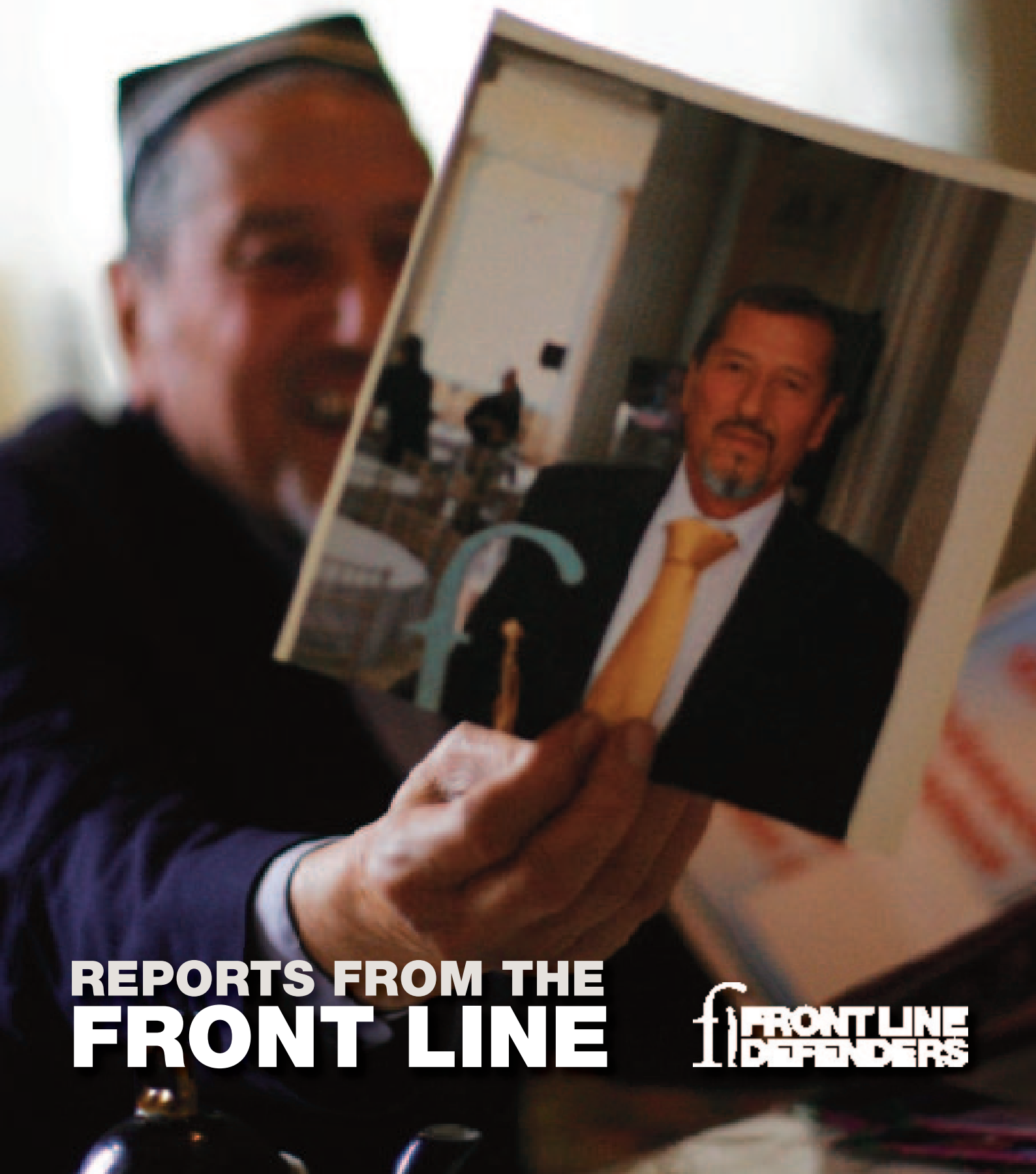


[DISPATCHES]



REPORTS FROM THE
FRONT LINE

f FRONTLINE
DEFENDERS

DENIS O'BRIEN

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Denis O'Brien, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Front Line Defenders.

2019 WAS AGAIN A YEAR WHICH SAW A huge increase in the applications Front Line Defenders received for its protection grants programme. We were able to provide rapid and practical support of €1,514,838 through 626 grants to 460 individuals and 166 organisations, a growth in grants of 17% on 2018. With the continued cooperation and support of our partners we are seeking to grow our capacity to respond to applications in 2020. In total, Front Line Defenders supported 2,307 human rights defenders at risk in 117 countries through the year.

It was hugely inspiring to welcome and learn from the 114 human rights defenders from 90 countries who attended the 2019 Dublin

Platform in October. This remarkable gathering provides HRDs with an opportunity to amplify their voices internationally, to engage with major stakeholders in the human rights field, and to learn effective strategies to help protect them in their work. International guests included Simon Coveney TD, Tánaiste and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland; Eamon Gilmore, EU Special Representative on Human Rights; Ramanie Kunanayagam, member of the Inspection Panel of the World Bank and John Knox, former UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment. Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Michel Forst, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation

of human rights defenders, each spoke at plenary sessions and participated in question and answer sessions with HRDs.

The discussions with human rights defenders over the three days focused on protection in times of elections and political crises; gendered aspects of smear campaigns, hate speech and defamation against women HRDs; innovation in collective approaches to holistic protection; and corruption as a driver of insecurity. The valuable input from activists working in hugely diverse but hostile contexts will inform our programmes in the coming years.

The HRDs also marched through the streets of Dublin as part of the "Set Them Free" campaign, calling for the release of HRDs facing multi-decade prison sentences around the world. The campaign includes former Front Line Defenders Protection Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa, Bahraini HRD Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, who is serving a life sentence for his role in the peaceful pro-democracy uprising of 2011.

I would like to place on record our thanks to all those who have supported the work of Front Line Defenders in 2019 including the fantastic support we have received from our donors. Without this generous support, Front Line Defenders would not be able to undertake its work.

We look forward to 2020 with the organisation in good shape to meet the challenges which face us. □

Denis O'Brien,
Chairman of the Board of Directors

WHAT DOES FRONT LINE DEFENDERS DO?

Front Line, the International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) registered as a charity in Ireland. It was founded in Dublin in 2001 with the specific aim of protecting human rights defenders at risk, people who work, non-violently, for any or all of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Front Line Defenders addresses the protection needs identified by defenders themselves.

Front Line Defenders provides rapid and practical support to at-risk human rights defenders including:

- grants to pay for the practical security needs of human rights defenders;
- provision of training and development of resource materials on security and protection, including digital security;
- international advocacy on behalf of human rights defenders at immediate risk;
- visibility and campaign support to HRDs to increase their recognition and legitimacy on international, national and local levels;
- rest and respite;
- opportunities for networking and exchange between human rights defenders, including at the biennial Dublin Platform;
- the annual Front Line Defenders Award for Human Rights Defenders at Risk;
- an emergency 24 hour phone line for human rights defenders operating in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and Russian;
- temporary relocation of human rights defenders in emergency situations.

Front Line Defenders promotes the protection of human rights defenders through its support for the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and other international and regional mechanisms. Front Line Defenders promotes respect for the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. Front Line Defenders has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, partnership status with the Council of Europe and observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

On the Cover



Uzbek human rights defender Ahmadjan Madmarov, winner of the 2006 Front Line Defenders Award for Human Rights Defenders at Risk holds a photo of himself at the award ceremony in Dublin during a visit to Uzbekistan by Executive Director, Andrew Anderson, and FLD's Europe & Central Asia Protection Coordinator. For more on developments in Uzbekistan, see p. 14.

DETERMINATION

*“the old is dying and the new cannot be born;
in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear...”*

- Antonio Gramsci



Andrew Anderson with Ebtisam Al-Saegh, a Bahraini human rights defender who works for the organisation SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights.

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO ATTEND THE GLOBAL IRELAND 2025 CONFERENCE AT THE MANSION HOUSE IN DUBLIN on the first Monday of 2020, attended by Irish diplomats from around the world, along with government officials, ambassadors from other countries stationed in Ireland and academics.

It was peculiar to hear Gramsci quoted at the opening of the first session, but well fitting to the frank and open discussion about the morbid symptoms we are seeing in the world. Democracy was described by one participant as “failing” and attacks by populist authoritarians on the international rules based system were acknowledged to be having some success. The first step towards better responding to this condition is a more honest appraisal of where we are.

Front Line Defenders documented 304 killings of human rights defenders in 2019. In June, Maxciel Pereira dos Santos was killed with two shots to the head in the city of Tabatinga in the Brazilian state of Amazonas; he was targeted for his efforts to prevent illegal invasions by hunters, loggers and gold miners in the Vale do Javari reservation, home to the world’s highest concentration of uncontacted indigenous tribes. In May, Mena Mangal, a journalist and women’s rights activist was shot dead in Kabul, Afghanistan shortly after she shared on Facebook the death threats she was facing. In spite of a previous abduction, she defiantly declared that “a strong woman wasn’t afraid of death,” and that she loved her country.

2019 was a year of popular protest and public uprisings in all world regions demanding changes to how people were governed. The role human rights defenders (HRDs) played in

these protests ranged from organising and mobilising to monitoring and documenting human rights violations, and to assisting those who were injured or arrested. The causes of street protests and social unrest differed, but tended to revolve around outright rejection of deep economic inequality, rampant corruption, and calls for greater civil and political rights. While the demonstrations in most countries were exclusively peaceful, security forces responses ranged from excessive use of force to extreme violence. This was highlighted in Sudan in June when dozens were shot dead by security forces while participating in a sit-in at the headquarters of the Transitional Military Council. The speed with which police and other forces were authorised to use tear gas, rubber bullets and live ammunition on non-violent protesters was extremely worrying, as governments around the world sought to remove the tactic of peaceful, on-street mobilisations from the toolkit of civil society.

As the Amazon burned, the corrupt President of Brazil incited violence against those working on land rights, environmental rights and indigenous peoples’ rights. Bolsonaro’s rhetoric of fake news and false allegations has made clear what we know from documenting attacks against environmental HRDs around the world – if we want to save the planet we must protect those working to defend the environment who are often those most at risk as well as the first to suffer the impacts of climate change.

And it is not only in Brazil that corruption drives attacks on human rights defenders. Those who investigate and expose corruption are often those who face the most violent repression, as we saw with the murder of

Daphne Caruana Galizia in Malta. And it is often through corruption that the powerful undermine the police or the judiciary, institutions that should be ensuring accountability and protection for human rights defenders.

It is no coincidence that the President of Guatemala refused to renew the mandate of the very effective International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala when it started to investigate those close to him. It points to the need for stronger international action against corruption. It is totally inadequate to only move against the bank accounts of corrupt rulers when they are deposed. In Guatemala, as elsewhere, the struggle for human rights and the rule of law is bound together with the struggle against corruption and impunity.

In June 2019, I had the pleasure and the honour to travel to New York with the five regional winners of the Front Line Defenders Award for Human Rights Defenders At Risk. Badr Baabou from Tunisia, Rosanna Marzan from the Dominican Republic, Veronika Lapina from Russia, Shinta Ratri from Indonesia and the Nyasa Rainbow Alliance from Malawi were recognised for their powerful struggles for LGBTI+ rights in their countries. Together we marked the 50th Anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising in New York and celebrated some of the incredible achievements of the global struggle for LGBTI+ rights.

The Americas regional Award winner Rosanna Marzan said: “We will go on fighting, we will not cease. This is about my life, about the lives of those around me, because violence, discrimination and homophobia are nothing more than a deficiency of love towards human beings.”

2019 has been a year of pain and suffering, but also a year of resilience and achievement for human rights defenders. The corrupt autocrats who pretend to project their strength as they lash out against human rights defenders actually demonstrate their own weakness. Power is increasingly contested, young people are increasingly engaged, corruption is increasingly exposed; all of this activism provokes powerful movements for change. There are more human rights defenders working in more places on more issues than ever before.

In 2019, we also lost the great writer and human rights defender Toni Morrison, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993. She wrote: “The presence of evil was something to be first recognized, then dealt with, survived, outwitted, triumphed over.”

If we focus only on the killings, and the torture, and the prison terms, and the abuse and the harassment, we are missing the big story. The resilience HRDs demonstrate in the face of such violence is nothing short of amazing. And the spirit of hope that human rights defenders nurture is never more needed than in these times we face today. □

Andrew Anderson,
Executive Director

PROTECTION GRANTS 2019

626

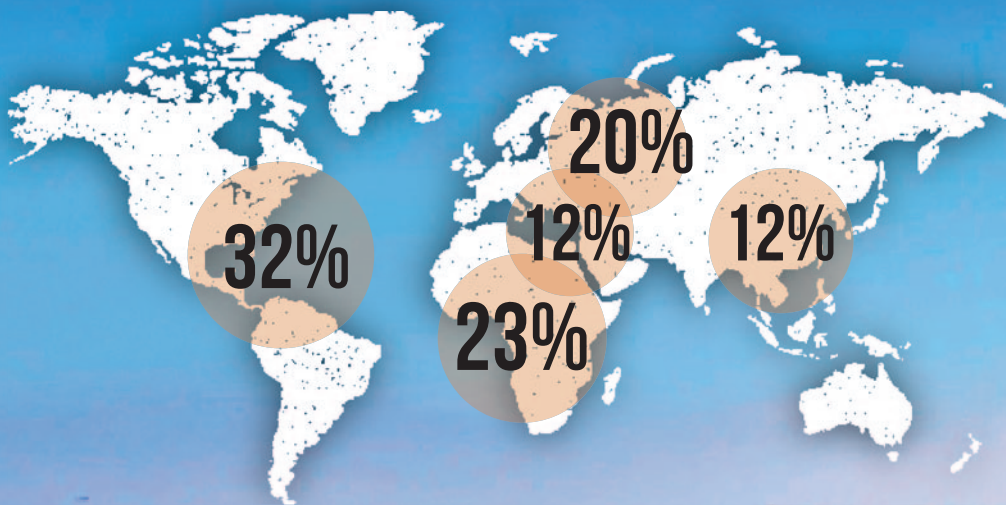
PROTECTION GRANTS

466

HRDS

166

ORGANISATIONS



BY REGION

AFRICA	23%
AMERICAS	32%
ASIA-PACIFIC	12%
EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA	20%
MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA	12%

BY TYPE OF VIOLATION*

THREATS	49%
SURVEILLANCE	25%
ARREST/DETENTION	21%
PHYSICAL ATTACK	20%
RAID/BREAK-IN/THEFT	12%

*TOTAL PERCENTAGE >100% AS GRANTS CAN BE IN RESPONSE TO MORE THAN ONE TYPE OF VIOLATION

f FRONT LINE DEFENDERS

2019 BY THE NUMBERS



2,307 HRDS AND **366** ORGANISATIONS
IN **117** COUNTRIES RECEIVED DIRECT SUPPORT

626 PROTECTION GRANTS = €1,514,838 

199 URGENT APPEALS ON **395** HRDS IN **61** COUNTRIES

93 SECURITY CONSULTATIONS
FOR **275** HRDS IN **26** COUNTRIES 

89 PROTECTION COORDINATION, VISIBILITY & SECURITY
ADVISOR FIELD VISITS TO **49** COUNTRIES

23 HRDS FROM **11** COUNTRIES SUPPORTED
BY THE REST & RESPITE PROGRAMME

8 VISIBILITY FOR PROTECTION WORKSHOPS
FOR **114** HRDS

133 HRDS FROM **14** COUNTRIES
PARTICIPATED IN **10** RAPP TRAININGS 

382 HRDS & HROS RECEIVED
DIGITAL PROTECTION CONSULTATIONS
294 HRDS FROM **20** COUNTRIES
PARTICIPATED IN **24** DIGITAL PROTECTION TRAININGS 

114 HRDS FROM **90** COUNTRIES
ATTENDED THE DUBLIN PLATFORM 

543 HRD ID CARDS ISSUED


“NO OBSTACLE
CAN PREVENT US
FROM REACHING
OUR DREAMS.
WE ARE
MEXICAN.
WE ARE
UNSTOPPABLE.”

NINGÚN OBSTÁCULO
NOS PUEDE IMPEDIR
ALCANZAR
NUESTROS SUEÑOS;
SOMOS MEXICANOS,
SOMOS IMPARABLES



6 [SOLIDARITY] DUBLIN PLATFORM

The 2019 Dublin Platform was held from 2 to 4 October in Dublin Castle and convened 114 human rights defenders (HRDs) from 90 countries, along with a wide range of other international guests. This remarkable gathering provided HRDs with opportunities to amplify their voices internationally and to major stakeholders in the human rights field, and learn effective strategies to help protect them in their work. International guests included Simon Coveney TD, Tánaiste and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland; Eamon Gilmore, EU Special Representative on Human Rights; Ramanie Kunanayagam, member of the Inspection Panel of the World Bank and John Knox, former UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment. Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Michel Forst, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, each spoke at plenary sessions and participated in question and answer sessions with HRDs. Additionally, representatives of international organisations, donors and other diplomats and officials were present throughout the Platform to learn from and dialogue with the HRDs.

WELCOME 



Left – Tumeliwa Mphemo, Malawi; centre – Shahidul Alam, Bangladesh; right – Hadeel BuQrais, Kuwait

HRDs featured on panel discussions over the three days, focusing on protection in times of elections and political crises; gendered aspects of smear campaigns, hate speech and defamation against women HRDs; innovation in collective approaches to holistic protection; and corruption as a driver of insecurity. A series of regional-based working groups allowed HRDs to focus on key issues, including democratic deficits, impunity, gender discrimination, solidarity, fundraising, development, corruption, LGBTI+ issues, smear campaigns and disinformation, and physical and sexual violence, among others.

HRDs shared their experiences by giving individual testimonies, offering each the space to present personal reflections on their work, challenges, struggles and successes to a room full of fellow activists, all who are uniquely qualified to empathize and offer solidarity and support.

FLD's team of digital security experts was available to provide one-to-one support to HRDs in digital clinics, while one-to-one physical security clinics were also available to review physical and personal security strategies for the home, office, while travelling, or any other topic. A number of safe spaces and psychological wellbeing clinics were also provided.



HRDs and guests gather for a photo in the main courtyard at Dublin Castle for a group photo on 3 October, during the Dublin Platform.



Left – Amgalanbayar Bor-Uvgon, Mongolia; centre – Abeer Saady, Egypt; right – Michel Forst, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of HRDs

A troubling trend in the region that has emerged over the last several years is the use of violence, intimidation and outright suppression around elections, from the period of campaigning through to the announcement – and contestation – of results. In 2019, general and presidential elections were held in a dozen sub-Saharan African countries, and in a number of them, human rights defenders and civil society came under attack in relation to their work around ensuring free and fair elections.

Threats and risks to the Malawi Human Rights Defender Coalition leadership increased in the wake of its protests against the mismanagement of national elections held in May 2019. Physical attacks and death threats were common tactics employed by Malawi police forces and cadres of the ruling party to harass and intimidate. Timothy Mtambo, Chairperson of the Coalition had several gun shots fired at his car in a suspected attempted killing in October, after he led civil society efforts to challenge the legality of the election results in the Constitutional Court. FLD's Eastern & Southern Africa Protection Coordinator traveled to Malawi in July to assess the security situation for HRDs.

Front Line Defenders supported 17 protection grants to Malawian HRDs in 2019, with most of the grants going to HRDs and organisations working on issues related to the elections or on LGBTI+ rights. □



Bridge crossing in Blantyre, Malawi, near the offices of Nyasa Rainbow Alliance. WHRD networks – Ugandan HRDs at the launch of the Uganda WHRD Coalition.

WHRD NETWORKS

There was an acceleration of the formation of WHRD coalitions in East and Southern Africa in 2019, as a response to state failures in the protection of women defenders. FLD's Eastern & Southern Africa PC attended the official launch of the Uganda WHRD coalition (WHRDN-U) in March. During subsequent research visits to the region, FLD has encouraged and advised WHRDs to form similar networks under mentorship of WHRDN-U. A Tanzanian coalition was successfully formed and registered. WHRDN-U has now started, with introductions from FLD, working with WHRDs from Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi to mentor them in the process.



[CRACKDOWN] ZIMBABWE

2019 saw an intensified crackdown against HRDs in Zimbabwe amidst waves of protests at a deepening economic crisis and a disputed election. Between July and September there were at least 50 activists abducted, including four teachers from the Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (ARTUZ), an organisation defending the right to education and labour rights in rural areas. The HRDs were subjected to threats and physical assault throughout their interrogations.

In May, seven HRDs now known as the 'Zimbabwe 7' were arrested at Harare airport after attending a training on civil engagement in the Maldives and charged with 'subverting the constitutional government.'

Front Line Defenders assisted several of these HRDs with protection grants, urgent appeals, and dedicated campaign visibility. FLD organised a solidarity action for the 'Zimbabwe 7' sending them messages of support from the Istanbul 10 via social media.



Zimbabwe – Three members of the #Zimbabwe7 hold solidarity cards they received from the #Istanbul10

MALI RADIO CAMPAIGN

In March 2019, Front Line Defenders travelled to Bamako to meet HRDs and plan with them the second phase of a campaign aimed at building public support for HRDs and advocating for the implementation of the law on HRDs protection. In 2019, Kunafoni, a web TV and radio partner of the campaign, organised a series of six rap debates and slam poetry public events in Bamako, attended by around 300 people (mostly youth) each time. Shows covered issues such as WHRDs working to defend women's land rights, HRDs working on the rights of victims, and anti-corruption activists. For each debate, the artists met and talked with the HRDs ahead of the shows, to decide together the priorities and what to focus on during the rap debate. Radio partner Studio Tamani broadcast a 45-minute discussion on the protection of HRDs across its national network of 70+ radio stations, for the first time inviting an LGBTI defender as a speaker in the debate; it also broadcast a 3 minute radio spot, translated in 6 local languages, about the importance of a national law for the protection of HRDs. And in Timbuktu, WHRD Fatouma Harber organised a 'human rights caravan' with a group of local bloggers and a public event in the main square in the city, followed by a series of 'listening clubs' where different target groups (women, youth, and people with disabilities) came together, listened to the radio debate, and discussed the role played by HRDs in advancing the rights of their communities.



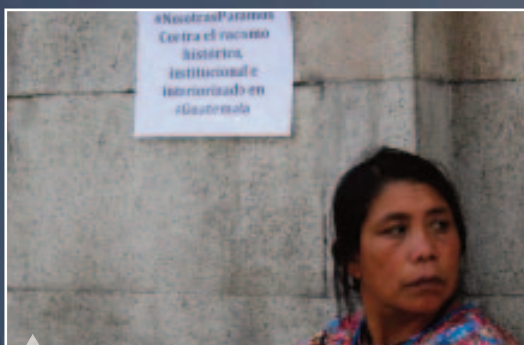
WHRD Fatouma Harber holding community outreach programmes in Tumbuktu in April as part of the Mali radio campaign.

Catatumbo, Colombia is an emblematic region of the challenges that the country faces in the effort to secure the appropriate implementation of the peace agreement that ended the decades-long armed conflict between the government and FARC-EP. The territory has been neglected by authorities for a long time and its inhabitants suffer from additional strong stigmatisation as a result of it being a place with significant historical FARC-EP presence, coca plantations and large deployment of security forces. HRDs have documented a deteriorating situation in the region since the Duque administration came to power and its weakened commitment to the Peace Accord, particularly, the lack of proper implementation of the crops substitution program, as well as the absence of the state in the region aside from the mainly militarised response to the local context). HRDs reported being regularly subjected to killings, stigmatisation, criminalisation, death threats, forced displacement, harassment by both illegal armed groups and the army, and surveillance.

FLD's Americas Protection Coordinator visited the region in June 2019, together with other local and international organisations, to better understand how HRDs have managed to organise, function and protect themselves in this context and to witness their creativity and management of community resources, how they deal with community problems, how they interact/dialogue with armed groups (legal and illegal) and how their own collective protection mechanisms and alternatives could be strengthened with the support of international community and national authorities.



Rural worker from Catatumbo, linked to CISCA (Comite de Integracion Social del Catatumbo), points to the site where a recent attack on his house happened.



Sexual and gender violence is increasing against WHRDs in Guatemala.

© Sector Mujeres

Visit of FLD and CPT to MST Camp near Maraba, in the state of Para. The camp has been one of the most attacked by illegal armed groups in the region.

GUATEMALA

In June 2019, Americas Protection Coordinator traveled to Guatemala to meet HRDs in the context of the first round of presidential elections, which were inconclusive. The electoral period proved dangerous for HRDs and a number of NGOs and HRDs were attacked.

WHRDs reported general perceptions that sexual and gender violence is increasing against WHRDs, particularly the ones working against gender violence, reproductive rights and feminism in general. WHRDs from a feminist organisation explained the psychosocial impact the attack they experienced in their offices had on the team and a number of WHRDs said they were afraid of being victims of gender and sexual violence as a consequence of their human rights work.

As WHRDs start to recognise themselves as such and start to gain recognition in their communities, men increase their hostile attitudes towards them, even to the point of physical and sexual violence. Femicides have increased in certain areas, such as in the Xinca region, thus WHRDs working there feel very exposed.

FLD provided 15 grants to HRDs and NGOs in Guatemala in 2019.

[CRISIS RESPONSE] BRAZIL

Brazil experienced political instability and violence in the first year of Jair Bolsonaro's term as president; since he took office in January 2019, HRDs in the country have come under sustained attack. Defenders have reported more violence and more fear, as well as a complete shut down and dismantling of the few policies and institutions that tried to guarantee certain basic rights to the population. Civil society and democratic institutions are facing their greatest crisis since the days of military rule.

In 2019, FLD's Americas Protection Coordinator met with HRDs in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Brasilia, Para, Pernambuco and Roraima. FLD staff in Europe met and supported defenders on advocacy and protection efforts in Brussels, Geneva and Dublin.

In April, FLD's Americas Protection Coordinator and Security Advisor met HRDs from different parts of the country at a gathering in Brasilia, as well as in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Roraima, including a visit to the border with Venezuela. In May, they were both hosted by Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT) in Para, historically one of the deadliest states in the country for HRDs, and met with leaders of rural movements and HRDs in the municipalities of Maraba, Xinguara, Redencao, Parauapebas, Eldorado dos Carajas, Canaa dos Carajas and Pau D'Arco. The visit included a one-day risk assessment session for members of the 4 CPT offices in South and Southeast Para, the establishment of a closer partnership for the protection work in the area, and planning for follow-up visits and training that took place in September and December 2019. FLD engaged in 4 training processes on holistic security in Para, Maranhão and Sao Paulo, with 44 total participants.

FLD worked with and strengthened collaboration with organisations with national reach, such as Coordenação Nacional de Articulação das Comunidades Negras Rurais Quilombolas – CONAQ, Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST), Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens (MAB) and Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT).

FLD organised a meeting with EU Member States on the situation of land defenders in Para state, as well as engaged in advocacy efforts on many cases of land rights defenders, particularly in relation to eviction processes. FLD provided 19 Protection Grants to HRDs and organisations and supported 5 WHRDs through the Rest and Respite programme.

MEXICO



Miguel López Vega, a HRD from the Zacatepec community, addresses members of the community and the International Mission about recent attacks.



Messages against the industrial projects outside the protest camp in Santa Maria Zacatepec.

On 3 December 2019, an International Observation Mission comprised of Front Line Defenders, the Center for Information on Business and Human Rights (CIEDH), the Human Rights Center "Zeferino Ladrillero", Servicios y Asesoría para la Paz (SERAPAZ) and the National Network of Civil Human Rights Organizations "Todos los Derechos para Todas y Todos" (Red TDT), visited the Nahua community of Santa María Zacatepec (henceforth Zacatepec), in the municipality of Juan C. Bonilla, Puebla, to document human rights violations perpetuated against members of the community in retaliation for their activities defending the Metlapanapa River. Zacatepec is part of the People's Front in Defence of Land and Water – Morelos, Puebla and Tlaxcala (FPDTA-MPT), comprised of several communities opposing the Morelos Integral Project (Proyecto Integral Morelos – PIM), a project implemented by the state-owned Federal Electricity Commission.

Multiple human rights violations have occurred in the context of this project, including police brutality, defamation campaigns and threats, and the assassination of indigenous communicator and land rights defender Samir Flores.

The threats and attacks documented by the mission reached a peak during the repression of a peaceful protest 30 October 2019. At least eight people received death threats – including a 17-year old WHRD – arson attacks on their homes, and legal harassment. The attacks on HRDs and journalists of Community Radio Zacatepec has been encouraged and facilitated by public officials and businessmen.

FLD and the other organisations released a mission report and engaged Mexican authorities to protect the HRDs.

On entering his fourth year as President of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte had overseen the killing of over 12,000 citizens as part of the administration's 'War on Drugs'. During that same period, Front Line Defenders documented the killing of almost 200 HRDs, with rampant impunity. HRDs are targeted not only with lethal violence, but also with criminalisation, physical attacks and a dedicated smear campaign directed from highest authorities. In 2019, Front Line Defenders worked to support local efforts to push back against the onslaught against HRDs and strengthen the security and protection of HRDs at various levels - from the individual to the collective to the societal.

Despite the challenges, HRDs and civil society in the Philippines have continued to press forward with efforts to advance and defend human rights. In September, FLD's Visibility Team held a Visibility for Protection workshop for 18 HRDs working on campaigning in support of national legislation for the protection of human rights defenders - a bill that has been passed by the lower house of the Philippine Congress. In further support of the legislation, FLD's EU Office organised a MEP letter that was sent to the key committee chairs who helped secure the passage of the bill. In 2020, efforts will be made to have the Senate approve the law. **FI**

Graffiti in Imphal, Manipur outside the Ima Market (Women's Market).

NEPAL

Front Line Defenders South Asia Protection Coordinator travelled to Nepal in April and September 2019 to expand the organisation's outreach, especially with indigenous rights groups, HRDs working on ESCR rights, and in former armed conflict affected areas; re-connect with HRDs with whom FLD has had a prior relationship; and understand the current political context, environment for HRDs and their work, as well as specific risks and needs/opportunities for protection. Unlike during the armed conflict and its immediate aftermath, there is a marked decrease in direct threats and violence especially from the State. The context differs in the Terai region of Nepal, where HRDs report disproportionate use of State/police violence, impunity for past violence, lack of protection against vigilante violence and structural discrimination. Today, the types of threats are less obvious, but can be as effective in undermining their work and silencing defenders, who fear legal persecution, exclusion, online threats and attacks, and threats from political party workers at the community level. There are also concerns of a resurgence of violence among a few armed groups, and the fear that the government may use this to bring about disproportionate security measures that would undermine human rights.

In December, FLD's Visibility Team organised a Visibility for Protection workshop for HRDs to strategise communications campaigns to raise public awareness of and support for HRDs.

[MARGINALISED SPACES] MANIPUR

In January 2019, Front Line Defenders delivered a digital protection workshop for 13 participants from North-East India provinces (Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, West Tripura) in cooperation with a regional coalition of NGOs. HRDs in the region are most concerned with threats and risks related to hacking, surveillance and malware. One HRD became the local digital protection champion and organised a follow-up workshop in April.

In November, the Visibility Team traveled to Manipur to develop narratives of HRDs in order to bring more attention to the situation in the territory, which remains under military rule. FLD consulted with HRDs working on a number of issues, including the environment, the rights of the LGBTI+ community, justice for those who disappeared and killed by the Indian military and security forces, and indigenous and minority rights.

For the anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders in December, FLD released the first story of a WHRD from Manipur, from Chitra, who works for justice for victims of state violence and against impunity.



“Impunity for attacks against HRDs and particularly women is rampant in Manipur. From Chitra (right) works for accountability for families of those who have been killed by the authorities. FLD is working with HRDs to present stories using graphic storytelling from Manipur (middle).”

HONG KONG



© The Stand News

Protesters with “Release Them” signs regarding protesters detained by police.

Front Line Defenders travelled to Hong Kong in mid-November 2019, as pro-democracy protests were met with increasingly aggressive police actions. Protesters, social workers, journalists, medics, trade unionists, and WHRDs reported a pattern of serious police abuses, including use of excessive force and live ammunition, obstruction of medical and legal aid for injured or arrested protesters, verbal, mental, and physical abuse on the street and during detention, and use or threat of sexual violence against detainees.

ADVOCACY

Veronica Koman is a WHRD from West Papua, who has been forced to relocate to Australia due to threats against her by Indonesian authorities, who control the territory.



Veronica Koman.

Veronica is a member of International Lawyers for West Papua, an international network of lawyers working to strengthen human rights of West Papua.

In September, East Java police announced that she must appear at the Indonesian

Embassy in Australia to comply with a summons, threatening that if the human rights defender failed to present herself, they will include her on a wanted list and issue an Interpol red notice for her.

Front Line Defenders issued an Urgent Appeal and arranged for the EU Delegation in Australia to take up the case with Australian authorities to ensure she was not compelled or forced back to West Papua. She has been able to remain in Australia and continue her critical advocacy for the rights of West Papuans, even as Indonesian authorities have cracked down against protests and human rights defenders.

In February and March, FLD's Europe & Central Asia Protection Coordinator and Executive Director travelled to Uzbekistan for the first visit to the country in a decade. In 2018, the government embarked on a tentative engagement with the international community and eased restrictions on human rights defenders and civil society. While FLD had been providing support to Uzbek HRDs, this was the first opportunity to engage HRDs in person and assess the changing dynamic.

Many human rights defenders recognised that apart from their release from prison, the changes in Uzbekistan had been largely cosmetic to date. They know that they risk returning to jail in a new clampdown – they point out where the security agents park when they hold protests, indicating that they are still under surveillance – but yet they persist in their peaceful work for human rights and seek to involve a new generation in the struggle. WHRDs working on domestic violence were more optimistic reporting about more progressive discourse of public officials and new State supported shelters for victims.

Among the HRDs they met was **Ahmadjan Madmarov**, the winner of the 2006 Front Line Defenders Award. Ahmadjan has been supporting the families of prisoners, writing letters appealing for visiting rights, accompanying family members for prison visits, throughout the brutal Karimov regime. Three of his sons and two of his nephews were imprisoned. He was told they would be released if he stopped his human rights work. He visited his sons in prison and they said he should continue, otherwise no one else would help the prisoner's families.



AHMADJAN HAS BEEN SUPPORTING THE FAMILIES OF PRISONERS, WRITING LETTERS APPEALING FOR VISITING RIGHTS, ACCOMPANYING FAMILY MEMBERS FOR PRISON VISITS, THROUGHOUT THE BRUTAL KARIMOV REGIME

Uzbek human rights defender Ahmadjan Madmarov, winner of the 2006 Front Line Defenders Award for Human Rights Defenders at Risk holds a photo of himself at the award ceremony in Dublin during a visit to Uzbekistan by Executive Director, Andrew Anderson, and FLD's Europe & Central Asia Protection Coordinator.

PROTEST

From 21 – 26 October, the Europe & Central Asia PC and a member of the Visibility Team conducted a mission to Italy, to meet with human rights defenders working on several issues (migrant rights, environmental rights, labour rights and women's rights) and assess their protection needs.

For two days, Front Line Defenders visited HRDs in Melendugno who are part of the **No-Tap Movement**, which opposes the construction of the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP). The pipeline would bring gas from Azerbaijan to Italy and threatens ancient olive farms, water sources, and cultural heritage sites in a region of Italy (Salento, Puglia) that depends heavily on agriculture and tourism.

Despite the fact that No-Tap protests have been peaceful, HRDs have faced severe police repression, fines of up to €10,000, and constant intimidation and



Two environmental HRDs from the NO TAP movement visit the TAP building site in Puglia (Southern Italy).

[UNCERTAINTY] UKRAINE

In October, FLD's Europe & Central Asia Protection Coordinator travelled to Ukraine on the occasion of the second annual conference of the Coalition for the Protection of Civil Society. The ongoing armed conflict, strengthening of right-wing groups, increasing number of attacks on HRDs and civil society activists and prevailing impunity for perpetrators of attacks has led to higher tension in society and general feeling of insecurity. The Coalition was launched to be a civil society platform to share information and jointly respond to the attacks and pressure from the government, law enforcement and extremist groups.

According to a Coalition report, 83 human rights defenders and civic activists were attacked in Ukraine in 2019. The highest number of attacks were in the Kyiv, Odessa and Kharkiv regions while HRDs working on LGBTI+ rights and gender equality as well as defenders countering corruption and illegal construction are the most at-risk groups.

The Protection Coordinator also met with members of the Ukrainian Bar Association. The lawyers noted that from January 2013 to September 2019 more than 1,200 crimes against lawyers were committed, yet only 8 cases were brought to court, and there had yet to be a verdict in any case.



Armenian transgender HRD Lilit Martirosyan speaking in parliament.



HRDs at the Coalition for the Protection of Civil Society conference in Kyiv.

BELARUS & ARMENIA

FLD's regional Protection Coordinator traveled to Armenia in April and Belarus in July to meet with HRDs and assess security situations in two countries that are making significant, yet precarious, progress in opening up civil society and moving away from dominant Russian influence in their political systems.

In Armenia, the formation of a new government in May that pledged commitment to human rights, following mass public protests, triggered a significant rise in hate speech, justification of hate crimes and violence against LGBTI+ and women's rights defenders both from the society and government officials. In the political sphere, opposition groups have attacked the government for its progressive positions towards women's rights and LGBTI+ issues. Lilit Martirosyan received death threats after she gave a speech in Parliament about discrimination of transgender people in Armenia. Gender-based online violence against WHRDs has been employed as a strategy to attack those working

on domestic violence and environmentalists. WHRDs reported an increase in social media smear campaigns since 2018 in connection to their work against the Amsular gold mine project, including dissemination of doctored personal photos and videos of HRDs and their families and CCTV recordings.

In Belarus, the Lukashenko regime was seemingly moving closer to Europe (away from Russia), though HRDs remain fearful of possibility of the "integration" of Belarus to the Russian Federation. HRDs described the current situation as relatively open, but stressed that it could change at any moment; there is fear of repression around upcoming parliamentary and especially presidential elections, as has happened over the last two decades. The Protection Coordinator met with defenders promoting women's rights and running a shelter for victims of domestic violence and to assess their needs.

When popular protesters took to the streets in Sudan in December 2018, few would have imagined that less than a year later, President Omar Al-Bashir would be ousted and that a newly empowered civil society would be able to impose its will on the military and security forces in the country.

The former regime did not give up power easily, and used all forms of repression, violence and intimidation to try to quell protests. Additionally, aware that the power of communication and information was in the hands of the protesters, the government repeatedly blocked the internet to try to stop the protests, even as bullets were fired at unarmed protesters, and organisers were attacked and detained.

Front Line Defenders mobilised to support the human rights defenders who were helping organise and sustain the protests. The regional Digital Protection Coordinator worked regularly with Sudanese HRDs to protect information and help keep them online and connected. Protection grants supported 8 HRDs to receive medical treatment abroad for serious injuries they sustained while organising and leading protests. □

Hala Al-Karib at a women's protest during the revolution in Sudan.

© Ula Osman



CRIMINALISING SPEECH

On 26 December, Moroccan investigative journalist and human rights defender, **Omar Radi**, was taken into custody, charged with 'insulting the judiciary'. He is a member of the Association Attac Maroc, working on human rights movements and social justice and reports mainly on labour rights and social movements in Morocco (Rif, Jerada, Imider, Zagora, etc.). He closely followed the Rif Movement, wrote extensively about it, and criticized the judiciary following a trial which concluded with the sentencing of Rif activists with up to 20 years in jail.

Despite his detention coming during the holidays, Front Line Defenders issued an Urgent Appeal and carried out urgent advocacy with EU and Moroccan officials, and contributed to the swell of public attention on social media.

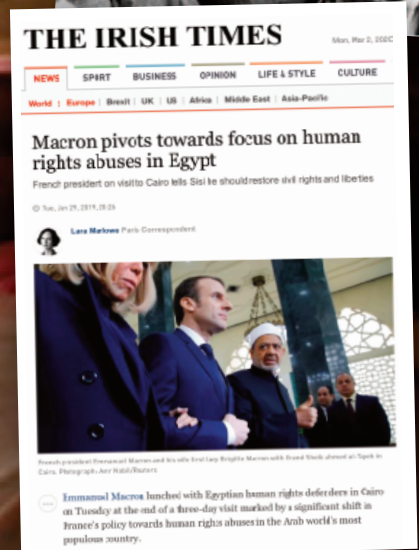
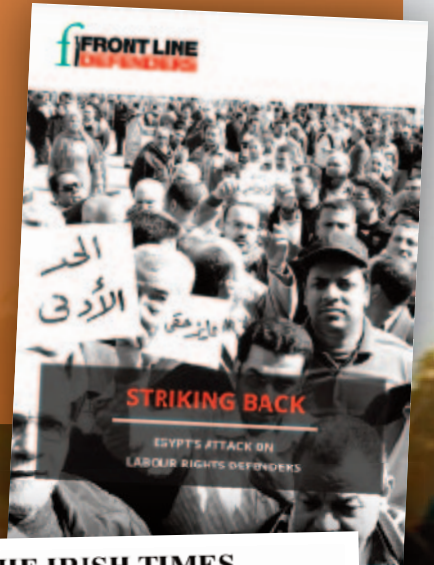


Omar Radi

LABOUR RIGHTS UNDER ATTACK

Front Line Defenders launched the **Egypt Report, Striking Back: Egypt's Attack on Labour Rights Defenders**, with a press conference in Paris, France, in collaboration with French labour union CFDT. In addition to FLD's MENA Protection Coordinator and Head of the EU Office, UN Special Rapporteur for HRDs, Michel Forst, and an Egyptian HRD addressed the media. The choice of Paris for the report launch was due to FLD's findings that a French military company, Naval Group, was involved in the repression of labour rights defenders. The report received considerable attention in the French and Arabic media. In a follow-up visit to Paris, FLD's Deputy Director, MENA Protection Coordinator, Research & Visibility Coordinator and Head of Communications & Visibility held a series of advocacy meetings with members of the French Parliament, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UN Global Compact on Business and Human Rights (French division) and ultimately with the company itself.

Following breaking news coverage of the report's Alexandria investigation, French President Emmanuel Macron criticized the al-Sisi government for human rights abuses on his trip to Cairo, which became the dominant media narrative of the two presidents' meeting. After a Brussels advocacy trip, FLD secured a letter from MEPs to Naval Group calling on the company to act to protect the rights of the HRDs.



[RECOGNITION] FLD AWARD


COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STONEWALL UPRISING, FRONT LINE DEFENDERS RECOGNIZED 5 LGBTI+ HRDS WITH THE 2019 AWARD



#FLDAWARD

FRONTLINEDEFENDERS.ORG

The 2019 Award ceremony was held in Dublin on 17 May, to coincide with the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOT). At the ceremony, Ms. Katherine Zappone, Irish Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, presented the Award to Badr Baabou of Tunisia, named the Global Laureate by an Irish jury.

Badr is co-founder and Chairman of DAMJ (meaning 'inclusion'), an organisation working for equality and justice for the LGBTI+ community. He is also co-chair of M-Coalition, the first regional network on MSM and HIV-related rights in the MENA region, which advocates for improved access to HIV services in member countries. For him it is important that people associate his face and his name with the fight against homophobia and transphobia because many people – too many in his opinion – remain anonymous. 



Above, left to right: Rosanna Marzan; Shinta Ratri; Nyasa Rainbow Alliance; Veronika Lapina with Mary Lawlor.

Regional Winner for the Americas, **Rosanna Marzan** (left) is leading a new wave of LGBTI+ awareness in the Dominican Republic. While pursuing an education in law, Rosanna has proudly represented the LGBTI+ community of the D.R. in a long list of local and international policy meetings. Rosanna, who considers herself a “social educator,” works with fellow activists to raise awareness of the need for SOGIESC inclusion. **Shinta Ratri** (center-left), Regional Winner for Asia-Pacific, is a transgender woman who co-founded Pondok Pesantren Waria al-Fatah, an Islamic boarding school for transgender people. She opened the school in 2008 in Yogyakarta, aiming to serve older transgender women who had been cut off from family and prevented from practicing their faith in most Islamic centres in the country. In December 2015, Eric Sambisa became the first person in Malawi to come out as gay on national television. The following year, he and other LGBTI+ community members established the **Nyasa Rainbow Alliance** (center-right), Regional Winner for Africa, to provide support services and openly advocate for rights of the community. The organisation provides a safe space for the LGBTI+ community to discuss health concerns, receive medical support, practice their faith, network, peer educate and collaboratively develop research projects. Regional Winner for Europe & Central Asia, **Veronika Lapina** (right), is an academic and activist with the Russian LGBT Network. After reports of a crackdown on the LGBTI+ community in Chechnya surfaced, Veronika joined the Network to help find safety and security for targeted members of the community. She risked her life and freedom traveling into Chechnya, at times alone, to bring individuals to safety in Russia. As a direct result of her work, more than 100 gay, lesbian and bisexual people have been evacuated from Chechnya in order to avoid the imminent danger they were facing there.




Award winners speaking at the New York Irish Center and taking a photo with Andrew Anderson at the EU Delegation in Washington, DC.

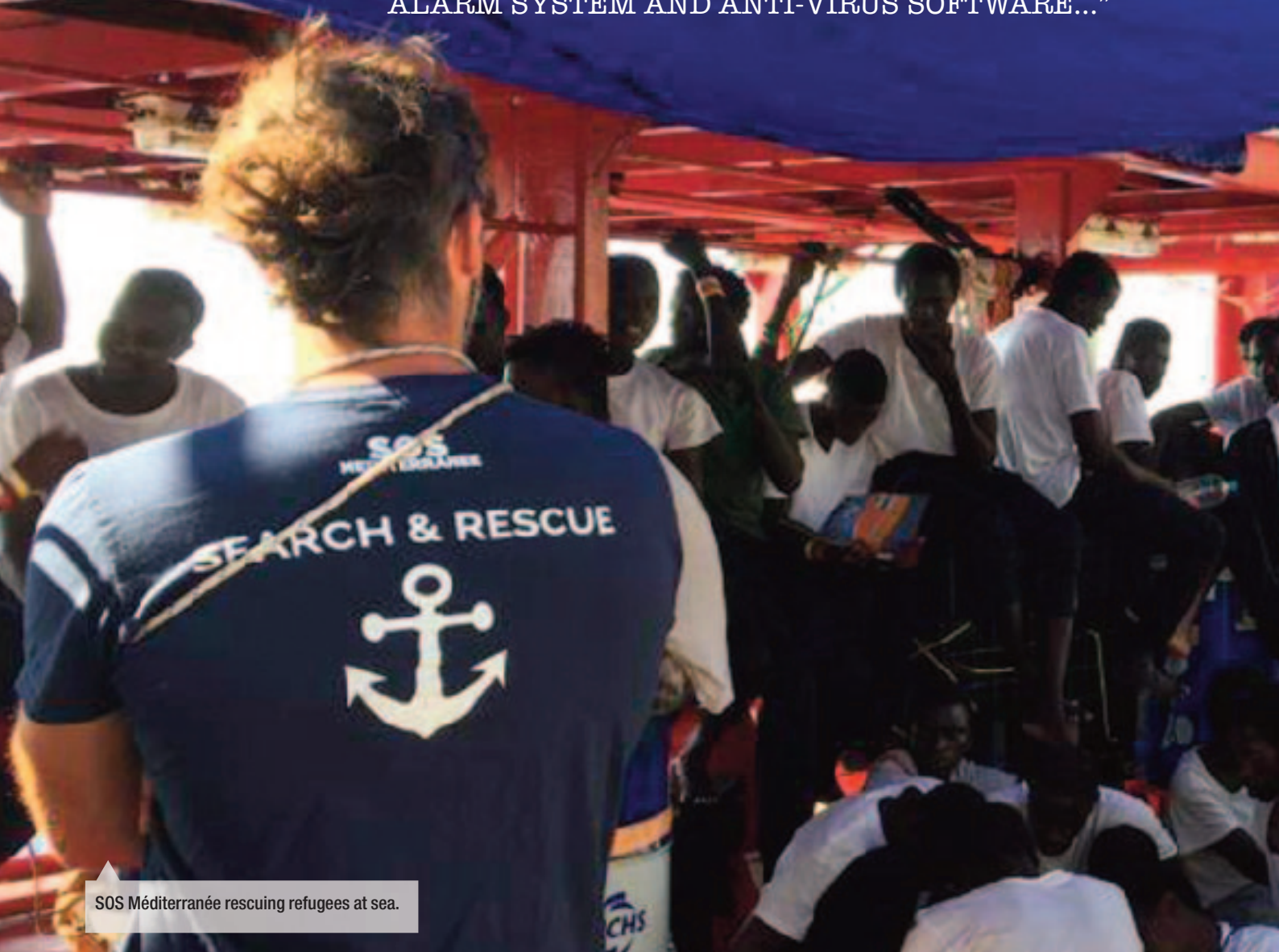
Badr Baabou speaking at the FLD Award Ceremony in Dublin in May.

To celebrate the Regional Awards, Front Line Defenders staff and board members attended local events in the countries of the winners. FLD Co-Founder and Board member, Mary Lawlor, presented the Europe & Central Asia Regional Award to Veronika Lapina at a ceremony hosted by the Irish Embassy in Moscow. Board Member Verónica Vidal presented the Americas Regional Award to Rozanna Marzan in Santiago at a reception hosted by the EU Delegation and subsequently both were interviewed on a popular radio station. The Irish Embassy in Lilongwe hosted a reception in which Board Member Arnold Tsunga presented the Africa Regional Award to Nyasa Rainbow Alliance (NRA). Board Member Mary Jane Real presented the Asia-Pacific Regional Award to Shinta Ratri at a reception hosted by the Irish Embassy in Jakarta and then joined Shinta at her school in Yogyakarta for a community celebration. Global Laureate, Badr Babou, hosted a community celebration in Tunis, attended by Deputy Head of Protection, Meerim Ilyas on behalf of Front Line Defenders.

In addition to the regional events, Front Line Defenders hosted the 5 winners for events in New York and Washington, DC. In partnership with the OHCHR, UN Foundation, Outright International, the New York Irish Center and the Human Rights Campaign, community and advocacy events celebrated the winners and their work and introduced allies to the situation for LGBTI+ communities around the world. In Washington, DC, the LGBT Equality Caucus hosted a briefing on Capitol Hill, the Irish Ambassador had the group for a luncheon at his residence and the EU Delegation hosted an evening reception.

Front Line Defenders provides protection grants to human rights defenders at risk to support security measures. These grants can support their individual security, office and home security, temporary relocation, medical expenses, legal costs, support for family members who are under threat/attack, digital security, wellbeing and other areas that HRDs identify as critical to their security and ability to be resilient. 

“SOS MÉDITERRANÉE, RESCUING REFUGEES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA, IS SUBJECTED TO VARIOUS KINDS OF HARASSMENT AND ATTACK... FRONT LINE DEFENDERS PROTECTION GRANT PROVIDED FUNDS FOR AN ALARM SYSTEM, SECURE LOCKS, A FIRE ALARM SYSTEM AND ANTI-VIRUS SOFTWARE...”



SOS Méditerranée rescuing refugees at sea.

SOS Méditerranée, the maritime-humanitarian organisation rescuing refugees in the Mediterranean Sea, is subjected to various kinds of harassment and attack. The office in Marseille has been vandalized several times by far-right/extremist groups, while some members have suffered physical attacks and continue to receive online threats. Front Line Defenders Protection Grant provided funds for an alarm system, secure locks, a fire alarm system and anti-virus software.

SOS Méditerranée reported that the grant helped to minimize some of the risks such as preventing: the physical assault of members of SOS Méditerranée; the intrusion of hostile persons into the offices; the theft of computerized data or sensitive documents relating to the organisation, its members or donors; and the theft of equipment/materials from the offices of the organisation.



Foromo Frédéric Loua.

In Guinea, lawyer **Foromo Frédéric Loua** is the Director of Les Mêmes Droits pour Tous (MDT), which works with communities affected by mining projects, supports victims of mass violence and extrajudicial killings, and, in 2019, campaigned against a proposed constitutional amendment which would allow a possible third term for President Alpha Conde.

MDT initiated several procedures both nationally and internationally against political and military officials, all of which increases the risk of reprisals. Foromo is also a member of a collective working on legal texts on compensation and resettlement of communities impacted by mining activities in Guinea, and he has regularly denounced anti-democratic acts

that violate public freedoms. Foromo was targeted with death threats, suspicious visits, wiretapping and other acts that put his life as well as those of his family members and office colleagues in danger. With the increase in tension in the country around the efforts of the President to extend his rule, Foromo and MDT were at great risk of attack and sought protection support.

Front Line Defenders responded with a Protection Grant for both organisational security and protection for the HRD. The grant supported MDT by funding security measures for the office, including CCTV cameras, an unarmed guard and a safe to keep sensitive documents; and security measures for Foromo, including a safe house and an unarmed guard.



© Aman

Aman (feminist art space).



Arab Foundation for Freedoms and Equality.

© Arab Foundation for Freedoms & Equality

In Lebanon, the **Arab Foundation for Freedoms and Equality** (AFEMENA; above right) supports MENA HRDs who work on sexual and bodily rights and gender equality - including activists working specifically on LGBTI issues. Authorities shut down their annual conference, the Union of Islamic Scholars called for their arrest, and the organisation and its members are subjected to constant surveillance. A Protection Grant supported AFEMENA's office security, including a CCTV system, metal doors, and sensors.

In Jordan, **Aman** (above left) is a feminist art space founded in 2018 that serves as a safe space for free expression and creativity from an intersectional angle, allowing for the creation

of art and culture that challenges predominant narratives and discourse in the country and the region. Due to the sensitive nature of the issues presented at Aman, the collectives sought support for security measures for the physical location in Amman. The Protection Grant provided for a steel door, secure locks and intercom system.

"Aman Space feels and is in fact more secure, it has brought that aspect and overview to the space for the attendees. We feel more at ease working there more, not fearing the security of our materials being used or stolen. At the end helped us focus on the work rather than being alert all the time."

The Front Line Defenders EU Office in Brussels raises cases of at-risk HRDs with the relevant institutions of the EU, including the European Parliament, and of Member States in order to generate pressure on authorities. The office also works to raise the issue of HRD protection and respect for the work of HRDs in various EU mechanisms, trade agreements and the EU's bilateral relations with other countries. **□**

“THE EU WILL RAISE INDIVIDUAL CASES RELATED INTER ALIA TO LAND RIGHTS, LABOUR RIGHTS, NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND THOSE RESULTING FROM CORPORATE ABUSES...”

Front Line Defenders conducted extensive advocacy on the 9 **Guapinol** human rights defenders of the Comité Municipal de Defensa de los Bienes Comunes y Públicos (CMDBCP) who are imprisoned and awaiting trial in Honduras. The EU office was in daily contact with partners in Honduras working on this case to ensure their requests were brought to the attention of the EU, in a rapidly changing legal context. Front Line Defenders facilitated meetings between the EU Delegation in Tegucigalpa and the local partners, including the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission. The EU delegation met with local partners in September and discussed both the details of the case and the structural problems with the national Protection Mechanism. Front Line Defenders then remained in daily contact with both the EU delegation and local partners to ensure the EU and member states were updated regularly on the developments of the case, before formally requesting that the EU observe the hearings. The EU delegation observed the hearing, together with other member states missions (in total over 20 people), who witnessed first-hand the judicial harassment against the HRDs and the partiality of the judge. As follow-up to the trial observation, and building on the established relationship, Front Line Defenders requested that the EU show solidarity with the HRDs by visiting them in prison. In December, representatives from the EU delegation and the embassies of France, Spain, and Germany visited the HRDs in prison together with their lawyer. The diplomats have pledged to remain engaged on the case through the end of the judicial process.



Sign at a protest supporting imprisoned HRDs in Brussels.

Front Line Defenders EU Office co-organised the annual EU-NGO Human Rights Forum in Brussels, which gathered almost 200 human rights defenders, civil society organisations, high level figures and diplomats on 3 and 4 December. The event's theme was the emerging link between human rights and the environment, and the event was meant to provide input into the environmental policies which are being prioritised by new European Commission. FLD invited more than 10 HRDs sponsored by the EU and shaped the session on human rights defenders.

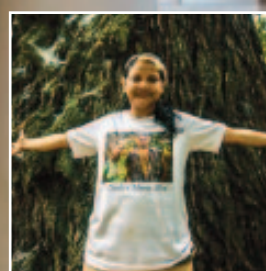
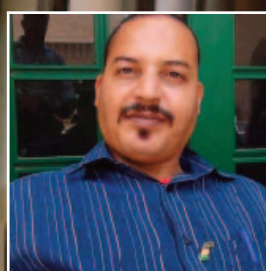
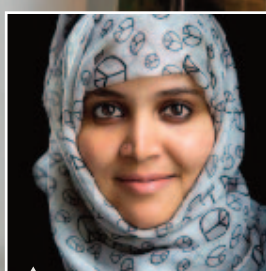
Indeed, as a result of that session, the new EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (released in early 2020) mentions explicitly, “Human rights will also be integrated across internal policies, especially in the priority areas under the Green Deal, such as environment”; and “Human rights and democracy will be promoted consistently and coherently in all areas of EU external action (e.g. trade, environment, development)”. Specifically in relation to HRDs, the new policy states, “the EU will raise individual cases related inter alia to land rights, labour rights, natural resources, environmental issues, climate change, and those resulting from corporate abuses”.

RAISING CASES

The EU office raised the harassment against three Sahrawi human rights defenders in Morocco in May 2019 with the EU Delegation and member States embassies, as well as with MEPs. The EU and Sweden applied pressure on the Moroccan government through official meetings on the cases of **Naziha El Khalidi**, **Brahim Dihani**, and **Ali Saadouni** whose hearings were upcoming. MEPs also sent a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs raising concerns over these cases. As a result, in July 2019, Brahim Dihani was acquitted, Naziha El Khalidi was only sentenced to a fine instead of prison. However, Ali Saadouni was brought to trial and sentenced to seven months imprisonment.

Following threats of repossession of indigenous lands in Brazil, the EU office obtained a meeting between the EU delegation and Front Line Defenders' Protection Coordinator for Latin America. The EU delegation, together with 15 member States, received human rights defenders from Para at their local human rights coordination meeting to determine possible EU action. One of these human rights defenders was **Claudence Silva dos Santos**, who is a 2019 Sakharov Laureate. As a result, increased attention is being brought on Brazilian environmental rights defenders at EU level.

In August, Front Line Defenders facilitated a meeting between a member of **Feminita** – an organisation that works on LGBTIQ, women, and sex workers' rights – to discuss the ongoing court case against them in Kazakhstan (denial of registration as an NGO) and formally request that the EU observes the trial. The EU delegation travelled to Almaty to observe the trial (which was postponed in an attempt to further delay the NGO's access to its rights). Subsequently the EU officials invited Feminita to a dinner with other civil society organisations. Feminita and the EU delegation have been in contact ever since to monitor the status of the court case, and Feminita has been invited to submit their input to the 2019 EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue – which they formerly could only do through ILGA Europe.



Above, left to right: Naziha El Khalidi; Brahim Dihani; Ali Saadouni; Claudence Silva dos Santos; Feminita logo.



Sakharov prize winner Claudence Silva dos Santos at the EU.

[CAPACITY] RISK ANALYSIS & PROTECTION PLANNING

MEETING DEMAND

During 2019, the Risk Analysis and Protection Planning (RAPP) programme engaged face-to-face with 133 HRDs at risk during workshops lasting between 3 and 5 days, in order to develop deep understanding of the implementation of effective risk mitigation measures.

In order to meet the demand of HRDs in **Europe & Central Asia** (ECA) for more security training, Front Line Defenders hired an ECA-based Capacity Builder to further meet the need in the region. A Training of Trainers (ToT) Course on RAPP took place in the region, consisting of 2 workshops and written assignments. HRDs from Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine participated, working towards understanding and using tools for analysing context, risks and threats; sharing skills and experiences on protection; creating/improving personal protection plans and creating/improving organisational protection plans; and increasing capacity to train/mentor HRDs on RAPP. A workshop also took place for Russian HRDs working to protect survivors of domestic violence. 

OBJETIVOS



Chilean WHRDs hold up self-images as part of the workshop on protection.

107

CONSULTATIONS

SECURING HRDS

Front Line Defenders strengthened its **Security Advisor programme** throughout 2019, with 107 consultations and workshops, reaching 554 HRDs across all regions of the world. The Security Advisor works with most-at-risk HRDs around the world to provide one-to-one security planning that is tailored to their needs and the specific threats they are facing; in 2019 he had in-person consultations in 13 countries, and made multiple trips to three countries.

During 2019, the Security Advisor provided support on topics ranging from mitigating office and home break-ins, working with HRDs on travelling safely, organisational security strategies, simulation exercises, preparing for peaceful protests and mobilizations, as well as collective, communal and traditional protection strategies in remote communities. The Security Advisor worked with less accessed HRDs in countries such as Chad during 2019. Suffering from a combination of repression and severe financial hardship and poverty, HRDs expressed an element of isolation from the broader human rights movement in these difficult to reach areas. FLD's practical support was highlighted as instrumental in their protection and ongoing struggle.

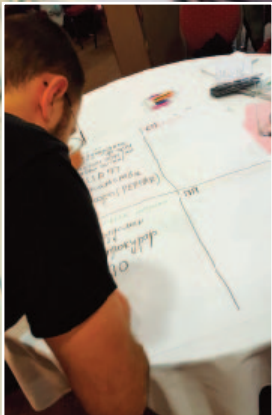
NETWORK SUPPORT

Following the 2018 launch of the Front Line Defenders report on the challenges to HRDs in Zambia and the establishment of the **Zambian Human Rights Defenders Network (ZHRDN)**, FLD mobilised to develop the capacity of HRDs in the country in relation to physical and digital security. A combined RAPP and digital protection workshop was organised with ZHRDN in August with 16 HRDs. Elsewhere in Africa, a workshop for a network of environmental HRDs in DRC was organised.

In the Americas, a local expert led a 3-part capacity-building RAPP and digital protection course for rural and indigenous HRDs in Brazil, as part of a longer term Protection Partnership. Just days after student-led protests started in Chile, Front Line Defenders held a RAPP workshop in Santiago for WHRDs. Participants used the workshop to plan immediate measures to implement in the context of increased repression against demonstrators and the targeting of HRDs.

In Asia, a Training of Trainers workshop was held in November for HRDs from India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, including rural and indigenous leaders. Earlier in the year, a RAPP workshop for rural HRDs in the north of Sri Lanka had been facilitated.

In the Middle East and North Africa, workshops took place for highly at risk Libyan HRDs, and a RAPP and digital protection workshop was organised for Moroccan HRDs with whom Front Line Defenders is working in a longer term Protection Partnership.




Training of Trainers



RAPP workshop.

WHRD and RAPP trainer Lina Solano at the workshop in Chile.

The Digital Protection Programme offers targeted response and support for HRDs experiencing or at risk of attacks on digital platforms, including hacking, doxing and other efforts to interfere with their work as HRDs. Regionally-based Digital Protection Coordinators (DPCs) provided both emergency rapid digital support and preventative capacity-building support, supporting 382 HRDs and 200 human rights organisations in 66 countries. Additionally, Front Line Defenders convened 24 workshops for 294 HRDs in 2019. 



© Rami Magid

Activists documenting the protests in Sudan.

A **Kenyan WHRD** used her social media accounts to expose the level of corruption in the country and to organize popular protests. The mobilization she initiated motivated a series of other demonstrations in the country. Subsequently, she was targeted by smear campaigns against her. She approached FLD for support when she felt her life was at risk and she was becoming depressed. With reconfiguration of her phone and social media accounts; the filing of complaints on the platforms; and counselling in how to use phones more securely, she was able to effectively return to her work.



Digital protection workshop in Iraq.



Digital protection workshop in Tanzania.

“THE DIGITAL PROTECTION COORDINATOR TAUGHT ME CLEARLY ABOUT ALL THE TOOLS TO MAKE MY WORK AND DOCUMENTS MORE SECURE, SUCH AS PROTECTING CHAT WITH SIGNAL AND PASSWORDS USING KEYPASS. HE TAUGHT ABOUT THE PSYCHOSOCIAL ASPECT OF SECURITY WHICH I NEVER GOT FROM ANOTHER SECURITY CLASS.”

– HRD, INDONESIA

FACTum

DPCs have been assisting **Revista Factum**, an alternative news magazine in El Salvador for a number of years. In October, the website administrator contacted FLD because the website was being attacked and was rendered inaccessible. The regional Digital Protection Coordinator

determined that the website was being targeted with a distributed denial of service (DDoS) attack. For an online news site, this represented a serious emergency.

At the time FLD was contacted, the attack had been underway for 72 hours. FLD helped to move their website to Qurium, which specialises in the mitigation of this type of attack. In less than 24 hours the site was

restored with no further downtime. Together with Qurium, FLD analysed the website's log files to see who had attacked the website. It showed that before the attack started, the website was scanned for vulnerabilities from Central Americas Software Services (CASS) that is also based in El Salvador. Now armed with this information, the magazine is conducting a journalistic investigation of the attack for publication.

The November 2019 elections in Sri Lanka saw the return of a group of politicians under whom the 26-year old civil war in the country's north came to a brutal end. A number of elected officials have been accused of inciting war crimes primarily through their role in the military and having called for an end to international investigations against the genocide of the Tamil population.

Well ahead of the elections, and anticipating this outcome, the regional Protection Coordinator and Digital Protection Coordinator traveled to several cities in northern Sri Lanka assessing the needs, risks and capacities of groups working on documenting war crimes in order to seek justice for survivors and victims.

The offices of one organisation, which documents eyewitness testimonies of abuses inflicted by the Sri Lankan military, was raided just after the announcement of elections. If the information it collected fell into the wrong hands, it would jeopardise not only the safety of eyewitnesses and sources, it would also put at risk all the HRDs involved in the research initiative. The DPC and a WHRD from the organisation worked to identify the vulnerabilities of where data was kept, which devices and people were able to access the information and which social media networks were linked.

nesses and sources, it would also put at risk all the HRDs involved in the research initiative. The DPC and a WHRD from the organisation worked to identify the vulnerabilities of where data was kept, which devices and people were able to access the information and which social media networks were linked.

The WHRD reported, "We did a series of calls to ensure digital security. Applying what I learned so far, I understood more issues and mistakes I and my colleagues are making. I am using Keepass, I have changed all my important passwords to very strong, I don't click on links and files from unknown contacts, I am in the process of encrypting important data and backing them up. I have trained my staff on safe browsing, using VPN, and how to keep the data safe. When it comes to phones, our staff are getting in the habit of using Signal and not keeping the mails and social media unprotected and open on their devices."

Front Line Defenders provided urgent and critical support to HRDs involved in demonstrations and protests throughout the MENA region in 2019.

The MENA Digital Protection Coordinator (DPC) offered protection advice and arranged VPN accounts for HRDs and organisations during the demonstrations that took place in


Sudan, Algeria, Iraq, Iraq and Lebanon after local authorities tried to block social media, and in some cases, cut off the internet during the demonstrations.

The DPC also facilitated the immediate closure of social media accounts of some of the arrested demonstrators, which helped protect

their networks and contributed to their release from detention.

During the Turkish military campaign in northern Syria against Kurdish groups, the DPC helped HRDs and organisations in accessing social media platforms blocked by Turkish authorities in the Syrian border region.

[ADVOCACY] MIGRANT RIGHTS DEFENDERS REPORT

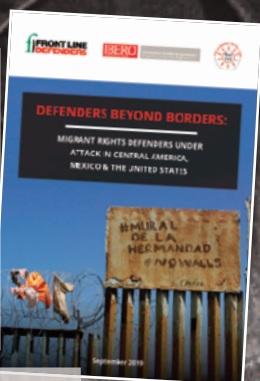
In September 2019, Front Line Defenders launched a new joint report revealing that migrant rights defenders protecting migrant families, refugees, asylum seekers, and others along migrant routes from Honduras to the United States are facing severe threats from both state and non-state actors. The report, **Defenders Beyond Borders**, was a partnership between Front Line Defenders, Programa de Asuntos Migratorios de la Universidad Iberoamericana Tijuana-Ciudad de México (PRAMI) and Red TDT. The report features documentation, videos and first-hand accounts of attacks and arrests in the US and Mexico, perpetrated by US Customs and Border Protection, Mexican federal police, non-state militia groups, and the Mexican military. 

Hector Ruiz, lawyer with the Santa Fe Dreamers Project.

© Santa Fe Dreamers Project



Article in Mexican media about the launch of the migrant rights defenders report.



Launch of the report in Washington, DC. with (left to right), Hector Ruiz, Ángeles Hernández and Gabriela Castañeda.

Researchers from the 3 organisations interviewed more than 30 human rights defenders in 10 cities on both sides of the Mexico-US border, and along migration routes in Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. Many defenders interviewed are current migrants, refugees, asylum seekers or undocumented people themselves. The investigation documented that migrant rights defenders protecting migrant families, refugees, asylum seekers, LGBTI+ people and others along migrant routes from Honduras to the United States are facing severe threats from both state and non-state actors. In the United States, Mexico and Guatemala, defenders faced persecution for the provision of humanitarian aid including distributing food, water and medical supplies and operating emergency shelters for migrant families.

The report was launched in Mexico City and Washington, DC the week of 23 September with a variety of events and partners in both cities. In Washington, DC, Front Line Defenders hosted HRDs **Hector Ruiz** and **Gabriela Castañeda** for three days of advocacy meetings and briefings related to the report, including on Capitol Hill. The launch in Mexico City drew major coverage by local media, and subsequent meetings were held with government officials and diplomats. In Mexico, videos from the campaign to support migrant rights defenders were featured at the international music festival, Festival Solar GNP, in Morelos, Mexico.

In 2019, Front Line Defenders continued to develop and expand its Visibility for Protection (VfP) workshop programme. Workshops were organised in 8 countries, with more than 110 HRDs participating. □

Front Line Defenders partnered with the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) to deliver a series of VfP workshops in Mongolia, Nepal and the Philippines to support the efforts to introduce HRD protection legislation in each country. While the workshops in Nepal and the Philippines supported broader HRD campaigning efforts, a more extended partnership was established with Mongolian HRDs to deliver a multimedia campaign to set the stage for bringing forward a national law. During the workshop in Ulaanbaatar, HRDs created a working group and started brainstorming ideas for a campaign to build public support for HRDs, with a strand of the campaign specifically targeting herders communities through a series of TV spots broadcast on a popular satellite channel and a series of local community events. The campaign launched on International Human Rights Day in December, broadcasting on the national television channel throughout the day.

As part of a two-year partnership with Oxfam/Novib, the Visibility Team held three VfP workshops - one each in Niger, Israel and Palestine.

The workshop in Niger involved 15 HRDs working on anti-corruption, women's rights, extractives and economic rights. Most participants – or their colleagues – had experienced defamatory attacks and had been accused of being traitors and political opponents, and these attacks had then led also to some arrests and to a climate of fear and mistrust within civil society. As a result of the workshop, the participants reported increased knowledge on the types of risks related to visibility, how to analyse them, and how to proactively build campaigns and visibility strategies to counteract negative narratives about them.

The workshop in Israel was with HRDs working for organisations providing legal support to Palestinian victims of human rights violations and campaigning for the right to freedom of movement for the people in Gaza, while the Palestinian workshop included HRDs working on women's rights, media freedom, and documenting human rights violations by both the Israeli military and Palestinian Authority security forces.


Visibility for Protection workshop in Mongolia.



VfP workshops in the Palestine, Philippines and Niger.



Published by Front Line Defenders and Fighting Words, **Yes, We Still Drink Coffee! Stories Of Women Human Rights Defenders** collects powerful stories of WHRDs from Egypt, Kuwait, Palestine, Tunisia, Turkey, Somalia and Sudan as shared with writers Laura Cassidy, Catherine Dunne, Hilary Fannin, Lia Mills, Azra Naseem, Sheila O'Flanagan and Melatu Uche Okorie. These stories of courage reflect the vital and often dangerous work of the WHRDs, and also show us that they are mothers, sisters, wives, partners and daughters who still do everyday things despite living extraordinary lives in extraordinary times.

The book was launched at the Dublin Book Festival in Ireland and the Belfast Book Festival in Northern Ireland. 



LAUNCH OF YES, WE STILL DRINK COFFEE!
STORIES OF WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS



Writer Catherine Dunne speaking at the launch of the book in Belfast.



Tara Madden (FLD) speaking about the role of HRDs with 5th class students at John Scottus primary school, Dublin, 29 May.



Front Line Defenders was invited to give the keynote speech at a Model United Nations conference organised by students at Loreto Secondary School, Clonmel on 27 February.



While on Rest & Respite in Dublin, El Ghalia Djimi from Western Sahara spoke about her experiences defending the rights of Sahrawi people at a lecture for law students at Griffith College Dublin on 14 March and at a lecture in Trinity College Dublin on 27 March. She protested in support of Nasrin Sotoudeh in Dublin after a court sentenced the Iranian WHRD to 33 years in prison and 148 lashes.





Meilyn Zendaya Gamez Mendoza speaking on a panel at the Dublin Arts & Human Festival.

From 27-29 September, Front Line Defenders and Smashing Times hosted the Dublin Arts & Human Rights Festival, in partnership with Trinity College Dublin, Irish Council for Civil Liberties, Trocaire and Fighting Words, with support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The festival showcased the extraordinary work of human rights defenders in Ireland and around the world, linking the arts to civil society, active citizenship and politics through a series of performances, film screenings, music, dance, arts-based workshops and panel discussions. Highlights included panels on challenging corporate power and the right to protest, a poetry slam evening called Righteous Verse, and a film screening and discussion exploring LGBTI+ rights around the world.



Above, from top: Panel on gender at the festival; middle – activity workshop; bottom – FLD volunteers.



WHRDs attending the WHRD Defamation Workshop in Rio de Janeiro.

Smear campaigns, defamation and online attacks are common tactics used against women human rights defenders (WHRDs), but their impact is often overlooked or dismissed. These campaigns affect the daily life of WHRDs, close doors to opportunities outside of their human rights work and can have a long-lasting impact on defenders, their families, their communities and their work. These campaigns are conducted by state officials, nationalist movements, extremist groups or companies, and can take different forms, including via state-owned or private media outlets and social media. These campaigns question WHRDs' credibility as women and the legitimacy of their human rights work in a highly visible and public way. Aside from disseminating false information or misinterpreting events, these messages are often loaded with hate speech that incites – either directly or indirectly – attacks against WHRDs by a broader community.

In response to these trends, Front Line Defenders, in collaboration with other partners, plans a series of activities to support women human rights defenders in three regions, the Americas, Central Asia and East Africa. The first event, an in-depth convening held in Rio, Brazil, focused on defamation and its impact on rural and indigenous women, with WHRDs discussing how to change narratives, counter them, and build acceptance strategies.

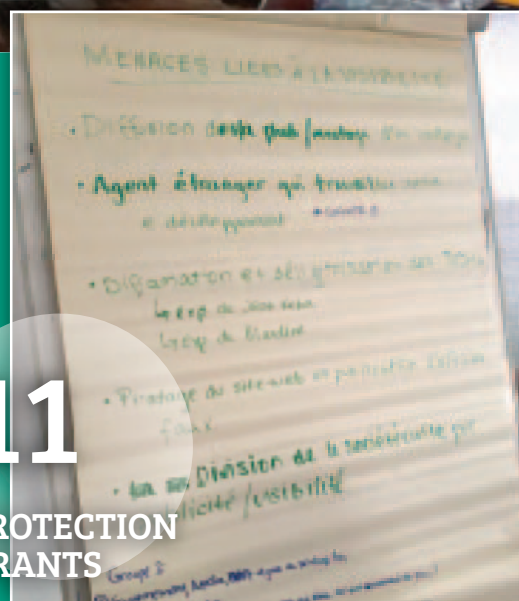


Above WHRD Defamation Workshop in Brazil.

“SMEAR CAMPAIGNS, DEFAMATION AND ONLINE ATTACKS ARE COMMON TACTICS USED AGAINST WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS...”


Main image and below: FLD workshops for the Stop Inga III Coalition.

As part of its 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, Front Line Defenders organised its first Protection Partnership with HRDs from the DRC who form the **Stop Inga III Coalition**. The Inga III Dam is the first part of a seven phase high-stakes investment project that has been labelled a priority by the Southern African Development Community (SADC). At issue is the displacement of Indigenous People and local communities, and wide-ranging negative environmental impacts for wildlife and the natural environment of the Congo Basin. For this reason, a coalition of local and international organisations have come together to oppose the first phase of the dam construction.



Front Line Defenders organised a series of workshops over 10 months in 2019. 43 HRDs participated in the workshops, including Visibility for Protection, Digital Protection Training (2) and follow-up consultations, RAPP Training, and Physical Security Training. In addition to the capacity building workshops, 11 Protection Grants were distributed for security measures. Many HRDs remarked in conversation or in surveys that they did not think that, before the Protection Partnership, they could be more secure in their line of work. They had resigned themselves to a life facing risk, without knowing that there were tools and tactics to mitigate that risk. This was, perhaps, the most important learning from the Protection Partnership.



Front Line Defenders supported 23 HRDs from 11 countries in its Rest & Respite Programme in 2019. HRDs experiencing stress and burnout were able to rest, explore new places and spend time with family members. 11 HRDs from Colombia, East Asia, Iran, Mexico, Morocco and Western Sahara were hosted in Ireland, while others were supported to spend time away from work in their own countries or regions. 

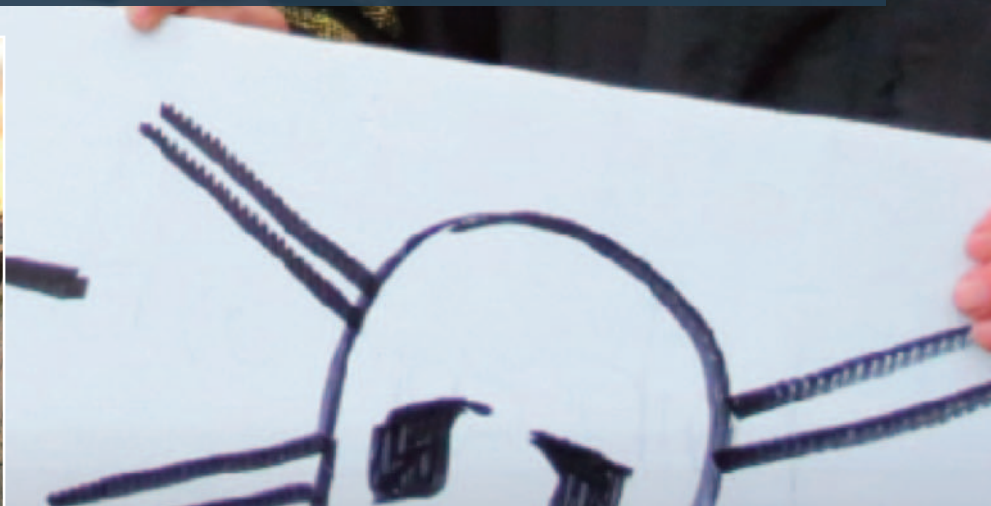


Mohamed Ed-Daoudy and Cormac McAleer.

In December, Amazigh environmental rights defender, **Mohamed Ed-Daoudy**, joined Northern Irish environmental rights defender, **Cormac McAleer** in solidarity at the Save our Sperrins protest camp in the Sperrin mountains. Cormac has received threats for protesting the impact to the region of a gold mine active near the Sperrin Mountains, a designated area of outstanding beauty. Mohamed, better known as Moha, also faced risks as one of the leading members of a social movement against a silver mine owned by the Moroccan royal family that has drained the water reserve of the community in Imider. The two HRDs met during the Dublin Platform in October, when Cormac invited his fellow defender to visit. Mohamed also attended English classes and spoke about his work at events in Derry and Belfast for the Northern Ireland Human Rights Festival.



Meilyn Zendaya Gamez Mendoza and Dandara Rudsan in Dublin.



Colombian WHRD **Meilyn Zendaya Gamez Mendoza** was invited to Ireland on the **Rest & Respite Programme**, where she also attended the Dublin Platform and the Dublin Human Rights Festival. Meilyn is a trans woman HRD who coordinates the human rights network of Marcha Patriótica en Norte de Santander (Patriotic March in North Santander), Colombia, a social and political movement established in 2012 to advocate for a negotiated resolution to the armed conflict, the reparation of victims, agrarian reform and popular sovereignty. At the end of her stay she noted, "What I appreciated most was getting to know so many brave people at the Dublin Platform who helped me to grow in so many ways and helped me to not feel alone in this human rights struggle. This global network of human rights defenders has given me courage for the journey ahead."

In November 2019, FLD hosted a HRD Memorial meeting in Dublin bringing together representatives from partner NGOs in Honduras, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, India and the Philippines. The discussion focused on strategising the most effective ways for the international community to hold perpetrators to account in a pervasive climate of impunity. Some of the key issues which underpin this denial of justice include unchecked endemic corruption, economic development strategies built on extractive industries and mega projects, racism/discrimination, ineffective institutions, and lack of political will to pursue robust investigations. □




Members of the HRD Memorial coalition meet in Dublin.

[PROTEST] SET THEM FREE

On 3 October, over 100 HRDs from more than 90 countries marched in solidarity for detained defenders. The procession took them from Dublin Castle to Christchurch Cathedral as part of the **Set Them Free** campaign, calling for their release through advocacy on cases which too often are forgotten. □



Set them Free protest outside Christchurch Cathedral in Dublin.

Front Line Defenders Americas Protection Coordinator and Digital Protection Consultant carried out a 3-day mission to Temuco, Chile in September to provide physical and digital protection consultation advice and support to the family of detained 2019 Goldman Prize Winner for South and Central America, **Alberto Curamil**, members of the wider Mapuche community, and lawyers and stakeholders involved with his case. Following on from this, FLD provided a protection grant to Curamil's organisation Alianza Territorial Mapuche (ATM) and campaigned directly through urgent appeals raised with EU member states and institutions. After more than a year in pretrial detention, Alberto Curamil was acquitted by a unanimous decision of three judges in December 2019. 

Alberto Curamil and his family after his release.

"IT IS A FACT THAT SOLIDARITY IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY. YOUR SOLIDARITY REFLECTS OUR DETERMINATION TO FIGHT AND UPLIFTS OUR SPIRIT KNOWING THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE."

– HRD, TURKEY



Foly Satchivi with his family after his release.

On 16 October 2019, **Foly Satchivi** was released in Lomé, Togo on presidential pardon after serving nine months of a 3-year sentence. The HRD was charged with "rebellion," "glorification of and incitement to commit crimes and misdemeanours" and "serious disruption of public order" prior to the launch of a press conference he had organised to discuss the deteriorating socio-political climate in Togo. Following his arrest and conviction, Front Line Defenders supported the HRD with a series of urgent appeals and letters as part of an international push to secure his freedom. Satchivi noted the impact that international support had on his case, "...international solidarity decreased the drastic and inhumane measures that the authorities employed to make my detention even more difficult, and also significantly contributed to the betterment of my conditions in prison."

In November, Front Line Defenders conducted a country evaluation in Kenya. The evaluation highlighted the efforts made by FLD to reach out to the most vulnerable and most marginalized human rights defenders in the country. Many rural and grassroots HRDs reported that without the support of FLD, their work would not have been possible. Support from FLD was deemed to have an immediate and important impact of affirming defenders' self-recognition and identity as HRDs; this allowed for a fundamental shift in how they worked, reporting that they felt part of a larger community of people speaking out against powerful forces. HRDs valued the role FLD played in amplifying their voices from the grassroots level to the international stage, which in turn emboldened them to persist with their work in the face of great challenges. □

“FLD IS SO FAR AWAY BUT WHEN I NEED THEM THEY ARE SO CLOSE.”

– HRD, KENYA

“IF FLD DIDN'T EXIST, I DON'T THINK I WOULD BE ALIVE TODAY.”

– HRD, KENYA



116

GRANTS

Grants: 116 Grants = €209,740
Advocacy: 18 Urgent Appeals; Advocacy Towards the EU on Individual Cases;
Training: RAPP Training of Trainers Course in 2018; Digital Security Trainings in 2015
Missions: PC Research Missions in 2015 & 2019

HRDs meeting with FLD during Kenya evaluation trip.

2019 income & expenditure

EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAMME AREA 2019

Front Line Defenders is grateful for the generous support of the following donors:

€200,000+

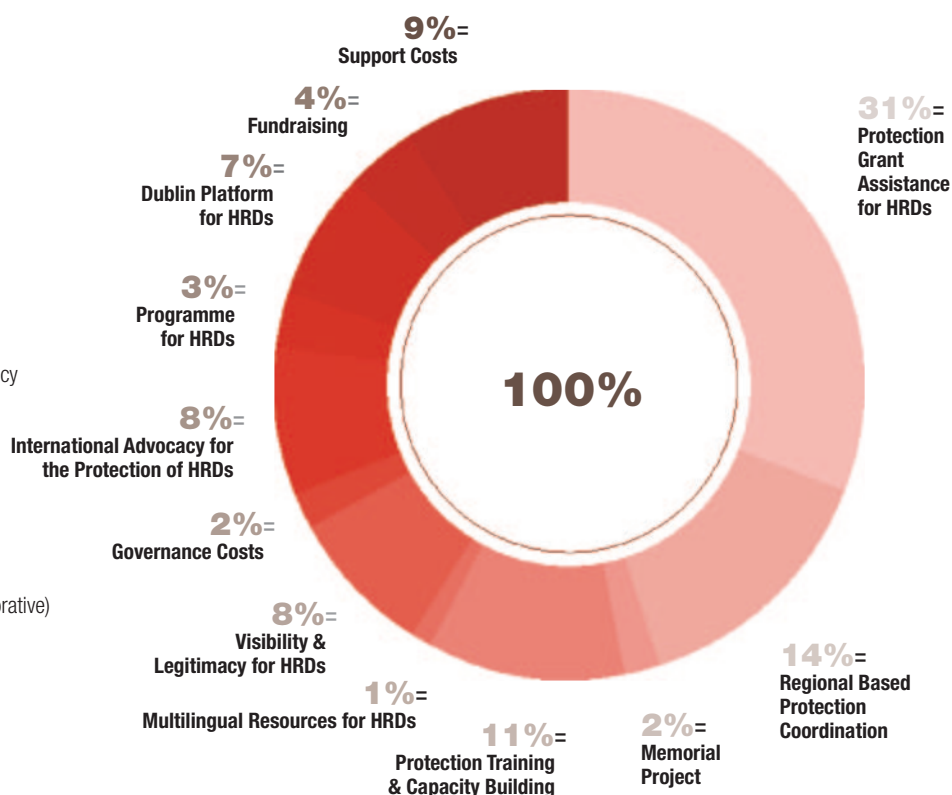
European Commission
Ford Foundation
Iris O'Brien Foundation
Irish Aid
Lifeline Embattled CSO Assistance Fund
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark
Oak Foundation
Open Society Foundations
Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Anonymous

€50,000 – €199,000

Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation
Foundation for a Just Society
German Federal Foreign Office
Global Greengrants (Environmental Defenders Collaborative)
Hivos International
The Swedish Postcode Lottery
11th Hour Project

€2,000 – €49,000

Al-Jazeera Media Network
American Jewish World Service
Arcus Foundation
Belgian Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs
Bread for the World
Bruce Schneier and Karen Cooper
Channel Foundation
Fair Wind Foundation
Fondation Nicolas Puech
Google
The Goldman Environmental Foundation
Helmsley Charitable Trust
Kvinna till Kvinna
Lifes2Good Foundation
Mize Family Foundation
Overbrook Foundation
Oxfam Novib
Peter Schattner
Roddick Foundation
Taiwan Foundation for Democracy
Tikva Grassroots Empowerment Fund / Tides Foundation
UN Foundation
Wallace Global Fund
Anonymous



WHERE FRONT LINE DEFENDERS SPENDS ITS RESOURCES

	Total funds €	Percentage
Protection Grant Assistance for HRDs	1,958,119	.31%
Programme for HRDs	212,663	.3%
Protection Training & Capacity Building	730,774	.11%
Regional Based Protection Coordination	907,174	.14%
Multilingual Resources for HRDs	80,282	.1%
Dublin Platform for Human Rights	427,493	.7%
Dublin Human Rights Festival	5,826	.0%
Visibility & Legitimacy for HRDs	525,868	.8%
Memorial Project	97,242	.2%
International Advocacy for the Protection of HRDs at Risk	511,633	.8%
Fundraising	236,035	.4%
Governance Costs	101,952	.2%
Support Costs	571,736	.9%
Total Expenditure	6,366,796	

WE ALSO WISH TO THANK OUR MANY PUBLIC DONORS WHOSE CONTRIBUTIONS ARE CRUCIAL TO OUR WORK.

Please help us protect human rights defenders by donating to Front Line Defenders at: www.frontlinedefenders.org/donate

or contact Laurent Aldenhoff at: laurent@frontlinedefenders.org or +353 1 212 3750

Front Line Defenders guarantees that 100% of your donation will go directly to the protection of human rights defenders at risk.

You can also donate to Front Line USA Foundation, which is recognized in the United States as tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Front Line USA Foundation is a separate and independent charity and currently does not accept online donations. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Laurent Aldenhoff for further information.

Andrew Anderson interviewed outside Lledoners Prison in Catalonia following a solidarity visit to imprisoned HRD Jordi Cuixart in December 2019



BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ADVISORY COUNCIL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Denis O'Brien (Chairman) is Chairman of the Digicel Group. He is one of Ireland's leading entrepreneurs with extensive investments across several sectors. Mr. O'Brien was voted Ireland's Entrepreneur of the Year in 1998 in the inaugural running of the worldwide competition organised and sponsored by Ernst & Young. Mr. O'Brien is also a director of a number of private companies which hold some of his other business interests including Quinta do Lago SA and Communicorp Group Limited. In 2000 he established The Iris O'Brien Foundation to assist disadvantaged communities in Ireland and internationally. He is co-founder of Front Line Defenders.



Kieran Mulvey is former Director General of the Irish Workplace Relations Commission and Consultant with the International Labour Organisation and the European Union.



Noeline Blackwell is an Irish-based lawyer specialising in refugee law and is the Chief Executive of the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre. Prior to that post, she served as the Director General of FLAC (Free Legal Advice Centres), an NGO that provides free legal advice and advocates for fairer laws to advance the public interest and achieve greater equality. She is the former Chairperson of both the International Human Rights Trust and the Irish Section of Amnesty International.



Jim Conway is the founder and Chairman of the Print & Display Group, one of Ireland's largest print companies. He also has a number of other media interests in Ireland and Eastern Europe.



Maria Mulcahy is the CEO of the Iris O'Brien Foundation and the Irish-based Head of Philanthropy for the Digicel Group. She was involved with "People in Need" from 1988 to 2000. She was responsible for organising the RTE telethons, which raised €28 million. She was Director of Fundraising for the 2003 Special Olympics World Games.



women's rights and human rights organisations in Asia and internationally including as Regional Coordinator of Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development.



Arnold Tsunga is Africa Director of the International Commission of Jurists. He was Executive Secretary of the Law Society of Zimbabwe and Executive Director of Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights. He was a joint winner of the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders in 2006.

Mary Lawlor is the Founder of Front Line Defenders, and served as Executive Director from 2001 to 2016. Prior to Front Line Defenders, Mary was Director of the Irish Section of Amnesty International from 1988-2000. She became a Board member of Amnesty International in 1975 and was elected Chair from 1983-1987.



David Sykes acts as an investment advisor to Island Capital Ltd and previously held positions in banking and stockbroking which included Trinity Bank Ltd and Dolmen Stockbrokers Ltd.



Mary Jane N. Real is the Co-Director of the newly established Urgent Action Fund – Asia Pacific, the first rapid response mechanism for women human rights defenders headquartered within the Asia Pacific region. She is a founding member and former Coordinator of the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition. Ms. Real is a long-time advocate of women's rights having worked with



Verónica Vidal is the Solidarity Tactic Lead at the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID). She is a long-term feminist activist for women's rights and human rights at the local level and internationally. She has worked as a researcher and advocate in Uruguay and Mexico with a focus on regional integration processes, international cooperation for development, the environment and civil society, as well as in building networks, documentation of attacks and developing protection approaches with Women Human Rights Defenders from a feminist perspective.



ADVISORY COUNCIL

Michel Forst is the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. From 2008 to 2013, Mr. Forst was the UN Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti, and between 2012 and 2013 he was the Chair of the Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Prior to that, he was Secretary General of the Paris Summit of Human Rights Defenders and Director of the French Section of Amnesty International. He is a founding Board Member of Front Line Defenders.



Hina Jilani is an internationally known human rights lawyer and advocate for human rights defenders. She was the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on the situation of human rights defenders from 2000 to 2008. She and her sister Asma Jahangir co-founded the first all female legal practice in Pakistan and she is also one of the founders of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. She is a member of The Elders.



James L. Cavallaro is the Founding Director of the International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic at Stanford Law School, where he is also a professor of law. Prior to joining Stanford, he spent nine years on the faculty at Harvard Law School, where he also served as executive director of the Human Rights Programme. In June of 2013 he was elected to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).



Maryam Elahi is President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. For more than 25 years, she has served in positions of leadership in the international human rights community as an advocate, teacher, and grant-maker. She was previously the director of the International Women's Program at the Open Society Foundations.



We are the future

by Aka Niviâna

They tell you to make a choice,
that you better make it right
“The World is at your feet”,
they tell you with a smile
But does that only bring comfort,
if you think, just for a little while?

Wars, disasters, death and destruction
To make a change in this World,
seems to me, to be the only option
If we are to prevent this planet
from self-destruction

Though we walk this planet,
with our soulless feelings as our
guidance, disconnected from ourselves,
from each other – equals violence
Equals endless spirals of eradication
of our environment,
creating self-entitlement,
zero spiritual alignment

Not only is the World at our feet,
but in our hands,
it's our job to make future plans
Will it be “eternal division”
or “together we stand”?

Will there be light at the end of the tunnel,
or will the tunnel crash down,
make it all crumble to the ground
Making it no longer matter if we lost or we found

Will we all sit down,
wait for it to happen,
or will we rise,
before the waves comes smashin',
the thunderstorms starts flashin'
– when will reality kick in?

When will we realize,
there is no time for us left to wait for a savior?
When will we realize,
that the savior we're waiting for
is us?

We are the hope for the future,
because we are the future.

DUBLIN

Front Line Defenders – Head Office
Second Floor, Grattan House
Temple Road, Blackrock, A94 FA39
Co. Dublin, Ireland

Tel: +353 1 212 37 50
Fax: +353 1 212 10 01
Email: info@frontlinedefenders.org

BRUSSELS

Front Line Defenders – EU Office
Square Marie-Louise 72
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Tel: +32 230 93 83
Fax: +32 230 00 28
Email: euoffice@frontlinedefenders.org

Follow Front Line Defenders on Facebook,
Twitter, YouTube and Instagram

www.facebook.com/FrontLineDefenders
twitter.com/FrontLineHRD
www.youtube.com/FrontLineHRD
www.instagram.com/frontlinedefenders/



Front Line Defenders subscribes to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages.



WWW.FRONTLINEDEFENDERS.ORG