



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Eric Friedman
efriedman@nycbar.org

Eli Cohen
ecohen@nycbar.org

International Coalition of Legal Organizations Calls for Protections for Afghanistan’s Decimated Legal Community

Recognizing Day of the Endangered Lawyer January 24, 2023

New York, January 23, 2023 – Each year the International Day of the Endangered Lawyer is organized to draw attention to the plight of lawyers in a particular focus country and to raise awareness about the threats the lawyers in that country face in the exercise of their profession.

The New York City Bar Association is a signatory and contributed to [a new report](#) from the Coalition for the Endangered Lawyer—a network of over two dozen national and international organizations and bar associations. The report makes 15 recommendations to the de facto authorities in Afghanistan, to the international community, to the legal community and to the media regarding the treatment of Afghan lawyers who continue to work in Afghanistan and who are seeking asylum abroad. The report and all of its recommendations can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3H0Spfc>

The report begins with the stark conclusion that “the fall of the Afghan government in August 2021 erased two decades of progress almost overnight. The country’s entire judicial system has essentially collapsed.” The report describes the dangers faced by legal practitioners, including:

- ❖ Seven lawyers have been killed since the dissolution of the Afghan Independent Bar Association and 146 lawyers have been arrested or investigated.
- ❖ Many of their colleagues felt compelled to flee the country or to begin living in hiding, together with their families, to attempt to evade the de facto authorities.
- ❖ Women lawyers are being specifically targeted, making their daily survival a challenge.
- ❖ Afghan asylum seekers, including lawyers and their families, are subjected to violence at the borders, to “pushbacks,” and to denial of individualized international protection needs.

The report calls the support of Afghan lawyers “a moral obligation” and calls on the international community to step up its efforts of assistance and asylum.

Read the full report and recommendations here: <https://bit.ly/3H0Spfc>

About the Association

The mission of the New York City Bar Association, which was founded in 1870 and has over 23,000 members, is to equip and mobilize a diverse legal profession to practice with excellence, promote reform of the law, and uphold the rule of law and access to justice in support of a fair society and the public interest in our community, our nation, and throughout the world. www.nycbar.org