



## Joint Statement by bar associations on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tajik lawyer Buzurgmehr Yorov's arrest

29 September 2025

The undersigned Bar Associations join the international legal and human rights community in expressing our grave concern over the ongoing detention of one of Tajikistan's most prominent human rights lawyers, Buzurgmehr Yorov. On 28 September 2025, it was ten years since his arrest.

Mr. Yorov is currently serving a 28-year prison sentence as a result of his work representing members of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, one of the country's few opposition parties before its banning later that year. On 6 October 2016, following proceedings that did not respect international fair trial standards, he was sentenced to 23 years in prison. His sentence has since been extended, most recently in July 2023, and his expected release date is now September 2043. We call on the authorities of Tajikistan to immediately and unconditionally release Mr. Yorov.

The undersigned bar associations have been informed by Lawyers for Lawyers, and through the Opinion of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (Opinion No. 17/2019), of serious violations in the case of Mr. Yorov.<sup>1</sup> These include his arrest without a warrant,<sup>2</sup> searches of his home and office without due process,<sup>3</sup> denial of access to counsel,<sup>4</sup> intimidation of his lawyers and family,<sup>5</sup> closed and unfair trials,<sup>6</sup> and reports of torture and solitary confinement.<sup>7</sup> The Working Group concluded that Mr. Yorov's detention was arbitrary and in violation of international law, and called for his immediate release. Despite this, he remains imprisoned.

We urge the Tajikistani authorities to comply with their obligations under international law and to immediately release Buzurgmehr Yorov.

<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Council, Opinions adopted by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention at its eighty-four session, 23 April-3 May 2019, A/HRC/WGAD/2019/17.

<sup>2</sup> These acts violate Articles 9 (1) (2) (3), 4 and 15 (1) of the Covenant and Article 11 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

<sup>3</sup> Protected by Article 2 (1), 9 (1) (3), 19 (2), 22 (1), 25 (a) and 26 of the Covenant, and Principles 38 and 39 of the Body of Principles, Articles 7, 9, 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Principles 2 and 36 (2) of the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment.

<sup>4</sup> These acts violate Article 14 (3) (b) and (d) of the Covenant, Rules 41 (3) and 61 of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules) and Principles 11 (1), 15, 17 (1) and 18 of the Body of Principles.

<sup>5</sup> See above.

<sup>6</sup> These acts violate Article 14 (1) (2) (3) (5) of the Covenant and Article 10 and 11 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Principle 36 (1) of the Body of Principles.

<sup>7</sup> These acts violate Articles 7, 10 (1) and 14 (3) (g) of the Covenant, Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Articles 1, 2 and 16 (1) of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

## **SIGNATORIES:**

Bologna Bar Association

Geneva Bar Association

Human Rights Commission of the Fédération des Barreaux d'Europe

Hungarian Bar Association

Institut des droits humains du Barreau de Bruxelles

Institute for the Rule of Law of the *Union Internationale des Avocats* (UIA-IROL)

Limburg Bar Association

North-Netherlands Bar Association

Order of French-speaking and German-speaking Bars of Belgium

Ordre des avocats de Nantes (Nantes Bar Association)

Ordre français des avocats du Barreau de Bruxelles

Quebec Association of Defense Lawyers

Supreme Bar Council of Bulgaria

Vaud Bar Association (OAV)