

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

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Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada
Item: Item 4: General Debate
Date: 12 March 2019
Speaker: Ms. H el ene Ramos dos Santos

Oral Statement to the 40th Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), NGO in special consultative status

Re: Arbitrary detention and disproportionate sentencing of lawyer Ms. Nasrin Sotoudeh

Mr. President,

On Monday 11th March 2019, LRWC made an oral statement at the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Islamic Republic of Iran¹ deploring the arbitrary detention of lawyer Ms. Nasrin Sotoudeh, who has been subjected to years of persecution for her legitimate practice of law including representation of political opposition members and activists.

LRWC is alarmed by reports of a harsh sentence given in absentia without the presence of her lawyer.² According to Ms. Sotoudeh, the office for the implementation of sentences in Evin Prison informed her on 9 March 2019 that she had received a sentence of 38 years imprisonment and 148 lashes.³ However, according to the Islamic Republic News Agency, a judge advised journalists that Ms. Sotoudeh has been sentenced to seven years.⁴

LRWC asks Council to urgently request that Iran provide official clarification of any sentences imposed on Ms. Sotoudeh. In either case, the sentences are disproportionate and are products of illegitimate charges and unfair trials in violation of Iran's obligations under the ICCPR.⁵ LRWC asks Council to urge that Iran quash the sentences against Ms. Sodouteh and immediately release her.

Thank you, Mr. President.

¹ Oral Statement to the 40th Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), NGO in special consultative status, Re: Ongoing and Intensified Wrongful Treatment of Lawyers in the Islamic Republic of Iran, 11 March 2019, available at: <https://www.lrwc.org/iran-oral-statement-to-the-human-rights-council-ongoing-and-intensified-wrongful-treatment-of-lawyers-in-the-islamic-republic-of-iran/>

² Amnesty International, Statement, 11 March 2019, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/03/iran-shocking-33-year-prison-term-and-148-lashes-for-womens-rights-defender-nasrin-sotoudeh/>

³ Iranian Lawyer Sotoudeh Gets Seven Years In Prison, ISNA Reports; Husband Says 38 Years, RFE, 11 March 2019, available at:

<https://www.rferl.org/a/iranian-human-rights-lawyer-sotoudeh-gets-seven-years-in-prison/29814974.html>.

⁴ *Ibid.*