

PRESS RELEASE

Lawyers from Algeria, Belarus and Myanmar shortlisted for the 2021 Lawyers for Lawyers Award

Amsterdam, 4 June 2021 - Lawyers from Myanmar and Belarus, and a lawyers' collective from Algeria are shortlisted as finalists for the 2021 Lawyers for Lawyers Award. The 2021 Award will be presented to the laureate during a seminar hosted by Lawyers for Lawyers and the Amsterdam Bar Association in Amsterdam on 18 November 2021. The ceremony will also be live-streamed.

The Lawyers for Lawyers Award aims to honour lawyers who have made significant contributions to the protection of the rule of law and human rights in challenging environments. Human rights lawyers from across the world were nominated for the 2021 Award. The expert jury selected U Khing Maung Zaw from Myanmar, the Collective for the Defence of Hirk Detainees from Algeria and Maksim Znak and Liudmila Kazak from Belarus as finalists for the Award. The laureate of the Award will be announced later this year.

About the finalists

- In Myanmar, **U Khing Maung Zaw** has courageously upheld the rule of law for more than five decades. He is currently representing leaders of the recently deposed Myanmar government and a number of other persons who have been arbitrarily detained on politically motivated criminal charges associated with the military coup in Myanmar beginning 1 February 2021. In this context of repression and danger, U Khin Maung Zaw remains committed to representing his clients.
- Since February 2019, grassroots peaceful protests (the "Hirak") have called for genuine democratic reform and rule of law in Algeria. In response, the government launched a campaign of arrests and judicial harassment against all those associated with this movement. The **Collective for the Defence of Hirk Detainees**, formed in July 2019 after the first wave of arrests, voluntarily and tirelessly defends those arbitrarily prosecuted, especially from marginalised backgrounds who cannot afford legal support.
- In the aftermath of the 2020 presidential elections in Belarus, lawyers working on politically sensitive cases or cases of human rights violations were subjected to pressure, harassment and intimidation in connection to their professional activities. **Maksim Znak** and **Liudmila Kazak** represented human rights defenders and opposition leaders, and are paying a high price for their work. On 9 September 2020, Maksim Znak was taken into custody and is still being detained. On 19 February 2021, Liudmila Kazak was disbarred.

Contact information

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About Lawyers for Lawyers

Lawyers for Lawyers (L4L) is an independent, non-political and non-profit lawyers' organization with the mission to promote the independent functioning of lawyers and the legal profession across the world in accordance with internationally recognized norms and standard. Our work to support lawyers who are at risk as a result of discharging their professional duties, seeks to protect them from threats, risks and reprisals, strengthens their international recognition and protection in laws, policies and practices, and empower them to fulfil their role as essential agents of the administration of Justice.

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