



The Law Society  
of England and Wales



Human Rights  
Institute

Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers

Date: 25 June 2025

Speaker: Ms. Shengchun Luo

**Oral Statement to the 59th Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR), the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, Lawyers for Lawyers, the Law Society of England and Wales, and Amnesty International, NGOs in consultative status\***

### **China: Ten years since the "709 crackdown" against human rights lawyers**

Mr. President,

This statement is co-sponsored by five NGOs. We thank the Special Rapporteur for her communications regarding Chinese human rights lawyers subject to repression.

This July marks ten years since the "709 Crackdown." On 9 July 2015, police targeted over 300 lawyers and legal advocates in the biggest attack on lawyers in China's modern history. Human rights lawyers embody the rule of law in China, upholding rights enshrined in China's Constitution and treaties China ratified.

Since then, China's government has continued to disbar lawyers, shut down law firms, and impose heavy prison sentences on lawyers. Their families face harassment leading to loss of housing and jobs, restrictions on children's education, surveillance, and travel bans. Lawyer Gao Zhisheng has been forcibly disappeared since August 2017. My husband, Ding Jiaxi, received a 12-year prison sentence in 2023 for attending a private gathering with other lawyers.

Persecution has also increased against other human rights advocates, including Tibetans, Uyghurs, and Hong Kongers. Beyond China's border, authorities hunt down dissent through transnational repression.

What steps does the Special Rapporteur recommend for the international community to hold China accountable for its widespread abuses against lawyers and human rights defenders?

Thank you.

\* The following 16 NGOs also share the views expressed in this statement: Alliance for Citizens Rights, Asian Lawyers Network (ALN), China Aid, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation, Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), Hong Kong Democracy Council, Human Rights Foundation, Human Rights in China, Humanitarian China, Judicial Reform Foundation, Safeguard Defenders, Taipei Bar Association Human Rights Committee, The Rights Practice, Uyghur Human Rights Project, World Uyghur Congress