



International  
Commission  
of Jurists



Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada



The Law Society  
of England and Wales

### United Nations Human Rights Council, 46<sup>th</sup> Session

#### *Agenda Item 4- Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Islamic Republic of Iran*

#### Joint Oral Statement

9 March 2021

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (the IBAHRI), the International Commission of Jurists (the ICJ), Lawyers for Lawyers, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, and The Law Society express deep concerns at the arbitrary arrests and detention of lawyers and others sentenced to exorbitant prison terms for legitimately carrying out their professional activities. We draw special attention to the cases of lawyers Nasrin Sotoudeh<sup>1</sup> and Amirsalar Davoodi<sup>2</sup>, who remain imprisoned and were excluded from Covid-19 prisoner release programmes.

Their imprisonment means that access to justice for citizens in Iran is restricted. We are alarmed by the widespread violation of fair trial guarantees, including the denial of access to a lawyer of one's own choosing, as well as the recent application of the death penalty<sup>3</sup> in Iran. We also condemn Iran's non-compliance with international standards on conditions of detention and reports of torture of those critical of the regime.<sup>4</sup>

#### **We urge the Iranian authorities to:**

- **Immediately and unconditionally release** Nasrin Sotoudeh, Amirsalar Davoodi and other lawyers who remain in prison after conviction in an unfair trial;
- **Pending release, ensure compliance** with international standards on conditions of detention;<sup>5</sup>
- **Ensure** that lawyers and others can carry out their profession free from undue interference, including judicial harassment;
- **Establish an immediate moratorium** on the death penalty, pending abolishment; and
- **Comply** with its international legal obligations in respecting, guaranteeing, and protecting human rights.

*This statement was delivered by:*

*Francesca Restifo, Senior Human Rights Advisor, UN Representative  
International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)*

<sup>1</sup> [www.ibanet.org/Article/NewDetail.aspx?ArticleUid=11044300-16b9-4c05-83f6-177a29d7c9d5](http://www.ibanet.org/Article/NewDetail.aspx?ArticleUid=11044300-16b9-4c05-83f6-177a29d7c9d5)

<sup>2</sup> [www.ibanet.org/Article/NewDetail.aspx?ArticleUid=4756c9a1-5228-4e63-aac9-d3e877a88558](http://www.ibanet.org/Article/NewDetail.aspx?ArticleUid=4756c9a1-5228-4e63-aac9-d3e877a88558)

<sup>3</sup> At least 50 executions took place from December 2020 to 13 February 2021 - [www.ibanet.org/Article/NewDetail.aspx?ArticleUid=896945d6-7c5b-4676-a3bd-f984686c5199](http://www.ibanet.org/Article/NewDetail.aspx?ArticleUid=896945d6-7c5b-4676-a3bd-f984686c5199)

<sup>4</sup> A great number of crimes carry the death penalty in Iran are facilitated by a growing legislative framework, often based on vaguely defined criminal provisions that depend on subjective or discretionary considerations. For example, the 2013 Iranian Penal Code expanded the number of crimes subject to the death penalty and includes provisions that reject the presumption of innocence with respect to crimes punishable by death.

<sup>5</sup> At least 50 executions took place from December 2020 to 13 February 2021 - [www.ibanet.org/Article/NewDetail.aspx?ArticleUid=896945d6-7c5b-4676-a3bd-f984686c5199](http://www.ibanet.org/Article/NewDetail.aspx?ArticleUid=896945d6-7c5b-4676-a3bd-f984686c5199)