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## CCBE Human Rights Award granted to Avocats Sans Frontières



Colin Tyre, QC  
CCBE President

Lieven Denys  
ASF President

José María Davo Fernández  
Chair of the CCBE  
Human Rights Committee

The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) has granted its first Human Rights Award to Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF).

The award was created this year by the CCBE, which represents over 700,000 lawyers from the European Union and European Economic Area through their member Bars and Law Societies, in order to highlight the work of a lawyer or lawyers' organisation that has brought honour to the legal profession by demonstrating outstanding commitment and sacrifice in upholding fundamental values.

Since its creation in 1992, ASF has had great success in the area of access to justice for the most vulnerable groups

world-wide. The CCBE considers that it is a remarkable example of effective co-operation between lawyers coming from different countries, with different backgrounds, joining together in the fight for human rights and the rule of law.

ASF is an independent international non-governmental organisation contributing to the creation of fair and equitable societies, in which law and legal institutions serve society's most vulnerable groups. The organisation is composed of lawyers and others concerned about justice. The primary strategic objective of ASF is to promote efficient and effective access to justice, including creation of legal systems to protect vulnerable groups. In doing so, it strives to promote respect for fundamental human rights, and, in particular, the right to defence and to a fair trial, which are necessary for installing the rule of law, as well as encouraging the non-violent resolution of disputes and, ultimately, sustainable peace.

ASF runs projects world-wide. In recent years, assistance has been provided in Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, East Timor and South Sudan (for further details on ASF activities, please visit the ASF website <http://www.asf.be>).

CCBE President, Colin Tyre QC, said today: *"I am proud to present our first award to Avocats Sans Frontières, an organisation which, through the courage and commitment of lawyers from all over the world, has achieved tremendous on-the-ground results for the benefit of the very people who most need access to justice. There could not be better illustration of what can be achieved by the legal profession in the improvement of social conditions."*

The President of ASF, Lieven Denys, said during the acceptance ceremony: *"The CCBE Human Rights Award is an extremely valuable recognition of ASF's work. This Award comes very timely since it coincides with the celebration of ASF's 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since 1992 ASF lawyers have been active in the field to improve access to justice of the most vulnerable people around the world. The Award is not only an important acknowledgment of ASF but also an encouragement of practicing lawyers worldwide fighting for more respect of human rights in general and engaged to promote the right of any person to be defended by an independent counsel"*.

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