

DATE
26/05/2010

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street
End of Shahid Keshvar Doust Street, Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

Re: **Concerns regarding the case of lawyer Ms. Shadi Sadr**

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), which, through the national Bars and Law Societies of the Member States of the European Union and the European Economic Area, represents around one million European lawyers. In addition to membership from EU bars, it has also observer representatives from a further eleven European countries' bars.

The CCBE, through its Human Rights Committee, places great emphasis on respect for human rights and the rule of law. The CCBE is particularly concerned by the situation of human rights defenders in the world.

We express our concern over the situation facing lawyer Ms. Shadi Sadr, an Iranian human rights defender, prominent lawyer, women's rights activist, Director of Raahi (a legal advice centre for women) and founder of Zanan-e Iran (a website dedicated to the work of Iranian women's rights activists). We already sent you a letter of concern regarding her abduction on 24 July 2009.

According to our information, on May 17 2010, Ms. Shadi Sadr, was sentenced to six years of imprisonment with 74 lashes on charges of "acting against national security and harming public order" after she participated in a rally within the framework of the "One Million Signatures Campaign" in March 2007 outside a revolutionary court where four fellow feminists were on trial. Iranian authorities arrested her along with 30 other protesters.

We are told that Ms. Shadi Sadr is currently abroad, was tried in absentia on May 16 and will appeal the court's decision.

The CCBE is gravely concerned about the conviction against Ms. Shadi Sadr, which seems to us aimed at sanctioning her activity defending human rights.

In this context, the CCBE wishes to draw to your attention the following Article of the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers (1990):

Article 16 states that:

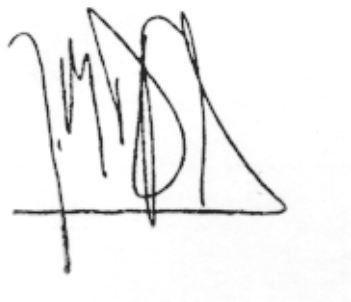
Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Furthermore, Article 23 states that:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the rights to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organisations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organisation. In exercising these rights, lawyers shall always conduct themselves in accordance with the law and the recognised standards and ethics of the legal profession.

In view of the above, the CCBE urges the Iranian authorities to guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of lawyers and to stop any unjustified measure against them, in order to guarantee the free exercise of the profession of lawyer, and the independence and integrity of the administration of justice.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. M. Davó-Fernández', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract.

JOSÉ-MARÍA DAVÓ-FERNÁNDEZ
President