

# Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada



**LAWYERS FOR  
LAWYERS**



Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur

Date: 15 March 2023

## **Oral Statement to the 52nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), NGO in special consultative status**

### **Applause for human rights lawyers under pressure in Russia and other countries**

Mr. President,

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, and Lawyers for Lawyers, join the Special Rapporteur's celebration of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, with endorsement by OVD-Info.

We join the Special Rapporteur's tribute to defenders, emphasizing the courage of lawyers who uphold human rights despite repression. Lawyers in China, Türkiye, Iran, and elsewhere struggle to ensure that their countries uphold human rights obligations, despite risks of harassment, judicial persecution, arbitrary detention, and torture. Many lawyers in the Philippines and Colombia risk their lives upholding rights, while those who threaten or attack them enjoy impunity.

In Russia, lawyers keep courageously denouncing human rights violations and providing legal aid to those facing bogus charges. Russia has intensified its punishment of legitimate dissent since its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, even charging a lawyer with an offence for using the word "war" in court.

We join the Special Rapporteur's appreciation of countries with policies, mechanisms or guidelines to protect defenders at home or abroad. We urge all States to adopt and consistently implement robust laws and policies to protect human rights lawyers and defenders everywhere.

Thank you.