



**LAWYERS FOR
LAWYERS**

Annual Report 2019

It has been one year since
Nasrin Sotoudeh
has been sentenced to
38 years imprisonment and 148 lashes.

#FreeTheLawyers
#FreeNasrin Sotoudeh

Preface

2019 was an eventful year for L4L. Phon van den Biesen stepped down as President, after 15 years of service. L4L evolved greatly and many new initiatives came to fruition under his leadership. The impact of L4L's activities on our target group – lawyers who are threatened or prosecuted because of their legitimate professional activities – has as a result been amplified. Moreover, L4L is in good shape as an organization. We owe Phon many thanks and I am honored to take over from him.

Additionally, Sophie de Graaf started as Executive Director of L4L in September 2020. Sophie has been working at L4L since 2011 and is familiar with all the ins and outs of the organization. She possesses the capacity, the network, the enthusiasm and the ideas to allow L4L to flourish and move further. She is supported in this task by Leroy Niekooop, who started working as Program Officer in December 2019. We consider ourselves fortunate to have such a compact, but very capable staff.

Apart from organizational concerns, 2019 was an eventful year in matters of substance. We supported 165 lawyers – with letters and social media campaigns, by trial monitoring, submitting reports to the United Nations and by organizing training sessions. The icing on the cake was the fifth Lawyers for Lawyers Award that was granted to Selçuk Kozağaçlı from Turkey. It is just too much to sum up: I gladly refer you to the annual report.

2019 was also the year of two awful incidents

in the Netherlands: the murder of lawyer Derk Wiersum and the shooting of lawyer Philippe Schol. The impact on the legal profession and the rule of law was and is enormous. What previously seemed to happen far away, now came very close. In other European countries lawyers are under pressure as well; Poland and Hungary are examples. Therefore, Europe is more than ever an area to which L4L will draw attention.

L4L could not function without the effort and commitment of our volunteers and partners, and the generous donations of our contributors, small and large. Together with them we will ceaselessly continue our work in 2020.



Irma van den Berg
President Lawyers for Lawyers

We are Lawyers for Lawyers

A free and independent legal profession. For every lawyer. Everywhere in the world. Lawyers for Lawyers is an independent network of lawyers, for lawyers. We stand up for our colleagues who are being threatened or obstructed in their profession. Because *their* rights are *our* rights. This way we defend the rule of law together.

Thanks to the hard work of lawyers in the Netherlands, we are able to support colleagues who are being threatened or prosecuted because of their work. Everywhere in the world. We operate under three pillars. Three programs to which Dutch lawyers devote their time, knowledge and care to achieve a free and independent legal profession.

Defend

We support individual lawyers who are under threat and generate international attention for their plight.

Empower

We empower lawyers and lawyers' associations to fulfil their role in upholding human rights.

Influence

We advocate for laws, policies and practices that ensure protection for the independence and safety of lawyers.



Lawyers for Lawyers
Defend the rule of law

Keyfigures 2019

165

Lawyers that we
campaigned for

27

Countries in which
we are active

60

Volunteers that
worked with us



Defend

We support individual lawyers under threat and generate international attention.

No matter where in the world they are, lawyers can count on us. Whether as an on-the-ground presence to monitor trials, or to advocate for them by publishing reports and sending letters that reach the right audience. We're also committed to highlighting and keeping attention on those cases where lawyers have been jailed for their work.

Concerns about attacks and murders

Lawyers in the Philippines are under pressure

Lawyers for Lawyers is very concerned about the situation of lawyers in the Philippines. Since President Duterte took office on June 30th 2016, the number of attacks on lawyers has risen significantly. Between July 2016 and September 2019, at least 41 lawyers and public prosecutors were killed, among them 24 practicing lawyers.

Furthermore, lawyers are being harassed and intimidated. They are the subject of threats, including death threats, surveillance and other forms of intimidation. Most murders and attacks on lawyers are related to them practicing their professional tasks or are assumed to be work related.

'War on drugs' and impunity

The attacks and extrajudicial murders of lawyers, district attorneys, members of the judiciary and other human rights activists that have

taken place are in the context of the war on drugs. These attacks are taking place in the entire country, seemingly in a climate of impunity.



Worldwide petition

151 bar associations, organisations and individuals support Philippine colleagues



In September 2019, Lawyers for Lawyers initiated a petition in support of colleagues in the Philippines. No less than 151 international and national bar associations, lawyers' organizations and legal professionals from 49 countries urged the Philippine government to take all measures necessary to stop the attacks and extrajudicial murders of lawyers and to end the current culture of impunity.



'We are perpetually grateful that international organizations like yours stand in solidarity with us. The support that you extend to us, adds fuel to our passion to continue the work that we do. And gives us courage to go on, knowing that we are not alone.'

Czarina Musni, a lawyer from the Philippines

Empower

We empower lawyers and lawyers' associations to fulfil their role in upholding human rights.

We support colleague lawyers worldwide by sharing knowledge and expertise, including providing training in international law. We also connect lawyers who come to us for support with their peers in the Netherlands that can help them. Fact-finding missions are also an important part of what we do, bearing witness first-hand to the situations our colleagues are facing.

Training Moskou

Russian lawyers get training on the UN & human rights

In April 2019, a Lawyers for Lawyers delegation traveled to Moscow to give a training to Russian lawyers and representatives of human rights organizations. Subject of the training: the use of the United Nations when defending human rights. Lawyers for Lawyers was in Moscow at the invitation of the Institute of Law and Public Policy (ILLP).

‘In my opinion, quite a lot of Russian lawyers are not familiar with the UN human rights mechanisms and bodies’, states Olga Podoplelova, a senior lawyer at the ILLP. ‘In many cases, however, they can be an effective tool for positive change in human rights policy. Therefore, it is important to provide lawyers with practical information about the optimal use of UN-mechanisms to protect human rights.’



Empowerment program

Volunteer-lawyers give training on the UN & human rights

Lawyers for Lawyers offers training on UN human rights mechanisms in our 'empowerment program'. Lawyers can not only use these mechanisms in the cases they are working on, they can also use them to protect their own professional rights and privileges, when these are being violated.

In April volunteer-lawyers Emiel Jurjens, Christien Wildeman, Tamilla Abdul-Aliyeva, Isabella Roos, Judith Lichtenberg and Sophie de Graaf, from the focus group Russian Federation, travelled to Moscow at the invitation of the ILPP. 21 participants, both lawyers and employees of human rights organizations, from

four Russian regions participated in the training: Moscow, St Petersburg, Nizjni Novgorod and the Mariy El Republic.

Volunteer-lawyer Isabella Roos: *'The responses were very positive. And also for us it was very extraordinary and educational to hear the stories of the participants. Plenty of subjects were discussed: LGBTI-rights, women's rights, labor law and minority rights. The journey to Moscow confirmed again for us that free and independent professional practice is not self-evident for a lot of lawyers and it deserves our full attention.'*



Influence

We advocate for laws, policies and practices that ensure protection for the independence and safety of lawyers.

We advocate for a free and independent legal profession. You'll find us regularly presenting at the UN in Geneva, as well as actively seeking audiences with representatives of individual governments, where we consistently emphasise the importance of the international agreements on the independent role of lawyers laid down in the UN Basic Principles. In the Netherlands, we organise meetings for Dutch lawyers to make them aware of the difficulties being faced by their colleagues in other parts of the world. And by using the power of social media and other channels, we're able to promote and share the stories of those who are being threatened or prosecuted for their work.

Lawyers for Lawyers Award 2019

2019 Award for lawyer Selçuk Kozağaçlı from Turkey

In May 2019 the Lawyers for Lawyers Award was given to lawyer Selçuk Kozağaçlı from Turkey. With this biannual Award, Lawyers for Lawyers honors lawyers who have committed themselves to the rule of law in an extraordinary way and who are threatened because of their profession.

The Award jury chose to award Selçuk Kozağaçlı to applaud the unwavering dedication of both Selçuk Kozağaçlı and his Turkish colleagues in defending the basic human rights of their clients.

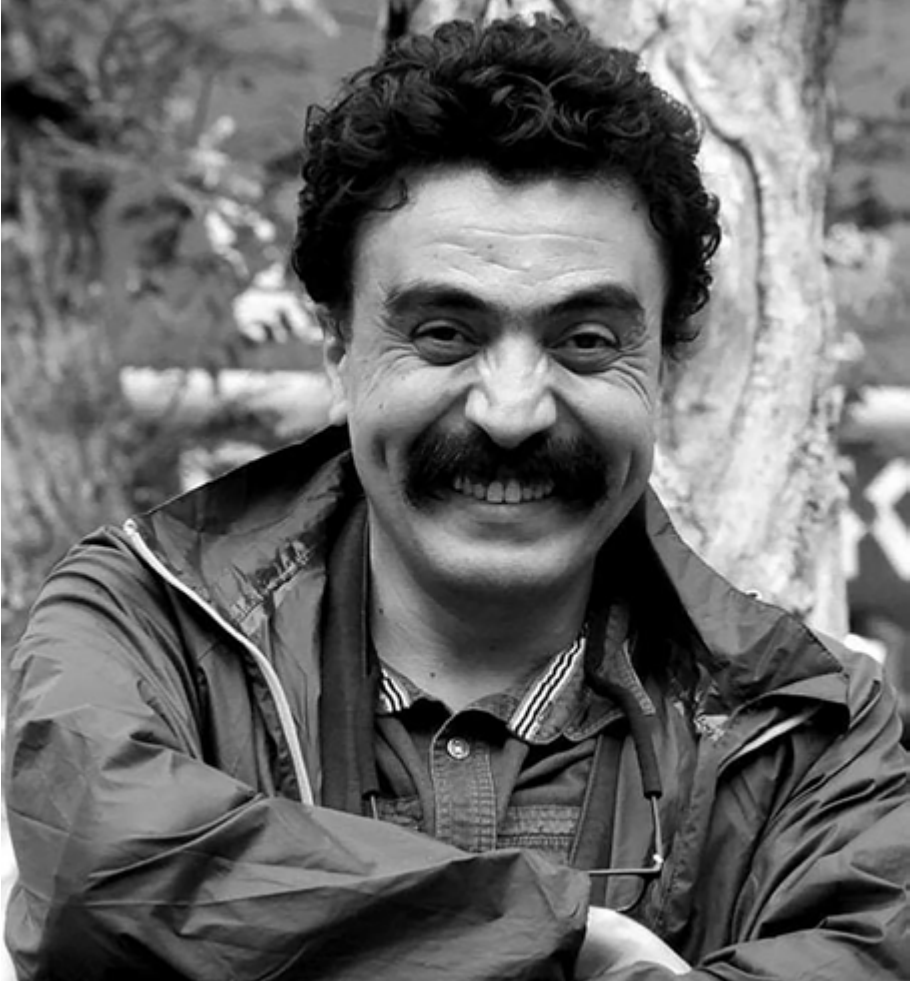
On May 23rd 2019 lawyer Serife Ceren Uysal accepted the award on behalf of Selçuk Kozağaçlı. The winner himself is detained in Turkey and could not attend the ceremony. More than 200 people, among whom

were many national and international lawyers, attended the ceremony. The Thai human rights lawyer Sirikan 'June' Charoensiri, the 2017 laureate, presented the Award.

Ferdinand Grapperhaus, the Dutch Minister of Justice and Security opened the ceremony. In his speech he stressed that *"the independent position of lawyers seems to be under increasing pressure, and we cannot and we should not accept that"*.

Laureate Lawyers for Lawyers Award 2019

About Selçuk Kozağaçlı



Selçuk Kozağaçlı is a lawyer from Turkey and member of the People's Law Office. He worked on many human rights cases. In November 2017 he was arrested and accused of 'membership of a terrorist organization'. On 20 March 2019 Selçuk Kozağaçlı was sentenced to a prison sentence of 11 years and 3 months.

‘Lawyers at risk! Do we need a European Convention?’

A symposium, with the title ‘Lawyers at risk! Do we need a European Convention?’ took place prior to the Award ceremony. It was organised by Lawyers for Lawyers, together with the Amsterdam Bar Association and the Jonge Balie Amsterdam. The attendees spoke about the problems and the risks that lawyers are facing

when practicing their profession. How can we protect and improve the safety and independence of lawyers? Special attention was given to the proposed European Convention for the protection of lawyers.



Focus on Turkey

In 2019 Lawyers for Lawyers asked attention in various ways for the situation of lawyers in Turkey. Together with a larger coalition of organizations, we submitted a report for the Universal Periodic Review of Turkey. Volunteer-lawyers from our focus group Turkey traveled to Geneva to lobby for an improvement in the situation of lawyers in Turkey. Moreover,

Lawyers for Lawyers monitored many hearings in 2019, in trials against a large number of lawyers. In honor of the Lawyers for Lawyers Award 2019, we organized a meeting with the Dutch Consulate in Istanbul, where Selçuk Kozağaçlı's wife accepted the Award in his place.



Join Lawyers for Lawyers

Every lawyer stands for a free and independent legal profession. And we all have a role to play in achieving this. Do your part by joining Lawyers for Lawyers. Contribute by volunteering your time to directly support your colleagues abroad, becoming a donor or taking part in a sponsored event.

Trial monitoring

Volunteer-lawyers observe trials against lawyers. These concern lawyers who are prosecuted and are hindered in their professional practice as a result.

Fact finding

Volunteer-lawyers take part in fact finding missions to denounce the repression of lawyers. Fact finding missions offer moral support to individual lawyers and their loved ones. Our reports form the basis for our lobbying with governments and organizations such as the United Nations.

UN-activities

Volunteer-lawyers contribute to advice and report to the United Nations. Lawyers for Lawyers has an UN-ECOSOC status. Because of this, volunteer-lawyers can participate in UN conferences and meetings.

Writing campaigns

Volunteer-lawyers write letters to the authorities of the country in which the detained lawyer is situated. In our letters we urge for his/her release, an independent investigation and an unobstructed professional practice.

Donors

Lawyers support Lawyers for Lawyers with a yearly or monthly contribution. On an individual basis, or with their law firm. By this, you facilitate our activities and ensure the independence of our foundation.

Join us!

Do you want to contribute to Lawyers for Lawyers?

That's possible! Send us an email at: info@lawyersforlawyers.nl

Quotes of volunteers



‘The arrest, prosecution and conviction of lawyers in Turkey is worse than ever before. Of course I sometimes wonder whether trial observation is useful in this situation. However, time after time the lawyers we support confirm how important it is that the international observers keep coming and support them in this way. Therefore, I continue going, full of persuasion of the utility of these missions.’

Angela Meijer (focusgroup Turkey)

“The presence of Lawyers for Lawyers during the court hearings in our cases, gives us courage and strength. The feeling that you are not alone and that there are colleagues who pay attention to your profession and your work is invaluable.”

Ramazan Demir (Lawyer from Turkey)

Lawfirm in the picture

Houthoff

Albert Knigge, partner at Houthoff

‘Lawyers have an important role in upholding the rule of law. Fundamental rights, such as the right to a fair trial, are under pressure if lawyers are not able to adequately carry out their professional activities. The rule of law only functions when these rights are upheld. It seems obvious that a government would endorse this and would ensure that we can carry out our professional activities freely, but this is not the case everywhere in the world. In many countries, lawyers are being threatened, harassed or hindered in other ways. Therefore, the fact that Lawyers for Lawyers commits itself to the safeguarding of a free and independent legal profession is a great thing and an important fight. During the past year we organized a session together with Lawyers for Lawyers, where an Iranian colleague told us about the sensitive cases he has taken on, endangering his own life. An impressive story with an important message to our own lawyers because, apart from providing financial support, we also offer our colleagues the opportunity to work as volunteers for Lawyers for Lawyers. We think it is of great importance that

our colleagues are aware of the complex situation our colleagues abroad are in and that they can contribute where possible. That is why we support Lawyers for Lawyers emphatically. Because if we, colleagues in freedom, do not offer this support, who will?’



HOUTHOFF

HOUTHOFF

ORDE VAN ADVOCATEN

OOST-BRABANT

VANDOORNE[⊕]

Kennedy Van der Laan

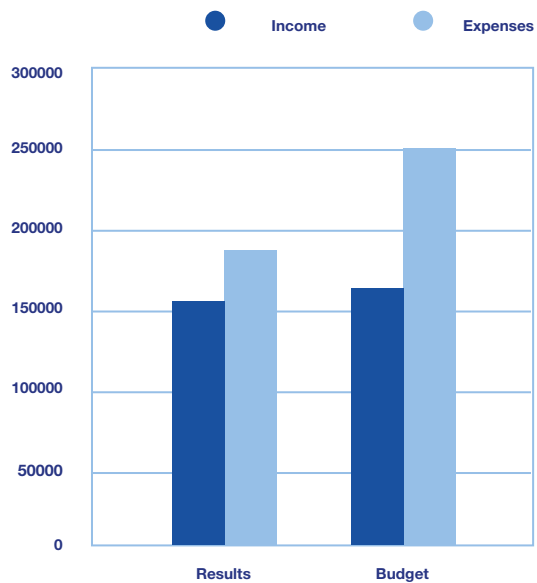
De heldere lijn

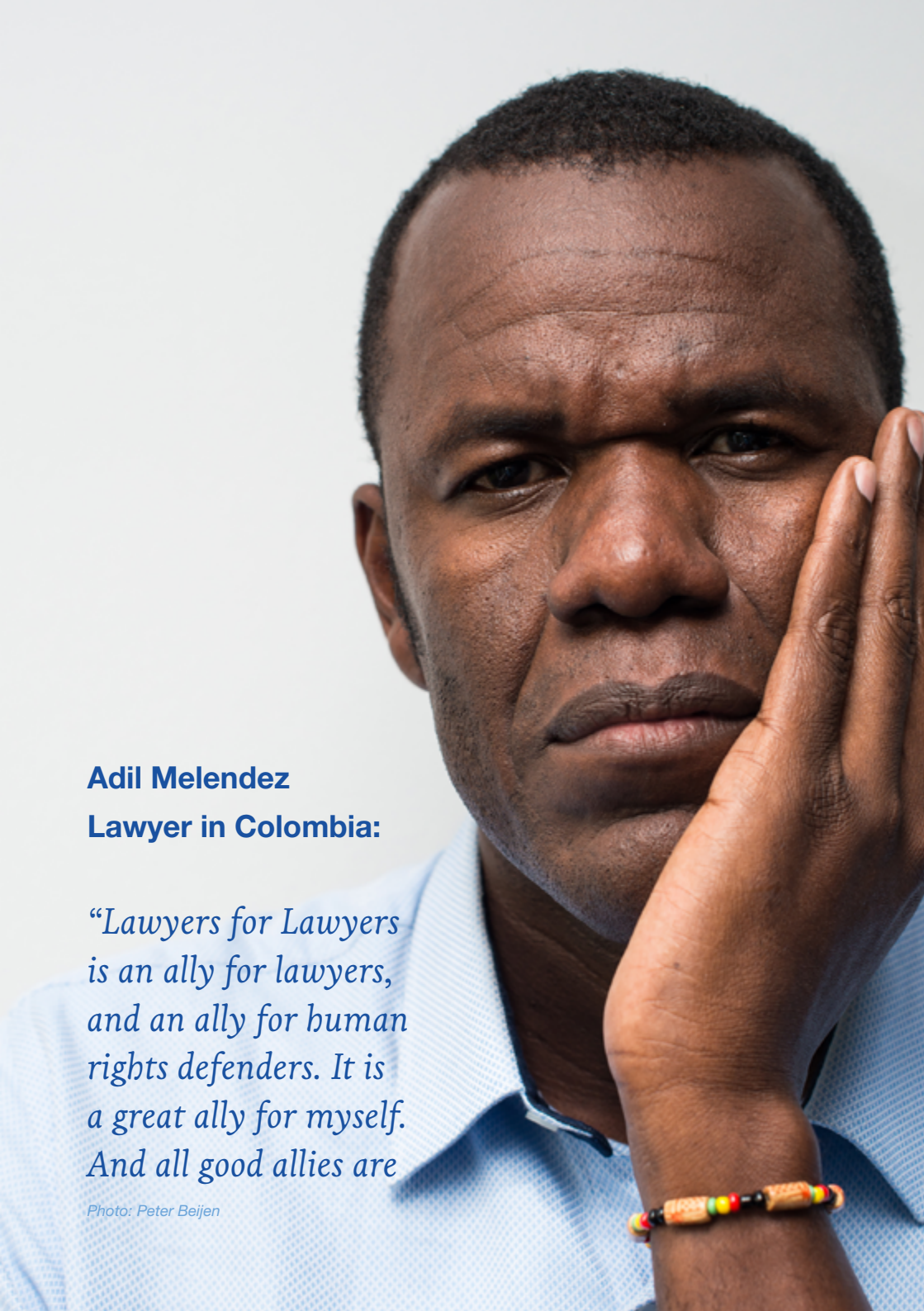
● **NautaDutilh**

● **Wolters Kluwer**

1ct concept.

Financial accountability





Adil Melendez
Lawyer in Colombia:

*“Lawyers for Lawyers
is an ally for lawyers,
and an ally for human
rights defenders. It is
a great ally for myself.
And all good allies are*

Photo: Peter Beijen

Contact



mailing address

P.O. Box 15732

1001 NE Amsterdam

The Netherlands

+31 20 717 16 38

info@lawyersforlawyers.org



bank details

ABN AMRO Bank:

NL69ABNA0489938655 attn Advocaten
voor Advocaten (L4L)

BIC: ABNANL2A, Incassant ID:

NL91ZZZ411819880000

ANBI status, **RSIN 814056453**

www.lawyersforlawyers.org

Lawyers for Lawyers (L4L) is an independent and non-governmental Dutch Organization and exists since 1986. Lawyers for Lawyers offers support to suppressed lawyers and lawyer-organizations worldwide.





This was 2019

*But we will continue. Towards a free
and independent legal profession. For
all lawyers. In all parts of the world.*

Lawyers for Lawyers
Defend the rule of law

www.lawyersforlawyers.org