



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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October 08, 2019

**A Joint Statement by the Asian Human Rights Commission, Lawyers for Lawyers, and 30 other civil society organisations of the world**

**WORLD: International Statement of Solidarity on Assassination of Derk Wiersum**

**4 October 2019 - We, the undersigned organizations, are deeply shocked by the brutal killing of our Dutch colleague Derk Wiersum. We extend our deepest condolences to Mr. Wiersum's family, friends, colleagues and all others affected by his death.**

Mr. Wiersum, a well-respected lawyer and deputy judge, was shot in broad daylight right outside his house in Amsterdam in the early morning of 18 September 2019. He was representing a crown witness in the so-called Marengo-trial, a high-profile criminal case against members of an organization accused of several murders and attempted murders in the last couple of years. Although the events are still being investigated, it is assumed and highly likely that the death of Mr. Wiersum is related to his work as a lawyer.

This killing of a lawyer, apparently in connection with his work, raises serious concerns for the safety of lawyers and poses a threat to the proper functioning of the rule of law and the adequate protection of rights, including the right to remedies and fair trial.

Lawyers, as well as judges and prosecutors, should be able to do their work freely and independently. The UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers specify that “[w]here the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities” (principle 17).

We welcome the prompt and public condemnation of this crime and the immediate measures taken by the Dutch authorities to initiate an investigation, which should lead to the identification and prosecution of the perpetrators. We also welcome that measures were taken promptly and immediately to protect lawyers and all others who need protection in the Marengo-case. We expect that the Dutch authorities will do everything in their power to ensure that lawyers can do their work safely, freely, and independently in all circumstances.

We stand in solidarity with all colleague-lawyers, judges and prosecutors in the Netherlands, who are at risk for simply doing their job.

**Organizations**

*(In alphabetic order)*



**Advocaten Zonder Grenzen  
(Netherlands)**



**Agora International Human Rights  
Group (Russia)**



**Arrested Lawyers Initiative (Turkey)**



**Asian Human Rights Commission  
(AHRC)**



**Conseil National des Barreaux  
(CNB) - French National Bar**



**Endangered Lawyers (Italy)**



**Défense sans Frontière - Avocats Solidaires (DSF AS)**



**European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights (ELDHR)**



*An association of European defence lawyers*



**European Criminal Bar Association (ECBA)**

Vincent Asselineau, Chair  
Scott Crosby, Human Rights Officer

**European Democratic Lawyers (AED)**



**Fair Trial Watch (FTW) (Netherlands)**

**Forum Penal - Associação de Advogados Penalistas (Portugal)**



**KEEP YOUR HANDS  
OFF THE LAWYERS**

**ORDRE DES AVOCATS  
DE GENÈVE**

**Foundation Day of the Endangered  
Lawyer (Netherlands)**

**Geneva Bar Association - l'Ordre  
des avocats de Genève**



**Union Internationale des Avocats**  
International Association of Lawyers  
Unión Internacional de Abogados

**Human Rights Embassy (Moldova)**  
Lela Metreveli, Executive Director

**International Association of Lawyers  
(UIA)**



**International Association of  
Peoples' Lawyers (IAPL)**



**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF YOUNG LAWYERS**

**International Association of Young  
Lawyers (AIJA)**  
Paola Fudakowska, President



Human Rights  
Institute

**International Bar Associations'  
Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)**



**International Commission of Jurists  
(ICJ)**



INTERNATIONAL  
OBSERVATORY  
FOR LAWYERS

**International Observatory for  
Endangered Lawyers**



**Lawyers for Lawyers (Netherlands)**



**Lawyers Rights Watch Canada  
(LRWC)**



LIETUVOS  
ADVOKATŪRA

**Lithuanian Bar Association**

# MLSA

**Media and Law Studies Association**  
**Medya ve Hukuk Çalışmaları Derneği**

**Media and Law Studies Association**  
**(MLSA) (Turkey)**



**New Zealand Law Society**



**Philippines National Union of**  
**Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL)**  
Edre Olalia, Secretary General



**Progressive Lawyers Association**  
**(PLA)**



**Solicitor's International Human**  
**Rights Group (SIHRG) (United**  
**Kingdom)**



**Southern Africa Human Rights**  
**Defenders Network**

**SOUTHERN AFRICA  
LITIGATION CENTRE**

**Southern Africa Litigation Centre**



**Swedish Bar Association**



**The Law Society of England and  
Wales**

IZBA ADWOKACKA  
W WARSZAWIE



AUDEMUS IURA  
NOSTRA DEFENDERE

**Warsaw Bar Association of  
Advocates**  
Mikolaj Pietrzak, Dean

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*The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) works towards the radical rethinking and fundamental redesigning of justice institutions in order to protect and promote human rights in Asia. Established in 1984, the Hong Kong based organisation is a Laureate of the Right Livelihood Award, 2014.*