



Human Rights Council, 44th session

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Agenda Item 3

Statement of the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute

Madam President,

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI) welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, drawing the link between corruption and denial of access to justice.

We would like to highlight the pivotal role that lawyers play in access to justice, and the particular importance of effective implementation of the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers. On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the UN Basic Principles this year, we urgently need to strengthen the protection of lawyers worldwide and support their role.

Today we so often witness lawyers being targeted simply for performing their functions. Unfortunately, we also witness many states not only failing to provide adequate protection to lawyers but often themselves becoming the source of these threats including, for example, in Azerbaijan, Turkey, Poland, and Venezuela.

States have the obligation to protect lawyers from any interference from state and non-state actors. Therefore, we call on states to commit to taking up positive actions to this end. The independence of lawyers is an absolute guarantee and a prerequisite for the rule of law.

Marking the 30th anniversaries of the UN Basic Principles as well as the IBA Standards for the Independence of the Legal Profession, the IBAHRI calls on the international community to denounce the growing attacks on independent lawyers worldwide and support their role in upholding free and democratic societies.

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