



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



International Commission of Jurists
2024 Annual Progress Report

Note from ICJ's Commissioners

In a year marked by intensifying threats to the rule of law—from the erosion of judicial independence and shrinking civic space to the resurgence of authoritarianism and impunity for gross human rights violations—the ICJ has remained a vital force for justice and accountability around the world.

Across all regions, we have witnessed governments continuing to undermine the independence of courts, intimidate lawyers and human rights defenders, and weaponize legal systems against marginalized communities. Yet, in the face of these mounting challenges, the ICJ has not wavered. The work that we have been able to do with ICJ staff throughout 2024 has contributed meaningfully to defending and advancing international justice. We supported victims of enforced disappearance in Southeast Asia through direct engagement and consultations; helped strengthen legal protections for survivors of torture; and advocated successfully for greater international cooperation on the prosecution of atrocity crimes, including through support for the Ljubljana-The Hague Convention.

From empowering lawyers in Central Asia with practical human rights training, to influencing global debates at the United Nations, the ICJ's impact continues to be both deep and far-reaching. As ICJ Commissioners, we remain committed to upholding human dignity, securing accountability, and reinforcing the foundations of the rule of law—no matter how turbulent the global context becomes.

Justice Azhar Cachalia	Africa South Africa	Ms Mikiko Otani	Asia Japan	Justice Tamara Morschakova	Europe Russia
Justice Moses Chinhengo	Africa Zimbabwe	Dame Silvia Cartwright	Asia New Zealand	Justice Egbert Myjer	Europe Netherlands
Ms Jamesina King	Africa Sierra Leone	Justice Ajit Prakash Shah	Asia India	Justice Stefan Trechsel	Europe Switzerland
Justice Qinisile Mabuza	Africa Eswatini	Justice Kalyan Shrestha	Asia Nepal	Prof. Fionnuala Ni Aolain	Europe Ireland
Justice Charles Mkandawire	Africa Malawi	Ms Ambiga Sreenivasan	Asia Malaysia	Dr Jarna Petman	Europe Finland
Justice Aruna Narain	Africa Mauritius	Mr Reed Brody	Americas United States	Professor Marco Sassòli	Europe Switzerland
Justice Lillian Tibatemwa-Ekirikubinza	Africa Uganda	Ms Catalina Botero	Americas Colombia	Ms Patricia Schulz	Europe Switzerland
Justice Carlos Ayala	Americas Venezuela	Professor José Luis Caballero Ochoa	Americas Mexico	Justice Marwan Tashani	MENA Libya
Mr Alejandro Salinas Rivera	Americas Chile	Ms Leilani Farha	Americas Canada	Ms Hadeel Abdel Aziz	MENA Jordan
Mr Wilder Taylor	Americas Uruguay	Professor Robert Goldman	Americas United States	Mr Marzen Darwish	MENA Syria
Dr Rodrigo Uprimny Yepes	Americas Colombia	Professor Juan Mendez	Americas Argentina	Mr Gamal Eid	MENA Egypt
Prof César Landa	Americas Peru	Professor Mónica Pinto	Americas Argentina	Ms Nahla Haidar El Addal	MENA Lebanon
Ms Claudia Paz y Paz	Americas Guatemala	Ms Chinara Aidarbekova	Europe Kyrgyzstan	Mr Shawan Jabarin	MENA Palestine
Professor Víctor Rodríguez Rescia	Americas Costa Rica	Sir Nicolas Bratza	Europe United Kingdom	Justice Kalthoum Kennou	MEN Tunisia
Prof Kyong-Wahn Ahn	Asia Republic of Korea	Justice Martine Comte	Europe France	Dr Fatsah Ouguergouz	MENA Algeria
Professor Adolfo Azcuna	Asia Philippines	Justice Radmila Dacic	Europe Serbia	Mr Michael Sfard	MENA Israel
Dr Elizabeth Biok	Asia Australia	Ms Gulnora Ishankhanova	Europe Uzbekistan		
Ms Hina Jilani	Asia Pakistan	Ms Asne Julsrud	Europe Norway		



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Executive Summary

Driving Justice Forward: ICJ's 2024 Impact

The International Commission of Jurists delivered results that promoted and protected the global architecture of justice and accountability. Operating across **36 countries** amid intensifying conflicts and shrinking civic space, we worked with **over 4221 justice sector stakeholders** (judges, lawyers, human rights defenders, survivors and policymakers) with interventions that produced measurable impact for victims, legal professionals, and human rights defenders.

Historic Breakthroughs - We supported a landmark victory for international justice with UN General Assembly approval for a treaty-drafting conference on Crimes Against Humanity—representing the **first progress toward a new universal human rights treaty in over two decades**. Our sustained advocacy also supported the establishment of the **UN Inquiries Branch** within the OHCHR, which builds directly on our extensive research and consultation.

Protecting Justice Actors Under Threat - Recognizing that independent courts and legal professionals are democracy's front line, we directly protected **67 individuals' fair trial rights** through strategic trial monitoring. We achieved groundbreaking institutional reforms in **Uzbekistan**, where we established the first international human rights law course in judicial training, ensuring all future judges receive human rights education. Our advocacy supported judges facing political persecution across multiple regions, and after many years, finally secured the transfer of detained Uyghurs from military to civilian detention in Thailand.

Advancing Global Standards - Our **8 March Principles** promoting a human rights-based approach to criminal law gained international traction, with UN Special Rapporteurs, government officials, and courts across four continents referencing them in official documents and decisions. Our **Practitioners' Guide on Human Rights-Based Criminal Law**, launched at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, now provides concrete tools for dismantling laws that criminalize poverty and status.

Transforming Legal Systems - Our work drove concrete legal and policy changes across regions. In **Nepal**, the parliament finally passed an amended Transitional Justice Act incorporating several ICJ-proposed amendments that strengthen protections-

for sexual violence survivors, although there is more work to be done. The **ICC Prosecutor cited five key ICJ arguments** in defending the Court's jurisdiction over Palestine. Courts in multiple countries—from Nepal's High Court upholding children's education rights to South Africa's Constitutional Court on military justice—adopted ICJ legal positions in landmark rulings.

Building Tomorrow's Legal Leaders - Through targeted capacity building, we equipped **over 1,800 lawyers, judges, and human rights defenders** with practical skills and international legal knowledge. Our Asia Regional Disability Rights conference brought together **120 participants from 15 countries**, and resulted in the **Kathmandu Declaration**, which is driving regional legal reform. Young lawyers we mentored in Nepal are now winning cases on education privatization - citing the Abidjan Principles.

Expanding Access to Justice - Our direct assistance reached those most in need: **26 victims of human rights violations** received legal support in Colombia, while **344 LGBTIQ+ violation cases** were documented and submitted to authorities in Sri Lanka. **Twelve strategic litigation submissions were adopted by courts**, creating precedents that protect vulnerable communities. The documentation networks we trained in **Afghanistan, Libya, and Myanmar** are now building evidence bases for future accountability processes.

Looking Ahead As we enter the final year of our 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, these achievements create powerful momentum for 2025. The Crimes Against Humanity treaty negotiations will begin, the UN Inquiries Branch will commence operations, and legal precedents we established will ripple through court systems worldwide.

The achievements over the year demonstrate that principled legal advocacy, combined with strategic partnerships and sustained engagement, can drive meaningful progress even in highly challenging times. Every legal precedent set, every judge protected, and every victim supported contributes to a more just world where the rule of law protects human dignity for all.



OVERVIEW OF ICJ'S 2024 RESULTS

REACH OF ICJ'S INTERVENTIONS

227

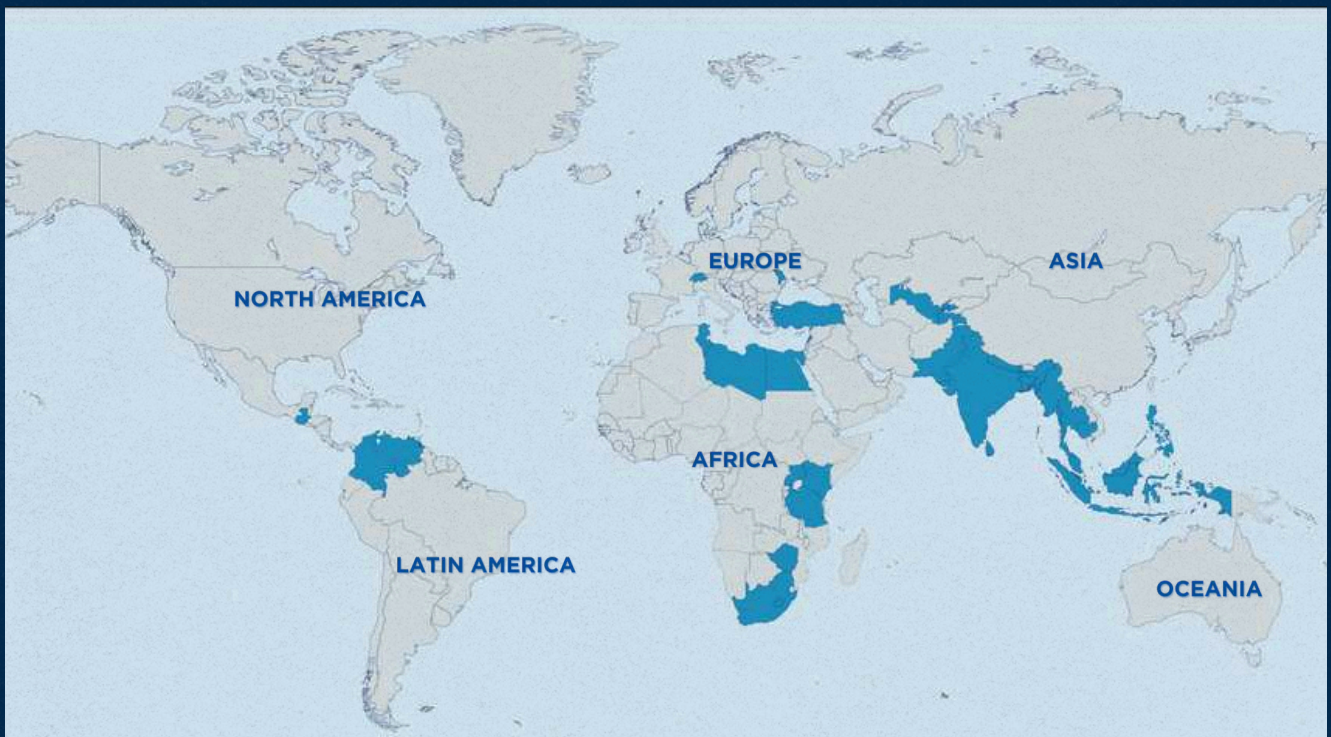
outputs were delivered by the ICJ globally and regionally in over 36 countries

(additional activities were implemented at global level and outside the scope of a project)

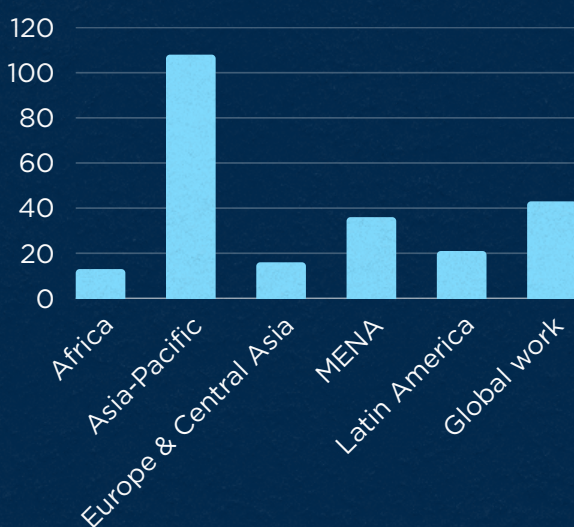
4,221

judges, prosecutors, lawyers, HRDs, civil society actors, public officials and others took part in ICJ's workshops and events

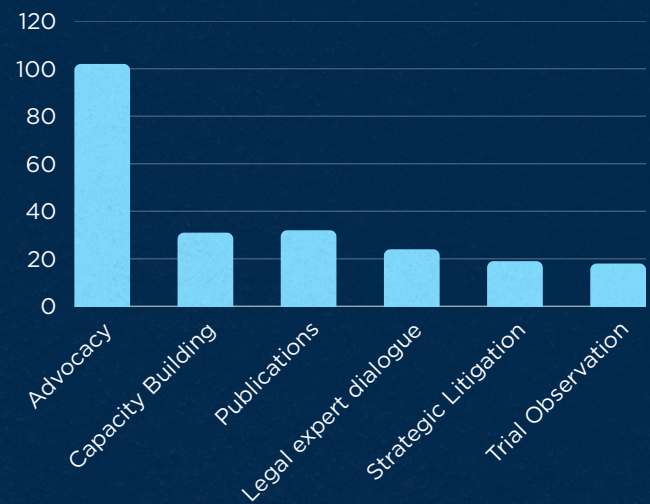
(including 50% of women)



OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES BY PROGRAMME



DIVERSITY OF WORKING METHODS USED TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS



2024 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

ANALYSIS FROM RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

GLOBAL TARGETS ACHIEVEMENTS

12

Indicators tracked at regional level and at global level

66%

of the targets achieved or exceeded

KEY RESULTS BY WORKING METHODS



Publications

67

ICJ publications have been used as advocacy tools to support, defend and strengthen institutions, instruments and standards on rule of law and human rights



Advocacy

20

Adoptions of ICJ recommendations to strengthen and defend national institutions, instruments and standards



Trial Observation

67

Individuals whose fair trial rights have been better protected through ICJ trial observation



Strategic Litigation

15

Litigation arguments submitted by the ICJ with international, regional and national courts and bodies that have been adopted



Capacity Building

93%

of target groups reported an enhanced understanding of international human rights law and international and regional mechanisms



Legal Expert Dialogue

92%

of legal experts targeted reported an enhanced environment to conduct their own legal work after the ICJ-moderated expert dialogue

A YEAR IN REVIEW

FEBRUARY

We participated in expert meetings linked to the UN Sixth Committee's special debates in support of a proposed treaty on Crimes against Humanity - this involvement helped the establishment of a treaty drafting conference.

APRIL

ECtHR passed a landmark ruling that Switzerland had failed to take adequate action to address climate change, supported by an ICJ and ICJ Switzerland third-party intervention. Publication of our No Will for Justice in Venezuela report on impunity in the Venezuelan prosecutor's office.

JUNE

South East Asia - We launched a new project on Strengthening Access to Justice and Effective Remedies for Gender-Based Violence in Lao PDR and supported a UN Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls on a mission to Thailand

JANUARY

South East Asia - We held a workshop in Chiang Mai for CSOs on international law to secure land rights. We submitted input to UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls' report on prostitution, focusing on Principle 17 of the 8 March Principles and applying international human rights law to the criminalization of sex work.

MARCH

We made a submission of the first-ever individual communication to the UN Human Rights Committee on behalf of Tunisian Judge Youssef Bouzakher, alleging rights violations following his arbitrary dismissal and prosecution.

MAY

Afghanistan - as part of a case building project, we trained documentation teams in the fundamentals of documenting human rights violations and international crimes.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

AUGUST

We submitted amicus curiae observations to the ICC, addressing its jurisdiction over alleged crimes committed by Israel in the State of Palestine, arguing that jurisdiction cannot be altered through external political arrangements. Nepal's Parliament passed amendments to the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, Truth and Reconciliation Act, incorporating several of ICJ's recommendations. We developed a briefing paper on this, urging the government to ensure a credible and victim-centric transitional justice process.

OCTOBER

Launch of the **Practitioners' Guide on Human Rights-Based Criminal Law** during a side event at the **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa**, following regional consultations on the decriminalization of poverty and status.

DECEMBER

We launched the report *Neither Comprehensive Judicial Elections nor Judicial Reform in Bolivia*, presenting findings to the Organization of American States Electoral Observatory Mission. In **Europe**, our *Justice Under Pressure* report highlighted the growing use of strategic litigation to safeguard judicial independence across the EU.

JULY

We held a technical roundtable on universal jurisdiction cases with Egyptian partner CSOs and participation from Commissioner Mazen Darwish, engaging with five victims willing to bring a case in European courts for acts of torture.

SEPTEMBER

We conducted a mission to Tajikistan, focusing on access to justice for women survivors of GBV. Our delegation included ICJ Commissioner Patricia Schulz, a former member of CEDAW, ICJ Secretary General Santiago Canton, and senior ICJ legal advisors. We hosted a side event on judicial independence in Mexico at the **UN Human Rights Council** with ICJ President Carlos Ayala.

NOVEMBER

We supported the Philippines' 1st National Summit on Environment and Sustainability, where 300 judges and lawyers discussed our proposed revisions to procedural rules for environmental cases. The UN Human Rights Committee issued its Concluding Observations on Pakistan's **second periodic review** on implementing Civil and Political Rights, **taking several of the ICJ's recommendations into consideration.**

MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

2024 KEY FIGURES



80 advocacy statements issued in 2024



20 k LinkedIn followers (31.4% more than in 2023)



An average of 1,000 daily users to www.icj.org

INCREASED TRAFFIC ON LINKEDIN



8,105 unique visitors on the ICJ LinkedIn page



509 k impressions



5,839 reactions and 101 shares

KEY AUDIENCE TARGETED ON OTHER PLATFORMS



More than 62.9k followers



More than 11 k followers



152 followers

15

PUBLICATIONS IN 2024

covering all the regional and global work. All published reports are available on the ICJ website.



SOURCE: ICJ MEDIA MONITORING TOOLS

Working with the Commissioners

In 2024, we mobilized the expertise of our Commissioners, national sections, and affiliates to across regions and thematic priorities

Justice Kalyan Shrestha delivered the keynote address during a regional workshop on access to justice for persons with disabilities, and played a prominent role in several regional initiatives, contributing to the Asia and Caribbean Consultation on a human rights-based approach to criminal law in Bangkok in September. He participated in four judicial dialogues in Nepal, focusing on the role of justice sector actors in implementing fundamental rights, particularly the right to remedy for victims of conflict-era human rights violations, and led sessions on transitional justice and the 8 March Principles.

Swiss Commissioner Patricia Schulz made a presentation on the 8 March Principles during the 33rd session of the UN Commission of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna, Austria, on the need to decriminalize conduct protected under international human rights law or whose criminal proscription is otherwise inconsistent with general principles of criminal law and international human rights law. She participated in the ICJ's research mission to Tajikistan on access to justice for survivors of gender-based violence and also provided global support for disseminating the 8 March Principles, alongside Commissioners Shrestha and Aruna Narain. Their efforts reached both high-level domestic audiences and international fora.

Commissioner Mikiko Otani delivered a virtual workshop in June for lawyers in Myanmar, focusing on the rights of children during states of emergency and armed conflict. Her session fostered a rich dialogue on addressing the accountability deficit for violations of children's rights. Her insights significantly deepened participants' understanding of international child rights frameworks, while also encouraging them to expand their approach beyond domestic legal remedies and consider the use of international accountability mechanisms.

A key added value of this engagement lies in its ability to bridge existing knowledge gaps and empower local legal practitioners and advocates to explore and utilize global tools for the protection of children's rights.

In a complementary effort, Commissioner Nahla Haidar provided strategic insights on leveraging international human rights mechanisms to demand accountability for violations of women's rights in Myanmar.

Commissioner Adolfo S. Azcuna was pivotal in helping foster the institutional relationship between the ICJ and the Supreme Court of the Philippines. As a former Justice of the Supreme Court, his efforts opened the door for collaboration and laid the groundwork for advancing shared goals, including upholding the right to a healthy environment and ensuring accountability for human rights violations through the judiciary. Justice Azcuna was present during the National Summit on Sustainability and Environmental Concerns as well as during one of the regional judicial dialogues. He also made a crucial contribution to the Ebru Timtik Award selection process, helping the committee reach consensus. He represented the ICJ at the International Fair Trial Day (IFTD) Congress and the award ceremony.



Commissioner Carlos Ayala - who took over the ICJ presidency in November - took part in a podcast and an online workshop session for EU lawyers on judicial independence as part of the Rule of Law for Lawyers Project. Alongside Commissioner Víctor Rodríguez Rescia, he participated in a Human Rights Council side event in Geneva, addressing constitutional reforms in Mexico related to judicial appointments.

Commissioner Rodrigo Uprimny co-authored the report *Reflexiones y recomendaciones sobre mecanismos de selección de altas autoridades judiciales en América Latina*, published in August. The report, supported by the ICJ, outlines international standards and recommendations for judicial selection processes, drawing on case studies from Bolivia, Colombia, and Guatemala.

Commissioner Asne Julsrud visited Guatemala in June to meet with members of the Guatemalan Association of Judges for Integrity and representatives of the executive and legislative branches, assessing challenges to judicial independence.

Commissioner Radmila Dragicevic Dacic took part in a mission to Montenegro and reviewed the subsequent report.

Commissioner Marco Sassoli took part in a co-organized event with TRIAL during the HRC June session on the proposed convention on crimes against humanity.

Commissioner Mazen Darwish remained actively involved in ICJ's work on accountability for Egypt and Libya, advising legal teams on Universal Jurisdiction (UJ) proceedings and strategic approaches. In July, the ICJ organized a technical roundtable on UJ cases and challenges. The session was joined by experts, including Commissioner Darwish who provided his experience in trying Syrian cases based on universal and extra-territorial jurisdiction. His participation contributed to the determination of concrete steps needed for the trial of Egyptian cases abroad.

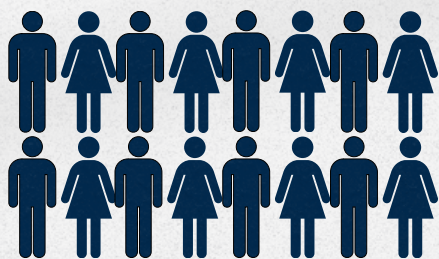
In Tunisia, Commissioner Martine Comte led expert dialogues on preserving judicial independence during times of crisis. She provided insight for participants on how to continue supporting one another in the context of conducting their judicial functions independently in the face of consistent executive interference and pressure.

We have continued to coordinate closely with ICJ sections, particularly those in Norway, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Italy, and the US. In September, a senior ICJ legal advisor presented along with members of ICJ Norway at a conference in Oslo on access to justice for persons with disabilities. We have a close relationship with the ICJ Switzerland through our Swiss Commissioner, Marco Sassoli, who is a member of both organizations, and we are partnering with the Dutch and Austrian sections on EU-funded projects providing capacity building on migration-related issues within the EU.



STRATEGIC GOAL 1 AT A GLANCE

DEFEND AND STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, INSTRUMENTS
AND STANDARDS ON RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS



130

judges, prosecutors, lawyers
and other actors participated
in activities on this topic

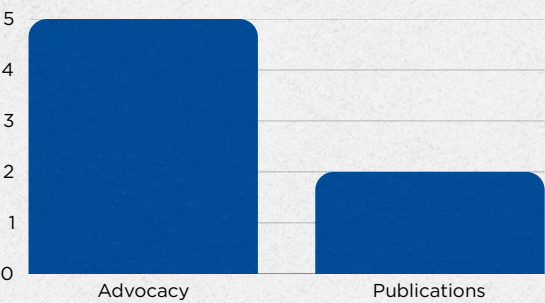


31

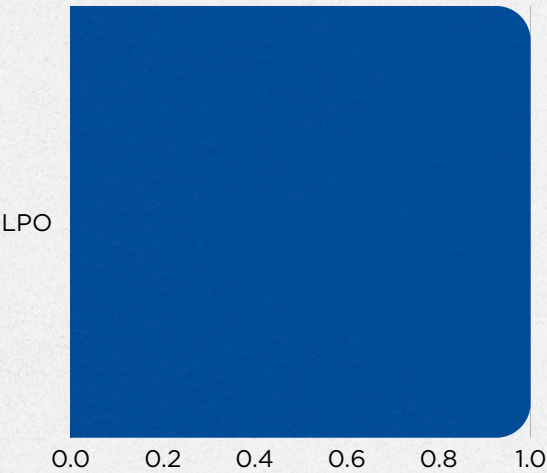
uptakes of ICJ policy positions
to protect international
institutions and instruments

MOST USED WORKING METHODS

to defend and strengthen international
institutions, instruments and standards



ACTIVITIES BY REGIONAL PROGRAMME



Projects feeding into
this strategic goal

Strategic Goal 1: Defend and strengthen international institutions, instruments and standards on rule of law and human rights

The ICJ remains a leading voice in international human rights advocacy, with **31 uptakes of our policy positions** in treaties, relevant court or tribunal judgements, human rights body resolutions, recommendations, guidelines, reports or publications that protected or made more effective the international institutions, human rights mechanisms and instruments. We supported international and local CSOs and HRDs to advocate for States to become parties to universal and regional human rights international instruments and to adhere to, cooperate with, and implement recommendations made by human rights treaty bodies and the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR).



The UN Human Rights Council and wider system

Our contributions continue to be recognized by States and civil society as influential, providing critical legal analysis on complex and politically charged issues. During the year we maintained a full programme of advocacy, focused around the UN Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, UN Treaty Bodies and the UN General Assembly. We made multiple submissions to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review and UN bodies. Accountability for human rights abuses and violations—and the role of civil society in ensuring it—are increasingly under threat, not only in many countries but also within the UN and multilateral forums – notably from the so-called Friends of the UN Charter group led by China and the Russian Federation.

In this challenging environment, we played a leading role within a core group of Geneva-based NGOs, engaging with the UN Office at Geneva, Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, and supportive States to push back against measures limiting civic space. This includes security restrictions on NGOs at the Human Rights Council and limits on participation of civil society actors outside Geneva. Despite growing polarization, accusations of double standards, and contested interpretations of international law, the ICJ has maintained a principled, progressive legal stance focused on justice and reparation for victims.



Standard Setting

Crimes Against Humanity

Our standard setting work continues to shape multilateral negotiations. For more than a decade we have been advocating for the elaboration of a treaty on Crimes Against Humanity (CAH), one of the major remaining normative gaps in international human rights and criminal law. While CAH are addressed in terms of individual criminal responsibility in the statutes of the ICC and other international tribunals, there is no treaty setting out the range of State obligations around these crimes domestically or in respect of international cooperation. In the last decade, we have engaged with the International Law Commission in their elaboration of a Draft Convention, and over the last three years we have engaged with the Sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly, including several advocacy trips to New York to debate the draft. Together with several civil society partners, we have urged the General Assembly to move towards a full negotiating conference to elaborate a treaty for eventual adoption, signature and ratification. We ramped up efforts this year at the UN GA Sixth Committee in support of a proposed treaty on CAH, participating in an expert meeting in February convened by the Permanent Mission of Germany and in April, attending the Sixth Committee's special debates in New York. We also co-sponsored a side event in March at the UNHRC and finalized a position paper on strengthening provisions in the draft. The result of this involvement has been the establishment of a treaty drafting conference on CAH. This decision by the General Assembly—to move to a conference of Plenipotentiaries in 2028 and 2029, with preparatory sessions in 2026 and 2027—represents the **first tangible progress towards a new universal human rights treaty in two decades**. We are preparing papers on the substantive provisions and will work to ensure a robust and effective Convention is eventually adopted.

ICJ's Africa Regional Director held a successful advocacy meeting with the South African government, resulting in a commitment to support and sponsor the CAH Convention at the international level.

Standing Independent Investigative Mechanism (SIIM)

Throughout 2024, we advanced consultations on the Standing Independent Investigative Mechanism (SIIM). In June, we held a regional consultation in Nairobi, Kenya, with CSOs from the Middle East and Africa, to discuss challenges to UN investigative mechanisms and our proposal to establish a SIIM. The objective was to better understand local CSO experiences, and whether the proposed SIIM, or an alternative, would address challenges and gaps. Participants explored the political, financial, administrative and substantive challenges confronting UN investigations and the availability of regional and international solutions. The insights and lessons will be taken into the forthcoming consultations on a SIIM in Asia-Pacific and Latin American Regions (to be held in early 2025).

Following several meetings with the High Commissioner and OHCHR staff, the OHCHR announced at the UN HRC side-event in October that the High Commissioner is creating the UN Inquiries Branch, bringing their investigations support and technical support/data management units under one branch and adding a judicial cooperation section. While concerns remain, and ultimately, we believe a SIIM would be the most effective avenue for remedying the current challenges and gaps, the Branch is a positive step towards making UN investigations more effective. We organized an NGO meeting with UN Inquiries Branch in November; held a side-event at ICC Assembly of States Parties with the new head of UN Inquiries Branch, the ICC senior legal coordinator, and the Head of the EU Genocide Network; and presented at the GCR2P 3rd annual workshop for diplomats in Geneva on Human Rights Council investigative mechanisms and the prevention of atrocity crimes. We have had numerous bilateral discussions with international institutions and States regarding the creation of the Inquiries Branch, advocating for States to continue to encourage such developments to meet the political, financial, administrative and substantive challenges of UN investigations.



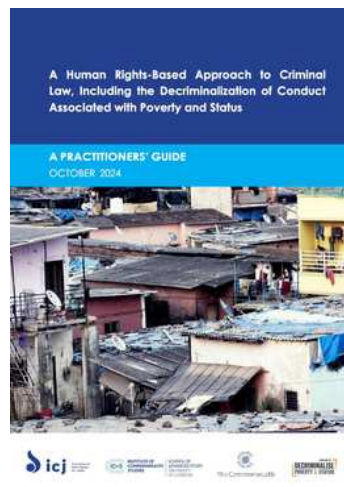
Putting 8 March Principles into Practice – A Human Rights-Based Approach to Criminal Law

Throughout 2024, our teams actively promoted and applied the [8 March Principles \(8MPs\)](#) to advance a human rights-based approach to criminal law. Judges in Asia-Pacific, Africa, Europe and Latin America are using and promoting the principles in their own jurisdictions and the 8MPs are being invoked as a tool for reference and advocacy.



With the Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec) and the Institute of Commonwealth Studies (ICS), we developed a **Practitioners Guide** for the 8MPs. We jointly presented on the decriminalization of poverty and status at the 2024 Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting in Zanzibar in March, introduced by Justice Aruna Devi Narain, ICJ Commissioner and Supreme Court Justice of Mauritius. We then held [an Africa regional consultation on a human rights-based approach to criminal law](#) in Kenya in June, with the 8MPs providing the law and policy framing for the consultation. In September we co-hosted an Asia and Caribbean regional consultation with ICS and ComSec in Thailand focused on the decriminalization of poverty and status.

We jointly launched the Practitioners' Guide (PG) in October, ["A Human Rights Based Approach to Criminal Law, including the Decriminalization of Conduct Associated with Poverty and Status"](#), as part of the Global Campaign to Decriminalize Poverty and Status. The Guide provides concrete recommendations for the critical roles that lawyers, judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officials, legislators, policymakers, national human rights institutions and civil society can play in dismantling legal frameworks and practices that unjustly criminalize poverty, homelessness and related status-based conduct.



The Guide was officially launched at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Samoa, attended by ministers, attorneys general, senior government officials, civil society representatives, and legal professionals from across the Commonwealth. We held a series of events and regional dialogues to promote the Guide and the implementation of its recommendations, with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to adequate housing featuring the Guide in his November newsletter.

Using 8MPs to combat Violence Against Women and Girls

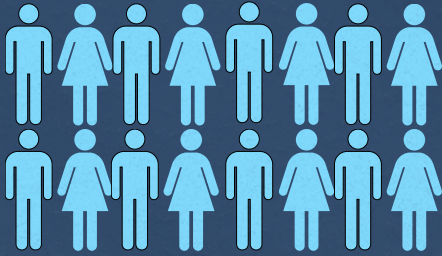
In July, we held a [colloquium on women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights under the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa \(Maputo Protocol\)](#) with the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, in Nairobi. We brought together judicial officers, legal practitioners, academics, legal experts, and civil society actors. Panel discussions analyzed various African domestic courts' decisions on sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), and participants explored how judicial officers can apply SRHR guaranteed in international human rights law and standards. Drawing on landmark judgments from courts in Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, participants discussed the challenges and opportunities in applying international human rights instruments that enshrine the right to the highest attainable standard of sexual and reproductive health, especially the Maputo Protocol.

The ICJ's [Bangkok General Guidance for Judges on Applying a Gender Perspective](#) and the [8 March Principles](#) were central to such discussions, providing guidance on the application of criminal law in a gender-sensitive manner that upholds the rights of women and girls to access sexual and reproductive health services. Participants unpacked the importance of applying a gender-sensitive lens in judicial decision-making to advance women's and girls' rights to: access safe abortion services; sexual health care services; maternal health care services; family planning information; and protection from forced sterilization and harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and forced marriages. Challenges include the lack of gender-sensitive judicial procedures and bias in judicial institutions, as well as social stigma around issues such as sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and abortion; the existence of laws criminalizing conduct associated with HIV transmission; and intersecting forms of discrimination based on age, marital status, religion or disability.



STRATEGIC GOAL 2 AT A GLANCE

IMPROVE DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE



330

judges, prosecutors, lawyers
and other actors participated
in activities on this topic

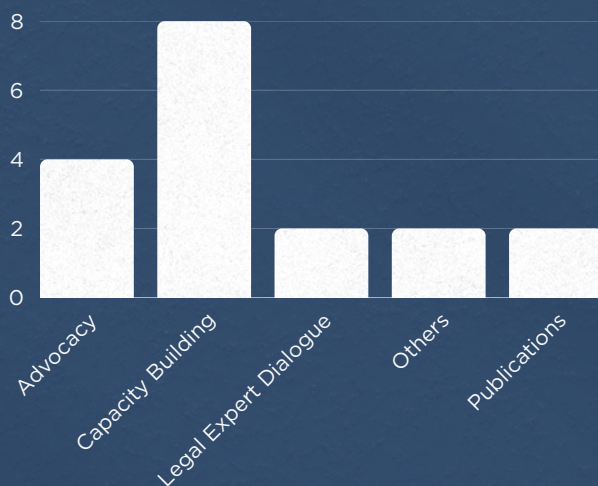


88%

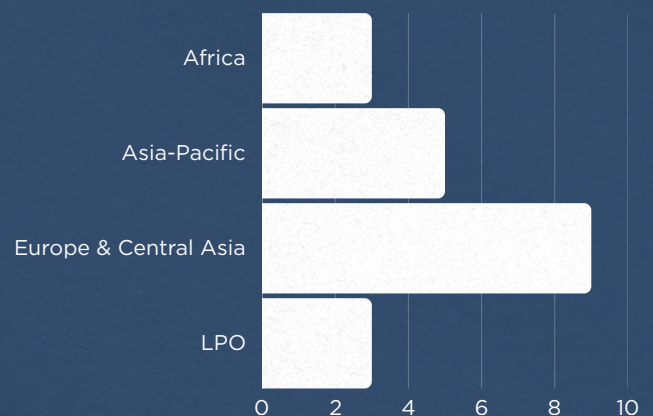
of ICJ's target group reports
qualitatively verified
improvements in or a lack of
regress in domestic
implementation and compliance

MOST USED WORKING METHODS

to Improve domestic implementation and
compliance



ACTIVITIES BY REGIONAL PROGRAMME



10 Projects feeding into
this strategic goal

Strategic Goal 2: Improve domestic implementation and compliance

Our global work is directly linked to ensuring States implement human rights-compliant laws, policies and practices. In 2024, we undertook a range of initiatives to counter authoritarian trends, promote judicial independence, and uphold fundamental rights. Through high-level engagement with regional mechanisms, expert consultations, and on-the-ground capacity-building, we strengthened legal protections for human rights defenders, migrants, women, children, and marginalized communities. Across all interventions, the ICJ's work was grounded in international law and aimed at ensuring accountability, reinforcing judicial independence, and preserving civic space in increasingly repressive contexts.

Upholding ICC Jurisdiction in the State of Palestine

In August, we submitted amicus curiae observations to the ICC, addressing the Court's jurisdiction over alleged crimes committed by Israeli nationals on the territory of the State of Palestine. We argued that the Rome Statute, as the governing legal framework of the ICC, is not subject to limitation by bilateral agreements such as the Oslo Accords.

We emphasized that jurisdiction under the Rome Statute is not delegated by States Parties but is inherent and cannot be altered through external political arrangements.

The Prosecutor of the ICC, in responding to interveners' observations, supported the ICJ's interpretation and cited at least five of the arguments presented in our submission.

During the 57th session of the HRC (September – October) we met UN Special Rapporteurs and Working Groups to highlight the [violations of international human rights rules and standards](#) contained in the draft Criminal Procedures Code (CPC).

We continued advocacy in the lead-up to Egypt's UPR, [calling on States](#) to address Egypt's dire human rights record, including the widespread use of torture, enforced disappearance, and arbitrary detention against journalists, human rights defenders and perceived dissident. We met state representatives to discuss Egypt's record and advise on recommendations for the UPR review.

We submitted a complaint to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearance on behalf of an Egyptian national, who has been subjected to arbitrary detention and other abuses since October 2024.

We continued to support a group of Egyptian lawyers and civil society actors to ensure accountability for serious human rights violations in Egypt and engaged with victims willing to bring a torture case to European courts under Universal Jurisdiction.

We organized an Experts Meeting on Universal Jurisdiction Avenues to discuss these cases with representatives of the Egyptian CSOs, individual experts, members of the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, and the International Federation for Human Rights.



Advocating for Fair Trial and Human Rights Reforms in Egypt

Together with AI, Dignity, and HRW, [we published](#) a detailed analysis of Egypt's draft Criminal Procedure Code, raising serious concerns about the inadequacy of safeguards for pre-trial detention, the limited role of defence lawyers, and the use of videoconferencing in prosecutorial and court proceedings, all of which risks undermining fair trial guarantees.

Türkiye: Safeguarding Civil Society and Judicial Independence

Throughout the year we responded to ongoing rule of law and human rights concerns in Türkiye. In September, we joined HRW and the Turkey Litigation Support Project in submitting an amicus brief in *Osman Kavala (2) v. Türkiye* (no. 2170/24), a follow-up case before the ECtHR, challenging Türkiye's continued detention of Kavala despite prior binding rulings from the Court. On 1 November, we submitted a third-party intervention, calling for his immediate release and overturning of his conviction, to comply with two binding judgments from the ECtHR which found that his detention was arbitrary and politically motivated. Kavala has been in prison for seven years, following a trial that failed to meet fair trial standards.

We also joined other civil society organizations to urge Turkish authorities to reject a proposed "Agent of Influence Law" to expand the definition of espionage, warning that the overly broad and vague language risks criminalizing legitimate activities of human rights defenders, journalists, and other civil society actors. Following significant international criticism, the bill was withdrawn the same month. No new steps have been taken to reinstate the adoption of the law.

Strengthening Domestic Implementation of Human Rights Standards in Asia

In collaboration with the Supreme Court of the Philippines, we launched a new initiative to revise the Rules of Procedure for Environmental Cases (RPEC) in order to strengthen access to environmental justice, integrating human rights and gender perspectives. This included Technical Working Groups, regional judicial dialogues and learning exchanges with ASEAN judiciary representatives. With the Raoul Wallenberg Institute, we co-organized a Southeast Asian Regional Judicial Dialogue in Bangkok in September with judges from the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Laos discussing environmental jurisprudence and judicial responses to climate harm.

In October we ran a focus group discussion with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, bringing together 35 lawyers, litigants, and legal aid providers to review proposed revisions to the RPEC. Participants' recommendations were based on their practical experience litigating environmental cases, highlighting gaps and suggesting improvements to better promote environmental rule of law. This informed the revision process and strengthened legal tools available for environmental protection in the country.



Examples of Strategic Litigation and Advocacy

We contributed to key human rights developments in Europe through third-party interventions and public advocacy, aimed at reinforcing the authority of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and addressing systemic human rights challenges in domestic legal systems. In a landmark ruling of the ECtHR in April, in *Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland*, the Grand Chamber found Switzerland had violated Articles 8 and 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) by failing to take adequate action to address climate change, disproportionately impacting the health and rights of older women. The ICJ and its Swiss Section had submitted a third-party intervention in the case, supporting the arguments brought forward by the applicants. In June, we expressed serious concern over a motion adopted by the lower chamber of the Swiss Parliament which called on the Swiss Federal Council to disregard the ruling. In support of broader discussion on the case's implications, an ICJ representative spoke at a European Law Institute webinar on "Assessing the Impact of the Klima Seniorinnen Case on Climate Change Policies and Litigation in Europe."

In [Tajikistan](#), we [addressed the critical gap between international legal standards and their domestic application](#), focusing on judicial processes. With the Supreme Court of Tajikistan, the OHCHR and OSCE, we examined cases where international law had been successfully applied within national justice systems to encourage a dialogue on incorporating international standards into local jurisprudence. In cooperation [with the national Bar Association, we hosted a round-table discussion](#) to increase lawyers' use of international law and mechanisms. This included challenges faced by those defending human rights, such as arrest and harassment, as well as practical ways to incorporate international human rights standards into their work. Click the links to read the briefing papers on [the judiciary](#) and on [the legal profession](#) summarizing the discussions.

“

“During the roundtable important topics were addressed including the application of international norms in the court decisions of the country. We realised that even though international standards have been integrated into our legislations, in practice, the judges rarely quote or apply them while making their decisions.” (Stakeholder-Tajikistan)

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“I may not have activities with ICJ, but it doesn’t mean I won’t cooperate with the ICJ if an opportunity presents itself. We have to be there and leverage all these possibilities. We collaborate whenever there is an opportunity to conduct some joint activities or do events together. This is so very important when the human rights issues we deal with are as complicated as they are.” (Tajikistan stakeholder)

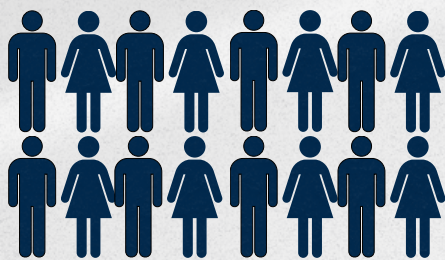
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Building on our long-term partnership with local community organizations in an informal settlement in Nairobi, Kenya, in July, we co-published [“Build Us More Schools’: The Quest for Quality Free Education in Mabatini and Ngei Wards of Mathare, Nairobi”](#). The report highlights serious human rights concerns linked to the chronic underfunding of education in Kenya. Despite being legally required to provide schooling, the government cites a lack of resources and land as reasons for failing to build enough public schools to serve all pupils. Existing public schools in Mathare are overcrowded and understaffed, undermining the quality of education. Private and informal institutions—such as Alternative Providers of Basic Education and Training schools, promoted as a solution to this issue — receive little to no government support. Oversight of these schools is minimal, with only 12% of all learning institutions in Kenya assessed each year. The result is deepening inequality and unaffordable school fees, even in quasi-public institutions. We are supporting advocacy between community members and the authorities to advance the report’s recommendations, including potential litigation to compel the construction of a public school in Mathare.



STRATEGIC GOAL 3 AT A GLANCE

BOLSTER THE EFFECTIVENESS AND INDEPENDENCE OF JUDGES AND LAWYERS



351

judges, prosecutors, lawyers and other actors participated in activities on this topic

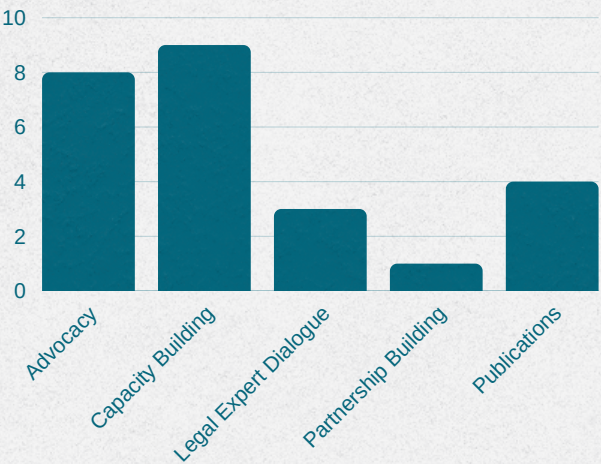


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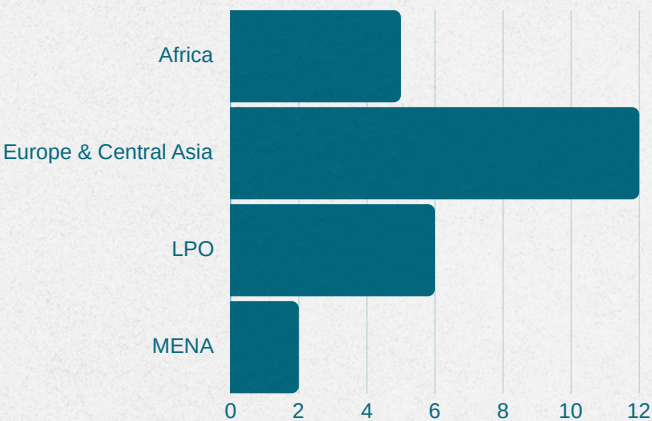
of judges, prosecutors, lawyers and key stakeholders who confirm a lack of regress or an increase in their independence and accountability

MOST USED WORKING METHODS

to enhance the independence of judges and lawyers



ACTIVITIES BY REGIONAL PROGRAMME



Projects feeding into this strategic goal

Strategic Goal 3: Bolster the effectiveness and independence of judges and lawyers



In 2024, amid increasing authoritarianism, democratic backsliding, and threats to the rule of law, we intensified our global work to defend judicial independence, support legal professionals under threat, and promote accountability within justice systems.

Defending Legal Professionals in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

UZBEKISTAN - In partnership with East West Management Institute and the Higher School of Judges, we established an International Human Rights Law course as part of the curriculum for future judges. The course has 16 modules addressing civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the rights of women, children, and persons with disabilities. The aim is to embed international legal principles within judicial training curricula. **For the first time, human rights education has become a regular and mandatory part of judicial preparation**, ensuring international standards can be applied in future court decisions. It also provides a strong example for sustainable legal capacity-building through cooperation with national institutions.

AZERBAIJAN - We published a statement condemning the arbitrary detention of Azerbaijani human rights lawyer Fariz Namazli and called for an end to harassment of independent lawyers, urging the Azerbaijani Bar Association to uphold its responsibility to protect legal professionals.

TAJIKISTAN - We convened a roundtable in Dushanbe on the role of an independent judiciary in ensuring fair trials. Co-organized with the Supreme Court of Tajikistan, the UN OHCHR Regional Office for Central Asia, and the Civil Society Coalition against Torture, we brought together judges, legal professionals, civil society, and international experts to address challenges to judicial independence and accountability.

BELARUS, UKRAINE AND RUSSIA - Throughout the year, we raised concerns about attacks on lawyers in the three countries, including the intimidation of legal professionals defending terrorism suspects, and the disbarment of Russian [human rights lawyer](#) Aleksey Ladin, condemning these reprisals and calling for guarantees of a free and independent legal profession.

TÜRKIYE - we co-sponsored and spoke at a side-event at the OSCE Human Dimension Conference in Warsaw, '[Addressing Attacks on Lawyers and the Rule of Law in Turkey: A Profession on Trial](#)'. For years, lawyers in Turkey have been unable to fulfil their professional duties effectively due to external pressure and improper interference. Attacks range from threats and surveillance to judicial harassment, including arbitrary (mass) arrest, detention, and criminal prosecution. Often, their prosecution is a direct consequence of the identification of lawyers with their clients or their clients' causes.





Strategic Litigation and Capacity Building to support African judiciaries

We monitored cases of judicial interference and threats to legal professionals, in **BURKINA FASO**, where we are investigating reports that magistrates and journalists have been removed from their positions and conscripted into the army by the ruling military junta. In **LESOTHO**, the Law Society's withdrawal of practicing certificates from lawyers working with NGOs, and its demand for case file transfers, prompted us to intervene in support of affected legal aid providers. We have met with three NGOs that provide essential advice and legal services to mostly indigent community members. We have attempted to liaise with the Law Society on this issue with little success and have had several meetings with our Lesotho partners, agreeing to file a case challenging the withdrawal of the practising certificates. In **UGANDA** we are engaged in the case of Judge Lydia Mugambe, recently convicted in the UK on charges related to modern slavery, and examining the situation where Acting Judge Farida Bukirwa Ntambi was appointed to the bench in an irregular manner. In **ZIMBABWE** we provided support and monitoring of the case of Judge Erica Ndewere, dismissed after granting bail contrary to political instructions, and which raises serious concerns over due process and judicial independence. In **SOUTH AFRICA** we welcomed the judgment of the Constitutional Court in the case of O'Brien N.O. v Minister of Defence and Military Veterans in which the court affirmed that the military courts of South Africa must be held to same standards of judicial independence as ordinary courts. ICJ intervened as amicus curiae in this case.

Judicial Independence and Selection in Latin America

We co-organized a Central American Judicial Conference in Costa Rica, bringing together 22 judges and former judges from across the region, 10 of whom were women.

Participants included five judges (and former judges) from El Salvador, five from Guatemala (including one in exile), two from Honduras, five from Costa Rica, two from Mexico, one from Argentina, and one from Norway, (who represented the Human Rights Committee of the Norwegian Judicial Association).

Discussions focused on strengthening judicial independence in the face of increasing authoritarianism and the criminalization of independent judges in Central America. A key theme was how to better engage young people on the importance of judicial independence and its role in upholding the rule of law.

We participated in a hearing before the **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights** during its 191st Period of Sessions, where we highlighted regional threats to judicial independence across Latin America, and participated in a regional two-day event organized by the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), focused on drafting a model law for the Americas to promote gender parity in the judiciary and political institutions.

BOLIVIA - In December, with the Due Process of Law Foundation and the Latin American Federation of Magistrates, we launched the report "[Ni elecciones judiciales integrales ni reforma judicial en Bolivia](#)" ("Neither Comprehensive Judicial Elections nor Judicial Reform in Bolivia"). The report critically examines the 2024 pre-selection process for appointing high judicial authorities in Bolivia, highlighting significant shortcomings in ensuring judicial independence. It provides clear recommendations to depoliticize the selection procedure of higher courts, amending the constitution so that selection is carried out by an independent expert body. This would avoid an electoral vote, increase transparency, and include measures to encourage women and indigenous persons to apply. The recommendations were [presented](#) to the Organization of American States Electoral Observatory Mission and we continue to follow up on this.





Throughout the year we continued to strengthen our work on documenting the use of **artificial intelligence (AI)** in judiciaries across Latin America, advocating for its regulation in line with international human rights law. We participated in seminars at the Iberoamericana University and the Government School of the Tecnológico de Monterrey University, Mexico, on the use of AI in judiciaries Latin America. We also participated in a global consultation convened by UNESCO on the Guidelines for the Use of Artificial Intelligence by judicial operators. We published an op-ed emphasizing the need for ethical guidelines for judges to use generative artificial intelligence, such as CHAT-GPT.

Global Work to support Independence of the Judiciary

INDIA - We addressed the independence and impartiality of the Indian Supreme Court, analysing how and to what extent international standards on judicial independence are upheld in structure and practice and assessed the implications of the lack of judicial independence on the Supreme Court's ability to protect and promote human rights. Findings were presented at a [side event](#) at the 55th HRC, and a full report will be published in early 2025.

In **ESWATINI**, we are compiling a report on the independence of judges and lawyers, following the assassination of human rights lawyer Thulani Maseko and a complaint by the Law Society of Eswatini against the Chief Justice, alleging his gross misconduct. The report ([No situation is permanent: Repression, intimidation, harassment and killing of lawyers in Eswatini](#)) was published in early 2025.

Fair Trial Monitoring

Overall, in 2024, we carried out trial monitoring to ensure the rights at least 67 individuals across the world were better protected. In Indonesia, we observed the trial of the court proceedings of human rights defenders Haris Azhar and Fatia Maulidiyanti, where we were able to document instances of irregularities through the course of the trial, including instances suggesting a lack of impartiality by the public prosecutors. In Eswatini, the Supreme Court handed down its long-awaited judgment in the case of Prime Minister of Eswatini and Another v Thulani Maseko and Six Others [2024] SZSC 88. This is a consolidation of four cases brought between 2008 and 2014, which challenged provisions of the Sedition and Subversive Activities Act of 1938 and the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. The Supreme Court upheld both, albeit with a more restrictive reading of the offence of sedition to include an element of violence or disorder. The court reversed the 2016 High Court ruling that found provisions of the sedition and terrorism laws unconstitutional. The respondents had challenged the offence of sedition for being overly broad, criminalizing the Act of "bringing into hatred, or contempt or to excite disaffection" against the monarchy or government. In doing so, they argued that the offence risked criminalizing conduct that would ordinarily constitute an essential element of democratic discourse.

INDIA AT THE BRINK:
Systematic discrimination and closing civic space

19 March 2024, 16:00-17:00 Room XXV

Recent years have seen a significant escalation in systematic discrimination and violence against minorities in India, often actively encouraged by government officials and political leaders who continue to enjoy impunity. These actions have been accompanied by efforts to shut down civic space, with targeting of journalists, human rights defenders and independent NGOs, as well as repression of politicians.

The upcoming April-May 2024 general elections in India will be held in this context, with the risk of becoming a flashpoint for further polarisation and violence.

This side event will highlight the impact of the worsening human rights situation on affected communities, and explore the role of member States and UN actors in addressing and preventing violations.

Speakers:

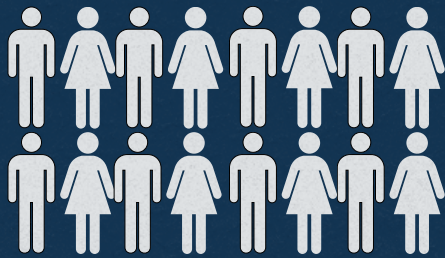
- **Clement Voule**
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
- **Nizam Pasha**
Advisor
- **Mandira Sharma**
Senior International Legal Advisor, International Commission of Jurists
- **Babloo Loitongbam**
Human Rights Defender, Director, Human Rights Alert
- **Elisabeth Pramendorfer**
Geneva Representative, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

Moderator: Amnesty International

Logos: AMNESTY, fidh, International Service for Human Rights, Moovs, FORUM-ASIA, ICJ, CIVICUS, and others.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 AT A GLANCE

IMPROVE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND ACCOUNTABILITY



3,122

judges, prosecutors, lawyers
and other actors participated
in activities on this topic

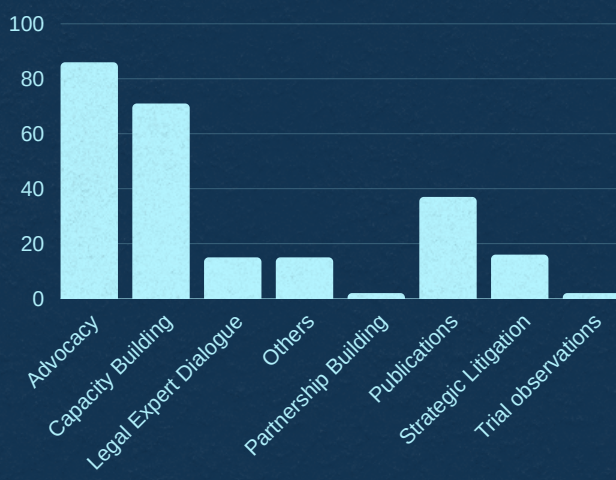


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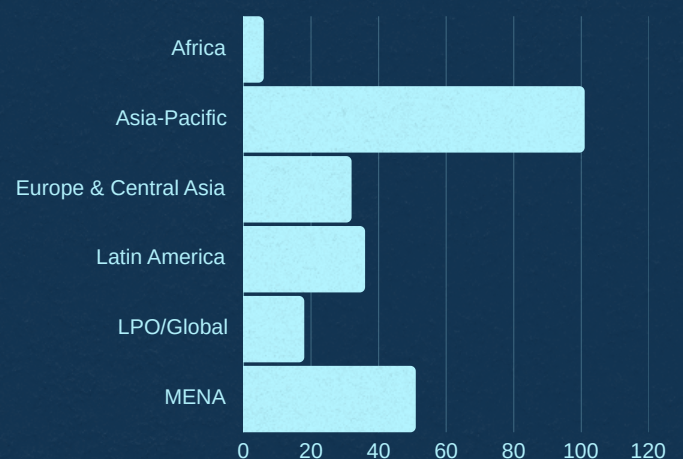
of ICJ's target groups who consider that
access to justice and accountability have
been improved, or at least back-sliding in
its provision is halted

MOST USED WORKING METHODS

to Improve access to justice for all
and accountability



ACTIVITIES BY REGIONAL PROGRAMME



39

projects feeding into
this strategic goal

Strategic Goal 4: Improve access to justice for all and accountability

In all regions of the world, victims of human rights and international humanitarian law violations and abuses struggle to access justice and effective remedies and reparation. In 2024, we continued to promote accountability for human rights violations, abuses, and serious violations of international humanitarian law, through targeted advocacy, strategic coordination, and expert engagement, with ICJ a leading voice connecting domestic issues with international accountability mechanisms.



Accountability - Protecting human dignity and the rule of law.

COLOMBIA has made significant progress in transitional justice through mechanisms such as the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), yet serious human rights concerns persist. These include threats against ex-combatants, social leaders, and human rights defenders. The rule of law remains fragile in conflict-affected regions, where impunity and the influence of armed groups undermine accountability and peacebuilding efforts. We provided technical assistance to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), ensuring torture and sexual violence were included in key indictments. This focused on how to use the Istanbul Protocol and Mendez Principles within the JEP's work to document and indict for torture, and how to make the legal qualification of conduct constituting gender-based violence, sexual violence, reproductive violence and hate crimes, based on the information that the JEP has, when the crimes are not explicitly covered by the Rome Statute or the Colombian Criminal Code. We received a letter of thanks from the president of the JEP.

We co-organized a national workshop on enforced disappearances for 39 judges from ordinary and military jurisdictions (half of whom were women). This focused on legal and forensic aspects in the search for the disappeared in armed conflicts, and the identification of the deceased. It also covered international human rights law and humanitarian law applicable to these cases, including the use of Minnesota and Istanbul Protocols. Concurrently, we supported advocacy in cases of human rights violations, including seven field missions, strengthening grassroots efforts for justice in cases of serious human rights violations. We directly assisted 26 victims of human rights violations and their representatives.

LIBYA'S political and security environment remains unstable, with the stalling of the Reconciliation Law and competing drafts put forward by the House of Representatives and Presidential Council, despite a UNSMIL-facilitated agreement. Human rights defenders and journalists face ongoing harassment and arbitrary detention. In collaboration with our partners, we monitored and documented crimes under international law, supporting the work of, and providing ongoing technical support to, a civil society network of 12 Libyan lawyers and human rights defenders.

We provided an intensive training programme focused on documenting crimes under international law in accordance with human rights standards and best practices and covered international criminal law, documentation techniques, strategic litigation avenues, including universal jurisdiction and engagement with UN mechanisms. We trained members in the use of a secure, shared case database, preserving evidence of crimes committed in Libya. Documenters uploaded cases involving enforced disappearances, torture, arbitrary detention, illegal migration, charges of apostasy and blasphemy, and we reviewed submissions, offering feedback and mentoring to improve documentation quality.

We monitored and challenged crackdowns on human rights defenders, responding to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' call on national legislation regulating freedom of association and assembly, highlighting restrictive laws and court rulings. At Human Rights Council sessions, we called for a new international investigative mechanism to succeed the existing Fact-Finding Mission, gaining momentum for these calls through advocacy roundtables with international and domestic civil society organizations, the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), former Fact-Finding Mission and UN Special Procedures staff, along with other stakeholders. We held a separate Civil Society Dialogue on Accountability for Tarhuna to build consensus on accountability strategies for crimes committed there.

The Special Rapporteur on Libya, Tunisia and on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants in Africa adopted some of ICJ's positions to strengthen human rights, including by including by [calling](#) on the Libyan authorities to adopt the [Draft Reconciliation Law](#) and the [Draft Law on Violence against Women](#).

We launched a report analysing Libya's draft Reconciliation Law, which urges Libyan authorities to address major deficiencies regarding the institutional independence of the proposed Reconciliation Commission and related mechanisms. It calls for full compliance with international human rights obligations to ensure genuine progress in transitional justice efforts.

To mark 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, we launched a campaign highlighting the discriminatory Article 424 of Libya's Penal Code, which allows rapists to escape punishment by marrying their victims. It also conducted a workshop for Libyan judges and prosecutors on international standards for addressing sexual and gender-based violence.

MYANMAR'S rule of law has severely deteriorated since the 2021 military coup, with widespread human rights violations, including arbitrary detentions, torture, and attacks on civilians. Transitional justice remains elusive, as domestic accountability mechanisms are absent and international efforts face significant political and jurisdictional challenges. We continue to support legal practitioners documenting human rights violations there, and advocating for international accountability amid military repression. We focus on documenting torture and other ill-treatment, investigating sexual and gender-based crimes, such as reproductive violence, transitional justice, and universal jurisdiction.

On the third anniversary of the coup d'état, we published a [statement](#) condemning the ongoing lack of accountability, and previewed our report on the gender competency of international accountability mechanisms on Myanmar at the International Bar Association's Human Rights Conference in Tokyo. The report, published in June, [Towards Gender Inclusive Justice and Accountability for Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in Myanmar](#), analyses and evaluates the specific measures and strategies implemented by international accountability bodies and actors to address and provide legal remedies for gender-based crimes in Myanmar and makes specific recommendations to strengthen gender justice.





We published a detailed [briefing paper](#) *Unseen and Unheard: Violation of Women's Rights in Myanmar* exposing abuses against women in detention, based on direct testimonies, submitted a case of enforced disappearance to the relevant UN body, and provided emergency support to 13 at-risk lawyers. We launched this in a side event at the 56th Human Rights Council, co-organized with the UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar. We led UN advocacy efforts and promoted gender-inclusive justice through public events and international engagement, including a closed-door dialogue in Chiang Mai with Myanmar women's rights groups based in Thailand.

"I can say that ICJ has been one of the best partners to collaborate with for several reasons in terms of accessibility and excellent reputation—both internationally and particularly in Myanmar. People truly respect ICJ and regard it as a critical actor in the human rights and accountability space. This respect and recognition have been very important for us, as it has opened doors and created opportunities for collaboration. It is essential that these activities continue," stated a member of the legal practitioner's network.

NEPAL'S transitional justice framework, anchored by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Commission on Enforced Disappeared Persons, has been repeatedly delayed by politically-influenced appointments, stalled investigations into tens of thousands of cases, and controversial amnesty clauses that dilute accountability. As part of our work to support the process, we supported efforts to promote truth, justice, and reparation for victims of Nepal's internal conflict, with a focus on enforced disappearances. This included documentation, legal support, stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and high-level advocacy.

We trained paralegals to document 110 new victims and relatives of the disappeared across seven provinces, with 101 cases receiving direct legal assistance through paralegal and legal clinics. Support ranged from facilitating compensation and relief processes to filing petitions in domestic courts and quasi-judicial bodies. We provided legal assistance in 21 cases before courts and the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons. Ongoing litigation before the Supreme Court, including landmark writs, challenged the flawed transitional justice bill and continued to seek individual redress.

We held 64 provincial- and local-level engagements with conflict victims, civil society, journalists, and legal professionals to ensure victim-centred advocacy. We held 12 consultations with parliamentarians, high-level government officials, and political leaders to promote rights-compliant transitional justice legislation, particularly concerning proposed amendments to the 2014 Enforced Disappearances Enquiry, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act. We held three judicial dialogues, bringing together over 170 judges, prosecutors and lawyers, and trained 48 paralegals, lawyers, and civil society actors on legal frameworks relating to enforced disappearances and transitional justice. We also supported community-based victim groups in strengthening local mobilisation and peer learning. Post training all paralegals contacted hundreds of family members of those forcibly disappeared, sharing TJ developments and collecting preliminary information on the violations they suffered.

We initiated a mapping of Nepal's forensic landscape to support legal and policy reform related to the search and identification of the disappeared. At the international level, we submitted a detailed legal analysis of the draft transitional justice bill to the parliamentary committee, and engaged UN mechanisms to ensure continued scrutiny of Nepal's obligations. Our advocacy work targeted the EU, OHCHR, and UN special procedures, reinforcing the need for a truth-seeking and accountability process aligned with international law. We supported public interest litigation before the Supreme Court for families of the disappeared, promoted inclusive justice for persons with disabilities, and worked with provincial authorities on detention monitoring, culminating in the Kathmandu Declaration on inclusive justice.

We launched a joint initiative with Advocacy Forum–Nepal (AF) to increase access to justice and reparation for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). The Gender and Transitional Justice (GTJ) Network was established as a key platform uniting civil society and survivors to advocate for gender-sensitive reforms in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Bill and to promote survivor-centred approaches. Our work provides significant opportunity to leverage the GTJ network to disseminate information and foster public discourse on relief and reparation for survivors of CRSV. We held provincial dialogues in Lumbini and Bagmati Provinces of Nepal with over 100 survivors, civil society members, and government officials—to identify gaps in reparation systems. Survivors highlighted exclusion from relief programs and limited public awareness, while officials cited budgetary constraints and lack of federal guidance. Key recommendations focused on meaningful survivor participation, establishing a national reparation policy, issuing victim-specific ID cards, and instituting gender-sensitive complaint mechanisms.



TAJIKISTAN'S judiciary lacks independence, and impunity for torture and ill-treatment of detainees remains pervasive, undermining the rule of law and fair justice. We have been supporting legal professionals and judicial institutions in addressing torture, arbitrary detention, and fair trial violations through joint workshops with OHCHR, OSCE, and local partners. These dialogues promoted judicial independence and alignment with international human rights standards. We contributed to improving justice for survivors of gender-based violence, publishing key legal resources in Tajik to strengthen domestic accountability, and briefed on structural justice barriers, reinforcing rule of law and human rights protections, and calling for stronger human rights oversight in the context of EU–Tajikistan cooperation.

These initiatives significantly reinforced national capacity for upholding the rule of law and combating impunity for human rights violations. In July, the ICJ, OHCHR's Regional Office for Central Asia, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Coalition against Torture and Impunity of Tajikistan organized a roundtable on increasing protection against arbitrary detention and to address pressing concerns related to criminal procedure, human rights safeguards and the rule of law. The event stressed the importance of using less restrictive measures than pre-trial detention and adhering to international human rights standards to ensure fair trial rights. Discussions centred around the challenges and opportunities in improving the legal and institutional framework to prevent and guarantee protection against arbitrary detention and ill-treatment in Tajikistan. Key topics included existing legislative gaps, practical difficulties in enforcing procedural guarantees, and the importance of respecting international human rights law and standards, particularly those related to freedom from arbitrary detention.

“

“It is very important for international organizations to work with local organisations, as the latter know and can gauge which events would likely work and which would not, who they should contact in the government, which events should be open and which not. The local organisations advise on efficient way of proceeding. Many international organizations don't do that, but ICJ does so beforehand, and engages in meaningful consultation. Many other organisations first arrange projects and then do consultation with local partners. It is imperative to have contact with local organisations and develop proposals and then start implementation based on that contact and input.” (Tajikistan Stakeholder)

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THAILAND'S status of human rights and rule of law remains fragile, with a heavily politicised judiciary and significant abuses, including transnational repression, and violations of freedom of assembly and expression. We have focused on strengthening accountability for torture and enforced disappearances, training 90 civil society members in preparation for Thailand's review by the UN Committee Against Torture. This was the first training of its kind since the Anti-Torture and Enforced Disappearance Act came into effect and it engaged authorities directly responsible for investigating and prosecuting cases under the Act to ensure compliance with international law and standards. We supported CSO participation in meetings with the Committee's country rapporteurs and coordinated the submission of written inputs from CSOs.

We issued a number of public statements, including one urging effective enforcement of the Anti-Torture Act, and condemned Thailand's deportation of 40 Uyghur detainees to China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, where they face a serious risk of human rights violations. In a landmark case, we submitted a [legal brief](#) to the Thai court in the criminal defamation proceeding against Thai human rights defender Chutima Sidasathian (a SLAPP case) and observed her trial. She was acquitted. We co-hosted the *Enforced Justice Instead of Disappearances* [forum](#) commemorating the 20th year of the enforced disappearance of prominent lawyer Somchai Neelapaijit.



We co-hosted a capacity-building sessions for over 50 justice actors, government officials, medical professionals, and members of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand, equipping them with updated tools for legal and medical investigations into torture, ill-treatment and enforced disappearances aligned with international standards.

In cooperation with the Extra-Territorial Obligation Watch Coalition (ETO Watch Coalition) and the Foundation for the Environment and Natural Resources, we ran a workshop to identify concrete recommendations for a regulatory framework to ensure that Thai companies are legally accountable for human rights abuses committed in the context of their activities abroad.

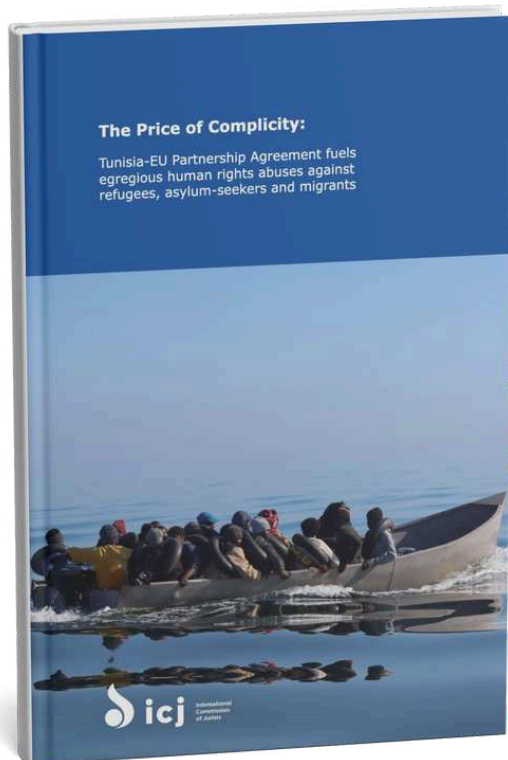


TUNISIA'S context of accelerating authoritarianism, we worked closely with local partners to uphold accountability and judicial independence by strengthening engagement with civil society and international actors.

We worked with lawyers representing clients of human rights violations before the transitional justice chambers, following up with the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on the case of a detained Tunisian journalist whose health was deteriorating amid harsh prison conditions. (He was subsequently released on 20 February 2025.)

In response to increasing threats to fair trial rights, we co-hosted expert dialogues with judges and prosecutors to address the deterioration of judicial independence. They focused on challenges to protecting human rights from the bench, the ongoing erosion of judicial independence, including arbitrary transfers and dismissals of judges and prosecutors by the executive, and their impact on fair trial rights. We co-organized a conference marking the two-year anniversary of the Executive's dismissal of 57 judges and prosecutors.

Over the year we trained 45 lawyers on international standards and defence strategies for politically sensitive cases involving activists, journalists and fellow lawyers.



Our international advocacy built on our monitoring and research work. We published a briefing paper around the EU-Tunisia Memorandum of Understanding on migration, ["The Price of Complicity"](#), exposing the forced expulsions of Black African migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers by Tunisian authorities and warning that a deal risks violating international and EU law due to Tunisia's failure to safeguard the rights of migrants and asylum seekers.

The briefing was disseminated widely to key stakeholders, including Members of the European Parliament, EU Special Representative for Human Rights, and African Commission Commissioners, urging them to critically reassess the human rights implications of the MoU.

In January 2025, the EU announced it would be rethinking the MoU with Tunisia and its partnership in light of concerns over migrant mistreatment by the Tunisian authorities.

We continued to document and denounce ongoing systemic human rights violations, attacks on the rule of law and violations of judicial independence. This included the dismissal and prosecution of judges under Decree Law 11, cybercrime and counter-terrorism laws which have been widely used to repress dissent. This included legal and strategic support in emblematic cases involving judges, lawyers, political opponents, and journalists.

We produced legal briefings, public statements, and press releases. documenting attacks on lawyers and journalists. We tracked the October 2024 Presidential elections, focusing on the politically motivated prosecution of opposition candidates, notably Ayachi Zammal, who was detained and convicted of electoral offences before the vote.

We also submitted an amicus brief to the Provisional Constitutional Court on the unconstitutionality of the dissolution of municipal councils.

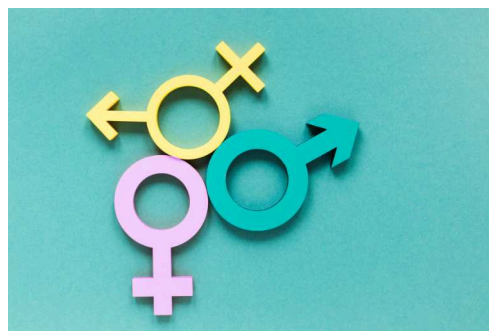
VENEZUELA'S authoritarianism has become increasingly entrenched following the disputed July 2024 elections. A non-independent judiciary enforces repression through politicized courts, arbitrary arrests, torture, disappearances, and widespread impunity. During the year, we intensified efforts to expose State failures and support victims of human rights violations. In April, we launched ["No Will for Justice in Venezuela: A Prosecutor's Office that Fosters Impunity"](#), a report highlighting the Venezuelan Public Prosecutor's Office's failure to investigate grave crimes under international law. This was followed in May by ["Hidden in Broad Daylight: The Decline of Public Education in Venezuela"](#), which assessed the devastating impact on public education.



We met with civil society representatives to focus on the use of universal jurisdiction in advancing justice for victims, analysing the case against Venezuelan public officials that was filed in Argentina under Universal Jurisdiction. We issued statements pre- and post-elections on the repression of protests and briefed the International Fact-Finding Mission and Special Procedures on the deteriorating situation. We led training sessions on “Human Rights and Strategic Litigation, with a focus on special procedures of the United Nations” and on “International Justice and Accountability for Venezuela at a Key Moment for the Country”. Given the context of post-electoral repression, these sessions allowed participants to promote a coordinated response to the current crisis, as well as enabling dialogues with embassies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Colombia. We took part in a hearing before the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, where concerns regarding the actions carried out by the Prosecution Office and the judiciary during the aftermath of the presidential electoral process were raised.

Access to Justice for all - SOGIE-SC

LESOTHO - In Access to justice should be available to all individuals without discrimination, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics but Lesotho is failing to fully comply with its international human rights obligations. We published a briefing paper [‘They see us as how we have sex, not as who we are’](#) outlining some of the obstacles LGBTIQ+ people face in their access to justice and effective remedies. We also made recommendations to the authorities on how to address them. LGBTIQ+ persons in Lesotho are subjected to many different forms of prohibited discrimination, including structural barriers to exercising their human rights, as well as harassment and abuse because of their real or imputed SOGIE-SC. Discriminatory, heteronormative and patriarchal societal norms in Lesotho have led to stigmatization, social and economic exclusion, violence and abuse against LGBTIQ+ persons, as well as the many human rights abuses they may experience when attempting to access justice when their rights have been violated.



SRI LANKA - We made substantial progress in advancing the rights of LGBTIQ individuals in Sri Lanka. Operating in a challenging socio-political environment, and despite persistent threats to civic space, we documented human rights violations, strengthened institutional partnerships, and amplified marginalized voices. With local partners, we documented 344 human rights violation cases and 578 common crime cases, submitting 230 cases to the Human Rights Commission, with 192 responses. The Legal Case Manager played a pivotal role in these efforts, supporting survivors through direct legal assistance, police follow-ups, and representation during 10 Human Rights Commission inquiries. Thirty-seven cases were resolved, and the practice of monthly in-person case submissions improved processing times. To increase evidence-based advocacy, 34 Right to Information requests were submitted, with 17 responses - an improvement from previous years.

We expanded strategic advocacy efforts over the year, meeting with parliamentarians, the Election Commission, embassies, religious leaders, and ILGA representatives. These addressed key issues including voting rights, the Gender Equality Bill, and the decriminalization of same-sex relations. The Election Commission agreed to allow temporary IDs for transgender voters on election day and committed to providing SOGIE sensitivity training for polling staff—critical steps toward inclusive political participation. We engaged on the proposed Penal Code (Amendment) Bill aimed at decriminalizing same-sex conduct, publishing a detailed legal briefer. Advocacy with the Human Rights Commission led to them committing to conduct sensitization training following reports of hostile behaviour from staff. A dedicated training session for Case Officers was subsequently organized to address concerns about evidentiary standards, complaint status updates, and experiences of discrimination during case filing.

Capacity building remained central to our engagement. We held legal awareness workshops for case officers, lawyers, and journalists, with a focus on laws affecting LGBTIQ individuals and broader human rights protections. In response to a request from the Women and Child Bureau of the Sri Lanka Police, the project delivered a targeted training for 29 female officers from the Women and Child Desk. Additional outreach activities included a national conference on *“Charting the Way Forward: Equality, Non-Discrimination, and Access to Justice for Sexual and Gender Minorities,”* attended by over 70 people. This was the first LGBTIQ+ conference to be held in Sri Lanka in more than a decade, and explored intersectional approaches for the LGBTIQ+ rights movements, identifying common legal barriers that impede effective access to justice for LGBTIQ+ individuals, and formulating advocacy strategies to advance legal and policy reform and better protect the human rights of LGBTIQ+ individuals.

We finalized two legal briefs —one debunking common myths surrounding the decriminalization bill, and another analysing the Online Safety Act through an LGBTIQ rights lens. We developed two additional briefs, on rape laws and police abuse. We provided technical assistance to the preparation of a shadow report to the CEDAW Committee, with several recommendations from the ICJ - on the decriminalization of consensual same-sex relations between women and the provision of specialized support services for LBTI women - reflected in the CEDAW’s Concluding Observations.



PAKISTAN - With our local partner, we advanced our work to document human rights violations, build capacity, and strengthen advocacy for LGBTIQI+ rights. Despite persistent challenges, we made substantial progress through training, engagement, and strategic international advocacy.

We provided capacity-building workshops for case coordinators in Lahore and Karachi to increase case documentation and community support skills, and held awareness sessions in Lahore and Karachi, including one focused on the challenges faced by Assigned Female At Birth (AFAB) queer individuals—such as trans men, non-binary, and trans-masc persons

We jointly documented 151 cases of human rights violations and abuses involving murder, assault, sexual violence, domestic violence, cybercrimes, workplace harassment, discrimination, and violations by state actors. Three emblematic cases were shortlisted for submission to the National Commission for Human Rights, reinforcing local advocacy efforts. We assisted preparations for Pakistan’s second periodic review by the UN Human Rights Committee organizing two awareness sessions with over 35 LGBTIQI+ activists and organizations to familiarize them with the process. We also organized a national convening of more than 50 LGBTIQI+ participants to prepare a joint submission which focused on SOGIESC-related violations and abuses, enforced disappearances, and the trial of civilians in military courts. We participated in the review in Geneva, bringing their concerns to the global stage. The Committee’s concluding observations took into consideration several of the ICJ’s recommendations.



Promoting the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

We advocated for the ratification and implementation of the Africa Disability Protocol, which, with 16 ratifications, entered into force. In **Zambia**, we supported organizations of persons with disabilities in [drafting submissions to the CRPD Committee](#) and facilitated the participation of two representatives in the Committee's March 2024 session in Geneva. In **Lesotho**, we partnered with the Lesotho National Federation on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to [advocate for the deinstitutionalization](#) of persons with disabilities in line with international human rights standards.

The Ghana Federation of Disability Organizations (GFD) requested advisory support to prepare submissions ahead of Ghana's periodic review. We brought together 30 participants, including global experts and local OPDs to prepare an alternative report responding to the committee's List of Issues. Our contributions highlighted critical issues, including the need to reform **Ghana's** outdated disability law and ensure the draft Disability Bill aligns with CRPD standards. GFD raised concerns about the institutionalization of persons with disabilities, particularly in so-called "witchcraft camps," and has requested ICJ assistance in documenting these abuses further.

We presented at the 81st ordinary session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Gambia, co-hosting a side-event at the session alongside Validity Foundation, Sightsavers and Inclusion Africa. In collaboration with the Working Group on the Rights of Older Persons and People with Disabilities, we produced a proposal for a resolution, which was [ultimately adopted by the Commission](#) (with ICJ supporting its drafting) – urging States to ratify the Africa Disability Protocol and implement it in their jurisdictions.

In **Colombia**, we participated in an event to discuss legal reform to incorporate procedural accommodations and a facilitator figure in the criminal procedural code and the general code of proceedings. Our presentation focused on the importance of these reforms for the domestic implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We submitted joint recommendations to Colombia's Ministry of Justice on aligning criminal justice reforms with the CRPD along with the Colombian Alliance for Legal Capacity, the Action Programme for Equality and Social Inclusion of the University of the Andes, and Colombian lawyer Liliana Patricia Rojas Roja.



To advance the rights of persons with disabilities in Asia, we co-organised a pan-Asian workshop in Nepal on Access to Justice. This brought over 120 participants from more than 15 countries together - including persons with disabilities as self-advocates, current and former Supreme Court justices from India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand, lawyers, policymakers, OPDs and a member of the UN Committee of Persons with Disabilities. Topics covered included legal reforms and administrative measures to ensure the right to live independently in communities. In the opening session, a participant shared her personal story of moving from living on the streets with a psychosocial disability to living independently as a self-advocate. The event helped position the ICJ as a technical resource on disability rights, consolidate relationships with OPDs, and set an agenda for joint regional advocacy on access to justice for persons with disabilities. The workshop was preceded and followed by satellite events with former and current Supreme Court judges from India and Sri Lanka who were hosted by the Supreme Court of Nepal, a High Court, and ICJ institutional allies associated with the judiciary.

At the request of the former lead of the ESCAP Disability Rights Program, we have begun coordinating efforts to establish a network of Asia-Pacific lawyers working on disability rights.

Kathmandu Declaration on Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities 2024



Building on the identified barriers to justice and working with local partners, we developed advocacy strategies to pursue legal reform, jointly launching the Kathmandu Declaration on Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities. The declaration urges States in the region to take immediate action to improve access to justice for persons with disabilities, and promotes legal and policy reform across the region. We are continuing work to ensure discriminatory, medicalized approaches to disability are removed from laws and practices, enabling persons with disabilities equal protection and access to justice.

* ICJ – EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

The ICJ-European Institutions (ICJ-EI) is a non-profit organisation established in Belgium in 2012, operating in the European Union. As ICJ's sister organisation, the ICJ-EI shares its mission and vision to promote human rights through the rule of law. The ICJ-EI works to bring concerns of noncompliance with European and international human rights laws to the attention of institutions and bodies of the European Union and Council of Europe, and to advocate for the strengthening of standards and mechanisms for the protection of human rights at European level.



Ensuring EU compliance with international human rights and rule of law standards

We worked to safeguard human rights and the rule of law across the European Union through a range of targeted interventions and advocacy efforts, working to ensure that the EU and its member states uphold the fundamental rights and legal principles that form the cornerstone of the Union's identity and obligations under international law. A key area of focus was the treatment of children in migration procedures.

In May, we and Czech organization FORUM [intervened as a third party](#) before the ECtHR concerning the procedural rights of children under the age of criminal responsibility in Czechia. The submission highlighted systemic deficiencies—such as lack of effective legal assistance and limited access to case files, which undermine their ability to challenge and cross-examine witnesses — that compromise the right to a fair trial under Article 6 of the ECHR. We emphasized the obligation to ensure that children are assisted by legal counsel from the very outset of criminal proceedings, including during police interrogations and subsequent detention hearings.

Ahead of June's General Affairs Council, we [called for continued scrutiny of Hungary and Poland](#) under Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). We highlighted multiple and persistent breaches of Article 2 TEU values, including the erosion of judicial independence, attacks on media freedom, escalating corruption, and the shrinking of civic space. We stressed that sustained EU action is necessary to address systemic rule of law deficiencies.

In July, we [issued a statement urging EU leaders](#) to make equality before the law and non-discrimination central pillars of the EU's future agenda. These principles, enshrined in Articles 20 and 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, are foundational to the EU's legal framework and essential for protecting marginalized communities.

We also engaged in high-level advocacy with European institutions to ensure that human rights and democratic principles remain at the core of EU policymaking. As part of the [Human Rights and Democracy Network \(HRDN\)](#), we addressed newly elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), calling on them to prioritize the protection of human rights, international humanitarian law, justice mechanisms, and civic space in their legislative work.

In November, we published a briefing paper on the risks of child detention under the EU Migration Pact: [Never in the best interests of the child](#), that raises serious concerns that the Pact incentivizes detention in border and screening procedures. The report emphasizes that children must be treated primarily as rights-holders—not as objects of migration enforcement—and must be provided with real, rights-respecting alternatives to detention.

Promoting Judicial Independence and Rule of Law in Europe

Under our EU-funded Rule of Law for Lawyers ([ROLL](#)) project, we published the [Justice Under Pressure: Strategic Litigation of Judicial Independence in Europe](#) report. The report outlines the growing threats to judicial independence across the EU and emphasizes the strategic role that litigation can play at national and international level in defending the rule of law. Drawing on the growing body of practice and work done through the project, the report reflects on lessons learned, obstacles encountered, and good practices for future litigation efforts. We held a workshop in Prague in March 2024 on Disciplinary and criminal procedures and accountability of judges and prosecutors and judicial ethics and accountability with legal professionals from eight EU member states. Following a subsequent mentoring session in November (on the independence of judges in the face of external pressures and threats), Bulgarian lawyers and judges set up an informal working group to address growing concerns over judicial independence and the increasing pressure on judges.

We produced [Judicial Independence podcasts](#), interviewing prominent jurists including [ICJ Commissioner Radmila Dacic](#) who spoke about the freedom of association and freedom of expression of judges. The other episodes covered the [erosion of the Rule of Law and judicial independence in Hungary](#) and the landmark [Garzon v. Spain decision of the UN Human Rights Committee](#). We also hosted a discussion with EU lawyers on the relevance of Inter-American jurisprudence on judicial independence, with ICJ President Carlos Ayala presenting insights from the Inter-American Court. As participants continue to apply and disseminate their enhanced expertise, the impact of the capacity building activities will extend beyond the immediate project, contributing to the development of independent and effective judicial systems that uphold human rights across the EU.



In September, we launched a [Model Bench Book](#) on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities who are Defendants in Criminal Proceedings—the first of its kind in the EU. The Bench Book, developed jointly with our partner organisation Validity, is aimed at justice actors, including judges, prosecutors, and lawyers, involved in criminal proceedings, but will also be useful to a range of State authorities in fulfilling their international legal obligations. The Bench Book provides guidance to justice actors and State authorities on how to better ensure the protection of persons with disabilities' rights in the context of criminal proceedings. We presented the Bench Book at a conference in Oslo, Norway, focused on ["Ending Psychiatric Coercion – Urgent Need for Effective Remedies."](#)



In September, we also published a report on the judiciary in Montenegro ([Beyond the Benchmarks: Dilemmas of Effective Judicial Reforms in Montenegro](#)) following a fact-finding mission earlier in the year. The report identifies several key challenges that continue to undermine the judiciary's effectiveness

and independence, including issues related to the structure of the Judicial Council, personnel shortages, case backlogs, and judicial integrity, and offers specific recommendations aimed at addressing these issues. In particular, we recommend that Montenegro reduce executive influence, improve the judicial appointments process, ensure better financial independence through appropriate remuneration, and enhance accountability and transparency in disciplinary processes. These measures will bring Montenegro's judiciary in line with international standards and improve its overall efficiency and independence.



* Financial report

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS, GENEVA

COMBINED BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 with comparative figures for 2023 in Swiss francs

		Combined	Combined
	Note	2024	2023
INCOME			
Contributions for projects (restricted)	6.4	5,147,996	4,854,074
Contributions for the commission	7	1,413,184	1,548,942
Other income			75,861
TOTAL INCOME		6,569,673	6,478,877
OPERATING EXPENDITURE			
Staff	8.1	(3,586,750)	(3,498,899)
Meeting & travel		(1,293,370)	(1,379,607)
Consultancy & service fees		(1,746,396)	(1,506,201)
Publication & promotion costs		(15,812)	(28,277)
Communication costs		(22,514)	(7,208)
Office premise		(287,647)	(291,592)
Other administrative expenditures		(76,730)	(110,663)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	8.2	(7,029,219)	(6,822,447)
OPERATING RESULT		(459,546)	(343,570)
Non-operating result, net	8.3	16,642	(16,174)
Financial (expenses)/income, net	8.4	(99,959)	(148,252)
Variation of the provision of loss on receivables		4,168	-
INTERMEDIATE RESULT BEFORE CHANGE IN FUNDS		(538,695)	(507,996)
Attribution to restricted funds	6.4	(5,147,996)	(4,854,074)
Use of restricted funds	6.4	5,414,223	5,242,724
Overheads from projects	6.4	342,865	376,303
Change in restricted funds		609,092	764,953
Attribution to tied capital	7	-	-
Change in tied capital		-	-
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		70,397	256,957

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS, GENEVA

COMBINED BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 with comparative figures for 2023 in Swiss francs

		Combined	Combined
ASSETS	Note	31.12.2024	31.12.2023
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash & cash equivalents	5.1	3,052,769	2,972,933
Grants receivables nets	5.2	368,010	1,392,466
Other current assets nets	5.3	553,363	174,815
Prepaid expenses	5.4	35,808	45,426
Total current assets		6,569,673	4,585,640
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Financial assets	5.5	11,500	11,431
Total non-current assets		11,500	11,431
TOTAL ASSETS		4,021,450	4,597,071
LIABILITIES & FUNDS			
SHORT-TERM LIABILITIES			
Operating liabilities	6.1	203,235	247,805
Accrued liabilities	6.2	337,847	553,859
Contributions received in advance	6.3	1,813,162	1,540,289
Total short term liabilities		2,354,244	2,341,953
RESTRICTED FUNDS			
Funds restricted to projects	6.4	1,014,356	1,698,761
Total restricted funds		1,014,356	1,698,761
CAPITAL OF THE ORGANISATION			
Tied capital		461,465	461,465
Foreign currency translation reserve		(31,734)	(57,829)
Accumulated result		152,722	(104,236)
Surplus for the year		70,397	256,957
Total capital of the organisation		652,850	556,357
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUNDS		4,021,450	4,597,071

ICJ PARTNERSHIPS IN 2024



A

Accountability Counsel
Accountability Watch Committee
Access Now
Action Programme for Equality and Social Inclusion of the University of the Andes (Colombia)
Adalaa for All
aditus Foundation (aditus) – Malta
Advocacy Forum (AF) Nepal
Afghan Independent Bar Association in Exile (AIBA-E)
African Judiciaries Research Network
Africa Albinism Network
Alerta Venezuela
Aman Against Discrimination
AmerBon Advocates
Amnesty International
Amnesty International – European Institutions Office
Amnesty International Thailand
Amnesty International Venezuela
Article 19
ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR)
ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR)
Asia Foundation
Asia Justice Coalition (AJC)
Asian Development Bank
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)
Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression
Association for the Prevention of Torture
Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD)
Association of Mayan lawyers and notaries of Guatemala
Ateneo De Naga University in the Philippines
Athan
Avocat Sans Frontiers

B

Bar Association of Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka
Bar Association of Tajikistan - Tajikistan
Bologna Bar Association
Bulgarian Helsinki Committee (BHC) – Bulgaria
Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC)

C

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
Campaign to decriminalize Poverty and Status
Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL)
Centre de Derechos Humanos de la Universidad Metropolitana (CDH-UNIMET)
Centre de Derechos Humanos – Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (CDH-UCAB)
Centre for Applied Legal Studies (South Africa)
Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria (CHR)
Centre para los Defensores y la Justicia
CEPAZ
Chapter One (Zambia)
Chief Justice's Office, Supreme Court of Sri Lanka
CIVICUS
Civil Rights Defenders
Civil Society Alliance for Human Rights in the Pandemic Treaty
Civillis
Clooney Foundation for Justice
Coalition Against Torture - Tajikistan
Coalition against the Death Penalty (of which we are Members)
Colors Rainbow
Colombian Alliance for Legal Capacity (Colombia)
Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ)
Columbia Mailman School of Public Health (USA)
Columbia University (USA)
Committee against Torture (CAT)
Committee for Justice
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
Conflict victims' organizations including Conflict Victim Women National Network (CVWN)
Consortium against the Commercialisation of Healthcare
Convention against Enforced Disappearance Initiative (CEDI)
Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI)
The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE)
CREA (India)
Cross Cultural Foundation (CrCF)
Cyrus Vance Center for International Justice

D

Defender Center For Human Rights
 Défense des Enfants International - Belgique (DCI-BE / DEI) - Belgium
 Défense Sans Frontière Avocats Solidaires (DSF-AS)
 Dejusticia (Colombia)
 Development of Women and Legal Education (ADWLE)
 Development Strategy Center – Uzbekistan
 DhColombia
 Disability Rights Watch (Zambia)
 Diversity and Solidarity Trust, Sri Lanka
 Djokosoetono Research Centre of the University of Indonesia
 Documenta (Mexico)
 Duay Jai Foundation
 Due Process Law Foundation (DPLF)

E

EachRights (Kenya)
 EarthRights International
 East West Management Institute, the Judicial System
 Strengthening Activity in Uzbekistan (JSSA)
 EEC Watch
 Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms
 Egyptian Front for Rights and Freedoms
 Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights
 Emergent Justice Collective
 Embassy of Germany
 Embassy of the Netherlands
 ENLAWTHAI Foundation (EnLaw)
 Equal Education Law Centre (EELC)
 Equality Myanmar (EQMM)
 ESCR-NET (of which we are members)
 Eswatini Commission on Human Rights & Public Administration
 ETO Consortium
 EuroMed
 European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights (ELDH)
 European Bars Federation (FBE)
 European Democratic Lawyers (EDL-AED)
 Extra-Territorial Obligation Watch Coalition (ETOs Watch Coalition)

F

Fair Trials
 Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka
 Federal Court of Malaysia
 FIAN International
 FIDH
 Fiscalía General de la Nación (Colombia)
 Focus on the Global South
 The Fort
 Forum for Human Rights (FORUM) – Czech Republic
 Forum for Women, Law and Development - FWLD
 Fortify Rights
 Foundation for Access to Rights (FAR) - Bulgaria
 Foundation for Socio Economic Justice (FSEJ)
 Franciscans International
 Free Court / Fundacja Wolne Sady (Free Courts) - Poland
 French National Bar Council (CNB)
 Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
 Frontline Defenders
 Fundación Clooney

G

Gender and TJ network
 Gender Studies Centre, Faculty of Social Sciences, National University of Laos
 Generation Wave
 Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights
 The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect - GCR2P
 Global Health Law Consortium (GHLG)
 Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR)
 Global Network of Sex Work Projects
 Global Strategy Lab
 Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) - Greece

Guernica Centre

H

Have Only Positive Expectations (HOPE), Pakistan
 Health Justice Initiative (HJI)
 Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (HFHR) – Poland
 HIV Justice Network
 Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka
 Human Rights Lawyers Association (HRLA)
 Human Rights Litigation Support Project – Turkey
 Human Rights Watch
 Human Rights Watch (EU office)

I

ICJ Austrian Section
 ICJ Swiss Section
 ILGA Europe
 Independent Investigative Mechanisms for Myanmar (IIMM)
 Inkyfada (confidential)
 Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER)
 Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict (ELAC), Oxford University
 Institute for the Rule of Law of the International Association of Lawyers (UIA-IROL)
 Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London
 Integrated Bar of the Philippines
 International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL)
 International Association of Lawyers
 International Association of Refugee and Migration Law Judges
 International Association of Women Judges
 International Bar Association Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)
 International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL)
 International Center for Transitional Justice
 International Commission of Jurists-Kenya (ICJ-Kenya)
 International Detention Coalition (IDC)
 International Development Law Organization (IDLO)
 International Disability Alliance
 ILGA
 International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
 International Network of People who Use Drugs
 International Network on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR-Net)
 International Observatory for Lawyers in Danger (OIAD)
 International Red Cross Committee in Colombia
 International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
 International Society for Human Rights (ISHR)
 International Trade Union Confederation
 Internet Law Reform Dialogue (iLaw)
 IProbono
 Italian National Bar Council (CNF)

J

Jaringan Mangsa Dari Undang-Undang Darurat (JASAD)
 Judges' Society Nepal
 JuRI- Nepal (Justice and Rights Institute Nepal)
 Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz (JEP)
 Justice and Truth Venezuela
 Justice Rapid Response

K

Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)
 Kathmandu School of Law (Nepal)
 Kenya Association of the Intellectually Handicapped (KAIH)
 Kenya Judicial Academy
 Kings College London (UK)
 Konrad Adenauer Latin America regional program
 KOSHISH

L

Latin American Federation of Magistrates
 Law Society of England and Wales, Lawyers for Lawyers (L4L)
 Law Society of Eswatini
 Lawyers for Human Rights (South Africa)
 Lawyers for Justice in Libya
 Lawyers for Lawyers – Netherlands
 Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada
 Lawyers Rights Watch Canada (LRWC)

Legal Resources Centre (South Africa)
 Legal Aid Commission of Sri Lanka
 Legal Policy Research Centre - Kazakhstan
 Legal Research Centre - Moldova
 Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD)
 Libya Crimes Watch

M

Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law
 Mental Health Users Network (Zambia)
 Muslim Attorney Center (MAC)
 Myanmar Lawyers Network

N

National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT)
 National Network for Economic, Social & Cultural Rights (ESCR-Network)
 National Transgender Network Trust, Sri Lanka
 Nederlands Juristen Comité voor de Mensenrechten (NJCM) – ICJ Dutch Section
 Nepal Bar Association
 Nepal Disabled Women's Association (NDWA)
 Nonviolent Peace Force (NP)

O

Observatorio de Conflictividad Social
 Observatorio Global de comunicación y democracia and Acción Solidaria
 Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Geneva)
 Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Myanmar & Thailand)
 Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights – Southeast Asia Regional Office (OHCHR-SEARO)
 The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA)
 Organisation Mondiale Contre la Torture
 Organisation Intersex International Europe
 OSF Access to Justice Knowledge Hub
 Outright International

P

The Paris Institute of Political Studies (France)
 Patani Human Rights Organization Network (HAP)
 People's Matrix
 Petri-Flom Center, Harvard
 Political Prisoners Network-Myanmar (PPNM)
 Privatisation in Education and Human Rights Consortium (PEHRC)
 Probono.org
 Progressive Lawyers Association (ÇHD)
 Progressive Voice (PV)
 Protection International
 PROVEA
 Public Interest Litigation Lawyer's Group (PIL Lawyer's Group)

R

Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law
 Rawadari
 Redress
 Republikanischer Anwältinnen- und Anwälteverein e. V. (RAV)
 Rights & Prosperity - Tajikistan
 Rights and Liberties Protection Department, Ministry of Justice

S

Saferworld
 Sancharika Samuha Nepal
 South African Judicial Education Institute (SAJEI)
 Section 27
 Seinoli Legal Centre (Lesotho)
 Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters
 Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University
 Socio Economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI)
 Solidarity Centre
 Solidarity of Trade Union in Myanmar (STUM)
 Southern Africa Chief Justices Forum

Southern African Litigation Centre
 Special Jurisdiction for Peace Colombia
 Sri Lanka Judges' Institute
 Sri Lanka Legal Aid Commission
 Sri Lanka Police
 Strathmore University Law School (Kenya)
 Supreme Court of Indonesia
 Supreme Court of Thailand
 Supreme Court of the Philippines
 Supreme School of Judges – Uzbekistan
 Swatini Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA)
 Swaziland Litigation Centre
 Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression

T

Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR)
 Thailand Institute of Justice
 Transforming Communities for Inclusion (TCI)
 Trial International

U

UN Working Group on discrimination against women and girls
 UNAIDS – Geneva
 United Nations Development Program (Eswatini)
 United Nations Development Program (Geneva)
 United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
 United Nations Environment Programme
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 Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD)
 World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva
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