



Check Against Delivery

Organization: Lawyers for Lawyers
Item: Item 4, General Debate
Date: 17 September 2019
Speaker: Ms. Catherine Morris

Oral Statement to the 42nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers for Lawyers, NGO in special consultative status

Mr. President,

Lawyers for Lawyers and Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada would like to call the Council's attention to the human rights situation in the Philippines, particularly the attacks against lawyers, including dozens of extrajudicial killings.¹

We welcome Council resolution 41/2² which mandates a comprehensive written report on the human rights situation in the Philippines and urges the Government of the Philippines to take all necessary measures to prevent extrajudicial killings, to carry out impartial investigations, and to hold perpetrators accountable.

Since the adoption of the resolution on July 11, 2019, three more lawyers in the Philippines have been assassinated, and another survived a murderous attack.

These attacks and extrajudicial killings of lawyers and the impunity shielding perpetrators impair the ability of lawyers to provide effective legal representation, and consequently severely undermine the proper functioning of the rule of law and the adequate protection of rights, including the right to remedies and fair trials.

Today, 151 Bar Associations, lawyers' organizations and lawyers around the world call on the Government of the Philippines to adequately protect the safety and independence of lawyers and to end the culture of impunity in which these attacks occur.³

We urge the Council to insist that the Government of the Philippines halt and remedy violations and fully comply with Resolution 41/2.

Thank you.

¹ Joint written statement*submitted by Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, Lawyers for Lawyers, International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), non-governmental organizations in special consultative status, and Asian Legal Resource Centre, non-governmental organization in general consultative status, A/HRC/42/NGO/7, 21 August 2019, <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/HRC/42/NGO/7&Lang=E>. The Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, the International Association of People's Lawyers (IAPL), and the Philippines National Union of Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL), NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

² Resolution 41/2 Promotion and protection of human rights in the Philippines, [A/HRC/41/L.20](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/41/2), Adopted by a recorded vote (18 to 14, with 15 abstentions), 37th meeting, 11 July 2019.

³ THE PHILIPPINES: ATTACKS AGAINST LAWYERS ESCALATING, statement of 17 September 2019, available on: <https://lawyersforlawyers.org/en/joint-call-by-international-legal-community-protect-filipino-lawyers/>