



**Human Rights Council, 4th session**

**06 March 2019**

**Agenda Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism**

**Statement of the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute**

Mr President,

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute commends the Independent Expert on her report and wishes to echo here three of the recommendations which are absolutely key to provide access to justice to persons with albinism and fight impunity for human trafficking and witchcraft-related crimes persons with albinism are subjected to.

First, we call on states to review their legal framework so as to ensure the protection and promotion of all human rights of persons with albinism, as well as condemn harmful practices, including the criminal conduct that may be related to witchcraft, such as human trafficking, murder, physical abuse or the abandonment of children. In that respect, the IBAHRI report 'Waiting to disappear' compiles international and regional legal bases of the rights persons with albinism are entitled.

Concomitantly, we call on states to provide the legal profession with human rights training addressing the rights of persons with albinism, together with persons with disability and other vulnerable groups. Lawyers involved in law review can help to ensure that laws with a negative impact on persons with albinism do not even enter the statute books. Furthermore crime against persons with albinism in general appears to be significantly underreported and lawyers working with communities can help by encouraging greater reporting, to ensure policy in this area is based on accurate evidence.

We call on states to appraise the multiple actors at stake and organise collaboration to address the root causes described in the Independent Expert's report and make access to justice a reality for persons with albinism. This may require, for instance, as stated in the African fair

trial Guidelines,<sup>1</sup> resort to para-legal assistance and establishment of the legal framework and training process to enable non-lawyers to provide basic legal assistance for persons with albinism. Likewise, traditional authorities and the formal justice sector should work together to ensure that such cases are investigated, prosecuted and punished as appropriate.

We thank you, Mr President.

This statement was delivered by:

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**Relevant IBA reports:**

IBA, [‘Access to justice for persons with disabilities: from international principles to practice’](#) (2017)

IBAHRI, [‘Waiting to disappear: international and regional standards for the protection and promotion of the human rights of persons with albinism’](#) (2017)

**For further information, please contact:**

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<sup>1</sup> African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Fair Trial and Legal Assistance in Africa