke out in 2011, the government has forcibly disappeared more than 65,000 people.<sup>27</sup> In October 2015, more than 50 human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Lawyers for Lawyers, signed a joint statement calling for the release of Khalil Ma'touq.<sup>28</sup>

## SYRIA– ABUDCTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER RAZAN ZAITOUNEH

### Sources of Information

44. The background information for this report was taken from the following sources:
  - a. Lawyers Rights Watch Canada (joint statement with other organizations)

### Background

45. The following report served as the basis for the Human Rights Monitoring Group's intervention in the case of Razan Zaitouneh in February 2014:
46. On December 9, 2013, award-winning human rights lawyer and writer, Razan Zaitouneh, along with her husband, Wa'el Hamada, and two colleagues, Nazem Hamadi and Samira Khalil, were abducted by unknown individuals from a joint office of the Violations Documentation Centre (VDC) and the Local Development and Small Projects Support

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/10/06/syria-joint-statement-urging-release-human-rights-lawyer-khalil-matouq>

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/11/tens-thousands-syrians-disappeared-151103151934501.html>

<sup>28</sup> *Supra* note 25.

(LDSPS) in the Damascus suburb of Douma.<sup>29</sup> The VDC is an independent non-governmental organization that documents human rights abuses committed by the Syrian government. The LDSPS provides humanitarian assistance.

47. Razan Zaitouneh has won several awards for her human rights work, including the 2013 International Women of Courage Award and the 2011 Sakhorov Prize for Freedom of Thought. She largely defends political prisoners. Razan Zaitouneh is a co-founder of both the VDC and the LDSPS.
48. According to reports, in 2011, Razan Zaitouneh was forced into hiding after receiving threats from the Syrian authorities. In recent months, she has received threats from at least one armed opposition group in Eastern Ghouta. Reports indicate that the abduction of Razan Zaitouneh and her colleagues is linked to their human rights work.

### **Update**

49. Razan Zaitouneh's whereabouts are still known. December 2015 marked the second anniversary of her abduction.<sup>30</sup>
50. Razan Zaitouneh's family, including her parents and her sister, arrived in Canada from Syria in 2014. The family, given the recent arrival of many Syrian refugees to Canada, has attempted to draw attention to Razan Zaitouneh's case. A number of human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, Human Rights Watch, Lawyers Rights Watch Canada and PEN Canada, have released a statement asking the Canadian government to be involved in this case by taking all steps to ensure the Razan Zaitouneh, her husband and her two colleagues are located and released immediately.

## **VIETNAM– ATTACK ON HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYERS TRAN THU NAM AND LE LUAN**

### **Sources of Information**

51. The background information for this report was taken from the following sources:
  - a. Front Line Defenders;
  - b. Lawyers for Lawyers; and
  - c. Radio Free Asia

### **Background**

52. The following information has been reported about the attack on human rights lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan.

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<sup>29</sup> Douma is located in Eastern Ghouta, an area under the control of a number of armed opposition groups that is being besieged by government forces.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.lrwc.org/syria-canadian-government-asked-for-support-to-help-free-syrian-human-rights-defender-razan-zaitouneh-on-two-year-anniversary-of-abduction-joint-statement/>

53. According to Lawyers for Lawyers:

Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan are Hanoi-based human rights lawyers providing legal support to the victims of alleged police brutality and other human rights abuses by the authorities. Currently they are supporting the family of Do Dang Du, who died on 10 October 2015, in police custody after being held there for two months on a charge of theft. The lawyers questioned the validity of the autopsy carried out on Do Dang Du's body as it failed to include an examination of internal organs, which could prove that he died as a result of injuries sustained in a beating."<sup>31</sup>

54. On 3 November 2015, Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan were attacked and beaten by eight masked men. Front Line Defenders notes that the two lawyers recognized one of their attackers as a local police officer. Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan sustained a number of injuries for which they received medical treatment. The attack took place following a meeting between Tran Thu Nam, Le Luan and the family of Do Dang Du to discuss the steps in the legal proceedings regarding Do Dang Du's death. Do Dang Du's mother, Do Thi Mai, witnessed the attack.<sup>32</sup>

55. Human rights organizations believe that Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan were targeted as a result of their human rights work.

### **VIETNAM– ATTACK, ARREST AND ARBITRARY DETENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER NGUYEN VAN DAI**

#### **Sources of Information**

56. The background information for this report was taken from the following sources:
- a. Lawyers for Lawyers;
  - b. Lawyers Rights Watch Canada;
  - c. The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders;
  - d. The United Nations News Centre; and
  - e. U.S. Department of State – Daily Press Briefing

#### **Background**

57. The following information has been reported about the arrest and arbitrary detention of human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai.

58. Nguyen Van Dai is a human rights lawyer and a well-known defender of religious freedom. He is the co-founder of the Vietnam Human Rights Centre.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.advocatenvooradvocaten.nl/fr/11293/vietnam-human-rights-lawyers-tran-thu-nam-and-le-luan-attacked/>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/30085/action>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.fidh.org/en/issues/human-rights-defenders/arrest-and-arbitrary-detention-of-mr-nguyen-van->

59. According to Lawyers for Lawyers and Lawyers Rights Watch Canada:

...on 6 December 2015, Nguyen Van Dai and human rights activists Ly Quang Son, Vu Van Minh and Le Manh Thang were attacked and severely beaten by an estimated 20 masked men, travelling in two cars without registration plates and five motorbikes. The attackers robbed all four men's mobile phones, wallets and other items.<sup>34</sup>

60. Reports indicate that Nguyen Van Dai and his three associates were returning to Hanoi from a human rights workshop they had conducted for residents of Nghe An Province.<sup>35</sup>

61. On 15 December 2015, 25 police officers arrested Nguyen Van Dai at his home in Hanoi. The officers searched his home and confiscated a number of items, including laptops, computers, USB sticks, cameras, camcorders, books on human rights, envelopes containing money used to support relatives of prisoners of conscience and Nguyen Van Dai's savings account bank book. The arrest took place as Nguyen Van Dai was preparing to meet with European Union delegates in Hanoi for the EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue scheduled for that day.<sup>36</sup>

62. Nguyen Van Dai has been charged with "spreading propaganda against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam" under Article 88 of the Criminal Code. This charges appear to relate to his organization of meetings to discuss the 2013 Vietnamese Constitution.<sup>37</sup> Nguyen Van Dai has been informed that he will be temporarily jailed for four months, pending trial. Should he be convicted, he will face three to 20 years in prison.<sup>38</sup>

63. Human rights organizations believe that the attack, arrest and arbitrary detention of Nguyen Van Dai are as a result of his human rights work. This is not the first time Nguyen Van Dai has been persecuted due to the legitimate exercise of his duties. In 2007, Nguyen Van Dai as sentenced to five years' imprisonment and four years' of house arrest under Article 88 of the Criminal Code. His sentenced was reduced to four years' imprisonment and four years' house arrest. He was released in 2011 and resumed his human rights work.<sup>39</sup>

## TAJIKISTAN – DETENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER BUZURGMEHR YOROV

### Sources of Information

64. The background information for this report was taken from the following sources:  
a. Human Rights Watch;

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dai-a-human-rights

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.lrwc.org/viet-nam-physical-attack-on-and-arrest-of-lawyer-nguyen-van-dai-joint-letter/>

<sup>35</sup> *Supra* note 33.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

- b. International Commission of Jurists;
- c. Lawyers for Lawyers;
- d. The Law Society of England and Wales; and
- e. The United Nations News Centre

## Background

65. The following information has been reported about detention of human rights lawyer Buzurgmehr Yorov.
66. Buzurgmehr Yorov is a civil and criminal lawyer and the Chairman of the Bar Association of Dushanbe.<sup>40</sup>
67. According to Lawyers for Lawyers:
- Atty. Yorov was arrested and detained on 28 September 2015. The authorities charged him with fraud related charges. An Internal Affairs Ministry spokesperson said the alleged fraud occurred in July 2010, when Yorov and purportedly received US \$4000 from a resident of the city of Istaravshan.<sup>41</sup>
68. Reports indicate that Buzurgmehr Yorov had just begun representing thirteen members of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) at the time of his arrest. The IRPT members had been arrested and charged by authorities on 16 September 2015.<sup>42</sup> On 29 September 2015, the Supreme Court of Tajikistan banned the IRPT and declared it a terrorist organization. Prior to that date, the IRPT was the only Islamic political party legally registered in Central Asia.<sup>43</sup>
69. Human Rights Watch notes that Buzurgmehr Yorov's arrest occurs in the context of a worsening government crackdown on lawyers who take on politically sensitive cases.<sup>44</sup> Human Rights organizations believe that his arrest and detention are a direct result of his representation of members of the IRPT.

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<sup>40</sup> <http://communities.lawsociety.org.uk/human-rights/interventions/2015/tajikistan-mr-buzurghmehr-yorov-lawyer-at-risk/5052100.fullarticle>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.advocatenvooradvocaten.nl/fr/11212/tajikistan-human-rights-lawyer-arrested/>

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/10/07/tajikistan-human-rights-lawyer-detained>

TAB 6.1.1

**PROPOSED LETTERS OF INTERVENTION AND PUBLIC STATEMENT**

**PU ZHIQIANG**

His Excellency Mr. Xi Jinping, The President  
The State Council General Office  
2 Fuyoujie  
Xichengqu  
Beijingshi 100017  
People's Republic of China

Your Excellency:

**Re: Conviction of human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang**

I write on behalf of the Law Society of Upper Canada\* further to our letter of 5 September 2014, to voice our grave concerns over the conviction of human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang. When serious issues of apparent injustice to lawyers and the judiciary come to our attention, we speak out.

Pu Zhiqiang is a prominent human rights lawyer in Beijing. He often defends clients who are involved in politically sensitive cases.

In our letter dated 5 September 2014, the Law Society expressed concern about the arrest, continued detention and ill-treatment of Pu Zhiqiang.

The Law Society again writes to voice its continued deep concern as a result of reports that on 22 December 2015, Pu Zhiqiang was convicted and given a three-year suspended sentence, following 19 months of detention on charges of "inciting ethnic hatred" and "picking quarrels and provoking trouble".

Reports indicate that although Pu Zhiqiang has been released, the verdict will prevent him from ever practising law again. A number of organizations have reported on the arrest and detention of human rights lawyers in China. The Law Society is concerned that the arrest and detention of these lawyers is directed at preventing them from carrying out peaceful human rights activities.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges Your Excellency to comply with Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of the People's Republic of China to:

- a. vacate Pu Zhiqiang's conviction immediately and unconditionally;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment against Pu Zhiqiang as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in China;
- c. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological safety and integrity of Pu Zhiqiang;
- d. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Pu Zhiqiang; and
- e. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

Yours very truly,

Janet E. Minor  
Treasurer

*\*The Law Society of Upper Canada is the governing body for more than 49,000 lawyers and 7,400 paralegals in the province of Ontario, Canada. The Treasurer is the head of the Law Society.*

*The mandate of the Law Society is to govern the legal profession in the public interest by upholding the independence, integrity and honour of the legal profession for the purpose of advancing the cause of justice and the rule of law.*

cc:

His Excellency Mr. Guo Shengkun  
Minister of Public Security  
No.14, Donchang'anjie,  
Dongchengqu, Beijing 100741  
People's Republic of China  
Email: gabzfwz@mps.gov.cn

Ambassador Luo Zhaohui  
Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Canada  
515 St. Patrick St.  
Ottawa, ON  
Canada K1N 5H3

Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders

Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch

Wang Junfeng, All China Lawyers Association

Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers

David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

### Proposed Letter to Lawyers' Associations

Dear [Name],

**Re: Conviction of human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang**

I write to inform you that on the advice of the Human Rights Monitoring Group\*, the Law Society of Upper Canada sent the attached letter to His Excellency Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, expressing our deep concerns over reports of the conviction of human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang.

We would be very interested in hearing from you concerning the situation noted in the attached letter, whether your organization has intervened in this matter and whether we have any of the facts in the case wrong. Any further information you may have about the case would also be welcome.

Please forward any further correspondence to the attention of Ekua Quansah, Associate Counsel, Equity, The Law Society of Upper Canada, 130 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5H 2N6 or to [equansah@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:equansah@lsuc.on.ca).

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Schabas  
Chair, Human Rights Monitoring Group

\* The Law Society of Upper Canada is the governing body for more than 49,000 lawyers and 7,400 paralegals in the province of Ontario, Canada. The Law Society is committed to preserving the rule of law and to the maintenance of an independent Bar. Due to this commitment, the Law Society established a Human Rights Monitoring Group ("Monitoring Group"). The Monitoring Group has a mandate to review information of human rights violations targeting, as a result of the discharge of their legitimate professional duties, members of the legal profession and the judiciary, in Canada and abroad. The Human Rights Monitoring Group reviews such information and determines if a response is required of the Law Society.

Letter to be sent to:

- Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada
- Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders
- Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

- Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch
- Wang Junfeng, All China Lawyers Association
- Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers
- David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada
- Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
- Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

## PROPOSED PUBLIC STATEMENT

### **The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the conviction of human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang in China**

TORONTO, ON — The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the conviction of human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang in China.

Pu Zhiqiang is a prominent human rights lawyer in Beijing and lawyer to artist Ai Weiwei. He often defends clients who are involved in politically sensitive cases.

Pu Zhiqiang was arrested on 6 May 2014, after attending a seminar that included discussion about the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre.

It has come to our attention that on 22 December 2015, Pu Zhiqiang was convicted and given a three-year suspended sentence, following 19 months of detention on charges of “inciting ethnic hatred” and “picking quarrels and provoking trouble”. The charges are related to social media posts questioning government policy, which were posted online between July 2011 and May 2014

Reports indicate that although Pu Zhiqiang has been released, the verdict will prevent him from ever practising law again. A number of organizations have reported on the arrest and detention of human rights lawyers in China. The Law Society is concerned that the arrest and detention of these lawyers is directed at preventing them from carrying out peaceful human rights activities.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges the government of the People’s Republic of China to comply with Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations’ *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the rights to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of the People's Republic of China to:

- a. vacate Pu Zhiqiang's conviction immediately and unconditionally;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment against Pu Zhiqiang as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in China;
- c. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological safety and integrity of Pu Zhiqiang;
- d. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Pu Zhiqiang; and
- e. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

TAB 6.1.2

**PROPOSED LETTERS OF INTERVENTION AND PUBLIC STATEMENT**

**SHALINI GERA AND ISHA KHANDELWAL**

Mr. Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi  
Prime Minister's Office  
Room number 152  
South Block  
New Delhi  
India

Dear Prime Minister:

**Re: Harassment against human rights lawyers Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal**

I write on behalf of the Law Society of Upper Canada\* to voice our grave concern over the harassment of human rights lawyers Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal. When serious issues of apparent injustice to lawyers and the judiciary come to our attention, we speak out.

Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal are human rights lawyers and the founders of the Jagdalpur Legal Aid Group (JagLAG), an organization that provides free legal aid to Adivasi people in Bastar, Dantewada, Kanker, Sukma and Bijapur. JagLAG has also worked on cases involving alleged human rights abuses by police.

It has come to our attention that on 6 October 2015, the Bastar Bar Association passed a resolution prohibiting any lawyer who is not registered with the local Bar Council from practising in the Jagdalpur courts. The resolution prevents Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal, both registered with the Delhi State Bar Council, from representing clients in Jagdalpur. It is our understanding that a local bar association has no authority to overrule Bar Council regulations and prevent a lawyer from practising in any court in the country under Section 30 of the *Advocates Act of India*.

Human rights organizations believe that the resolution is intended to inhibit the work of Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal as lawyers for JagLAG. Reports indicate that both lawyers have faced repeated harassment as a result of their work in the region.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges Your Excellency to consider Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of India to:

- a. put an end to all acts of harassment against Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal, as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in India;
- b. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal;
- c. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

Yours very truly,

Janet E. Minor  
Treasurer

*\*The Law Society of Upper Canada is the governing body for more than 49,000 lawyers and 7,400 paralegals in the province of Ontario, Canada. The Treasurer is the head of the Law Society.*

*The mandate of the Law Society is to govern the legal profession in the public interest by upholding the independence, integrity and honour of the legal profession for the purpose of advancing the cause of justice and the rule of law.*

cc:

Mr. Vishnu Prakash  
High Commission of India  
10, Springfield Road  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
K1M 1C9

Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders

Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch

Chairman, The Bar Council of India

Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers

David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

### **Proposed Letter to Lawyers' Associations**

Dear [Name],

#### **Re: Harassment against human rights lawyers Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal**

I write to inform you that on the advice of the Human Rights Monitoring Group\*, the Law Society of Upper Canada sent the attached letter to Mr. Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi, Prime Minister of India, expressing our deep concerns over reports of the harassment of human rights lawyers Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal.

We would be very interested in hearing from you concerning the situation noted in the attached letter, whether your organization has intervened in this matter and whether we have any of the facts in the case wrong. Any further information you may have about the case would also be welcome.

Please forward any further correspondence to the attention of Ekua Quansah, Associate Counsel, Equity, The Law Society of Upper Canada, 130 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5H 2N6 or to [equansah@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:equansah@lsuc.on.ca).

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Schabas  
Chair, Human Rights Monitoring Group

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Letter to be sent to:

- Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada
- Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders
- Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

- Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch
- Chairman, The Bar Council of India
- Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers
- David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada
- Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
- Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

## PROPOSED PUBLIC STATEMENT

### **The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the harassment against human rights lawyers Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal in India**

TORONTO, ON — The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the harassment against human rights lawyers Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal in India.

Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal are human rights lawyers and the founders of the Jagdalpur Legal Aid Group (JagLAG), an organization that provides free legal aid to Adivasi people in Bastar, Dantewada, Kanker, Sukma and Bijapur. JagLAG has also worked on cases involving alleged human rights abuses by police.

It has come to our attention that on 6 October 2015, the Bastar Bar Association passed a resolution prohibiting any lawyer who is not registered with the local Bar Council from practising in the Jagdalpur courts. The resolution prevents Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal, both registered with the Delhi State Bar Council, from representing clients in Jagdalpur. It is our understanding that a local bar association has no authority to overrule Bar Council regulations and prevent a lawyer from practising in any court in the country under Section 30 of the *Advocates Act of India*.

Human rights organizations believe that the resolution is intended to inhibit the work of Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal work as lawyers for JagLAG. Reports indicate that both lawyers have faced repeated harassment as a result of their work in the region.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges the government of India to consider Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the rights to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of India to:

- a. put an end to all acts of harassment against Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in India;
- b. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Shalini Gera and Isha Khandelwal;
- c. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

TAB 6.1.3

**PROPOSED LETTERS OF INTERVENTION AND PUBLIC STATEMENT**

**KHIN KHIN KYAW**

President Thein Sein  
President's Office  
Nay Pyi Taw  
Myanmar

Your Excellency:

**Re: Persecution of human rights lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw**

I write on behalf of the Law Society of Upper Canada\* to voice our grave concern over the persecution of human rights lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw. When serious issues of apparent injustice to lawyers and the judiciary come to our attention, we speak out.

Khin Khin Kyaw is a member of a legal team that is representing more than 50 students who participated in the March 2015 protests to oppose Myanmar's National Education Law. The students have been detained and face charges related to unlawful assembly, rioting, harming public servants, and public mischief.

Reports indicate that while Khin Khin Kyaw was representing her clients in court on 1 September 2015, the judge refused to accept a minor amendment to the legal motion Khin Khin Kyaw submitted. Individuals in the courtroom loudly accused the judge of being biased. On 15 September 2015, Khin Khin Kyaw was charged with 'disrupting the court', and her trial began on 14 October 2015. It is our understanding that she is now facing up to six months in prison and the revocation of her licence to practice law.

Human rights organizations believe that the trial against Khin Khin Kyaw is an attempt to prevent her from representing the student protestors.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges Your Excellency to consider Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or

be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of Myanmar to:

- a. drop the charges against Khin Khin Kyaw;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment against Khin Khin Kyaw as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in Myanmar;
- c. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Khin Khin Kyaw;
- d. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Khin Khin Kyaw;
- e. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

Yours very truly,

Janet E. Minor  
Treasurer

*\*The Law Society of Upper Canada is the governing body for more than 49,000 lawyers and 7,400 paralegals in the province of Ontario, Canada. The Treasurer is the head of the Law Society.*

*The mandate of the Law Society is to govern the legal profession in the public interest by upholding the independence, integrity and honour of the legal profession for the purpose of advancing the cause of justice and the rule of law.*

cc:

H.E. U Hau Do Suan  
Ambassador  
Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
336 Island Park Drive

Ottawa, ON K1Y 0A7  
Canada

Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders

Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch

Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers

David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

### Proposed Letter to Lawyers' Associations

Dear [Name],

**Re: Persecution of human rights lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw**

I write to inform you that on the advice of the Human Rights Monitoring Group\*, the Law Society of Upper Canada sent the attached letter to President Thein Sein, President of Myanmar, expressing our deep concerns over reports of the persecution of human rights lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw.

We would be very interested in hearing from you concerning the situation noted in the attached letter, whether your organization has intervened in this matter and whether we have any of the facts in the case wrong. Any further information you may have about the case would also be welcome.

Please forward any further correspondence to the attention of Ekua Quansah, Associate Counsel, Equity, The Law Society of Upper Canada, 130 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5H 2N6 or to [equansah@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:equansah@lsuc.on.ca).

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Schabas  
Chair, Human Rights Monitoring Group

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Letter to be sent to:

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- Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders
- Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

- Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch
- Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers
- David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada
- Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
- Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

## PROPOSED PUBLIC STATEMENT

### **The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the persecution of human rights lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw in Myanmar**

TORONTO, ON — The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the persecution of human rights lawyer Khin Khin Kyaw in Myanmar.

Khin Khin Kyaw is a member of a legal team that is representing more than 50 students who participated in the March 2015 protests to oppose Myanmar's National Education Law. The students have been detained and face charges related to unlawful assembly, rioting, harming public servants, and public mischief.

Reports indicate that while Khin Khin Kyaw was representing her clients in court on 1 September 2015, the judge refused to accept a minor amendment to the legal motion Khin Khin Kyaw submitted. Individuals in the courtroom loudly accused the judge of being biased. On 15 September 2015, Khin Khin Kyaw was charged with 'disrupting the court', and her trial began on 14 October 2015. It is our understanding that she is now facing up to six months in prison and the revocation of her licence to practice law.

Human rights organizations believe that the trial against Khin Khin Kyaw is an attempt to prevent her from representing the student protestors.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges the government of Myanmar to consider Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the rights to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of Myanmar to:

- a. drop the charges against Khin Khin Kyaw;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment against Khin Khin Kyaw as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in Myanmar;
- c. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Khin Khin Kyaw;
- d. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Khin Khin Kyaw;
- e. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

TAB 6.1.4

**PROPOSED LETTERS OF INTERVENTION AND PUBLIC STATEMENT**

**KHALIL MA'TOUQ**

Minister of Justice of the Syrian Arab Republic  
Mr. Najm Hamad al-Ahmad  
Al-Nasr Street  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

**DELIVERED BY EMAIL TO: [moj@net.sy](mailto:moj@net.sy)**

Dear Minister:

**Re: Persecution of human rights lawyer Khalil Ma'Touq**

I write on behalf of the Law Society of Upper Canada\* to voice our grave concern over the persecution of human rights lawyer Khalil Ma'Touq. When serious issues of apparent injustice to lawyers and the judiciary come to our attention, we speak out.

Khalil Ma'touq is a longtime and prominent human rights lawyer in Syria, and is also the director of the Syrian Centre for Legal Studies and Research. Khalil Ma'touq is known for providing legal assistance to victims of human rights violations in Syria, including the defense of hundreds of political prisoners, prisoners of conscience and journalists.

On 2 October 2012, Khalil Ma'touq and his friend and assistant Mohammed Thatha left Khalil Ma'touq's home in a suburb of Damascus, for work in the city. However, the two men did not arrive at the office and it is believed that they were detained at a government controlled checkpoint en route to work. It is believed that Khalil Ma'touq was arrested as a direct result of his human rights work.

The whereabouts of Khalil Ma'touq are still unknown. The state continues to deny that he was arrested. Khalil Ma'touq suffers from severe lung disease, which requires regular medication and constant monitoring. It is unknown whether Khalil Ma'touq is able to receive any medical care for his serious condition.

October 2015 marked the third anniversary of his disappearance. Human Rights Watch notes that Ma'touq continues to be held "...despite calls by the international community to end the practices of enforced disappearances and torture and other ill-treatment in detention facilities in Syria. UN Security Council Resolution 2139 of February 2014 demanded the release of all those

arbitrarily detained, a call reiterated by a UN Security Council Presidential Statement issued on 17 August 2015.”

According to reports, since Syria’s civil war broke out in 2011, the government has forcibly disappeared more than 65,000 people. In October 2015, more than 50 human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Lawyers for Lawyers, signed a joint statement calling for the release of Khalil Ma’touq.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges the government of Syria to comply with Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations’ *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of Syria to:

- a. Immediately and unconditionally release Khalil Ma’touq;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment and intimidation against human rights lawyers and defenders in Syria;
- c. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological safety and integrity of Khalil Ma’touq;
- d. provide Khalil Ma’touq with regular access to his lawyer, family, his physician and adequate medical care;
- e. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Khalil Ma’touq;
- f. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

Yours very truly,

Janet E. Minor  
Treasurer

*\*The Law Society of Upper Canada is the governing body for more than 49,000 lawyers and 7,400 paralegals in the province of Ontario, Canada. The Treasurer is the head of the Law Society.*

*The mandate of the Law Society is to govern the legal profession in the public interest by upholding the independence, integrity and honour of the legal profession for the purpose of advancing the cause of justice and the rule of law.*

cc:

Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders

Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch

Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers

David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

### Proposed Letter to Lawyers' Associations

Dear [Name],

**Re: Persecution of human rights lawyer Khalil Ma'Touq**

I write to inform you that on the advice of the Human Rights Monitoring Group\*, the Law Society of Upper Canada sent the attached letter by email to Mr. Najm Hamad al-Ahmad, Minister of Justice of the Syrian Arab Republic, expressing our deep concerns over reports of the persecution of human rights lawyer Khalil Ma'Touq.

We would be very interested in hearing from you concerning the situation noted in the attached letter, whether your organization has intervened in this matter and whether we have any of the facts in the case wrong. Any further information you may have about the case would also be welcome.

Please forward any further correspondence to the attention of Ekua Quansah, Associate Counsel, Equity, The Law Society of Upper Canada, 130 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5H 2N6 or to [equansah@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:equansah@lsuc.on.ca).

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Schabas  
Chair, Human Rights Monitoring Group

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Letter to be sent to:

- Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada
- Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders
- Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

- Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch
- Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers
- David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada
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- Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

## PROPOSED PUBLIC STATEMENT

### KHALIL MA'TOUQ

#### **The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the disappearance of human rights lawyer Khalil Ma'touq in Syria**

TORONTO, ON — The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the disappearance of human rights lawyer Khalil Ma'touq in Syria.

Khalil Ma'touq is a longtime and prominent human rights lawyer in Syria, and is also the director of the Syrian Centre for Legal Studies and Research. Khalil Ma'touq is known for providing legal assistance to victims of human rights violations in Syria, including the defense of hundreds of political prisoners, prisoners of conscience and journalists.

On 2 October 2012, Khalil Ma'touq and his friend and assistant Mohammed Thatha left Khalil Ma'touq's home in a suburb of Damascus, for work in the city. However the two men did not arrive at the office and it is believed that they were detained at a government controlled checkpoint en route to work. It is believed that Khalil Ma'touq was arrested as a direct result of his human rights work.

The whereabouts of Khalil Ma'touq are still unknown. The state continues to deny that he was arrested. Khalil Ma'touq suffers from severe lung disease, which requires regular medication and constant monitoring. It is unknown whether Khalil Ma'touq is able to receive any medical care for his serious condition.

October 2015 marked the third anniversary of his disappearance. Human Rights Watch notes that Ma'touq continues to be held "...despite calls by the international community to end the practices of enforced disappearances and torture and other ill-treatment in detention facilities in Syria. UN Security Council Resolution 2139 of February 2014 demanded the release of all those arbitrarily detained, a call reiterated by a UN Security Council Presidential Statement issued on 17 August 2015."

According to reports, since Syria's civil war broke out in 2011, the government has forcibly disappeared more than 65,000 people. In October 2015, more than 50 human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Lawyers for Lawyers, signed a joint statement calling for the release of Khalil Ma'touq.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges the government of Syria to comply with Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients

freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the rights to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of Syria to:

- a. Immediately and unconditionally release Khalil Ma'touq;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment and intimidation against human rights lawyers and defenders in Syria;
- c. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological safety and integrity of Khalil Ma'touq;
- d. provide Khalil Ma'touq with regular access to his lawyer, family, his physician and adequate medical care;
- e. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Khalil Ma'touq;
- f. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

TAB 6.1.5

**PROPOSED LETTERS OF INTERVENTION AND PUBLIC STATEMENT**

**RAZAN ZAITOUNEH**

Minister of Justice of the Syrian Arab Republic  
Mr. Najm Hamad al-Ahmad  
Al-Nasr Street  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

**DELIVERED BY EMAIL TO: [moj@net.sy](mailto:moj@net.sy)**

Dear Minister:

**Re: Persecution of human rights lawyer Razan Zaitouneh**

I write on behalf of the Law Society of Upper Canada\* to voice our grave concern over the persecution of human rights lawyer Razan Zaitouneh. When serious issues of apparent injustice to lawyers and the judiciary come to our attention, we speak out.

Razan Zaitouneh is a prominent human rights lawyer who has won several awards for her human rights work, including the 2013 International Women of Courage Award and the 2011 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. She largely defends political prisoners. Razan Zaitouneh is a co-founder of both the Violations Documentation Centre (VDC) and the Local Development and Small Projects Support (LDSPS).

On 9 December 2013, Razan Zaitouneh, along with her husband, Wa'el Hamada, and two colleagues, Nazem Hamadi and Samira Khalil, were abducted by unknown individuals from a joint office of the VDC and the LDSPS in the Damascus suburb of Douma. In the months prior to her abduction, Razan Zaitouneh had received threats from at least one armed opposition group in Eastern Ghouta. Reports indicate that the abduction of Razan Zaitouneh and her colleagues is linked to their human rights work.

Razan Zaitouneh's whereabouts are still unknown. December 2015 marked the second anniversary of her abduction.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges the government of Syria to comply with Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

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The Law Society urges the government of Syria to:

- a. locate Razan Zaitouneh and ensure that she is released immediately;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment and intimidation against human rights lawyers and defenders in Syria;
- c. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological safety and integrity of Razan Zaitouneh;
- d. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

Yours very truly,

Janet E. Minor  
Treasurer

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*The mandate of the Law Society is to govern the legal profession in the public interest by upholding the independence, integrity and honour of the legal profession for the purpose of advancing the cause of justice and the rule of law.*

cc:

Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders

Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch

Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers

David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

### **Proposed Letter to Lawyers' Associations**

Dear [Name],

#### **Re: Persecution of human rights lawyer Razan Zaitouneh**

I write to inform you that on the advice of the Human Rights Monitoring Group\*, the Law Society of Upper Canada sent the attached letter by email to Mr. Najm Hamad al-Ahmad, Minister of Justice of the Syrian Arab Republic, expressing our deep concerns over reports of the persecution of human rights lawyer Razan Zaitouneh.

We would be very interested in hearing from you concerning the situation noted in the attached letter, whether your organization has intervened in this matter and whether we have any of the facts in the case wrong. Any further information you may have about the case would also be welcome.

Please forward any further correspondence to the attention of Ekua Quansah, Associate Counsel, Equity, The Law Society of Upper Canada, 130 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5H 2N6 or to [equansah@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:equansah@lsuc.on.ca).

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Schabas  
Chair, Human Rights Monitoring Group

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Letter to be sent to:

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- Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

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- Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

## PROPOSED PUBLIC STATEMENT

### RAZAN ZAITOUNEH

#### **The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the abduction of human rights lawyer Razan Zaitouneh in Syria**

TORONTO, ON — The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the abduction of human rights lawyer Razan Zaitouneh in Syria.

Razan Zaitouneh is a prominent human rights lawyer who has won several awards for her human rights work, including the 2013 International Women of Courage Award and the 2011 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. She largely defends political prisoners. Razan Zaitouneh is a co-founder of both the Violations Documentation Centre (VDC) and the Local Development and Small Projects Support (LDSPS).

On 9 December 2013, Razan Zaitouneh, along with her husband, Wa'el Hamada, and two colleagues, Nazem Hamadi and Samira Khalil, were abducted by unknown individuals from a joint office of the VDC and the LDSPS in the Damascus suburb of Douma. In the months prior to her abduction, Razan Zaitouneh had received threats from at least one armed opposition group in Eastern Ghouta. Reports indicate that the abduction of Razan Zaitouneh and her colleagues is linked to their human rights work.

Razan Zaitouneh's whereabouts are still unknown. December 2015 marked the second anniversary of her abduction. A number of human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, Human Rights Watch, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada and PEN Canada, have released a statement asking the Canadian government to be involved in this case by taking all steps to ensure the Razan Zaitouneh, her husband and her two colleagues are located and released immediately.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges the government of Syria to comply with Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the rights to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of Syria to:

- a. locate Razan Zaitouneh and ensure that she is released immediately;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment and intimidation against human rights lawyers and defenders in Syria;
- c. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological safety and integrity of Razan Zaitouneh;
- d. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

TAB 6.1.6

**PROPOSED LETTERS OF INTERVENTION AND PUBLIC STATEMENT**

**TRAN THU NAM AND LE LUAN**

H.E. Mr. Truong Tan Sang  
President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam  
02 Hung Vuong Street, Ba Dinh District  
Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Your Excellency:

**Re: Attack on human rights lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan**

I write on behalf of the Law Society of Upper Canada\* to voice our grave concern over the attack on human rights lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan. When serious issues of apparent injustice to lawyers and the judiciary come to our attention, we speak out.

Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan are human rights lawyers who provide legal support to the victims of alleged police brutality and other human rights abuses by the authorities. They are currently supporting the family of Do Dang Du, who died on 10 October 2015, in police custody after being held there for two months on a charge of theft. It is our understanding that Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan questioned the validity of the autopsy carried out on Do Dang Du's body as it did not include an examination of internal organs, which could prove that he died as a result of injuries sustained in a beating.

Reports indicate that on 3 November 2015, Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan were attacked and beaten by eight masked men. Front Line Defenders notes that the two lawyers recognized one of their attackers as a local police officer. Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan sustained a number of injuries for which they received medical treatment. The attack took place following a meeting between Tran Thu Nam, Le Luan and the family of Do Dang Du to discuss the steps in the legal proceedings regarding Do Dang Du's death. Do Dang Du's mother, Do Thi Mai, witnessed the attack.

Human rights organizations believe that Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan were targeted as a result of their human rights work.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges Your Excellency to consider Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

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The Law Society urges the government of Vietnam to:

- a. conduct a fair, impartial and independent investigation into the attack on Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan in order to identify all those responsible, bring them to trial and apply to them civil, penal and/or administrative sanctions provided by law;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment against Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan, as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in Vietnam;
- c. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan; and
- d. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

Yours very truly,

Janet E. Minor  
Treasurer

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*The mandate of the Law Society is to govern the legal profession in the public interest by upholding the independence, integrity and honour of the legal profession for the purpose of advancing the cause of justice and the rule of law.*

cc:

Mr. To Anh Dung  
Ambassador  
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Canada  
55 MacKay Street  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
K1M 2B2

Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders

Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch

Vietnam Bar Federation

Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers

David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

### **Proposed Letter to Lawyers' Associations**

Dear [Name],

#### **Re: Attack on human rights lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan**

I write to inform you that on the advice of the Human Rights Monitoring Group\*, the Law Society of Upper Canada sent the attached letter to H.E. Mr. Truong Tan Sang, President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, expressing our deep concerns over reports of the attack on human rights lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan.

We would be very interested in hearing from you concerning the situation noted in the attached letter, whether your organization has intervened in this matter and whether we have any of the facts in the case wrong. Any further information you may have about the case would also be welcome.

Please forward any further correspondence to the attention of Ekua Quansah, Associate Counsel, Equity, The Law Society of Upper Canada, 130 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5H 2N6 or to [equansah@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:equansah@lsuc.on.ca).

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Schabas  
Chair, Human Rights Monitoring Group

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Letter to be sent to:

- Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada
- Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders
- Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

- Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch
- Vietnam Bar Federation
- Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers
- David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada
- Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
- Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

## PROPOSED PUBLIC STATEMENT

### **The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the attack on human rights lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan in Vietnam**

TORONTO, ON — The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the attack on human rights lawyers Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan in Vietnam.

Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan human rights lawyers who provide legal support to the victims of alleged police brutality and other human rights abuses by the authorities. They are currently supporting the family of Do Dang Du, who died on 10 October 2015, in police custody after being held there for two months on a charge of theft. It is our understanding that Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan questioned the validity of the autopsy carried out on Do Dang Du's body as it did not include an examination of internal organs, which could prove that he died as a result of injuries sustained in a beating.

It has come to our attention that on 3 November 2015, Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan were attacked and beaten by eight masked men. Front Line Defenders notes that the two lawyers recognized one of their attackers as a local police officer. Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan sustained a number of injuries for which they received medical treatment. The attack took place following a meeting between Tran Thu Nam, Le Luan and the family of Do Dang Du to discuss the steps in the legal proceedings regarding Do Dang Du's death. Do Dang Du's mother, Do Thi Mai, witnessed the attack.

Human rights organizations believe that Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan were targeted as a result of their human rights work.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges the government of Vietnam to consider Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the rights to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their

meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of Vietnam to:

- a. conduct a fair, impartial and independent investigation into the attack on Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan in order to identify all those responsible, bring them to trial and apply to them civil, penal and/or administrative sanctions provided by law;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment against Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan, as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in Vietnam;
- c. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Tran Thu Nam and Le Luan; and
- d. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

TAB 6.1.7

**PROPOSED LETTERS OF INTERVENTION AND PUBLIC STATEMENT**

**NGUYEN VAN DAI**

H.E. Mr. Truong Tan Sang  
President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam  
02 Hung Vuong Street, Ba Dinh District  
Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Your Excellency:

**Re: Attack, arrest and arbitrary detention of human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai**

I write on behalf of the Law Society of Upper Canada\* to voice our grave concern over the attack, arrest and arbitrary detention of human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai. When serious issues of apparent injustice to lawyers and the judiciary come to our attention, we speak out.

Nguyen Van Dai is a human rights lawyer and a well-known defender of religious freedom. He is the co-founder of the Vietnam Human Rights Centre.

It is our understanding that on 6 December 2015, Nguyen Van Dai and three human rights activists were attacked and severely beaten by an estimated 20 masked men, travelling in two cars without registration plates and five motorbikes. The attackers took mobile phones, wallets and other items of Nguyen Van Dai and his three associates. Reports indicate that Nguyen Van Dai and his three associates were returning to Hanoi from a human rights workshop they had conducted for residents of Nghệ An Province.

On 15 December 2015, 25 police officers arrested Nguyen Van Dai at his home in Hanoi. The officers searched his home and confiscated a number of items, including laptops, computers, USB sticks, cameras, camcorders, books on human rights, envelopes containing money used to support relatives of prisoners of conscience and Nguyen Van Dai's savings account bank book. The arrest took place as Nguyen Van Dai was preparing to meet with European Union delegates in Hanoi for the EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue scheduled for that day.

Nguyen Van Dai has been charged with "spreading propaganda against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam" under Article 88 of the Criminal Code. This charge appears to relate to his organization of meetings to discuss the 2013 Vietnamese Constitution. Nguyen Van Dai has been informed that he will be temporarily jailed for four months, pending trial. Should he be convicted, he will face three to 20 years in prison.

Human rights organizations believe that the attack, arrest and arbitrary detention of Nguyen Van Dai are as a result of his human rights work. This is not the first time Nguyen Van Dai has been persecuted due to the legitimate exercise of his duties. In 2007, Nguyen Van Dai was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and four years of house arrest under Article 88 of the Criminal Code. His sentence was reduced to four years' imprisonment and four years' house arrest. He was released in 2011 and resumed his human rights work.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges Your Excellency to consider Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of Vietnam to:

- a. release Nguyen Van Dai immediately;
- b. provide Nguyen Van Dai with regular access to his lawyer, family, physician and medical care;
- c. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Nguyen Van Dai and other human rights lawyers and defenders in Vietnam;
- d. conduct a fair, impartial and independent investigation into the attack on Nguyen Van Dai in order to identify all those responsible, bring them to trial and apply to them civil, penal and/or administrative sanctions provided by law;
- e. put an end to all acts of harassment against Nguyen Van Dai, as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in Vietnam;
- f. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Nguyen Van Dai; and
- g. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

Yours very truly,

Janet E. Minor  
Treasurer

*\*The Law Society of Upper Canada is the governing body for more than 49,000 lawyers and 7,400 paralegals in the province of Ontario, Canada. The Treasurer is the head of the Law Society.*

*The mandate of the Law Society is to govern the legal profession in the public interest by upholding the independence, integrity and honour of the legal profession for the purpose of advancing the cause of justice and the rule of law.*

cc:

Mr. To Anh Dung  
Ambassador  
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Canada  
55 MacKay Street  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
K1M 2B2

Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders

Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch

Vietnam Bar Federation

Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers

David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Yves Berthelot, President, Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

### **Proposed Letter to Lawyers' Associations**

Dear [Name],

#### **Re: Attack, arrest and arbitrary detention of human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai**

I write to inform you that on the advice of the Human Rights Monitoring Group\*, the Law Society of Upper Canada sent the attached letter to H.E. Mr. Truong Tan Sang, President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, expressing our deep concerns over reports of the attack on human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai.

We would be very interested in hearing from you concerning the situation noted in the attached letter, whether your organization has intervened in this matter and whether we have any of the facts in the case wrong. Any further information you may have about the case would also be welcome.

Please forward any further correspondence to the attention of Ekua Quansah, Associate Counsel, Equity, The Law Society of Upper Canada, 130 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5H 2N6 or to [equansah@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:equansah@lsuc.on.ca).

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Schabas  
Chair, Human Rights Monitoring Group

\* The Law Society of Upper Canada is the governing body for more than 49,000 lawyers and 7,400 paralegals in the province of Ontario, Canada. The Law Society is committed to preserving the rule of law and to the maintenance of an independent Bar. Due to this commitment, the Law Society established a Human Rights Monitoring Group ("Monitoring Group"). The Monitoring Group has a mandate to review information of human rights violations targeting, as a result of the discharge of their legitimate professional duties, members of the legal profession and the judiciary, in Canada and abroad. The Human Rights Monitoring Group reviews such information and determines if a response is required of the Law Society.

Letter to be sent to:

- Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada
- Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders
- Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

- Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch
- Vietnam Bar Federation
- Adrie van de Streek, Executive Director, Lawyers for Lawyers
- David F. Sutherland, Chair, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada
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- Gabriela Knaul, Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

## PROPOSED PUBLIC STATEMENT

### **The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the attack, arrest and arbitrary detention of human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai in Vietnam**

TORONTO, ON — The Law Society of Upper Canada expresses grave concerns about the attack, arrest and arbitrary detention of human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai in Vietnam.

Nguyen Van Dai is a human rights lawyer and a well-known defender of religious freedom. He is the co-founder of the Vietnam Human Rights Centre.

It is our understanding that on 6 December 2015, Nguyen Van Dai and three human rights activists were attacked and severely beaten by an estimated 20 masked men, travelling in two cars without registration plates and five motorbikes. The attackers took the mobile phones, wallets and other items of Nguyen Van Dai and his three associates. Reports indicate that Nguyen Van Dai and his three associates were returning to Hanoi from a human rights workshop they had conducted for residents of Nghệ An Province.

On 15 December 2015, 25 police officers arrested Nguyen Van Dai at his home in Hanoi. The officers searched his home and confiscated a number of items, including laptops, computers, USB sticks, cameras, camcorders, books on human rights, envelopes containing money used to support relatives of prisoners of conscience and Nguyen Van Dai's savings account bank book. The arrest took place as Nguyen Van Dai was preparing to meet with European Union delegates in Hanoi for the EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue scheduled for that day.

Nguyen Van Dai has been charged with "spreading propaganda against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam" under Article 88 of the Criminal Code. This charge appears to relate to his organization of meetings to discuss the 2013 Vietnamese Constitution. Nguyen Van Dai has been informed that he will be temporarily jailed for four months, pending trial. Should he be convicted, he will face three to 20 years in prison.

Human rights organizations believe that the attack, arrest and arbitrary detention of Nguyen Van Dai are as a result of his human rights work. This is not the first time Nguyen Van Dai has been persecuted due to the legitimate exercise of his duties. In 2007, Nguyen Van Dai was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and four years of house arrest under Article 88 of the Criminal Code. His sentence was reduced to four years' imprisonment and four years' house arrest. He was released in 2011 and resumed his human rights work.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges the government of Vietnam to consider Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients

freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Moreover, Article 23 states:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the rights to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the government of Vietnam to:

- a. release Nguyen Van Dai immediately;
- b. provide Nguyen Van Dai with regular access to his lawyer, family, physician and medical care;
- c. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Nguyen Van Dai and other human rights lawyers and defenders in Vietnam;
- d. conduct a fair, impartial and independent investigation into the attack on Nguyen Van Dai in order to identify all those responsible, bring them to trial and apply to them civil, penal and/or administrative sanctions provided by law;
- e. put an end to all acts of harassment against Nguyen Van Dai, as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in Vietnam;
- f. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Nguyen Van Dai; and
- g. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

TAB 6.1.8

**PROPOSED LETTERS OF INTERVENTION AND PUBLIC STATEMENT**

**BUZURGMEHR YOROV**

His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rahmon  
President of the Republic of Tajikistan  
Rudaki Avenue, 80  
Dushanbe 734023  
Republic of Tajikistan

Your Excellency

**Re: Detention of human rights lawyer Buzurgmehr Yorov**

I write on behalf of the Law Society of Upper Canada\* to voice our grave concern over the detention of human rights lawyer Buzurgmehr Yorov in Tajikistan. When serious issues of apparent injustice to lawyers and the judiciary come to our attention, we speak out.

Buzurgmehr Yorov is a civil and criminal lawyer and the chairman of the Bar Association of Dushanbe. It is our understanding that Buzurgmehr Yorov was arrested and detained on 28 September 2015. The authorities charged him with fraud-related charges, related to an incident which allegedly occurred in July 2010, when Yorov had purportedly received US\$4,000 from a resident of the city of Istaravshan.

Reports indicate that Buzurgmehr Yorov had just begun representing 13 members of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) at the time of his arrest. The IRPT members had been arrested and charged by authorities on 16 September 2015. On 29 September 2015, the Supreme Court of Tajikistan banned the IRPT and declared it a terrorist organization. Prior to that date, the IRPT was the only Islamic political party legally registered in Central Asia.

Human Rights Watch notes that Buzurgmehr Yorov's arrest occurs in the context of a worsening government crackdown on lawyers who take on politically sensitive cases. Human Rights organizations believe that his arrest and detention are a direct result of his representation of members of the IRPT.

The Law Society of Upper Canada urges Your Excellency to consider Articles 16 and 23 of the United Nations' *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

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The Law Society urges the government of Tajikistan to:

- a. release Buzurgmehr Yorov immediately;
- b. provide Buzurgmehr Yorov with regular access to his lawyer, family, physician and medical care;
- c. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Buzurgmehr Yorov and other human rights lawyers and defenders in Tajikistan;
- d. put an end to all acts of harassment against Buzurgmehr Yorov as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in Tajikistan;
- e. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Buzurgmehr Yorov;
- f. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

Yours very truly,

Janet E. Minor  
Treasurer

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cc:

Mr. Shomurod Rustam  
Minister of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan  
Shotemur Street, 27  
Dushanbe 734025  
Republic of Tajikistan

Mr. Aslov Sirojiddin Muhridinovich  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan  
Sheroz Street, 33  
Dushanbe 734001  
Republic of Tajikistan

H.E. Mr. Mahmamin Mahmaminov  
Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations  
216 East 49<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
USA

Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders

Vincent Forest, Head of European Union Office, Front Line Defenders

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Sarah Smith, Human Rights and Rule of Law Policy Adviser, The Law Society of England and Wales

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Dear [Name],

**Re: Detention of human rights lawyer Buzurgmehr Yorov**

I write to inform you that on the advice of the Human Rights Monitoring Group\*, the Law Society of Upper Canada sent the attached letter to His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, expressing our deep concerns over reports of the detention on human rights lawyer Buzurgmehr Yorov.

We would be very interested in hearing from you concerning the situation noted in the attached letter, whether your organization has intervened in this matter and whether we have any of the facts in the case wrong. Any further information you may have about the case would also be welcome.

Please forward any further correspondence to the attention of Ekuu Quansah, Associate Counsel, Equity, The Law Society of Upper Canada, 130 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5H 2N6 or to [equansah@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:equansah@lsuc.on.ca).

I thank you for your time and consideration.

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Chair, Human Rights Monitoring Group

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The Law Society urges the government of Tajikistan to:

- a. release Buzurgmehr Yorov immediately;
- b. provide Buzurgmehr Yorov with regular access to his lawyer, family, physician and medical care;
- c. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Buzurgmehr Yorov and other human rights lawyers and defenders in Tajikistan;
- d. put an end to all acts of harassment against Buzurgmehr Yorov as well as other human rights lawyers and defenders in Tajikistan;
- e. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Buzurgmehr Yorov;
- f. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

**TAB 6.2**

**FOR INFORMATION**

**ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN FRENCH UPDATE**

70. The Access to Justice in French Update is presented at [TAB 6.2.1](#).

**FACILITATING INTERNATIONAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
THROUGH INTERVENTION REPORT**

71. The Human Rights Monitoring Group Facilitating International Access to Justice Through Intervention report is presented at [TAB 6.2.2](#). The report, first presented to Convocation in June 2014, provides an overview of the Human Rights Monitoring Group's work from an access to justice perspective, by outlining the types of clients that those lawyers serve. Lawyers who are persecuted by authorities are often advocates for human rights. They also represent vulnerable clients who have no other access to legal services. Judges are also included in this report. Most often presiding judges who are persecuted in the course of their duties focus on facilitating access to justice by advocating for an independent judiciary and promoting the rule of law.

**EQUITY LEGAL EDUCATION AND RULE OF LAW SERIES  
CALENDAR 2016**

72. The Equity Legal Education and Rule of Law Series calendar is presented at [TAB 6.2.3](#).

## FOR INFORMATION

## ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN FRENCH UPDATE

## Background

73. At its January 14, 2016 Committee meeting, the Committee received presentations from the Honourable Julie Thornburn, Superior Court of Justice, and Andrée-Anne Martel, Executive Director of the Association des juristes d'expression française de l'Ontario ("AJEFO") about recent initiatives to facilitate access to justice in French in Ontario. Julie Lassonde also facilitated a lively discussion following the presentations.
74. Justice Thorburn presented an update on the implementation of recommendations to facilitate access to justice in French based on the September 2015 [Enhancing Access to Justice in French: A Response to the Access to Justice in French Report](#). She provided an overview of the current rights to French language services in Ontario, and noted that in order to make these rights meaningful there is both a service component and the need for the "active offer" of French language services to ensure that the right is made available to service users.
75. Justice Thorburn highlighted how efforts are underway to (1) increase awareness of rights; (2) make sure there are adequate staff service delivery levels; and (3) harmonize / coordinate the delivery of language rights. She described various initiatives to facilitate access to justice in French, including the judiciary's efforts to enhance language resources for Ontario judges and the Ottawa courthouse pilot project where a range of low-cost tools are being used to actively offer French language services.
76. Justice Thorburn described the Law Society as a "leader" and expressed support for the numerous Law Society initiatives promoting access to Justice in French.
77. Andrée-Anne Martel presented highlights of AJEFO's current initiatives, and featured Jurisource, the Centre d'information juridique d'Ottawa and Cliquezjustice.ca. [Jurisource](#) provides a free library of legal resources to facilitate the delivery of legal services in French. The [Centre d'information juridique d'Ottawa](#), a Department of Justice Canada funded initiative, provides users up to thirty minutes to meet with a lawyer in order to receive legal information (not advice) in French or English. Of note, 30% of the clinic's users are French speaking, and 93% of users are self-represented. [Cliquezjustice.ca](#) is a website providing plain language legal information in French to francophone Canadians. The site had 58,000 separate visitors last year.
78. The Law Society looks forward to continuing to work with justice stakeholders including the judiciary and AJEFO to facilitate access to justice in French.

TAB 6.2.2



**FACILITATING INTERNATIONAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE THROUGH  
INTERVENTION**

---

**Human Rights Monitoring Group**

**Monitoring Group Members**  
**Paul Schabas (Chair)**  
**Paul Copeland**  
**Julian Falconer**  
**Judith Potter**  
**Heather Ross**

**October 2014**

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## BACKGROUND

*“Nothing is more important than justice and the just society. It is essential to flourishing of men, women and children and to maintaining social stability and security. You need only open your newspaper to the international section to read about countries where the rule of law does not prevail, where the justice system is failing or non-existent.”<sup>1</sup>*

— Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, P.C.  
Chief Justice Supreme Court of Canada

1. Basic human rights cannot be guaranteed by law in the absence of the rule of law. They are interdependent and bound together by justice. Safeguarding these rights requires vigilant advocates both at home and abroad. Only through an independent legal profession where lawyers and judges perform their legitimate professional duties without undue or illegal interference can human rights and the rule of law prevail.
2. Unfortunately, lawyers and judges around the world working to uphold the rule of law and defend human rights work under threat of not only professional sanctions, but also threats to personal safety. Yet, they continue their work to ensure that their communities can access justice, advance their legal rights and that right might prevail.
3. The Law Society has a duty to maintain and advance the cause of justice and the rule of law. Central to advancing both the cause of justice and the rule of law is ensuring access to justice for all.
4. While the *Law Society Act*<sup>2</sup> provides that the Law Society facilitate access to justice for Ontarians, the Law Society's commitment to access to justice issues not only focuses on a provincial level, but extends to the international community.

---

<sup>1</sup> Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, P.C., “The Challenges We Face” (Speech delivered at the Empire Club of Canada, Toronto, 8 March 2007), online: <<http://www.scc-csc.gc.ca/court-cour/judges-juges/spe-dis/bm-2007-03-08-eng.aspx>>.

<sup>2</sup> *Law Society Act*, RSO 1990, c L8

5. This report provides an overview of the Human Rights Monitoring Group (the “Monitoring Group”) work over the years, from an access to justice perspective, by outlining the types of clients that those lawyers serve. Lawyers who are persecuted by authorities are often advocates for human rights. They also represent vulnerable clients who have no other access to legal services. Judges are also included this report. Most often presiding judges who are persecuted in the course of their duties focus on facilitating access to justice by advocating for an independent judiciary and promoting the rule of law.
6. This report is divided as follows:
  - a. Mandate of the Monitoring Group;
  - b. United Nations’ focus on access to justice;
  - c. An overview of access to justice trends internationally in relation to the Law Society’s interventions;
  - d. International human rights advocates expanding access to justice; and,
  - e. Response to our interventions.

## **MANDATE OF THE MONITORING GROUP**

7. In light of the Law Society’s mandate to uphold the rule of law and facilitate access to justice, Convocation approved in March 2006, a policy “to systematically respond to the human rights violations that target members of the legal profession and judiciary in retribution for the discharge of their legitimate professional duties, and; that a group of benchers be charged with monitoring human rights violations that target members of the legal profession and judiciary in retribution for the discharge of their legitimate professional duties.”<sup>3</sup> The policy was based on a report of a working group chaired by bencher Paul Copeland and the initiative was championed by bencher Heather Ross through the Emerging Issues Committee.

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<sup>3</sup> Emerging Issues Committee, Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation* (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 23 March 2006) online: < [http://www.lsuc.on.ca/media/convmar06\\_emerging\\_issues.pdf](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/media/convmar06_emerging_issues.pdf) > at 4.

8. The mandate of the Monitoring Group approved by Convocation is to,
  - a. review information that comes to its attention about human rights violations that target members of the profession and the judiciary, here and abroad, as a result of the discharge of their legitimate professional duties;
  - b. determine if the matter is one that requires a response from the Law Society; and,
  - c. prepare a response for review and approval by Convocation.
  
9. The Monitoring Group is also mandated to explore the possibility of developing a network of organizations, and work collaboratively with them, to address human rights violations against judges and lawyers.

## **UNITED NATIONS' FOCUS ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

10. The United Nations Development Program ("UNDP") has stated that "[i]n the absence of access to justice, people are unable to have their voice heard, exercise their rights, challenge discrimination or hold decision-makers accountable."<sup>4</sup>
  
11. Globally, there is an increasing focus on access to justice issues. Without access to justice the larger movement towards eradicating poverty, promoting equality, increasing educational outcomes, ensuring environmental sustainability, improving health by combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases suffer. These are just a few of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. International human rights standards are integral in protecting vulnerable populations such as women, persons with disabilities and minorities.<sup>5</sup>
  
12. Although the UNDP's report, *Strengthening Judicial Integrity through Enhanced Access to Justice*, focused on access to justice issues for women, persons with

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<sup>4</sup> UNDP, *Fast Facts: Justice and Security*, UN Doc, July 2011, online:

<[http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/results/fast\\_facts/fast\\_facts\\_justiceandsecurity/](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/results/fast_facts/fast_facts_justiceandsecurity/)>.

<sup>5</sup> UNDP, *Strengthening Judicial Integrity through Enhanced Access to Justice*, UN Doc, 2013 at 8 – 9.

disabilities and minorities, they observed a number of factors barred vulnerable persons and groups from accessing justice. These factors ranged from “discrimination, poverty, low institutional trust or confidence in the process, lack of capacity, language barriers, weak access to information, or living in remote areas with a lack of judicial facilities.”<sup>6</sup>

## **OVERVIEW OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE TRENDS – INTERNATIONALLY**

13. We reviewed the Law Society’s more than 75 interventions on behalf of members of the legal profession and the judiciary from September 2007 to June 2014. Our findings show a trend – clients of persecuted lawyers are most often vulnerable with very limited access to legal representation and cases involving judges often challenge corruption or advocate for the rule of law.
  
14. Most lawyers in the more than 70 cases that involved the profession were persecuted, harassed, imprisoned and in some cases killed for their work in the following areas:
  - a. representing clients from religious and ethnic minority communities or vulnerable clients due to their socioeconomic, gender or ethnic situation;
  - b. challenging government actions on behalf of groups or human rights organizations;
  - c. defending clients involved in politically charged cases; and,
  - d. advocating for prisoners of conscience who were imprisoned for exercising their democratic rights.
  
15. In the few cases involving judges, the judges were,
  - a. advocating for judicial independence;
  - b. promoting the rule of law; and,
  - c. challenging corruption.

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<sup>6</sup> *Supra* note 5.

16. We have categorized the cases as best we could, even though some cases would fall under more than one rubric. The following outlines the cases based on the categories listed above.

***Representing Clients from Religious and Ethnic Minority Communities and Vulnerable Clients Due to their Socioeconomic, Gender or Ethnic Status***

17. There are numerous examples of lawyers, for whom the Law Society has intervened, who represented clients who are vulnerable because of their socioeconomic, gender or ethnic status. In some cases, clients from minority religious or ethnic communities are unable to secure legal representation.

**China**

18. The Law Society has intervened on numerous occasions in cases where lawyers are being persecuted while carrying out their legal duties in China. A number of these cases involved clients who, because of their poverty, ethnic or religious status, would not be represented.

**Gao Zhisheng**

19. In 2006, 2007 and 2014, the Law Society has intervened on behalf of Gao Zhisheng who is known for many things, but primarily for defending activists, religious minorities and documenting human rights abuses in China. For example, Gao Zhisheng has provided legal help for Falun Gong practitioners, including Huang Wei, who was illegally sentenced to three years of re-education through labor in Shijiazhuang. He has also provided legal help for an illegal Chinese house church pastor, Cai Zhuohua, who was sentenced to three years in prison for printing and distributing copies of the Bible.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Zhisheng Letters of Intervention and Public Statements" (October 2006, May 2007 and April 2014).

20. In addition, Gao Zhisheng has, over the years, focused his legal practice on advocating for the most vulnerable. He has advocated for fair compensation for a client whose home was expropriated for a building project connected to the Summer 2008 Olympics. He took on a land dispute case against Taishi village officials and also a class-action lawsuit against local authorities over coercion in implementation of China's family planning policies. He won a case for six factory workers from Guangdong province who were detained for protesting exploitation by their employer. He also worked to defend the right to free expression by appealing the sentence of Zheng Yichun, a journalist and former professor who was sentenced to seven years imprisonment in September for his on-line writings.<sup>8</sup>
21. Gao Zhisheng was imprisoned in the Shaya County Prison in a remote part of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in northwestern China. His brother asked for permission to visit him, but was denied by officials after traveling to the prison on January 10, 2012. Gao Zhisheng's wife, Geng He, was told by officials that he was undergoing a "three month period of education". On March 2012, his brother and father-in-law were permitted to visit and confirmed he was being held in the Shaya County Prison. Ten months later, on January 12, 2013, unidentified family members were permitted to visit Gao Zhisheng for a second time.
22. Gao Zhisheng was scheduled for release on August 22, 2013, but has again disappeared. In February 2014, his wife, Geng He, who lives with their children in the United States, testified in front of the United Nations Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearance. Her submissions highlighted that they do not know if Gao Zhisheng is alive.

### **Chen Guangcheng**

23. In 2006, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Chen Guangchen, a human rights lawyer who is known for advocating for women's rights, land rights and the welfare of the poor. Chen Guangcheng is one of China's most prominent human

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<sup>8</sup> *Supra* note 7.

rights defenders. He organized a landmark class action suit against authorities in Linyi, Shangdong province for the excessive enforcement of the one-child policy.<sup>9</sup>

### **Ni Yulan**

24. In 2013, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Ni Yulan, an outspoken human rights lawyer and activist. For many in China, the preparation for the 2008 Olympic Games brought about mass evictions and illegal demolitions. Since 2001, much of Ni Yulan's legal practice centered on defending persons who were forcibly evicted from their homes by housing developers across China.<sup>10</sup> Ni Yulan has been beaten, imprisoned, harassed and threatened.
25. Many not only lost their homes through illegal expropriations or demolitions, but were never compensated.<sup>11</sup> Her advocacy gave voice to those people unable to challenge developers and authorities.

### **Lawyers Providing Legal Aid**

26. Finally, in 2008 the Law Society intervened in favour of Chinese lawyers providing voluntary legal aid to the victims of contaminated milk powder products. On September 11, 2008, the first toxic milk powder case became public. Contaminated milk powder products placed over 50,000 infants at risk of contracting kidney stones and four children died. The powdered milk was tainted with melamine, a chemical used in making plastics.<sup>12</sup>
27. By September 24, 2008, about 124 lawyers offered pro bono legal services to the victims. Lawyers and law firms providing legal aid were intimidated and warned by Chinese authorities to not take these cases. At least two dozen lawyers

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<sup>9</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Guangcheng Letter of Intervention and Public Statements" (October 2006).

<sup>10</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Ni Yulan Letter of Intervention and Public Statements" (September 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Lawyers for Lawyers (L4L), "China: Lawyer acting against illegal expropriation of homes severely mistreated and arrested and detained several times" (2013), online: <<http://www.advocatenvooradvocaten.nl/lawyers/ni-yulan>>.

<sup>12</sup> Austin Ramzay and Lin Yang, "Tainted-Baby-Milk Scandal in China" *Time.com* (16 September 2008), online: <<http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1841535,00.html>>.

withdrew their services following governmental pressure. Without legal representation many victims would be unable to seek justice for their children.<sup>13</sup>

## **Honduras**

28. The Law Society has intervened in Honduras in cases where lawyers were harassed, intimidated or murdered while representing their clients' interests. One of the vulnerable client groups involved are disadvantaged labourers.

## **Dionisio Diaz Garcia**

29. In 2007, the Law Society expressed its concern over the assassination of labour and human rights lawyer, Dionisio Diaz Garcia. He worked as the lead labour lawyer for the Association for a More Just Society ("AMJS"). While working for the AMJS's Labour Rights for Vulnerable Populations program, Dionisio Diaz Garcia discovered routine labour violations in areas where security guards were employed by private security firms. In December 2006, two men pulled up alongside him as he walked to court and shot him.<sup>14</sup> His assassination followed a two-year public trial.<sup>15</sup>

## **Iran**

30. The Law Society has intervened in Iran in numerous cases where the lawyers representing clients who are journalists, human rights activists or women were imprisoned or harassed for providing legal services.

## **Farshid Yadoollahi and Imprisoned Human Rights Lawyers**

31. Farshid Yadoollahi is a human rights lawyer who is known for representing dervishes and is also a member of the administration of the Majzooban.org, a community news website for Gonabadi Sufis. His arrest, in late 2011, is related to his successful representation of dervishes, who are Sufi Muslims and choose to live in poverty. They are a religious minority in Iran. He is currently serving seven and a half years in prison based on his representation of religious minorities.

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<sup>13</sup>Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 30 October 2008) at 6 – 7.

<sup>14</sup> Frontline Defenders, "Honduras: Dionisio Diaz Garcia" online: <<http://www.frontlinedefenders.net/node/1701>>.

<sup>15</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 27 January 2011) at 19 – 20.

32. Farshid Yadollahi along with four other lawyers and over 60 Sufis were arrested en mass. His arrest is seen as part of an ongoing campaign by Iranian authorities to harass lawyers representing dervishes.
33. Until recently, Farshid Yadollahi was serving his sentence in Iran's Evin prison. In March 2014, he was illegally transferred from the Evin prison to the Rajai-Shahr prison, west of Tehran. This transfer is considered to be an additional punishment. Prisoners in Rajai-Shahr prison have reported heavy-handed harassment. The illegal transfer of Farshid Yadollahi and the lack of medical treatment for imprisoned human rights lawyers, like him, along with other prisoners of conscience, have prompted protests.
34. In early March, Iranian protestors marched and called for access to medical treatment for imprisoned human rights defenders. Over Gonabadi 300 male and 26 female dervishes, who protested, were beaten, arrested on March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> and later released.
35. The lack of medical treatment for imprisoned human rights lawyers is receiving increased attention in Iran. Several prisoners of conscience detained in Evin prison wrote an open letter to the head of the Iranian Judiciary to draw attention to the lack of medical treatment and facilities for sick prisoners. In the letter, the prisoners state that politically motivated judicial interference by Judge Salavati was responsible for the lack of access to medical treatment.
36. In July 2013, Judge Salavati ordered that Farshid Yadollahi not be transported outside the Evin Prison for much needed dental treatment. The judge also placed a condition on dervish community members being transferred outside of the prison for medical treatment which includes that they wear their prisoner uniforms and remain shackled.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 24 April 2014).

## Houtan Kian

37. In 2010, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Houtan Kian, a human rights lawyer. He represented Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani, a 43 year old Iranian woman who was charged and convicted of adultery. She was sentenced to death by stoning. After international pressure, her death sentence was commuted to hanging. Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani's first lawyer, who represented her pro bono, was intimidated and exiled leaving her without legal representation.<sup>17</sup> Afterwards, Houtan Kian took her case and ensured she had legal representation.
38. On October 10, 2010, Houtan Kian and two journalists who were looking to interview Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani's son were arrested. Houtan Kian was detained by Iranian officials on the suspicion of having involvement with anti-revolutionary groups abroad and forging/duplicating identity cards. His arrest and detention were an attempt to keep him from fulfilling his duties as Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani's defence council.<sup>18</sup>

## Iran's Endangered Lawyers

39. At the end of 2010, The Law Society received nine separate requests to intervene on behalf of Iranian lawyers who were harassed, arrested and imprisoned. Both the intervention requests and reports pointed to a change in Iran's treatment of lawyers after the June 2009 presidential election. The cases showed signs of a systemic approach by the government towards singling out and persecuting lawyers based on their advocacy in helping their clients access the judicial system.
40. The lawyers' client cases ranged from defending women sentenced to death to representing journalists and women's rights activists. More than 90 lawyers have

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<sup>17</sup> Saeed Kamali Dehghan, "Iranian facing stoning speaks: 'It's because I'm a woman'" *The Guardian* (6 August 2010) online: <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/aug/06/sakineh-mohammadi-ashtiani-iran-interview>>.

<sup>18</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Kian Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (29 November 2010).

been sentenced to prison terms ranging from six months to 15 years or death as a result of performing their professional duties.

### **Maryam Karbasi, Maryam Kianersi and Sara (Hajar) Sabaghian**

41. On November 12, 2010, three women human rights lawyers, Maryam Karbasi, Maryam Kianersi and Sara (Hajar) Sabaghian, were arrested at the Tehran airport. These three lawyers were known for defending journalists, bloggers and youths. They were also known for defending women who were sentenced to death. The arrest of all three women followed the publication of an open letter they signed calling for the release of fellow lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh from prison.<sup>19</sup>

### **Shadi Sadr**

42. Shadi Sadr is a prominent Iranian lawyer who has a long history of being intimidated by Iranian authorities for her advocacy on behalf of women. She co-founded a women's rights organization called *Zanan-e Iran* (Women of Iran) and launched several campaigns, including the "Stop Stoning Forever" campaign.
43. Shadi Sadr has been arrested twice for her advocacy on behalf of women and women's rights. She represented a number of women's rights activists and a journalist who were given death sentences. She also represented Shiva Nazar Ahari a human rights defender and member of the Committee of Human Rights Reporters. In July 2009, she was detained for 11 days by Iranian authorities. After her release, she fled Iran. Shadi Sadr was tried in absentia and sentenced to 6 years imprisonment and 74 lashes. Today, she still lives in exile.<sup>20</sup>

### **Nasrin Sotoudeh**

44. Nasrin Sotoudeh was sentenced to a total of 11 years in prison and banned from both practicing law and leaving Iran for 20 years. She was given three concurrent sentences. Five years imprisonment for "acting against national security",

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<sup>19</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 27 January 2011) at 16 – 18.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

another five years for “not wearing a hijab during a videotaped message” and another year for “propaganda against the regime.”<sup>21</sup>

## Malaysia

### Hindraf Lawyers

45. In June 2008, the Law Society intervened in Malaysia on behalf of lawyers whose clients were part of the Indian minority. Malaysian lawyers P. Uthayakumar, M. Manoharan, R. Kenghadharan and V. Ganabati Rao provide legal counsel for the Hindu Rights Action Force (“Hindraf”). Hindraf is a coalition of various Hindu non-governmental organizations committed to preserving and defending the rights of Malaysia’s Hindu community. Hindraf emerged in response to the encroachment of Sharia based laws, demolition of Hindu temples and shrines and the alienation of the Hindu community in Malaysia.<sup>22</sup>
46. Hindraf’s lawyers’ advocacy on behalf of the Indian community resulted in harassment, arrest and detention. M. Manoharan was elected to the Selangor State Assembly, but Malaysian authorities barred him from taking his seat. On October 30, 2007, P. Uthayakumar and V. Ganabati Rao were arrested and detained for organizing and participating in demonstrations against the demolition of a Hindu shrine in Kuala Lumpur. They were charged with sedition and incitement, but were released due to a lack of evidence. After organizing further peaceful demonstrations, P. Uthayakumar and V. Ganabati Rao were once again arrested on November 23, 2007 and charged under the *Sedition Act*.<sup>23</sup>
47. On December 11, 2007, they were eventually released since the prosecutors could not prove that they had indeed incited racial hatred. The next day, the Malaysian Prime Minister, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, signed detention letters allowing Malaysian authorities to detain all four of the Hindraf lawyers under the

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<sup>21</sup> *Supra* note 19.

<sup>22</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee* (Toronto, Law Society of Upper Canada, 26 June 2008) at 13 – 16.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

provisions of the *Internal Security Act*. This allowed the government to detain individuals without trial on national security grounds for up to 2 years, after which the government may extend the detention for a further two years. This process can be repeated indefinitely.<sup>24</sup>

48. Following the Prime Minister's authorization, P. Uthayakumar, M. Manoharan, R. Kenghadharan, V. Ganabati Rao and T. Vasanthakumar were arrested in Kuala Lumpur by the Special Branch police officers. Their arrests were grounded in their advocacy work on behalf of minority groups.<sup>25</sup>

## **Nigeria**

### **Lawyers Providing Legal Services to LGBTI clients**

49. In February 2014, the Law Society intervened on behalf of lawyers providing legal services to Nigeria's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex ("LGBTI") communities. Lawyers serving LGBTI clients and organizations face stigmatization which is creating a chilling effect as fewer lawyers are willing to represent LGBTI persons, who are often marginalized and impoverished.
50. Lawyers working with Nigeria's LGBTI community or representing persons charged under the *Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act* also may face harassment and arrest. Enacted on January 7, 2014, the *Act's* provisions prohibit any person or group from providing services to anyone perceived to be homosexual as well as supporting the registration, operation and support of gay clubs, societies, organizations, processions or meetings in Nigeria.
51. From the wording of the *Act* it appears that Nigerian and international human rights lawyers advocating for Nigeria's LGBTI community, non-governmental organizations and persons who are charged under the *Act* may also be charged and convicted for providing legal services. The *Act* limits the LGBTI community's access to justice as increasingly lawyers are frightened that they will be charged

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<sup>24</sup> *Supra* note 22.

<sup>25</sup> *Supra* note 22.

under the *Act* or found guilty by association. By intervening on behalf of lawyers providing legal services to Nigeria's LGBTI communities, the Law Society is lending its voice in support of lawyers helping this vulnerable population access justice.<sup>26</sup>

## Saudi Arabia

### Abdul Rahaman al-Lahem

52. The Law Society intervened on behalf of Abdul Rahaman al-Lahem in January 2008 after his licence to practice law was confiscated for representing a sexual assault victim.
53. In 2006, a 19 year-old woman, known as "al-Qatif Girl", and her male companion were convicted of "being alone in private with a member of the opposite sex who is not an immediate family member." They were each sentenced to six months in prison and 90 lashes.<sup>27</sup>
54. In mid-2006, the young woman and her male companion were kidnapped. She was gang-raped by seven men. While the men who raped her were convicted of both kidnapping and rape in November 2006, Abdul Rahaman al-Lahem's client and her male companion were also arrested, prosecuted and convicted. The case was appealed. Abdul Rahaman al-Lahem represented her at the court of appeals. The "al-Qatif Girl" garnered national and international media attention and scrutiny.<sup>28</sup>
55. At court, Abdul Rahaman al-Lahem successfully challenged the previous ruling and his client received a revised sentence. However, he was removed from the case and his license was revoked. He also faced a disciplinary hearing on

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<sup>26</sup>Law Society of Upper Canada, "Abdul Rahaman al-Lahem Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (February 2014).

<sup>27</sup> Ebtihal Mubarak, "Abullah Pardons 'Qatif Girl'" Arab News (18 December 2007) online: <<http://www.arabnews.com/node/306849>>; Law Society of Upper Canada, "Abdul Rahman al-Lehem Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 29 January 2008).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

charges he allegedly advertised his services in violation of Saudi regulations. The charges apparently flowed from appearing in the media.<sup>29</sup>

## Turkey

### Filiz Kalayci

56. In February 2010, the Law Society intervened in Turkey where the lawyers' clients were Turkish prisoners. The lawyers were associated with the *Insan Haklari Derneği* ("IHD"), a human rights association.
57. The lawyers who are associated with IHD were working on rights violations in prisons and improving prison conditions. They travelled to almost every prison in Turkey and listened to prisoners' complaints. On February 6, 2009, the IHD released its report on the human rights violations in Turkish prisons.<sup>30</sup>
58. Filiz Kalayci, a lawyer and Executive Committee member of the IHD was arrested on May 12, 2009 along with three other human rights lawyers, Hasan Anlar, Halil Ibrahim Vargün and Murat Vargün. All three lawyers are associated with IHD, an organization that denounces human rights violations occurring while individuals are in detention. Two days later, all four lawyers were released. However, the Public Prosecutor appealed the decisions to release the lawyers. On May 25, 2009, a warrant was re-issued for Filiz Kalayci's arrest. She was arrested on May 28, 2009 for "aiding illegal organizations". The other three lawyers were not arrested.<sup>31</sup>
59. The purpose of Filiz Kalayci's of arrest, detention and prosecution was to prevent and punish her lawful and professional advocacy for prisoners' rights.

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<sup>29</sup> *Supra* note 27.

<sup>30</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 28 January 2010) at 25 – 26.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

## Vietnam

### Bui Thi Kim Thanh

60. In February 2007, the Law Society intervened on behalf of lawyer Bui Thi Kim Thanh, who is known as an outspoken critic of Vietnam's land confiscation policies. Bui Thi Kim Thanh's clients included farmers whose land was expropriated. She also represented the Democratic Party of Vietnam as well as providing pro-bono defence work for low-income and impoverished people.<sup>32</sup>
61. On November 2, 2006, police officials took Bui Thi Kim Thanh to a local psychiatric hospital where two doctors assessed her and found no evidence of mental illness. She was then taken to the Central Psychiatric Hospital in Bien Hoa, Saigon, where she was committed and forcibly confined, after being interrogated by the police. She has also been injected with unknown drugs although there is no medical basis for these injections. The result of the enforced drug treatment is that she cannot speak.<sup>33</sup>
62. Bui Thi Kim Thanh has not been charged with an offence. The authorities offered to release her if she agreed not to talk about her treatment. She refused. As a result she is not allowed to receive visitors.<sup>34</sup>

### ***Challenging Government Actions on Behalf of Groups or Human Rights Organizations***

63. Internationally, barriers to access to justice are sometimes the result of government actions, legislation or historical abuses. Many people seeking to access justice look to lawyers or advocacy groups to make their voices heard and seek redress.

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<sup>32</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Bui Thin Him Thanh Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (February 2007).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Supra* note 32.

## Algeria

### Amine Sidhoum Abderramane and Hassiba Boumerdesi

64. Accessing legal services in cases involving disappeared persons is difficult as open talk about Algeria's disappeared is heavily discouraged. However, human rights lawyers Amine Sidhoum Abderramane and Hassiba Boumerdesi, working with the SOS Disappeared, took on cases. In February 2007, the Law Society intervened on behalf of these lawyers.
65. Amine Sidhoum Abderramane and Hassiba Boumerdesi represented the families through their work with SOS Disappeared, an Algerian group that represents more than 7,000 people who disappeared during the 1990s in the armed struggle between the government and Islamic groups in Algeria. Disappeared persons often were placed in facilities such as the special interrogation and rape center at the Chateaneuf barracks. In addition to journalists, judges and political opponents, the persons who were disappeared often came from marginalized groups such as religious minorities, women and LGBT persons.<sup>35</sup>
66. Like those who disappeared, the families are a cross section of Algerian society and are often harassed by authorities. According to reports, hundreds of family members line up at the SOS Disappeared office and wait in long lines with pictures of their missing relatives.<sup>36</sup>

## China

### Xu Zhiyong

67. Xu Zhiyong is a prominent legal scholar and human rights lawyer who was arrested and tried on criminal charges of "gathering crowds to disrupt public order". He was sentenced to four years in prison. The charges relate to a small scale peaceful street

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<sup>35</sup> "The tragedy of Algeria's 'disappeared'", *The Independent* (20 December 2010) online: <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/the-tragedy-of-algerias-disappeared-2164859.html>>; "Families of Algeria's 'Disappeared' Search for Truth" *The Washington Post* (31 December 2004) online: <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A39033-2004Dec31\\_2.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A39033-2004Dec31_2.html)>; Law Society of Upper Canada, "Abderramane and Boumerdesi Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (February 2, 2007).

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

protest by members of the New Citizens' Movement who were calling for educational equality and for government officials to declare their assets.

68. During Xu Zhiyong's trial, the court denied his defence counsel the right to call witnesses. The court also refused to summon prosecution witnesses to prevent Xu Zhiyong's defence counsel and the presiding judges from questioning them. Additionally, Xu Zhiyong was tried separately from his colleagues who were being prosecuted for the same offence. This contravened the Chinese *Criminal Procedure Law* requirement that persons charged with the same offence be tried jointly. These irregularities during Xu Zhiyong's trial raise questions regarding the fairness and due process of his trial.<sup>37</sup>

### **Honduras**

69. The numbers of lawyers killed for performing their legal duties prompted the Law Society to intervene in Honduras a number of times. According to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, between 2009 and 2012, 74 lawyers were killed.<sup>38</sup>

### **Lawyers at Association for a More Just Society ("AMSJ")**

70. The Law Society intervened in January 2011 on behalf of the Association for a More Just Society ("AMSJ"). This Honduras based organization is focused on improving access to justice for all sectors of society and working to promote human rights. In 2004, AMSJ began by investigating violations of labour rights by private security firms. Over the years AMSJ's work has expanded to include peace and public security, land rights, labour rights, anti-corruption, youth and family issues.<sup>39</sup>
71. AMSJ Lawyers work under constant threats and intimidation. For example, in December 2006, Dionisio Diaz Garcia, a lawyer with AMSJ, was assassinated. On

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<sup>37</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Xu Zhiyong Letters of Intervention and Public Statement (February 2014).

<sup>38</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee* (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 22 November 2012) at 80.

<sup>39</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee*, (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 27 January 2011) at 19 – 20.

December 7, 2006, Carlos Hernández, AMSJ President, received a text message threatening his life. That same day, he was pursued by a man on a motorcycle. The constant threats to AMSJ lawyers prompted the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, in 2006, to request the Honduran government take measures to protect AMSJ lawyers such as providing police protection for AMSJ members.<sup>40</sup>

72. On September 21, 2010, a woman who is both a lawyer and AMSJ member (her name was withheld) was in the offices of the Secretary of Labour to look at documents on labour laws that protect cleaners and security guards. She was approached by three different employees who advised her to drop the investigation into security companies due to the existing personal security risk.
73. A month later, on October 19, 2010, the same woman was abducted. Two men forced her into a taxi and barred her from leaving. They questioned her about her work and told her that they were paid to execute her. She was eventually released.
74. Then on November 3, 2010, two armed men on a motorcycle threatened another AMSJ lawyer, advising that the lawyer "Be careful with AMSJ and Transformemos Honduras [a Christian movement that AMSJ supports]." The ongoing harassment and intimidation of AMSJ lawyers is the result of their legal work, investigations of security companies and promotion of labour rights.<sup>41</sup>

### **Antonio Trejo Cabrera**

75. Antonio Trejo Cabrera was a well respected lawyer and pastor. His legal work centered on representing a number of Honduran agrarian groups in disputes with large landowners. For years he had been subject to death threats related to his defense of the land rights of four campesino cooperatives over four farms, San Isidro, San Esteban, La Trinidad, and El Despertar which together form the Authentic Revindicative Campesino Movement of the Aguan (Authentic Peasant Reclamation Movement of Aguan), which is called MARCA.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Supra* note 39.

<sup>42</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 22 November 2012) at 76 – 80.

76. On June 29, 2012, Antonio Trejo Cabrera's legal work resulted in the cooperative farmers recovering possession of three of the four farms from African palm oil corporations. He constantly faced harassment and death threats because of his work. Antonio Trejo Cabrera was murdered on September 22, 2012. He was officiating at a couple's marriage. When he left to retrieve the marriage certificate, he was shot five times. He died in hospital.<sup>43</sup>

## India

### Leitanthem Umakanta Meitei

77. The Law Society intervened in November 2006 on behalf of Leitanthem Umakanta Meitei, a human rights lawyer working in India. Leitanthem Umakanta Meitei is also the Secretary General of the Threatened Indigenous Peoples' Society ("TIPS"). In 2006, he was arrested without a warrant at his home. The police officers seized CDs, books and information on TIPS and the International Labour Organization. He was detained at the Imphal Police Station where he was interrogated and tortured. Throughout his detention, he was denied a lawyer.<sup>44</sup>
78. His arrest stemmed from his involvement in a protest against a bomb attack on a Hindu temple that killed five Hindus and injured over 40 people. Leitanthem Umakanta Meitei was charged with being a member of, and supporting terrorist organisations and accused of maintaining links with the illegal group "Organisation to Save the Revolutionary Movement in Manipur". On August 29, 2005, the Chief Judicial Magistrate ordered his release on bail due to lack of evidence. Charges were eventually dropped. The charges were fabricated. It appears that his torture and detention were linked to his legal work.

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<sup>43</sup> *Supra* note 42.

<sup>44</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Umakanta Meitei Letter of Intervention and Public Statement "(November 2007).

## Nepal

### Jitman Basnet

79. The Law Society intervened in October 2007 on behalf of Jitman Basnet, a lawyer and journalist. He is an advocate for victims of Nepal's armed conflict and has filed cases on behalf of the victims before Nepal's Supreme Court and the United Nations Human Rights Committee. He is also Secretary General of the Lawyer's Forum on Human Rights ("LAFHUR"), a pro-bono lawyers' network that works on transitional justice and human rights in Nepal.<sup>45</sup>
80. In March 2007, Jitman Basnet published a book entitled *258 Dark Days*. The book recounted his experiences while he was detained in army custody. After his release he received threats from members of the military. In the book, he named government soldiers he claimed raped, tortured or unlawfully killed people during Nepal's armed conflict. Starting in August 2007, Jitman Basnet began receiving harassing telephone calls.<sup>46</sup> The callers threatened to kill both him and his wife. The ongoing harassment related to his advocacy and exposure of human rights abuses during Nepal's armed conflict.

## Malaysia

### Karpal Singh

81. Karpal Singh, a 73 year old human rights lawyer, remarked that the removal of Mohammad Nizar and the Sultan of Perak's appointment of Datuk Seir Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir as the new Menteri Besar, chief executive of Perak's state government, could be questioned in court. The Sultan's appointment was related to the 2009 Constitutional Crisis, which occurred after three Patyakhn Rakyat party members crossed the floor to sit as pro-Barisan Nasional independents. Karpal Singh was responding to media questions about the constitutional crisis during a press conference at his law firm on February 6, 2009. However, his comment

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<sup>45</sup>Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 25 October 2007) at 6 –7.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

was considered seditious and he was charged under Section 4 (1) (b) of the *Sedition Act*, 1948.

82. On June 2012, the High Court acquitted and discharged Karpal Singh. The prosecution appealed his acquittal. The Court of Appeal granted the appeal on January 20, 2012 and ordered a new trial. The High Court found Karpal Singh guilty of sedition on February 21, 2014. He was then sentenced on March 11, 2014 to pay a fine of RM 4,000. The effect of this sentence meant that Karpal Singh could be disqualified and removed as a member of parliament for answering media questions.<sup>47</sup>

### **Myanmar**

83. Over the years, the Law Society has intervened on behalf of a number of lawyers in Myanmar who have represented individuals and groups in human rights challenges against government actions.

### **Nyi Niy Htwe and Saw Kyaw Kyaw Min,**

84. Human rights lawyers Nyi Niy Htwe and Saw Kyaw Kyaw Min defended 11 young National League for Democracy protesters who were arrested in September 2008 for peacefully marching while wearing t-shirts depicting Daw Aung Sung Suu Kyi to mark her birthday.
85. On October 29, 2008, Nyi Niy Htwe was arrested by the police for his role in defending the 11 youth protesters. The next day, he was sentenced to six months in prison by the Rangoon Northern District Court for "interruption and insulting [a] judiciary proceeding".
86. A warrant for Saw Kyaw Kyaw Min's arrest was issued. However, he failed to appear at the police station on October 30, 2008. Fearing arrest and detention for political reasons, Saw Kyaw Kyaw Min fled Myanmar. However, he was found

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<sup>47</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Karpal Singh Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (April 2014).

guilty in absentia for "interruption and insulting [a] judiciary proceeding" and sentenced to six months imprisonment. Saw Kyaw Kyaw Min's license to practice law was revoked due to this criminal conviction.

87. In 2012, Saw Kyaw Kyaw Min sought to have his license reinstated. He was one of 32 lawyers who had their licenses to practice law revoked.

### **U Aung Thein and U Khin Maung Shein**

88. U Aung Thein and U Khin Maung Shein were also arrested following the submission of a written statement of their clients' desire to relinquish their power of attorney. The defendants stated that they no longer had "faith in the judicial processes," and therefore wished to dismiss their lawyers.

89. The court claimed that the lawyers' defendants did not state this and that this was their opinion as lawyers. However, reports showed that the defendants had expressed these wishes orally at the previous hearing, and that the court had then requested it from the lawyers in writing.

90. Both U Aung Thein and U Khin Maung Shein were convicted without a trial, and therefore, were not given the opportunity to defend the charges brought against them.<sup>48</sup>

### **Lawyers Disbarred**

91. In April 2012, the Law Society intervened on behalf of 32 lawyers who have had their licenses revoked following criminal convictions and were seeking to have their licenses reinstated. The use of criminal sanctions and subsequent disbarment of some or all of these lawyers is a tactic used to punish these lawyers for their political activities.<sup>49</sup> Eventually, 11 of the 32 lawyers who were disbarred had their licenses reinstated. The remaining lawyers who had their licenses revoked can apply to be considered for reinstatement.

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<sup>48</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "U Aung Thein and U Khin Maung Shein Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (January 2009, September 2012).

<sup>49</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Lawyers Disbarred Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (April 2012).

## **Sri Lanka**

### **Dr. Nimalka Fernando**

92. Dr. Nimalka Fernando is a 59 year old woman, a prominent human rights lawyer and activist. She is the president of the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism ("IMADR"). She has also actively participated in and contributed to the human rights work of the United Nations, including participating in treaty body committee meetings (committees of independent experts to monitor the implementation of treaties) and sessions of the Human Rights Council for over three decades.
93. During a November 4, 2013 radio program titled "The Way the Country is Moving (Rat Yana Atha)", death threats and derogatory comments were directed by callers toward Dr. Nimalka Fernando. The subtitle of the program was "Stoning the Sinner Woman". Most of the callers were men and some identified themselves as retired members of the armed forces.
94. The day before the radio show aired, Dr. Nimalka Fernando had given a television interview. Her interview was related to a larger public debate that was prompted by Dr. Nimalka Fernando calling for the abolition of Sri Lanka's abortion laws, the promotion of safer sex and a more protective reproductive health approach. She had also stated that she objected to the use of the word "prostitution". Her statements were broadcast on the radio program "The Way the Country is Moving (Rat Yana Atha)".
95. Dr. Nimalka Fernando lodged a complaint with the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka and the Inspector General of Police. However, this is not the first time she has faced harassment as a result of her human rights work.
96. In March 2012, Dr. Nimalka Fernando, along with three other human rights defenders, was accused of being a traitor and working against the interests of the

country to obtain “dollars”. Additionally, the Minister of Public Relations threatened to “break the limbs” of Dr. Nimalka Fernando and three other human rights defenders.<sup>50</sup>

## Turkey

### Lawyers Protesting

97. On January 2013, 15 human rights lawyers were arrested. Nine of the lawyers are members of the Progressive Lawyers' Association (“ÇHD”), which is affiliated to the European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights (“ELDH”). The lawyers who were arrested are known for their work in representing persons accused of crimes against the state and terrorism and members of minority groups.
98. Some of the lawyers were released, however nine lawyers were imprisoned and awaiting trial: Güçlü Sevimli (member of the Istanbul Branch - Istanbul Bar Association), Barkın Timtik (member of Istanbul Bar Association), Şükriye Erden (member of Istanbul Bar Association), Naciye Demir (member of Istanbul Bar Association), Nazan Betül Vangölü Kozağaçlı (member of the Ankara Branch - Ankara Bar Association), Taylan Tanay (President of the Istanbul Branch - Istanbul Bar Association), Ebru Timtik (member of Istanbul Bar Association), Günay Dağ (member of Istanbul Bar Association) and Selçuk Kozağaçlı (National President of ÇHD - Ankara Bar Association).
99. The nine imprisoned lawyers were particularly active in working on human rights cases, especially in representing victims of police violence. The lawyers who were arrested were targeted for their human rights work.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, “Dr. Nimalka Fernando Letters of Intervention and Public Statement” (February 2014).

<sup>51</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, “Turkey Lawyers Letters of Intervention and Public Statement” (February 2013).

### **Ramazan Demir**

100. Ramazan Demir was arrested and charged with “insulting or (...) offending the dignity of a public authority in the performance of his duties” under section 125 of Turkey’s *Criminal Code*. If convicted, Ramazan Demir could face up to two years in prison. The charges and his arrest stem from his defence of journalists during the Koma Civakên Kurdistan (“KCK”) trials.
  
101. In 2012, 44 journalists were arrested on terrorist charges and accused of backing the illegal pan-Kurdish umbrella group KCK. Human rights groups consider the prosecution of these journalists to be part of the government’s efforts to curb free speech in Turkey. Ramazan Demir was representing some of the journalists and lawyers arrested and involved in the KCK trials.
  
102. During his clients’ hearing in Silivri on November 16, 2012, Ramazan Demir rebutted the prosecutor’s allegation that the journalists on trial were not independent journalists. He challenged the capacity of the prosecutor to determine that the journalists were conducting activities that were not “normal” or “independent” journalistic activities and requested the court to call and hear expert testimony on the subject. Six months later, on May 13, 2012, the Special Prosecutor of the 15<sup>th</sup> Serious Crimes Court filed a complaint against Ramazan Demir regarding his submissions. On September 9, 2013, the Special Prosecutor was authorized by the Ministry of Justice to file an indictment against Ramazan Demir under s. 125 of Turkey’s *Criminal Code*.
  
103. In addition to defending journalists, Ramazan Demir is known for mobilizing support in favour of lawyers prosecuted in two mass anti-terrorism trials. Human rights groups view Ramazan Demir’s case as an example of ongoing judicial harassment of lawyers. They anticipate that similar charges and arrests against other defence lawyers involved in the KCK trials will be forthcoming.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 24 April 2014).

## Uganda

### **Lawyers Challenging the Uganda's *Anti-Homosexuality Bill***

104. Lawyers and paralegals working with Uganda's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex ("LGBTI") community are stigmatized. As a result of the government's *Anti-Homosexuality Bill* there is a chilling effect as lawyers are refusing to represent LGBTI clients because of the fear of persecution.
105. Lawyers working with Uganda's LGBTI community and non-governmental organizations are looking to challenge the constitutionality of the *Bill*. Recently, a law firm retained by Fox Odoi, West Budama North Member of Parliament, and the Civil Liberties Organisation-Chapter Four, to provide a legal opinion on the constitutionality of the *Bill*. However, the law firm declined to be named.
106. While the *Bill's* provisions criminalize homosexuality, it also prohibits Uganda's Parliament from ratifying any international treaties, conventions, protocols, agreements and declarations that are contrary or inconsistent with the provisions of the *Bill*. This means that the international safeguards currently protecting lawyers may not shield those working on this issue from prosecution and harassment.<sup>53</sup>

### ***Defending Clients Involved in Politically Charged Cases***

107. The political climate, negative perceptions or a client's past all play a role in barring clients from receiving adequate legal representation. The more unpopular the client, the harder it is for them to get a fair trial. Lawyers who represent unpopular clients are often targeted for their work.

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<sup>53</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (February 2014).

## Bahrain

### Mohamed Issa Al Tajer

108. Mohamed Issa Al Tajer provided legal aid to protestors during the Arab Spring. The Law Society first intervened on behalf of Mohamed Issa Al Tajer in May 2011, and then again in September 2012, after learning he was targeted by authorities based on his legal work.
109. Bahrainian authorities are attempting to put pressure on those who provide legal and medical assistance to protesters. Further, the information received suggests that about 600 people, including human rights defenders, political leaders, trade unionists, doctors and paramedics and clerics have been arrested since February 2011.
110. On April 15, 2011, a group of more than 20 masked and armed plain-clothes men, belonging to security forces, burst into Mohamed Issa Al Tajer's home. After searching his house and office, they took computers and mobile phones. He was arrested and taken to an unknown destination.<sup>54</sup>
111. In September 2012, the Law Society intervened again to voice its continued concern over the arbitrary detention of Mohamed Issa Al Tajer from April 14, 2011 to August 6, 2011. During his detention, he was subject to acts of torture and ill-treatment.
112. Mohamed Issa Al Tajer is closely monitored by Bahrain's National Security Intelligence and his clients have been pressured. He continues to be harassed and has received blackmail threats since January 2011.
113. In May 2012, he attended the United Nations Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review ("UPR") of Bahrain. Following his participation in the UPR process, a video of Mohamed Issa Al Tajer being intimate with his wife was

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<sup>54</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Mohamed Issa Al Tajer Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (27 May 2011).

released to the public. Mohamed Issa Al Tajer continues to be targeted because of his representation of the Arab Spring protestors and legal work.<sup>55</sup>

## **Belarus**

### *Emanuel Zeltser*

114. In the late 1990s, Emanuel Zeltser, a U.S. national, represented a former Kremlin official, Pavel Borodin, who was charged by a Swiss court with money laundering. In addition to being a lawyer, Emanuel Zeltser is also a specialist on money laundering and organized crime. The Law Society intervened on behalf of Emanuel Zeltser in June 2008 after he was detained in Belarus in March 2008.
115. On March 12, 2008, Emanuel Zeltser was held in a state security services detention facility in Minsk, where he was interrogated, beaten and denied the medicine to treat his diabetes and arthritis. On March 21, 2008, he was charged with "use of forged documents." The U.S. Embassy was only allowed to visit him twice, on March 27 and April 25, 2008. After the second visit, the U.S. Consul reported that Emanuel Zeltser's health was failing. He had lost weight, was very weak and had difficulty walking and talking. He also reported he had been beaten two or three times while in custody.
116. In addition to representing, Pavel Borodin, a former Kremlin official, Emanuel Zeltser's work included testifying about a money laundering scheme at the Bank of New York Mellon. He also sued the bank for \$2 billion on behalf of depositors who had lost money in an affiliate.<sup>56</sup>

## **China**

117. Over the years, the Law Society has intervened on behalf of a number of lawyers in China who have provided legal services to protestors or politically unpopular clients.

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<sup>55</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Mohamed Issa Al Tajer Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (27 September 2012).

<sup>56</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Emanuel Zeltser Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (27 June 2008).

## **Human Rights Violations against Lawyers**

118. On October 31, 2007, the Law Society first intervened on behalf of human rights lawyers working in China. Increasingly, lawyers were being harassed and persecuted for merely performing their legitimate professional duties. Some of the lawyers harassed were Gao Zhisheng, Director of the Beijing-based Shengzhi Law office, who was again subjected to ill treatment. He went missing after ten plainclothes State Security Protection officers took him away on September 22, 2007. Another lawyer, Li Heping was abducted in the parking lot of his law office by a dozen plainclothes men. Finally, the Shandong Provincial Bureau of Judicial Affairs refused to renew Li Jianqiang's licence to practice law.<sup>57</sup> Revoking or refusing to renew the licence of lawyers representing unpopular clients is a common form of harassment.
119. Again, in April 2008, the Law Society intervened on behalf of lawyers in China. Human rights lawyers were subjected to an escalating pattern of persecution and harassment by authorities. Hundreds of Tibetans were arrested in connection with the March 14, 2008 unrest in Tibet and the violent crackdown on the protests by Chinese security forces. As a result, on April 2, 2008, 18 Chinese lawyers publically offered to provide legal assistance to the detained Tibetans.
120. Chinese authorities told the lawyers that they should not involve themselves in the "Tibet incident". Authorities questioned lawyers involved in providing legal representation to the Tibetan protestors and placed them under surveillance and tapped their phones.<sup>58</sup> The Law Society has consistently condemned the persecution and ill-treatment of lawyers in China.

## **Guo Feixiong (aka Yang Maodong)**

121. The Law Society also intervened in China on behalf of Guo Feixiong (also known as Yang Maodong) in April 2007, January 2008 and again in January 2009. Guo

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<sup>57</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Violations Against Lawyers Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (31 October 2007).

<sup>58</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Violations Against Lawyers Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (16 April 2008).

Feixiong is currently serving a five year sentence in Meizhou Prison, Guangdong Province.

122. Guo Feixiong is a self-taught legal defender based in Guangzhou and adviser with Gao Zhisheng's Beijing-based Shengzhi law firm. Guo's human rights work began in 2005, when he helped organize villagers in Taishi, Guangzhou protest against official corruption and land seizures. In 2006, Guo campaigned alongside prominent human rights lawyer, Gao Zhisheng, against a government crackdown on human rights activists. He was formally arrested in late 2006 on charges of "illegal business activity," based on a book he wrote about a political scandal in Liaoning Province. He was sentenced to five years in prison, where he was tortured.
123. Guo Feixiong's current detention followed his release in September 2011 from a five-year prison term for his earlier activism. According to police, Guo is now facing prosecution for the following acts: delivering a speech promoting press freedom during a protest in January 2013 by supporters of *Southern Weekly* journalists on strike, organizing campaigns in April 2013 calling for disclosure of officials' wealth, and urging the government to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which China signed in 1998.
124. He was arrested again in August 2013 for his involvement in campaigns promoting press freedom, political rights, and transparency. On December 10, 2013, police from the Guangzhou Municipal Public Security Bureau concluded their investigation and submitted an "Indictment Opinion" to the District People's Procuratorate. They recommended that Guo Feixiong be indicted for "disrupting public order," a charge increasingly used against Chinese rights activists and which carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison. Chinese law requires that prosecutors decide within 30 days whether to issue an indictment. Although the 30-day limit passed, no announcement was made.

125. Authorities denied numerous requests from Guo Feixiong's lawyers to meet with him, permitting the first such meeting to occur in November, more than three months after he was taken into custody.

### **Colombia**

126. Over the years, the Law Society has intervened on behalf of a number of lawyers and human rights organizations in Columbia who have represented political prisoners and groups. The Law Society is concerned about situations where lawyers who work to defend the rights of others are themselves targeted for exercising their freedoms and rights under the law.

### **William Cristancho Duarte**

127. In January 2011, the Law Society intervened on behalf of William Cristancho Duarte, who is working on cases involving the extrajudicial executions of civilians murdered by military groups.
128. During Colombia's armed conflict, which has lasted over four decades, extrajudicial executions were carried out by the security forces in a widespread and systematic manner. These executions are part of the terror tactics used by the security forces as part of their counter-insurgency strategy. Columbia's Attorney General's Office is investigating more than 2,000 cases of extrajudicial executions.
129. William Cristancho Duarte's has received death threats, including an assassination attempt as a result of his work. In December 2010, shots were fired at his car. Repeatedly, lawyers like William Cristancho Duarte who campaign for justice for victims of extrajudicial executions have been threatened or killed by members of the security forces or paramilitaries working with security forces.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "William Cristancho Duarte Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (4 February 2011).

### **José Humberto Torres**

130. After receiving reports of the bounty offered by paramilitary groups for the assassination of lawyer, José Humberto Torres, the Law Society intervened on his behalf in May 2012.
131. José Humberto Torres, a distinguished Colombian human rights defender, is known for defending political prisoners and fellow human rights defenders on behalf of the Fundación Comité de Solidaridad con los Presos Políticos (Political Prisoners Solidarity Committee). He was involved in a case against Jorge Noguera, former director of the Colombian Intelligence Agency, for his involvement in the assassination of professor Alfredo Correa de Andreis. He called for criminal investigation into the links between members of Congress and paramilitary groups and their alleged involvement in various crimes. He also participated in various cases against army leaders for alleged human rights violations.
132. An outspoken advocate for victims of extrajudicial killings, paramilitary groups have called for José Humberto Torres' assassination. These groups have publicized that they will pay a bounty equivalent to US \$120,000 to anyone who assassinates José Humberto Torres.<sup>60</sup>

### **Congo**

133. The Law Society has intervened on behalf of a number of lawyers and human rights organizations in the Congo who have represented former political leaders, persons considered undesirable or prisoners unable to get representation.

### **Marie-Thérèse Nlandu Mpolo-Nene**

134. In February 2007, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Marie-Thérèse Nlandu Mpolo-Nene regarding her arrest and detention.

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<sup>60</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "José Humberto Torres Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (28 May 2012).

135. The highly charged political climate in the Congo made retaining legal representation difficult. Marie-Thérèse Nlandu Mpolo-Nene, a human rights lawyer, agreed to represent Jean-Pierre Bemba, the former Vice-President of Congo, in his appeal to the Supreme Court of Justice against the results of the second round of presidential elections in 2007.
136. On November 21, 2006, members of the Special Services police arrested Marie-Thérèse Nlandu Mpolo-Nene, at the Kin-Mazière police station, the Special Services police headquarters, where she went to visit six of her colleagues who were arrested the day before. She was charged with “organizing an insurrectionary movement” and with “illegal possession of firearms.”
137. The charge for organizing an insurrection movement related to a speech she made to supporters of Jean-Pierre Bemba outside the Supreme Court on November 20, 2006, in which she asked them to exercise their right to protest “in a disciplined way.” Marie-Thérèse Nlandu Mpolo-Nene is also the leader of the political party for peace. Her arrest and detention are a result of her representation of Jean-Pierre Bemba.<sup>61</sup>

### **Jean-Claude Mubalama and Charles Cubaka**

138. Charles Cubaka and Jean-Claude Mubalama are Congolese lawyers who were involved in a high profile appeal of four civilian men who were appearing before a military court. They were sentenced to death in August 2007 for the murder of a radio journalist, Serge Maheshe. The investigators failed to pursue allegations of possible military involvement in their investigation of Serge Maheshe’s murder.
139. Charles Cubaka and Jean-Claude Mubalama both received a series of anonymous threats warning them to stop criticizing the conduct of the appeal

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<sup>61</sup>Law Society of Upper Canada, “Marie-Thérèse Nlandu Mpolo-Nene Letter of Intervention and Public Statement” (2 February 2007).

hearing, to stop implicating the military in the murder, and to stop "tarnishing the image of the country".<sup>62</sup>

## Haiti

### **Mario Joseph, Newton St-Juste and André Michel**

140. The Law Society intervened in both 2012 and 2013 on behalf of Mario Joseph, Newton St-Juste and André Michel.
141. Newton St-Juste and André Michel filed claims against both the wife and son of the President of the Republic of Haiti for corruption and embezzlement of public funds. Mario Joseph, a prominent human rights lawyer and head of the International Lawyers Office (Bureau des Avocats Internationaux), was involved in a number of political cases such as proceedings against former dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier. Another case was against the United Nations for their alleged involvement in spreading the cholera epidemic in Haiti as well as a case dealing with the forced evictions of people made homeless after the earthquake.
142. On September 28, 2012, the former Chief Prosecutor of Port-au-Prince, Jean Renel Sénatus, claimed that he had been dismissed by the Ministry of Justice because he refused to implement an order to arrest 36 people. On the list were lawyers Newton St-Juste and André Michel.
143. Mario Joseph, Newton St-Juste and André Michel have reported receiving anonymous telephone death threats in recent months. In addition, they have reported other acts of intimidation, including hostile graffiti painted on walls and police vigilance in proximity of their offices and homes. It is believed that the three lawyers are being targeted for their activism and criticisms against the Haitian government.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Charles Cubaka and Jean-Claude Mubalama Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (27 June 2008).

<sup>63</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Mario Joseph, Newton St-Juste and André Michel Letters of Intervention and Public Statement s" (27 June 2008).

144. In November 2013, the Law Society intervened again on behalf of André Michel. On October 22, 2013, human rights lawyer André Michel was arbitrarily held for one night in police custody. While on his way home, André Michel's car was stopped by police officers who attempted to carry out a search of his vehicle. He refused to get out. He said he would only accept the search if a justice of the peace was called, a request which is in accordance with Haitian law. The search was eventually carried out in the presence of justice of the peace and no evidence of wrongdoing was found. However, he was held overnight in custody for the obstruction of justice.
145. In 2013, André Michel was still involved in legal proceedings against the wife and eldest son of Haiti's president. Since the beginning of this case, he stated that he has faced intimidation and has received threats. Shortly after André Michel's release on October 23, 2013, a member of the Office of the Prosecutor declared to the press that the July 2013 arrest warrant, which had never been executed, would be carried out. He continues to work under the risk of being arrested.
146. In July 2013, an arrest warrant was issued against André Michel for his alleged involvement in a murder. His client, the complainant in the corruption case, was arrested on the same charge and remains in detention.<sup>64</sup>

## India

### **Noor Mohammad, Muhammad Shoaib, Zayfarayab Jilani and A M Faridi**

147. In November 2008, the Law Society intervened on behalf of four lawyers, Noor Mohammad, Muhammad Shoaib, Zayfarayab Jilani and A M Faridi, who were being harassed, intimidated and assaulted. The police were complicit in the attacks against lawyers. The lawyers defended Muslim clients accused of

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<sup>64</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 21 November 2013) at 143 – 147.

terrorist acts, despite the fact that some of India's bar associations implemented bans preventing lawyers from representing these clients.

148. These bans are contrary to the fundamental right to be considered innocent until proven guilty. Lawyers should not be intimidated by their colleagues in the course of the legitimate discharge of their professional duties.<sup>65</sup>

## **Iran**

149. Over the years, the Law Society has intervened on behalf of a number of lawyers and human rights organizations in Iran who have represented political prisoners and groups. In particular, the Law Society continues to intervene and monitor Nasrin Sotoudeh's case.

### **Nasrin Sotoudeh**

150. In both September 2010 and October 2013, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Nasrin Sotoudeh.
151. On September 4, 2010, Nasrin Sotoudeh, a prominent human rights lawyer, was arrested. She is known for defending juveniles facing the death penalty, prisoners of conscience and children victims of abuse. Nasrin Sotoudeh also represented several political activists and protesters who were arrested in the aftermath of the disputed presidential election in Iran in 2009. She is also a member of the Iranian Women's Rights Movement "One Million Signature Campaign" which collects signatures from Iranians opposed to the country's discriminatory laws against women.
152. She chose to represent clients who many lawyers were afraid to defend. She represented several political activists and protesters who were arrested in the aftermath of the disputed presidential election in Iran in 2009. Her clients included journalist Isa Saharkhiz, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shirin Ebadi, and

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<sup>65</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (November 2008).

Heshmat Tabarzadi, head of the banned opposition group Democratic Front of Iran.

153. Nasrin Sotoudeh was sent to the Evin prison court, where she had been summoned by the Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office on charges of "propaganda against the State" and "collusion and gathering with the aim of acting against national security, and membership in the Centre for Human Rights Defenders". After her questioning by a magistrate, she was arrested. Her lawyer was not permitted to be present during the questioning.
154. In January 2011, she was sentenced to 11 years in prison, and given a 20 year ban on practicing law as well as a 20 year ban on foreign travel. An appeals court later reduced her sentence to 6 years.
155. A few days prior to her arrest, she had reported to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran that the Iranian authorities were using tax harassment against human rights lawyers in order to limit their working conditions. She gave the example of lawyer Shirin Ebadi, who was subjected to the payment of taxes of hundreds of thousands of dollars on the money she had been granted for her Nobel Peace Prize.<sup>66</sup>

## **Kenya**

### **Haroun Ndubi**

156. The Law Society intervened on behalf of Haroun Ndubi after he received a death threat as a result of his criticism of the elections and his public interest work regarding the election's irregularities in Kenya.
157. On February 6, 2008, Haroun Ndubi lawyer and member of the Kenya Domestic Observers Forum received a death threat along with Muthoni Wanyeki, Executive Director of the Kenya Human Rights Commission ("KHRC"), Gladwell Otieno,

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<sup>66</sup>Law Society of Upper Canada, "Nasrin Sotoudeh Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (September 2010, 30 October 2013).

Director of the Africa Centre for Open Government, Njeri Kabeberi, Executive Director of the Centre for Multi-Party Democracy/ the death threat was also directed at Maina Kiai, the former Chairman of KHRC and Chair of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, Ndung'u Wainaina, member of the National Convention Executive Council, James Maina, member of Bunge La Mwananchi (the People's Parliament), and David Ndi, co-founder and Director of the Kenya Leadership Institute, a non-profit organization that seeks to raise-awareness on public policy issues, and author of a report on the last elections' irregularities.

158. Haroun Ndubi received anonymous calls threatening to cut off his head if he did not stop talking about the results of the Kenyan general election, which was held on December 27, 2007. In addition to commenting on election irregularities, Haroun Ndubi also drew attention to the human rights abuses that occurred during the violence that followed the elections.<sup>67</sup>

## Peru

### Francisco Soberon

159. The Law Society intervened on behalf of Francisco Soberon, a Peruvian human rights lawyer and recipient of the French National Order of Merit Award. He also established the Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos ("APRODEH"). The purpose of the APRODEH is to combat the continued human rights abuses, including routine beatings, torture, "disappearances" and arbitrary detentions, prevalent in Peru.
160. Francisco Soberon was involved in prosecuting former Peruvian President Fujimori for ordering two massacres that killed 25 people in the 1990s. Senior government officials threatened him and made derogatory remarks about him and the APRODEH. He was subjected to harassment. The Peruvian government

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<sup>67</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 27 March 2008) at 12–14.

attempted to have the APRODEH classified as a terrorist organization but the European Parliament refused the request.<sup>68</sup>

## Russia

### Sapiyat Magomedova

161. The Law Society has intervened on behalf of Sapiyat Magomedova, a criminal and human rights lawyer, in November 2010, April 2012 and July 2013. Her law firm is known for taking on cases relating to abductions, torture and extrajudicial executions in the Northern Caucasus region of Dagestan in Russia.
162. Sapiyat Magomedova represents victims in highly sensitive cases. She has defended individuals suspected of involvement with the insurgency in Dagestan and who have been tortured by the police. As a result of discharging her professional duties, Sapiyat Magomedova has experienced a continued pattern of harassment and intimidation.
163. Sapiyat Magomedova was assaulted by police inside Khasavyurt town police station on June 17th, 2010. She traveled there to visit a client but was denied access. She was subsequently taken to a security checkpoint by four police officers from the special intervention unit. They then beat her until she was unconscious. As a result, Sapiyat Magomedova was hospitalized for several weeks.
164. In October 2010, Sapiyat Magomedova challenged the legality of the prosecutor's decision to open a criminal case against her. Reports indicated several procedural violations occurred during court hearings. For instance, the hearing of her application began later than is legally mandated and only after a lawyer representing Sapiyat Magomedova contacted the court about it. The first hearing on November 1, 2010 was adjourned and has since been delayed twice.

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<sup>68</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada 26 June 2008) at 18 –19.

165. On March 14, 2012, she learned that the criminal investigations against both her and the officers had been closed several months prior. However, she had not been notified. At that time, Sapiyat Magomedova and her colleague Musa Suslanov were working on a high profile criminal case, representing the families of five men who were killed. On May 19, 2013, Musa Suslanov received a text message from an unknown mobile phone number, telling him and his colleague to withdraw from the case if they wished to stay alive.<sup>69</sup>

## **Sudan**

166. The Law Society intervened in Sudan in October 2006 and November 2013. In both cases, the lawyers were working to defend their clients while they were harassed and, in some cases, detained.

### **Mossaad Mohamed Ali, Rasha Souraj, Ebtisam Alsemani, Najat Dafaalla and Mohamed Badawi**

167. Mossaad Mohamed Ali, Rasha Souraj, Ebtisam Alsemani, Najat Dafaalla and Mohamed Badawi are lawyers and members of the Amel Centre for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture. This organization provides legal aid to victims of torture and sexual violence. Mossaad Mohamed Ali, Rasha Souraj, Ebtisam Alsemani, Najat Dafaalla and Mohamed Badawi have all been harassed, threatened and summoned to security offices and detained. Sometimes the detentions lasted hours, days and were also detentions incommunicado.
168. In May 2006, officers from the National Security Bureau (“NSB”) in Nyala, Southern Darfur, summoned Mossaad Mohamed Ali for questioning. He was detained and remained in detention until May 20, 2006. He was denied access to his family and to legal counsel. Security officers denied the United Nations Mission in Sudan (“UNMIS”) an opportunity to meet with him. No reason was

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<sup>69</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, “Sapiyat Magomedova Letters of Intervention and Public Statements” (November 2010, April 2012, July 2013).

given as to why Mossaad Mohamed Ali was summoned, arrested and held incommunicado.

169. On July 27, 2006, Mossaad Mohamed Ali and volunteer lawyers at the Amel Centre, Rasha Souraj and Ebtisam Alsemaniwere were accused of sending false reports and of disclosing information of a military nature. They were then warned that their case had been given to the police and that they would likely be arrested following a police investigation.
170. On August 1, 2006, Mossaad Mohamed Ali and Najat Dafa Alla were accused of spreading false information and of being a threat to public security. It is believed that they were being investigated for their work in defending the rights of five individuals from the Otash camp, who were detained after participating in a demonstration against the Darfur Peace Agreement, on May 30 and 31, 2006.<sup>70</sup>

### **Adam Sharief**

171. Adam Sharief is a lawyer and the coordinator of the Darfur Bar Association in South Darfur. According to reports, he was arrested on September 26, 2013 and held without charge. Adam Sharief has not been granted access to a lawyer.
172. Six days before his arrest, Adam Sharief participated in an interview with independent radio station, Radio Dabanga. During this interview, he criticized the Governor of South Darfur for the lack of security in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur. His criticism was linked to the protests that broke out in Nyala on September 18, 2013, after Ismail Ibrahim Wadi, a prominent local businessman and the president of the local football team, his son and nephew were killed. Protestors said the militia employed by the local authorities were responsible for the killings. Adam Sharief also criticized the use of live ammunition by security

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<sup>70</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 26 October 2006) at 21– 24; Law Society of Upper Canada, "Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (October 2006).

forces on September 19, 2013, to disperse demonstrators that gathered around the South Darfur government offices to call for the Governor to resign.

173. Adam Sharief's detention is linked to his advocacy on behalf of those at the protest and for exercising his right to freedom of expression.<sup>71</sup>

## **Syria**

174. In both February 2010 and January 2011, the Law Society intervened in Syria on behalf of lawyers, who were providing legal services and challenging the government on its human rights record. In both cases, the lawyers were working to defend their clients while they were harassed and, in some cases, detained.

## **Haytham al-Maleh**

175. Haytham al-Maleh is a 78 year old Syrian human rights lawyer who has been imprisoned by Syrian authorities for "weakening national sentiment", "spreading false information" and insulting the President and the judiciary. At the time of his arrest, Haytham al-Maleh was defending Muhannad al-Hassani, another human rights lawyer and President of the Syrian Human Rights Organization ("SHRO"), who was being tried on charges related to his work defending the rights of political prisoners.
176. On October 13, 2009, an officer from the Political Security, Syria's Intelligence Services, contacted Haytham al-Maleh, and told him to report to the Political Security's branch in Damascus. He refused to go. The next day he disappeared. Initially, Haytham al-Maleh's whereabouts were unknown, but on October 18, 2009 the Syrian authorities acknowledged they are holding him.
177. Haytham al-Maleh has been imprisoned and harassed by the Syrian authorities for his human rights work before. He was imprisoned from 1980-1986 for his

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<sup>71</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada 21 November 2013) at 148.

work for the Freedom and Human Rights Committee of the Syrian Lawyers Union.<sup>72</sup>

### **Radeef Moustafa**

178. Radeef Moustafa is the president of the Kurdish Committee for Human Rights and coordinator of the Syria Coalition against Capital Punishment. He provides pro bono legal services to human rights defenders in Syria, such as Muhannad Al-Hassani.
179. In response to Radeef Moustafa's activities in support of human rights defenders and the Kurdish minority in Syria, he has experienced ongoing harassment from Syrian authorities. He has been subjected to travel restrictions and most recently was summoned for a disciplinary hearing on December 19th 2010 with the Syrian Bar Association. The grounds for referral include membership in a non-licensed organization, incitement against Syrian authorities through his writing and harming national unity by publishing unfounded news. He is also accused of committing crimes against state security.
180. Muhannad Al-Hassani was the target of similarly disputed procedures by the Syrian Bar Association. He was eventually disbarred and imprisoned. This disciplinary action against Radeef Moustafa is similarly viewed as an act of harassment by the Syrian Bar Association.<sup>73</sup>

### **Tunisia**

181. The Law Society intervened on behalf of a Tunisian lawyer who was exercising his right to freedom of expression.

### **Mohammed Abbou**

182. Mohammed Abbou, a lawyer and member of the National Council for Civil Liberties in Tunisia, was arrested in March 2005 as a result of an article he

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<sup>72</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee, (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 28 January 2010) at 20 – 21.

<sup>73</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 27 January 2011) at 22 – 23.

published online. In November 2005, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concluded that Mohammed Abbou's detention was arbitrary and in violation of international law.

183. In April 2006, Mohammed Abbou was sentenced to three years and six months in prison. While in detention, he undertook several hunger strikes in protest at the conditions of his detention. He continues to face harassment and ill treatment by the prison administration.<sup>74</sup>

### **Thailand**

184. The Law Society has previously intervened on behalf of human rights defenders in Thailand and is always concerned when lawyers face reprisals for representing clients in politically sensitive cases.

### **Robert Amsterdam**

185. Robert Amsterdam has acted for many clients involved in politically sensitive circumstances. He was legal counsel to former Prime Minister of Thailand Thaksin Shinawatra, political prisoners like Eligio Cedeno of Venezuela and Singapore's Dr. Chee Soon Juan.
186. As a result of his work, Robert Amsterdam has been intimidated and harassed. He has threatened with legal action for representing former Prime Minister of Thailand Thaksin Shinawatra. Despite the outcome of the July 2011 general election in Thailand, there are still concerns for his personal safety.<sup>75</sup>

### **Turkey**

187. In both October 2012 and June 2013, the Law Society intervened on behalf of lawyers in Turkey who were facing reprisals for providing advice to their clients.

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<sup>74</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Mohammed Abbou Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (October 2006).

<sup>75</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Robert Amsterdam Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (16 August 2011).

### **Lawyers Defending Kurdish Minority**

188. Turkish lawyers who defend their client's civil and political rights in politically sensitive cases are subjected to judicial harassment. Defence lawyers representing imprisoned Kurdistan Workers Party ("PKK") leader, Abdullah Öcalan, have been particularly at risk. At least 68 lawyers have been the subject of more than one hundred criminal cases since 2005 that accuse them of violating Article 314 of the Turkish Penal Code ("TPC") and Articles 6 and 7 of the Anti- Terrorism Law ("ATL"), and of "complicity with a terrorist organisation."
189. In November and December 2011, a police operation aiming to dismantle an alleged terrorist network known as the Kurdish Communities Union started. The police operation targeted lawyers involved or believed to be providing legal services to Abdullah Öcalan. A total of 41 lawyers were arrested and subsequently charged as part of this police operation. Three persons employed by the accused lawyers were also arrested. The law offices and houses of the lawyers were searched. Confidential files were consulted by the police and some were sealed.
190. A total of 46 lawyers, including the lawyers previously detained, along with three legal workers and one journalist have been collectively charged and are being tried together. All the parties charged are either of Kurdish origin or represent clients in cases related to the Kurdish issue, and the accusations and charges are all founded on the legal representation of Abdullah Öcalan.
191. On November 26, 2011, the lawyers were brought before the court. Thirty-three of the detained lawyers were refused a provisional release. The others were released. However, the public prosecutor objected to the provisional release of lawyers, Mehmet Ayata and Mahmut Alinak. The court issued detention orders and these lawyers were re-arrested on December 8, 2011. Mehmet Sabir Tas, who was abroad when the arrests occurred, was arrested and detained when he

went to the public prosecutor to give his statement on November 30, 2011. On December 8, 2011, 36 lawyers and one journalist were still in custody.<sup>76</sup>

### **Lawyers Denouncing Repression**

192. More than 50 lawyers were arrested on June 11, 2013 for protesting at Caglayan Justice Palace to denounce the repression of the Occupy Gezi protestors. Reportedly, many of the lawyers were beaten and kicked on the ground by police and their clothes were torn.<sup>77</sup> Increasingly, lawyers in Turkey are being harassed for their advocacy and exercising their right to freedom of expression.

### **United Arab Emirates**

193. The Law Society intervened in September 2012 and July 2013 on behalf of lawyers working in the United Arab Emirates ("UAE").

### **Mohamed 'Abdullah al-Roken, Dr. Mohamed al-Mansoori and Salem al-Shehi**

194. Dr. Mohamed 'Abdullah al-Roken acted as defence counsel for five UAE residents who were arrested in April 2011 for posting articles on an online forum that were critical of the UAE government and called for political reform. In retaliation, he was prevented from lecturing at University of Al Ain. On July 17, 2012, as Dr. al-Roken was driving to the police station in Dubai to tell the police that his son and brother-in law were missing, he was arrested by authorities. He learned that both his son and brother-in-law had also been detained.
195. Dr. Mohamed al-Mansoori is the former head of the UAE Jurists' Association. He was fired from his position as legal advisor to the government of Ras Al Khaimah in January 2012 after he criticized restrictions on freedom of speech in the UAE during a television interview. He has been barred from traveling since October 2007 and the government has refused to renew his passport. On July 16, 2012,

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<sup>76</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 25 October 2012) at 196 – 198.

<sup>77</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Turkey: Lawyers Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (June 2013).

Dr. al-Mansoori left the house to run an errand when he was approached by plainclothes officers and taken into custody. Afterwards, 25 to 28 officers searched his house and seized laptops, an iPad and papers.

196. Salem al-Shehhi, a lawyer, was arrested on July 18, 2012, when he went to the State Security Prosecutor's office to ask about his clients, Dr. al-Mansoori and Dr. al-Roken.<sup>78</sup>

### **Human Rights Lawyers Speaking Out**

197. The Law Society intervened on behalf of 94 lawyers, activists and human rights defenders. Since March 4, 2013, 94 government critics, many of them lawyers, have been on trial for violating the Penal Code provision which prohibits founding, organizing, or operating a group that aims to overthrow the country's political system. Approximately 60 of those arrested are connected to the Reform and Social Guidance Association (al-Islah), a peaceful group that advocates for greater adherence to Islamic precepts. At least 64 of the defendants were arrested and held in undisclosed locations for up to a year prior to the trial, some in extended periods of solitary confinement. Reports indicate that at least some of them had also been subjected to torture and ill-treatment while in custody. Many of the defendants were also denied legal assistance for several months, and when they eventually did see a lawyer, it was done so in the presence of a representative of the State Security Prosecutor, contrary to Emirati law and international fair trial standards.
198. Independent observers and international media were barred from attending the trial, which has been plagued by allegations of unfairness and a lack of due process. The lawyers for the defendants further identified that their case files had

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<sup>78</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "United Arab Emirates Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (September 2012).

been tampered with. Relatives of the defendants were also barred from attending the trial. If convicted, the defendants could face up to 15 years imprisonment.<sup>79</sup>

## Vietnam

### Nguyen Van Dai and Le Thi Cong Nhan

199. The Law Society intervened on the behalf of Nguyen Van Dai and Le Thi Cong Nhan in August 2007. Both these lawyers were known for defending protestors. On November 13, 2006, Nguyen Van Dai, reported that he had been interrogated by police for days in the run up to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Summit which was held in Hanoi, Vietnam, in November 2006. The next day, ten security police officers surrounded Nguyen Van Dai's home and posted signs marked 'No Foreigners.' He was prohibited from having visitors until the last day of the Summit.
200. Prior to his arrest in March 2007, Nguyen Van Dai started the blog "the Reporters without Borders Blog" where he posted his essay on political parties. On March 6, 2007, security forces raided his home and arrested him for "conducting propaganda against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam".<sup>80</sup>
201. On May 11, 2007, Nguyen Van Dai and Le Thi Cong Nhan, a lawyer and spokesperson for the Progression Party, were sentenced in the Ha Noi People's Court. Nguyen Van Dai was sentenced to 5 years in prison and 4 years house arrest. Le Thi Cong Nhan was sentenced to 4 years in prison and 3 years house arrest, for "spreading propaganda against the State".

## Zimbabwe

202. The Law Society intervened to promote the rule of law in Zimbabwe on July 26, 2001. The intervention was made shortly following the release of the *International*

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<sup>79</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 27 June 2013).

<sup>80</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Nguyen Van Dai and Le Thi Cong Nhan Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (7 August 2007).

*Bar Association Report on Zimbabwe – 2001*, which outlined the results of a fact finding mission organized by the Human Rights Institute of the International Bar Association. Since then, the Law Society has intervened on behalf of Beatrice Mtetwa and Arnold Tsunga.

### **Beatrice Mtetwa**

203. Beatrice Mtetwa is a human rights lawyer and the former president of the Law Society of Zimbabwe. She also represented Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, Zimbabwean President Mugabe's main political rival.
204. On March 17, 2013, Beatrice Mtetwa was arrested while attempting to assist her clients. The arrest took place on the day following Zimbabwe's constitutional referendum. The new constitution would curb the powers of the president and limit presidential power to two five-year terms. Both Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and his rivals were in favour of the new constitution.
205. The day after the referendum, police arrested four senior aides of President Mugabe's main political rival, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai. When Beatrice Mtetwa was called to the home of Prime Minister Tsvangirai's chief legal advisor, where police were conducting a search, she was arrested and charged with "obstructing or defeating the course of justice". Beatrice Mtetwa asked the police officers to produce a search warrant and an inventory list of items that had been removed by the police. Officers accused her of trying to photograph security officers. She was handcuffed and forced into a police vehicle. Reports also state that police confiscated her mobile phone, which contains privileged solicitor-client information.
206. On March 25, 2013, a high court judge finally decided to grant bail to Beatrice Mtetwa under three conditions: that she post a \$500 bail, that she reside at a given address and that she not interfere with the ongoing investigations.

According to reports, at 1:40 p.m. on March 25, 2013, Beatrice Mtetwa was finally released from prison.<sup>81</sup>

### **Arnold Tsunga**

207. The Law Society has followed Arnold Tsunga's career. He is the recipient of the Human Rights Watch award in 2006. In March 2007, the Law Society invited Arnold Tsunga, then Executive Director of the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and Acting Executive Secretary of the Law Society of Zimbabwe, to make a presentation at the Law Society on the rule of law in Zimbabwe.
208. Arnold Tsunga met with the directors of the Law Society. The Law Society agreed to collaborate with the Law Society of Zimbabwe to assist it in strengthening its self-regulation capabilities and the independence of the legal profession in Zimbabwe.
209. As a human rights lawyer, Arnold Tsunga helped document human rights abuses in Zimbabwe and has brought them to the attention of the international community. He worked for the International Commission of Jurists and was elected a member of the Zimbabwean parliament in 2013.
210. Zimbabwean police arrested Arnold Tsunga around July 20, 2013. He was running for the Movement for Democratic Change of Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai in the eastern city of Mutare. He was detained at Dangamvura police station along with his campaign team for allegedly holding an unauthorised rally. Police have stated their intention to transfer Arnold Tsunga and his colleagues to Mutare Central Police Station. The Law Society of Zimbabwe has also indicated that another Movement for Democratic Change activist and lawyer, Jacob Mafume, was barred from holding a campaign rally in a Harare suburb.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 25 April 2013) at 390 – 392.

<sup>82</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Arnold Tsunga Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (July 2013).

### ***Advocating For Prisoners of Conscience***

211. Prisoners of conscience are confronted by systemic barriers to accessing justice. These individuals are imprisoned because of the non-violent expression of their consciously held beliefs. Other times they are imprisoned because of their race, sexual orientation, religion or political views.

### **Equatorial Guinea**

#### **Fabián Nsue Nguema**

212. In November 22, 2012, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Fabián Nsue Nguema, a prominent lawyer and human rights defender. He has acted as defense counsel for a number of political opponents and prisoners of conscious. He is also a leading member of Unión Popular (“UP”), a political party that monitors and exposes human rights violations.<sup>83</sup>
213. In March 2004, he represented a group of people accused of attempting a coup. He also represented Simon Mann, a British citizen who was jailed in 2008 for plotting to overthrow the President. He was defence counsel for four UP members who were accused of having attacked the Presidential Palace in February 2009.
214. Throughout his representation of prisoners of conscience, Fabián Nsue Nguema has been harassed, detained and arrested. In April 2002, he was arrested on his way to defend a group of political prisoners. A few months later, he was arrested and tried for defaming the President and given a one year prison sentence. In June 2005, the Bar Association in Equatorial Guinea arbitrarily suspended his license alleged misconduct. The International Bar Association issued a statement in July 2005 stating they believed Fabián Nsue Nguema’s disbarment was politically motivated.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 22 November 2012) at 74 – 76.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

215. On October 22, 2012, Fabián Nsue Nguema received a call from the Inspector general of National Security notifying him he could visit an imprisoned client, Augustin Nzogo, who was connected to a non-governmental organization called Transparency International France. While at the prison, he disappeared. Later authorities confirmed he was in prison. Fabián Nsue Nguema has not been charged. He has no access to his lawyer or his family.<sup>85</sup>

## Iran

### **Saleh Kamrani**

216. The Law Society intervened in February 2007 on behalf of Saleh Kamarani, an Iranian Azerbaijani lawyer who was harassed, arrested and imprisoned by Iranian authorities. Saleh Kamrani represented a number of Iranian Azerbaijanis who have been detained in connection with their political or cultural activities and has defended members of other ethnic groups. He defended high profile prisoners of conscience such as Iranian Arab writer Yusuf Azizi Bani Torof and Persian human rights defender Mohsen Sazegara.
217. Iranian security forces have continually harassed Saleh Kamrani. He has been threatened with arrest. His telephone conversations, correspondence and contacts were monitored. He was interrogated and threatened by security officials whenever he left or returned to Iran, was been prevented from leaving Iran on several occasions, and has also been detained.
218. On June 14, 2006, as Saleh Kamrani left his office to give an interview, he was accosted by three plain-clothes men. They handcuffed him and forced him into their car. He was then taken to Evin prison and neither his family nor his lawyer was notified. Four days later, the Ministry of Intelligence acknowledged Saleh Kamrani 's detention.

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<sup>85</sup> *Supra* note 83.

219. While in prison, he was held in solitary confinement and subjected to psychological torture. He spent 97 days in solitary confinement. He went on a hunger strike for seven days.<sup>86</sup>

### **Nasser Zarafshan**

220. Lawyer Nasser Zarafshan's ongoing detention prompted the Law Society to intervene on his behalf in February 2007. He was imprisoned in Evin prison since August 2002 and released in March 2007.

221. Nasser Zarafshan is a human rights lawyer, an author and a translator. He is a distinguished member of the Iranian Writers' Association, Kanoon, a member of the Committee on Serial Killings in Iran and a member of the Iranian Bar Association. He represented families of two Iranian writers who were assassinated in November 1998. Nasser Zarafshan was charged with publishing information about the assassinations in December 2000 and was imprisoned. In February of 2002, he was tried in a closed door military court. While in prison he was severely beaten.<sup>87</sup>

### **Abdolfattah Soltani**

222. Abdolfattah Soltani is a well-known Iranian human rights lawyer. He represents the family of Zahra Kazemi, an Iranian-Canadian photojournalist murdered in Iran. In October 2003, the Iranian Parliament released its inquiry into the death of Zahra Kazemi and concluded that Saeed Mortazavi, Prosecutor General of Tehran, and other members of the judiciary were directly involved in her death.
223. On July 27, 2005, two warrants were issued for his arrest. Abdolfattah Soltani was charged with releasing "secret and classified national intelligence information" in connection with his work defending an espionage case. He was arrested on July 30, 2005 when he took part in a sit-in protest at the Bar of

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<sup>86</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Saleh Kamrani Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (February 2007).

<sup>87</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Nasser Zarafshan Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (February 2007).

Tehran. When he was imprisoned, he was held in solitary confinement for three months.

224. After seven months in prison, Abdolfattah Soltani was released temporarily following a bail hearing. His bail had originally been set at 8 billion Rials (about \$870,000 US), an amount that far exceeded normal bail requirements, but it was later reduced to 1 billion Rials (about \$109,504 US) due to pressure from his lawyers. On April 5, 2006, Abdolfattah Soltani appeared in court for the first time. Leading up to his trial, his lawyers were barred from accessing his case file. In addition to the charge of espionage, he was also charged with 'insulting the regime', "propaganda against the regime", and 'acting against national security'.
225. On July 16, 2006, Iran's Revolutionary Court acquitted him of espionage but convicted him of "disclosing confidential documents" and sentenced him to four years in prison. He was also convicted of 'propaganda against the system' and given an additional one year prison sentence.
226. As a human rights lawyer, Abdolfattah Soltani represented Akbar Ganji, during the journalist's imprisonment and long hunger strike. He also represented the imprisoned Iranian-American academic Haleh Esfandiari.<sup>88</sup>

### **Shirin Ebadi**

227. In June 2008, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Shirin Ebadi, who was awarded the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize for her work promoting women's rights, children's rights and refugee rights.
228. In April 2008, Shirin Ebadi received death threats aimed at curtailing her human rights work. As a renowned human rights lawyer, she advocated on behalf of dissidents of the Iranian regime, and religious minorities such as the Baha'is. She

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<sup>88</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Abdolfattah Solanti Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (February 2007).

was defence counsel in various child abuse cases and provided legal representation in censorship.

229. She often represented prisoners of conscience and their families. She represented the family of Dariush Forouhar, a dissident intellectual and politician who was found stabbed to death at his home. She also represented the family of Ezzat Ebrahim-Nejad, who was killed in the Iranian student protests in July 1999. Finally, Shirin Ebadi also represented the family of murdered Canadian-Iranian photojournalist, Zahra Kazemi.<sup>89</sup>

## **Kyrgyzstan**

### **Tahir Asanov**

230. The Law Society intervened in November 2010 on behalf of Tahir Asanov, who was defending an Uzbek man charged with killing the driver of a murdered police chief in June 2010. Violence erupted between Uzbek and ethnic Kyrgyz people which lead to the displacement of about 400,000 people in June 2010.
231. During a trial hearing on September 30, 2010, Tahir Asanov called for an inquiry into allegations that his client, along with others, was assaulted while in custody. After the hearing, Tahir Asanov was beaten outside the courthouse. Although police were present at the scene, they failed to intervene. Moreover, the Prosecutor General's Office claims that all necessary security measures were taken to protect Tahir Asanov.<sup>90</sup>

## **Syria**

### **Anwar al-Bunni**

232. The Law Society intervened several times on behalf of Anwar al-Bunni, who is a lawyer and founding member of the Syrian Human Rights Association. He is also the head of the Committee for the Defence of Prisoners of Conscience.

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<sup>89</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Shirin Ebadi Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (27 June 2008).

<sup>90</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Tahir Asanov Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (29 November 2010).

233. In 2006, the Law Society first intervened when Anwar al-Bunni was arrested after signing the *Beirut-Damascus Declaration*. This petition, drawn up by 274 Syrian and Lebanese human rights activists, asked Syria to improve its diplomatic relations with Lebanon by respecting Lebanon's independence and sovereignty. He was charged with “undermining national pride”, “incitement to racial and sectarian hatred”, and “slander of public administrative and governmental bodies”<sup>91</sup>
234. In 2008, the Law Society intervened again over the treatment of Anwar al-Bunni while in detention and the lack of due process at his trial. He was prevented from talking to his lawyer. He was targeted in prison and was not allowed to receive food, clothes or books, and refused access to the prison library.<sup>92</sup>
235. Anwar al-Bunni represented many Syrian prisoners of conscience including: Riad al-Turk, Riad Seif, the owner of the independent newspaper *The Lamplighter*, Kurdish protestors and Damascus Spring activist Aref Dalila.

### **Muhannad al-Hassani**

236. In February 2010, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Syrian lawyer Muhannad al-Hassani. His work centered on defending Syrian political prisoners and exposing abuses in the Supreme State Security Court (“SSSC”), a special tribunal that handles politically sensitive cases and is not bound by a code of procedure. Although Muhannad al-Hassani was not representing a specific client at the proceedings, he attended and documented the SSSC proceedings. He was then charged with “weakening national sentiment” and “spreading false information” and arrested. Muhannad al-Hassani was both imprisoned and disbarred.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, “Anwar Al-Bunni Letter of Intervention and Public Statement” (27 November 2006).

<sup>92</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, “Anwar Al-Bunni Letter of Intervention and Public Statement” (29 March 2008).

<sup>93</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, “Muhannad al-Hassani Letter of Intervention and Public Statement” (2 February 2010).

### **Khalil Ma'touq**

237. In July 2013, Khalil Ma'touq's ongoing imprisonment prompted the Law Society to intervene on his behalf. Khalil Ma'touq is a prominent human rights lawyer in Syria and Executive Director of the Syrian Centre for Legal Studies and Research. He provided legal services to victims of human rights violations in Syria, including the defense of hundreds of political prisoners, prisoners of conscience and journalists.
238. On October 2, 2012, Khalil Ma'touq, his assistant Mohammed Thatha and a friend left his home to go work. Khalil Ma'touq and Mohammed Thatha did not arrive for work. They disappeared. Since then, their families have been unable to obtain any information about their whereabouts. Although Syrian law only allows detention for the purposes of investigation for a maximum period of sixty days, Khalil Ma'touq has been in detention for more than 240 days. The ongoing silence of Syrian authorities heightens worries that the men are being subjected to torture. In late May 2013, people close to Khalil Ma'touq and Mohammed Thatha received a tip indicating that Khalil Ma'touq was indeed in detention and that his health was deteriorating. It is unknown whether Khalil Ma'touq is receiving any medical care for his lung condition.
239. The arbitrary arrest and detention of Khalil Ma'touq is part of a widespread pattern of enforced disappearance and repression of lawyers in Syria. It is estimated that at least 37 lawyers are currently detained in Syria. Since anti-government protests erupted in March 2011, upwards of 1,300 individuals have reportedly died in custody, and many more have been subjected to torture and ill-treatment in Syrian detention centres and prisons. Several human rights organizations have condemned Syria's ongoing persecution, harassment and imprisonment of human rights lawyers who are engaged in legitimate, peaceful legal duties and human rights work.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Khalil Ma'touq Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (9 July 2013).

## **Razan Zaitouneh**

240. Razan Zaitouneh is an award-winning human rights lawyer and writer who was abducted along with her husband, Wa'el Hamada, and two colleagues, Nazem Hamadi and Samira Khalil, by unknown individuals from a joint office of the Violations Documentation Centre ("VDC") and the Local Development and Small Projects Support ("LDSPS") in the Damascus suburb of Douma. (Douma is located in Eastern Ghouta, an area under the control of a number of armed opposition groups that is being besieged by government forces.) The VDC is an independent non-governmental organization that documents human rights abuses committed by the Syrian government. The LDSPS provides humanitarian assistance.
241. In 2011, Razan Zaitouneh was forced into hiding after receiving threats from the Syrian authorities. In recent months, she has received threats from at least one armed opposition group in Eastern Ghouta had.
242. Razan Zaitouneh has won several awards for her human rights work, including the 2013 International Women of Courage Award and the 2011 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. She largely defends political prisoners. Razan Zaitouneh is a co-founder of both the VDC and the LDSPS.<sup>95</sup>

## **Vietnam**

### **Le Quoc Quan**

243. The Law Society intervened on behalf of Le Quoc Quan in February 2013, after learning he was subjected to arbitrary arrests, ongoing surveillance and harassment as a result of his human rights work. Le Quoc Quan writes a popular blog about human rights abuses. In 2007, Le Quoc Quan was disbarred following his return to Vietnam from the United States.

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<sup>95</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Razan Zaitouneh Public Statement" (February 2014).

244. On December 27, 2012, Le Quoc Quan was arrested while dropping his daughter off at school. The police advised his family that he would be charged under Article 161 of the Criminal Code, which relates to tax evasion.
245. On August 2012, Le Quoc Quan was beaten by two unidentified men with iron bars outside his home in Hanoi. In October 2012, security police and plain-clothed militia forced entry into the office of a firm that belongs to Le Quoc Quan and his two brothers. Police allegedly seized files and documents belonging to the firm, assaulted the staff and detained the brothers for interrogation. They returned at a later date and arrested Le Quoc Quan's brother, Le Dinh Quan, who is currently detained in Hoa Lo Prison No. 3.
246. On October 2, 2013, Le Quoc Quan was convicted. The entire trial took one day. He was sentenced to 30 months in prison and fined 1.2 billion dong (approximately \$59,000 USD), which was levied against the company where he is a director. The Hanoi Appeal Court upheld his conviction on February 18, 2014. Le Quoc Quan's conviction is believed to be politically motivated and intended to prevent him from continuing his legitimate human rights work.

## **Venezuela**

### **Daniel Wilkinson**

247. The Law Society intervened on November 7, 2008, after learning of the apprehension and deportation of lawyer Daniel Wilkinson, an American national and Managing Director of the Americas division at Human Rights Watch.
248. Daniel Wilkinson's deportation from Venezuela followed the release of a report by Human Rights Watch, entitled *A Decade under Chavez, Political Intolerance and Lost Opportunities for Advancing Human Rights in Venezuela*. He co-authored the report along with José Miguel Vivanco. Daniel Wilkinson's deportation is considered as

"evidence of the Venezuelan authorities' lack of tolerance for all forms of dissenting voices" and is linked to his work as a human rights lawyer.<sup>96</sup>

## Judges

### ***Advocating For Judicial Independence***

249. The judicial system cannot be subject to political pressures or influence. Citizens looking to the courts for remedies and justice must be confident the judiciary is free and independent.

## Egypt

### **Hisham Bastawissi and Ashraf El-Baroudi**

250. Human rights violations against judges in Egypt are not uncommon. In March 2008, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Justice Hisham Bastawissi and Justice Ashraf El-Baroudi, On February 7, 2008, reports indicated that restrictions had been placed on the freedom of movement of judges Hisham Bastawissi and Ashraf El-Baroudi. They were invited to attend a meeting on the independence of the judiciary organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network in Brussels from February 9 to 11, 2008. This event included a public seminar to be held at the European Parliament where both judges were expected to attend and speak. However, Egyptian authorities prohibited them from traveling.<sup>97</sup>

## Nauru

### **Magistrates**

251. On January 19, 2014, Peter Law's, the Chief Magistrate and Supreme Court Register of Nauru, employment was terminated. The police then took him into custody and to the airport where he was deported. The Chief Justice of Nauru,

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<sup>96</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Daniel Wilkinson Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (7 November 2008).

<sup>97</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Hisham Bastawissi and Ashraf El-Baroudi Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (March 2008).

Geoffrey Eames, issued an injunction preventing the removal of Peter Law from his position as Chief Magistrate and Supreme Court Register of Nauru. In response, Nauru's government revoked the visa of the Chief Justice and barred him from entering Nauru.

252. Both the removal and deportation of Peter Law and the revocation of the visa of the Chief Justice are linked to their administration and adjudication of asylum seeker cases. Prior to his removal and deportation, Peter Law was scheduled to hear the direction hearings of about 40 to 60 asylum seekers charged with rioting in 2013. As well, the revocation of the visa of Chief Justice Eames follows his issuance of an injunction stopping the Nauru government from removing and deporting Peter Law.<sup>98</sup>

## **Spain**

### **Justice Baltasar Garzón**

253. The Law Society intervened on behalf of Justice Baltasar Garzón in April 2012. He was convicted of abuse of power on February 9, 2012 as a result of his involvement in a high-profile corruption case. Justice Garzón ordered that the monitoring of the conversations between detainees and their lawyers should be an exception to the rule protecting attorney-client privilege.
254. This is not the first time that Justice Garzón has been the subject of a criminal prosecution as a result of discharging his duties as a judge. Justice Garzón was recently acquitted of abuse of power for ordering an investigation of Franco-era human rights abuses.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup>Law Society of Upper Canada, "Nauru Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (February 2014).

<sup>99</sup>Law Society of Upper Canada, "Justice Baltasar Garzón Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (30 April 2012).

## Sri Lanka

### Madam Justice Shirani Bandaranayake

255. In January 2013, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Madam Justice Shirani Bandaranayake, former Chief Justice of Sri Lanka. Justice Bandaranayake, the first female Chief Justice of Sri Lanka, was appointed on May 18, 2011. In October 2012, a parliamentary motion to impeach her was submitted.
256. President Mahinda Rajapaksa's United People's Freedom Alliance party had enough seats for the impeachment to succeed. The government declined to give full details of why it was moving against Justice Bandaranayake, but government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said Chief Justice Bandaranayake 's behaviour and conduct in the past year had "affected the sovereignty of the people", without giving further details. Critics say the move is evidence of the ruling party's attempt to stifle the courts' independence.
257. A large crowd gathered outside the Supreme Court in November 2012 denouncing what they see as President Rajapakasa's intention to cut the judiciary down. In October 2012, a judge was assaulted by a gang in Colombo after publicly saying that the government was putting direct pressure on the judiciary. Chief Justice Bandaranayake came under fire after delaying passage of a key bill, which would place previously devolved development funds under the minister of economic development, who is also one of the president's brothers. In December, a Parliamentary Select Committee found Chief Justice Bandaranayake guilty of professional misconduct, unexplained wealth and misuse of power.
258. Reports indicate that the case against Chief Justice Bandaranayake is part of a pattern of attacks and threats against members of the judiciary and lawyers and interference in their work. The steps that were taken towards impeaching the

Chief Justice appear to be the culminating point of a series of attacks against the judiciary for asserting its independence.<sup>100</sup>

## Venezuela

### Justice Maria Lourdes Afiuni

259. The Law Society has intervened on behalf of Justice Maria Lourdes Afiuni in June 2010, January 2012 and July 2013. Justice Afiuni's case first gained international attention when she was arrested by Venezuelan intelligence officers, on December 9, 2009, after ordering the conditional release pending trial of Eligio Cedeño. Cedeño's detention was declared arbitrary in September 2009 by the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, which cited violations of his right to a fair trial.<sup>101</sup>
260. Justice Afiuni released Cedeño because he had been in pre-trial detention for nearly three years, which was in violation of a two-year limit prescribed by Venezuelan law. As a result, Justice Afiuni was charged with corruption, being an accessory to escape, criminal conspiracy and abuse of power. In addition to these charges, she has been denied a public defender. Appearing before Government officials and broadcast on national television and radio, Venezuelan President, Hugo Chávez, demanded that Justice Afiuni be sentenced to a 30-year prison term, even if new legislation was required to achieve that result. He also suggested that he had instructed the Attorney General and the President of the Supreme Court to punish Justice Afiuni as severely as possible to prevent similar actions by other judges.<sup>102</sup>
261. Justice Afiuni was imprisoned. She was given a conditional release by the Tribunal 17 de Juicio de Caracas on June 14, 2013. Reports indicate that her

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<sup>100</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation* (January 24, 2013) by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 24 January 2013) at 324 – 26.

<sup>101</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Justice Afiuni Letters of Intervention and Public Statements" (June 2010, January 2012 and July 2013).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

conditional release was granted on health grounds, following a request from the Attorney General.

### ***Promoting the Rule of Law***

262. The rule of law is fundamental to creating an environment for peace, liberty and freedom. It is the foundation upon which the judicial system is built.

## **Colombia**

### **Judge Diego Fernando Escobar Munera**

263. The growing violence against judges prompted the Law Society to intervene on behalf of Justice Diego Fernando Escobar Munera who was murdered in broad day light in the city of Medellin while waiting for a taxi. Justice Munera spent 19 years in the judiciary. He was known for his transparency, honesty and dedication to justice. His death was linked to the systematic targeting of judges.<sup>103</sup>

## **Pakistan**

### **Asma Jahangir**

264. On July 3, 2012, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Asma Jahangir, a prominent human rights lawyer. Persons within Pakistan's military and intelligence agencies plotted to kill her. As an advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and President of Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan, Asma Jahangir tirelessly promotes the rule of law. She established an independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and AGHS Legal Aid, the first free legal aid centre in Pakistan.

265. In addition, she was the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Arbitrary and Summary Executions from 1998 to 2004 and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief from 2004 to 2010. Asma Jahangir acted as a defence lawyer for Husain Haqqani, Pakistan's ambassador

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<sup>103</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Justice Munera Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (3 June 2010).

to the United States who was forced to resign by the Pakistani military. She was targeted because of her human rights work and dedication to promoting the rule of law in Pakistan.<sup>104</sup>

### **Challenging Corruption**

266. When judges challenge corruption, they are working to ensure the efficacy and integrity of the judicial system. There can be no access to justice if the judicial system is corrupt.

## **Brazil**

### **Threats against Brazilian Judges**

267. In November 2011, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Brazilian judges who face threats of violence, attempted assassinations, disappearances and assassination. Many of Brazil's judges are working under a climate of intimidation and insecurity. Justice Patricia Aicoli was murdered by masked assailants. She was shot 21 times in front of her home in Niteroi, Rio de Janeiro. Her murder is reported to be in retaliation for her adjudication in the trials and convictions of members of the "Milicias" and in particular the murder investigation of an 18 year-old man that involved several police officers. Justice Aicoli was known for her tough stance against police corruption.<sup>105</sup>

## **Pakistan**

### **Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali**

268. In July 2013, the Law Society sent a letter of intervention regarding the death of Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali, Chief Prosecutor and former Deputy Director of the Federal Investigation Agency ("FIA"). He was shot in his car by unidentified assailants, near his home in Islamabad.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Asma Jahangir Letters of Intervention and Public Statement" (3 July 2012).

<sup>105</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, "Judge Patricia Aicoli Letter of Intervention and Public Statement" (9 November 2011).

<sup>106</sup> Law Society of Upper Canada, *Report to Convocation*, by Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 27 June 2013) at 5 – 7.

269. Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali had a reputation for determinedly pursuing cases against suspects with powerful and sometimes militant connections, despite receiving repeated death threats. In his roles both as deputy director and chief prosecutor at the FIA, he was heavily involved with several high profile and dangerous prosecutions. He acted as the government's lead prosecutor in the 2008 terrorist attack in Mumbai, India, which killed 166 people. The investigation into this case involved a probe into several members of the Lashkar-e-Taiba militant group, which was ongoing at the time of his murder.
270. He was also leading the prosecution against suspects in the 2007 assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto. In connection with this case, the prosecutor was pursuing charges against several suspected Taliban militants, and had also recently ordered the arrest of former military ruler Pervez Musharraf. It is speculated in various news outlets that Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali's killing may be connected to his involvement in these two particularly high profile cases.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

## International Human Rights Advocates Expanding Access to Justice

271. Expanding access to justice is precarious work for many lawyers and judges in their countries. Tracking the whereabouts of human rights advocates and judges is difficult. Often these individuals go into hiding or have been disappeared. However, sometimes news reports or letters from the lawyers or judges families provide information into where the lawyers or judges are and how they are continuing their work of expanding access to justice.

### China

#### Chen Guangcheng

272. In 2006, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Chen Guangchen, the human rights lawyer who is blind, who is known for advocating for women's rights, land rights and the welfare of the poor. Today, he is living outside of China. After escaping China to the American Embassy in Beijing, Chen Guangchen has been living in the United States where he has been granted asylum. For one year, he was a fellow at New York University and is now a visiting fellow at the Catholic University of America.<sup>108</sup> He continues to lecture and speak out on human rights issues and the need for legal reform in support of China's vulnerable populations.

### Iran

#### Nasarin Sotoudeh

273. On January 13, 2013, Nasrin Sotoudeh, who was sentenced to a total of 11 years in prison and banned from both practicing law and leaving Iran for 20 years, was temporarily freed after spending more than two years in jail. She was reunited with her husband and two young children.<sup>109</sup> Nasarin Sotoudeh was among 11 political prisoners freed by the Iranian government. The year before,

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<sup>108</sup> "Chen Guangcheng, Famed Activist, Says Shen Yun is Inspiring" *Epoch Times* (14 April 2014), online: <<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/620930-chen-quangcheng-famed-activist-says-shen-yun-is-inspiring/>>.

<sup>109</sup> "Iran: Nasrin Sotoudeh 'among freed political prisoners'", *The BBC* (18 September 2013), online: <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-24151298>>.

she was awarded the European Parliament's 2012 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought.

274. On April 2, 2014, Iran's Intelligence Ministry summoned her in for questioning. This came days after a video of her voicing support for what she called "prisoners of conscience" was posted online. Nasarin Sotoudeh considers the summons to be illegal and has chosen not to comply at this time.<sup>110</sup>

### **Shirin Ebadi**

275. In June 2008, the Law Society intervened on behalf of Shirin Ebadi. Four years later, she was awarded a degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa* (LLD) by the Law Society during the June 15, 2012 Call to the Bar ceremony. Shirin Ebadi continues to speak out in defence of human rights and democracy.

## **Zimbabwe**

### **Beatrice Mtetwa**

276. In April 2013, The Law Society intervened on Beatrice Mtetwa's behalf. Beatrice Mtetwa, a prominent human rights lawyer and the former president of the Law Society of Zimbabwe, was arrested while attempting to assist her clients on March 17, 2013. She was released from prison on March 25, 2013.
277. In June 2013, she was tried for obstructing justice and being unruly to the police. Zimbabwe's prosecutors alleged that her shouting "'at the top of her voice,' saying what the police were doing was 'unconstitutional, illegal and unlawful,'" was preventing the police from doing their job. On November 26, 2013, the court dismissed the charges and stated that her presence did not prevent the police from doing their job.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> "Iranian rights lawyer summoned by ministry", *Saudi Gazette* (2 April 2014), online: <<http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentid=20140402200547>>.

<sup>111</sup> "Beatrice Mtetwa: Zimbabwe lawyer acquitted", *BBC News* (26 November 2013), online: <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-25105987>>.

## Responses to the Law Society's Interventions

278. From time to time, the Law Society receives responses to its intervention efforts.<sup>112</sup> Numerous lawyers from foreign countries have noted that public interventions from organizations such as the Law Society are helpful in informing the community that human rights violations of lawyers and judges do not go unnoticed.
279. The Law Society intervened in Justice Afiuni's case and received acknowledgements of the intervention. On December 9, 2009, Judge Maria Lourdes Afiuni was arrested by intelligence officers in Venezuela after ordering the conditional release pending trial of Eligion Cedeño. She was eventually committed to house arrest. The Law Society intervened in the case in May 2010 through a letter of intervention and a public statement. On December 13, 2011, a judge extended the measure of house arrest against Judge Afiuni by two years. The Law Society intervened again through a letter of intervention. There was a strong response to the Law Society's intervention. The public statement was released in newspapers in Venezuela and read on television. Justice Afiuni was also informed of the public statement and she expressed her gratitude for the Law Society intervention.
280. In 2012, the Law Society intervened in the case of lawyers in Myanmar who were disbarred as a result of their legitimate political and professional activities. These lawyers, who were reinstated to the practice of law, thanked the international community and the Law Society for their effort to assist them.

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<sup>112</sup> To date, the Law Society has received four responses from foreign authorities to its letters of intervention. The Law Society sent an intervention letter dated November 27, 2006, to the government of the Philippines expressing concern over reports of attacks and killings of lawyers in the Philippines. The Law Society received a reply dated February 14, 2007, from the National President of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, acknowledging receipt of the letter and thanking the Law Society for its concern. In February 2007, the Law Society sent a letter of intervention to the Georgian authorities in support of a lawyer who had been accused of corruption while he himself was investigating allegations of corruption in a prison. The Law Society received a reply dated March 28, 2007 from the Office of the Prosecutor General of Georgia assuring the Law Society that all necessary measures were being taken to ensure the interests of justice in this case. In 2011, the Law Society sent a letter of intervention to the President of the Republic of Colombia and received a letter indicating that the letter was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their consideration. In July 2013, the Law Society intervened in the case of two lawyers in Russia and received a response from the General Investigative Directorate of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation for the North Caucasus Federal District indicating that they were considering the matter.

281. The Law Society has intervened a number of times in the cases of human rights lawyers in Iran who are facing harassment, arrest and imprisonment as a result of their work. When Dr. Shirin Ebadi was at the Law Society, she indicated to then Treasurer Pawlitza the importance of the Law Society intervening in support of lawyers in Iran.
282. More recently, the Law Society interventions in support of Madam Justice Bandaranayake in Sri Lanka received considerable media attention and were positively received.
283. The Law Society also received a response from the Law Society of England and Wales regarding its intervention in 2014 in the cases of lawyers who represent the LGBTI community in Uganda and Nigeria. The Law Society of England and Wales indicates its concern over the matter and has stated that it will monitor the situation. The Law Society has also been thanked by lawyers for its intervention in the case.

TAB 6.2.3

## FOR INFORMATION

# EQUITY LEGAL EDUCATION AND RULE OF LAW SERIES CALENDAR Winter 2016 - Summer 2016

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT

**Date:** February 9, 2016

**Time and Location:**

Presentations: 5:30 to 7:15 p.m. in the Lamont Learning Centre\*

Reception: 7:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in Convocation Hall

\*This program is also available via simultaneous webcast

**Description:** The Law Society of Upper Canada and the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers (CABL) will be hosting their annual celebration in honour of Black History Month. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

Additional information about this event will be posted here shortly:

[www.lawsocietygazette.ca/events/](http://www.lawsocietygazette.ca/events/)

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENT

**Date:** March 8, 2016

**Time and Location:**

Panel Discussions: 4:00 to 6:00\* p.m. in the Lamont Learning Centre

Reception: 6:00 to 8:00\* p.m. in Convocation Hall

\*exact time to TBC

**Description:** The Law Society of Upper Canada, The Barbara Schlifer Clinic, The Women's Law Association of Ontario, The Women Lawyers' Forum of the Ontario Bar Association and the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund will be hosting their annual event in honour of International Women's Day. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

## **JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE**

**Date:** March 22, 2016

**Time and Location:** 5:00-7:00\* p.m. in Convocation Hall

\*exact time to TBC

**Description:** The Law Society of Upper Canada, the Ontario Bar Association and the Association of French Speaking Jurists of Ontario (AJEFO) will be hosting their annual event celebrating the International Day of the Francophonie. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

## **DIVERSE CAREERS FOR WOMEN IN LAW EVENT**

**Date:** April 19, 2016

**Time and Location:** 4:00-8:00\* p.m. Panel discussion and reception in Convocation Hall

\*exact time TBC

**Description:** The Women's Law Association of Ontario and the Law Society of Upper Canada will present their annual panel discussion and reception to promote diverse careers for women in the legal profession. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

## **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS EVENT**

**Date:** May 3, 2016

**Time and Location:**

Panel Discussion: 4:00 – 6:00\* p.m. in the Lamont Learning Centre

Reception: 6:00 – 8:00\* p.m. in Convocation Hall

\*exact time to TBC

**Description:** In honour of Mental Health Week, the Law Society will be hosting a panel discussion and reception focused on mental health and fostering wellness in the legal profession. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

## **HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY EVENT**

**Date:** May 5, 2016

**Time and Location:**

Panel Discussion: 4:00 – 6:00\* p.m. in the Lamont Learning Centre

Reception: 6:00 – 8:00\* p.m. in Convocation Hall

\*exact time to TBC

**Description:** The Law Society, the Human Rights League of B'nai Brith and the Canadian Race Relations Foundation will be hosting their annual event to commemorate Yom HaShoa, or Holocaust Remembrance Day. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

## **ASIAN AND SOUTH ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH EVENT**

**Date:** May 17 or 19, 2016 (TBC)

**Time and Location:**

Panel Discussion: 4:00 – 6:00\* p.m. in the Lamont Learning Centre

Reception: 6:00 – 8:00\* p.m. in Convocation Hall

\*exact time to TBC

**Description:** The Law Society, the Canadian Association of South Asian Lawyers, the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers and the South Asian Bar Association of Toronto will be hosting their annual event in celebration of Asian and South Asian Heritage Month. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

## **ACCESS AWARENESS EVENT**

**Date:** May 31, 2016

**Time and Location:**

4:00 – 8:00\* p.m. Panel discussion and reception in the Lamont Learning Centre

\*exact time to TBC

**Description:** The Law Society and the ARCH Disability Law Centre will be hosting their annual event in honour of Access Awareness Week. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

## **ABORIGINAL HISTORY MONTH EVENT**

**Date:** June 23, 2016 (TBC)

**Time and Location:**

Panel Discussion: 4:00 – 6:00\* p.m. in the Lamont Learning Centre

Reception: 6:00 – 8:00\* p.m. in Upper and Lower Barristers Lounges

\*exact time to TBC

**Description:** The Law Society will be hosting its annual event in honour of National Aboriginal History Month. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

## **PRIDE WEEK EVENT**

**Date:** June 28, 29, or 30, 2016 (TBC)

**Time and Location:**

Panel Discussion: 4:00 – 6:00\* p.m. in the Lamont Learning Centre

Reception: 6:00 – 8:00\* p.m. in Convocation Hall

\*exact time to TBC

Description: The Law Society and the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Section (SOGIC) of the Ontario Bar Association will be hosting their annual Pride Week discussion and reception. Additional details will follow closer to the event date.

**NOTE:** A number of the above events will also be available via simultaneous webcast. Additional information will be sent to benchers within 1-2 months of the event date, and will be posted here: <http://www.lawsocietygazette.ca/events/>