



62nd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
Item 4: ID on the report of the SR on the situation of human rights in Belarus - Interactive Dialogue
Monday 29 June 2026, 15:00 – 18:00

Joint Oral Statement

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute and the International Commission of Jurists condemn the ongoing repression of civil society in Belarus, in particular systematic attacks and judicial harassment against lawyers representing dissenting voices and defending human rights and the rule of law.

We deplore the subordination of the judiciary to executive control, and the Ministry of Justice's interference in the independent governance of the legal profession, including in lawyers' licensing and disciplinary proceedings, and the Bar Association's failure to protect its members. Effective remedies for impacted lawyers are not available. Since 2020, almost 600 lawyers have been forced to leave the profession through arbitrary disbarment, prosecution, fear of persecution, with several imprisoned and many forced into exile.

We denounce systematic repression of Belarusians residing abroad, including trials in absentia against exiled activists and the denial of access to essential consular services, placing many at risk of statelessness and other serious human rights violations. We call on host States to protect and support lawyers in exile through all appropriate measures, including by facilitating their access to legal employment.

We urge Belarus to immediately and unconditionally release all those arbitrarily detained, including lawyers and human rights defenders; cease all acts of persecution and reprisals, including those targeting persons abroad; and ensure prompt, thorough, independent and impartial investigations into these violations, with a view to ensuring full accountability.

This statement was delivered by:

Francesca Restifo

Senior Human Rights Lawyer and UN Representative

International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)

For further information please contact: francesca.restifo@int-bar.org