



19 March 2015

Human Rights Council Section: 28<sup>th</sup> Session, Agenda Item 6

Speaker: Phon van den Biesen, President Lawyers for Lawyers

**Oral Statement to the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers for Lawyers (L4L) and Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), non-governmental organizations in special consultative status<sup>i</sup>**

**Regular Session - Oral Statement Item 6: UPR Outcomes: Iran**

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Yes, Madam, Mr. President, the rule of law needs to be respected at all times.

Iran is fully entitled to the benefits of Article IV of the NPT.

And all citizens are fully entitled to the benefits of the right to a fair trial that Human Rights Treaties provide.

Where fundamental rights are at stake, applying double standards, to States or citizens, is not acceptable.

The right to a fair trial includes the right to be represented by *independent counsel*. This independence is elaborated in the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, expressing *the* UN's standard for the protection of lawyers against interference by State- and other actors.

We congratulate President Rouhani for stating that "a lawyer should be immune from any prosecution for carrying out its professional duty, and the investigative authority for the lawyers' professional issues is the Bar Association".<sup>1</sup>

Currently, a draft-Law providing rules for lawyers and their Bar Association is under review in Iran. This Draft deserves to be carefully tested against the provisions of the UN's Basic Principles and modified accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

Celebrating Iran's Day of the Lawyer (25 February) we sent President Rouhani a letter requesting him to review the detention of 7 Iranian Lawyers currently in prison for facts related to their discharging of their professional duties. We repeat that request today!

Thank you!

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<sup>1</sup> (English: Meeting the members of the board of Directors of Bar Associations, February 2014) ۱۳۹۲/۱۲/۰۳. See: [http://www.rouhani.ir/event.php?event\\_id=310](http://www.rouhani.ir/event.php?event_id=310).

<sup>2</sup> LRWC and L4L, Submission to the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the UPR on IRAN – *Safety and independence of lawyers & access to legal representation*, March 2014, p. 8.