

Lawyers for Lawyers Award Presentation & Seminar:

“Lawyers representing journalist targeted around the globe”

Date: 15 May 2025

Time: 15.30 – 17.30, drinks and bites until 19.00.

Location: De Rode Hoed, Amsterdam

Introduction

Since 2011, the *Lawyers for Lawyers Award* has honored lawyers who have made significant contributions to upholding the rule of law and human rights, often in the most challenging environments. As part of the 2025 award ceremony, *Lawyers for Lawyers* and the Amsterdam Bar Association are hosting a seminar designed to serve as a platform for exchanging ideas, sharing knowledge, and addressing the pressing challenges facing lawyers worldwide.

This year, the seminar will focus on the topic of **“Lawyers Representing Journalists Targeted Around the Globe”** inspired by the growing and urgent challenges that lawyers face when defending journalists in hostile environments. **We invite you to join us for this seminar on Thursday, 15 May 2025, from 15:30 – 17:30 CET at De Rode Hoed, Amsterdam.** Drinks and bites will be available until 19:00.

Seminar Overview

Lawyers play a vital role in protecting free and independent media. However, in regions where press freedom, freedom of expression and the rule of law are under threat, lawyers defending journalists are increasingly targeted. These attacks include intimidation, arbitrary disbarment, harassment, Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) and even criminal prosecution. These retaliatory measures often result in the imprisonment, exile or suspension of a lawyer's ability to practice law or defend media rights. Such actions not only threaten the legal profession but also undermine the principles of justice and lead to censorship and suppression of press freedom.

When media lawyers are targeted, the right of journalists to effective legal defense is compromised, ultimately leading to censorship, suppression of press freedom, and a denial of citizens' right to be informed on matters of public interest. Despite the urgency of the issue, the persecution of lawyers defending journalists remains an under-researched topic, with the preliminary findings of the ground-breaking report [Defending the Defenders: Legal Threats Against Lawyers Protecting Journalists](#) being one of the firsts to shed light on the various forms of targeting and surveillance used against these lawyers in different countries¹. In particular, the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers has raised concerns about the continued criminalization of lawyers who provide legal assistance to journalists, emphasizing the need for greater protection of these professionals².

Within this framework, this event will focus on the growing trend of targeting lawyers defending journalists, raising awareness through panel discussions and testimonies, and fostering dialogue among key stakeholders to develop strategies to protect both journalists and their lawyers.

¹ Thomson Reuters Foundation, [Defending the Defenders: Legal Threats Against Lawyers Protecting Journalists Preliminary Findings](#), 2024.

² Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, *Protection of lawyers against undue interference in the free and independent exercise of the legal profession*, [A/HRC/50/36](#).

Programme

Moderation: The seminar will be moderated by **Emiel Jurjens**, a renowned media and human rights lawyer with extensive experience in representing international media, journalists, and human rights defenders.

15.00 – 15.30 Walk-in

Part I: Seminar

15.30 – 15.33 Welcome by **Jeroen Brouwer**, Chair of the board of Lawyers for Lawyers

15.33 – 15.40 Opening remarks by **Margaret Satterthwaite**, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers (video)

15.40 – 15.50 Keynote speech by **Jacqueline Schaap**, President of the Amsterdam Bar Association

15.50 – 16.45 Panel discussion

- **Emma Bergmans**, Senior Policy & Advocacy Advisor at Free Press Unlimited (The Netherlands)
- **Bea Bodrogi**, Human rights lawyer specialized in freedom of expression and media law (Hungary)
- **Sirikan Charoensiri**, Co-founder of Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (Thailand)
- **Ginna Anderson**, Associate Director of the American Bar Association Center for Human Rights (USA)

16.45 – 16.55 Q&A

16.55 – 17.00 Closing by **Emiel Jurjens** and introduction of Award ceremony

Part II: Award ceremony

17.00 – 17.07 Opening remarks by **Jeroen Soeteman**, President of the Dutch Bar Association

17.07 – 17.12 Jury remarks by **Agaath Reijnders**, L4L Award jury member, Amsterdam Bar Association

17.12 – 17.27 Presentation of Award by laureate 2023, **Claudia González Orellana**, to laureate 2025, **Zola Ferreira Bambi**. Followed by speech by the laureate 2025

17.27 – 17.30 Closing by **Emiel Jurjens**

Part III – Drinks and bites

17.30 – 19.00 Drinks and bites