



The Law Society
of England and Wales

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

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

Human Rights
Institute

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Item 4: Interactive Dialogue with the UN Special rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in the Russian Federation

Joint Oral Statement

The International Bar Association, The Law Society of England and Wales, Lawyers for Lawyers, and Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, thank the Special Rapporteur for her vital work. We condemn ongoing systematic targeting of lawyers in Russia, including judicial harassment, arbitrary disciplinary actions, disbarment, and criminal charges. Lawyers defending the rule of law are routinely branded as "foreign agents", simply for performing their legal duties. They are subjected to severe pressure, including criminal prosecution and harsh punishment.

We deplore the sentencing, following an unfair trial, of the three lawyers who represented Aleksei Navalny, and urge Russia to release them unconditionally, end any further persecution and prosecution of all lawyers.

We remain extremely concerned at the law "On Advocacy and the Legal Profession" that expands the Ministry of Justice's oversight of legal profession through centralised administrative control, including the power to impose disciplinary sanctions.

We also join the Special Rapporteur's concern over Russia's plans to end its cooperation with the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture. Limiting external scrutiny of places of detention while targeting those lawyers defending due process for those deprived of their liberty, creates the conditions where torture occurs with impunity.

It is imperative to maintain rigorous monitoring over Russia. We therefore urge this Council to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur.

This statement was delivered by:

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