

PRESS RELEASE

Protection of threatened Human Rights Lawyers

30/03/2017

Today marked the launch of a new online platform for the protection of human rights defenders and lawyers worldwide.

The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) welcomes the launch of a new online platform "[Index of attacks and threats against Human Rights Defenders](#)" by the European Union Human Rights Defenders Mechanism.

This platform is an important new instrument to enhance the protection of threatened lawyers, since it will centralise alerts on attacks on lawyers worldwide.

The CCBE proposed the establishment of this platform last year, based on the platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists launched by the Council of Europe, in 2015.

The new platform was presented today at the workshop "[How to improve the protection of threatened lawyers worldwide? Practical tools from the EU Human Rights Defenders mechanism](#)", jointly organised by the CCBE and the EU Human Rights Defenders Mechanism.

The event gathered around 70 participants among which were Bars and Law Societies, International, European and national lawyers' organisations, individual lawyers, and human rights NGOs.

Mercedes García Pérez, Head of Human rights Division at the European External Action Service (EEAS), and Sarah Rinaldi from the Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) presented the EU initiatives in support of human rights defenders/lawyers.

The CCBE President, Ruthven Gemmill WS, and the CCBE Human Rights Committee Chair, Patrick Henry, highlighted the deterioration of the situation of lawyers in many countries and reported on

international mobilisation and the CCBE initiatives in support of threatened lawyers.

The European Union Human Rights Defenders Mechanism representatives presented the new platform, as well as other practical tools to assist endangered human rights defenders and lawyers.

There were also testimonies from the President of the Executive committee of the Colombian Bar and from lawyers at risk from Burundi and Kenya whom benefited from the temporary relocation programme of the EU Human Rights Defenders Mechanism.

About the CCBE:

The CCBE represents the bars and law societies of 45 countries, and through them over one million European lawyers. The CCBE places great emphasis on respect for human rights and the rule of law, and is particularly concerned with the situation of human rights defenders around the world. Since 2007, the CCBE has annually granted its Human Rights Award to a lawyer or lawyers' organisation that has brought honour to the legal profession by upholding the highest values of professional and personal conduct in the field of human rights.

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