

# [ DISPATCHES ]



REPORTS FROM THE  
**FRONT LINE**

**f** FRONT LINE  
DEFENDERS

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**FRONT LINE**

## WHAT DOES FRONT LINE DEFENDERS DO?

Front Line Defenders was founded in Dublin in 2001 with the specific aim of protecting human rights defenders at risk, people who work, non-violently, for any or all of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Front Line Defenders aims to address the protection needs identified by defenders themselves. Front Line Defenders provides rapid and practical support to at-risk human rights defenders, including through:

- international advocacy on behalf of human rights defenders at immediate risk;
- grants to pay for the practical security needs of human rights defenders;
- provision of training and development of resource materials on security and protection, including digital security;
- rest and respite, including the Front Line Defenders Fellowship;
- opportunities for networking and exchange between human rights defenders, including at the biennial Dublin Platform;
- the annual Front Line Defenders Award for Human Rights Defenders at Risk;
- an emergency 24 hour phone line for human rights defenders operating in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and Russian.

In emergency situations, Front Line Defenders can facilitate temporary relocation of human rights defenders. Front Line Defenders promotes strengthened international and regional measures to protect human rights defenders including through support for the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. Front Line Defenders seeks to promote respect for the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Front Line Defenders has Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Front Line Defenders has Observer Status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Front Line Defenders received the 2007 King Baudouin International Prize for Development.

Front Line Defenders is an International not for profit organisation established by charitable deed trust.

Registered Charity Number CHY 14029

### FRONT LINE DEFENDERS TRUSTEES



**Denis O'Brien** (Chairman)  
Denis O'Brien is Chairman of the Digital Group. Mr O'Brien is one of Ireland's leading

entrepreneurs with extensive investments across several sectors. He founded the Communicorp Group which has a portfolio of media and broadcasting-related companies in Ireland and seven other European countries. In 2000 he established The *Iris O'Brien Foundation* to assist disadvantaged communities in Ireland and internationally.



**Mary Lawlor** (Director)  
Mary Lawlor has been constantly inspired by the work of human rights defenders who put their vision of a

civil and just world for all ahead of their own safety. In 2001 she set up Front Line, the International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders to provide round the clock practical support and deliver fast and effective action on behalf of human rights defenders at risk.



**Hina Jilani** is an internationally known human rights lawyer and advocate for human rights defenders. She was the Special Representative of the Secretary General on

the situation of human rights defenders from 2000 to 2008. She and her sister Asma Jahangir co-founded the first all female legal practice in Pakistan and she is also one of the founders of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.



**Jim Conway** is the founder and Chairman of the Print & Display Group, one of Ireland's largest print companies. He also has a number of other media interests in Ireland and Eastern Europe.



**Kieran Mulvey** is Chief Executive of the Irish Labour Relations Commission and Consultant with the International Labour Organisation and the European Union.



**Michel Forst** is Secretary General of the French National Consultative Commission on Human Rights. He was Secretary General of the Paris Summit and Director of the French section of Amnesty International.



**Noeline Blackwell** is Director of FLAC (Free Legal Advice Centres), an independent human rights organisation

dedicated to the realisation of equal access to justice for all.



**David Sykes** is Investment Director of Island Capital Ltd and worked in various banks and stockbrokers including Trinity Bank and Dolmen stockbrokers.



**Maria Mulcahy** was involved with "People in Need" from 1988 – 2000. She was responsible for organising the RTE telethons, which raised €28 million. She was Director of Fundraising for the 2003 Special Olympics World Games.



**James L. Cavallaro** is the Founding Director of the International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic at Stanford Law School, where he is also a professor of law. Prior to joining Stanford, he spent nine years on the faculty at Harvard Law School, where he also served as executive director of the Human Rights Programme.

### LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

**Hanan Ashrawi** Founder and Secretary General of the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy.

**Robert Badinter** President of the OSCE Court of Conciliation and Arbitration and a member of the French Senate. He was previously French Minister for Justice.

**Bono** Founder member of the Irish rock group U2, and a prominent human rights advocate.

**Desmond Tutu** Anglican archbishop who rose to worldwide fame during the 1980s as an opponent of apartheid. Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1984.

**Adolfo Pérez Equivel** Leader of Servicio Paz y Justicia and the 1980 Nobel Peace Prize recipient.

**Indai Lourdes Sajor** Founder and former Executive Director of the Asian Centre for Women's Human Rights.

**His Holiness The Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso** Temporal and spiritual leader of the Tibetan people and Nobel Laureate.





Mary Lawlor welcoming Mutabar Tadjibaeva to the 2011 Dublin Platform

truly inspirational human rights defenders who attended not only the 2011 Platform but those in 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2010 got me thinking about some of our memorable moments along the way.

...when Aloysius Toe escaped from prison in Liberia in 2003. He was on a blacklist and couldn't leave by air. We managed to get a bank to open during the looting of Monrovia and worked through an intermediary to get some money to him. He hid under the nets of a tiny fishing boat and left for a 4 day stormy crossing after the nightly security sweep. It was a tricky operation and taught us a lot.

...when the "EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders" were adopted under the Irish Presidency in 2004. We were proud to prepare the consultation paper following discussion with other relevant NGOs. The officials in the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs deserve much credit for persisting in pursuing them, even when it looked like there would be no support from their EU partners.

IN SEPTEMBER, IT WAS VERY SPECIAL to be able to welcome Mutabar Tadjibaeva, from Uzbekistan, to the 6th Dublin Platform for Human Rights Defenders at Risk. It had taken 6 years.

Mutabar was arrested on her way to the 3rd Dublin Platform in 2005. She was sentenced to 8 years in March 2006 after an unfair trial. She was held in solitary confinement for 7 months. On one occasion the authorities put a noose in her cell in the hope that she might commit suicide. Her health deteriorated and she was refused access to medical attention.

Despite intensive and persistent action and lobbying, Mutabar remained in prison and we were making no progress. We decided to send her flowers on her birthday. We wanted her to know she had not been forgotten. We weren't sure if they would arrive but amazingly they were given to her.

What a joy it was to learn of Mutabar's early release in June 2008. Some time later she wrote to us.

*"I think that every birthday of all my life I will remember this birthday in prison when you sent me the flowers. I think that not only me but other women prisoners who were there in this magic moment will remember it. You cannot imagine the miracle you made on this day. You showed to the society the weakness of the dictatorship. It was the most beautiful, the most precious gift, I have ever received. This moment was the first symbol of our victory."*

Looking back on the Dublin Platform and thinking about the

...the amazing 7 winners of the Front Line Defenders Award for Human Rights Defenders at Risk. 2005: Dr. Mudawi Ibrahim Adam, Sudan; 2006: Ahmadjan Madmarov, Uzbekistan; 2007: Gégé Katana, DRC; 2008: Anwar al-Bunni, Syria; 2009: Dr. Yuri Melini, Guatemala; 2010: Dr. Soraya Rahim Sobhrang, Afghanistan; 2011: The Joint Mobile Group, Russian Federation.

As I said to the wonderful human rights defenders who gathered at our Sixth Dublin Platform:

We set out in Front Line Defenders, 10 years ago, with enthusiasm, excitement and the unspoken promise of individual commitment. At the core of our work was the thought of all of you brave defenders and your relentless work for the human rights of others. We believed then, as now, that HRDs are key agents of change, and that there was a need for an international organisation which focussed all its activities on your protection - to help build a safe space in which you could work. We wanted to be linked to you, to be a witness to your work, and to be fast, flexible and furious in our determination to protect you. This was and remains our moral horizon. □

Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders

**2011: AT A GLANCE**

- Front Line Defenders issued 256 Urgent Appeals on behalf of 594 individuals at risk in 70 countries.
- The EU Office took action on 120 cases in 52 countries with positive response in 38% of cases.

- In 2011 the Front Line Defenders Security Grants Programme awarded 189 grants, totalling €488,748 to individuals and organisations at risk. This included 97 temporary relocations of individual human rights defenders and family members.
- The Front Line Defenders Award was presented to the Joint Mobile Group of Russia.

- The 6th Dublin Platform for Human Rights Defenders at Risk was held at Dublin Castle and brought together 132 human rights defenders from 85 countries.
- 242 human rights defenders participated in 17 security and protection workshops and 230 human rights defenders in 22 digital security workshops.

- Front Line Defenders carried out 27 missions to 22 countries.
- *Workbook on Security: Practical Steps for Human Rights Defenders at Risk* was published in Arabic, English, French, and Spanish.
- Two online campaigns: Human Rights Defenders in Bahrain and Human Rights Defenders in China were launched.



# Focus on the Front Line

## AMERICAS

- **Brazil:** Killing of environmental rights defender Mr Joao Chupel Primo
- **Colombia:** House break-in, assault and threats against human rights defenders Ms Jackeline Rojas Castañeda, Mr Juan Carlos Galvis and family
- **Cuba:** Violent arbitrary arrest of three human rights defenders and incommunicado detention of Ms Ivonne Malleza Galano
- **Guatemala:** Threats, intimidation and false accusations against human rights defender Ms Lucia Carolina Escobar Mejia
- **Honduras:** Killing of human rights journalist Mr Héctor Francisco Medina Polanco
- **Mexico:** Death threats against human rights defenders and their families

## EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

- **Belarus:** Mr Ales Bialiatski imprisoned after grossly unfair trial
- **Ireland:** Monitoring of policing of demonstrations against Corrib Gas project
- **Kazakhstan:** Violent attack against human rights defenders and journalists Asan Amilov and Orken Bisenov
- **Kyrgyzstan:** Life imprisonment for Human Rights Defender Azimjan Askarov
- **Russian Federation:** Death threats against human rights defender Ms Lilya Shibanova
- **Turkey:** Arrest and pre-trial detention of human rights defender Mr Ragıp Zarakolu
- **Turkmenistan:** Unfair trial and conviction of human rights defender and journalist Mr Dovlemurat Yazguliev



“I WOULD LIKE TO THANK FRONT LINE DEFENDERS VERY MUCH FOR STANDING BY OUR SIDE AND EMPOWERING US TO DO OUR JOB AND FOR SHARING OUR CONCERN TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD.”

HRD

## AFRICA

- **Burundi:** Death threats against and intimidation of members of the anti-corruption organisation OLUCOME
- **Côte d'Ivoire:** Increased threats against human rights defenders
- **DRC:** Intimidation and aggression against human rights defenders Mr Jeredy Malonga Kambasu, Ms Justine Masika Bihamba, and members of the organisation BEDEWA
- **Malawi:** Campaign of intimidation and threats against human rights defenders to prevent pro-reform protests
- **Nigeria:** Detention and charges against human rights defender Mr Osmond Ugwu
- **The Gambia:** Continuing judicial harassment of Dr Isatou Touray and Ms Amie Bojang-Sissoho

ASIA

- **Cambodia:** Judicial harassment of human rights defender Mr Sam Chankea
- **China:** Brutal beating and house arrest of human rights defender Mr Chen Guangcheng and wife Ms Yuan Weijing
- **India:** Renewed death threat against human rights defender Dr Lenin Raghuvanshi
- **Pakistan:** New death threats against human rights lawyer, Mr Parvez Aslam Choudhry
- **Philippines:** Murder of human rights defender Father Fausto Tentorio
- **Thailand:** Human rights defender and magazine editor Somyot Prueksakasemsuk detained and prosecuted on lèse majesté charge
- **Vietnam:** Arrest and incommunicado detention of eight human rights defenders

“I ALSO STARTED TO FEEL THAT I AM NOT ALONE AND I AM NO LONGER AFRAID TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS IN SPITE OF THE DETERIORATING SITUATION AND THE PERSECUTION OF DEFENDERS IN MY COUNTRY.”

HRD

**POSITIVE NEWS - IN 2011 SEVERAL HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS WHOSE CASES WERE RAISED BY FRONT LINE DEFENDERS WERE RELEASED FROM JAIL**

**Cuba** – release of two further human rights defenders Héctor Maseda Gutiérrez and Angel Moya Acosta

**Burundi** – establishment of the new National Human Rights Commission was welcomed with cautious optimism; Jean Claude Kavumbagu released on 16 May 2011 on the basis of time served.

**Uzbekistan** – the prison sentence of Maxim Popov, psychologist and Executive Director of Izis commuted to corrective work while human rights defender and poet Yusuf Juma, released in May and Norboy Kholjigitov, the eldest human rights defender detained released in October.

**The Russian Federation** – human rights defender Alexei Sokolov released on parole while – on 14 June 2011, Khamovniki district court of Moscow dropped all libel charges against Oleg Orlov who was being prosecuted for libel based on his allegations that President Kadyrov was responsible for the killing of Natalya Estemirova in Chechnya.

**Syria** – 79 year old Haitham Al Maleh, one of Syria’s most prominent human rights defenders released after detention in brutal conditions and Anwar al Bunni winner of the 2008 Front Line Defenders Award was released after completing a five year prison sentence.

**Western Sahara** – On 14 April 2011 Sahrawi human rights defenders Ali Salem Tamek, Brahim Dahane and Ahmad Anasiri released. The three defenders were arrested along with four others on 8 October 2009 and detained since that date.

MIDDLE EAST / NORTH AFRICA

- **Egypt:** Human rights defender Ahmad Sayed Muhammad Sayed sentenced to two years in prison
- **Bahrain:** Widespread crackdown on human rights defenders
- **Iran:** Arrest and incommunicado detention of human rights defenders Abdolfattah Soltani, Fereshteh Shirazi and Faranak Farid, human rights lawyer Nasrin Soutoudeh also arrested
- **Saudi Arabia:** Sentencing of Sheikh Suliman Ibrahim Al-Reshoudi and eight civil and political rights advocates to prison terms ranging from ten to 30 years.
- **Syria:** Disappearance of human rights lawyers amidst escalating crackdown
- **UAE:** Detention, unfair trial and conviction of 5 human rights defenders before release – was it a pardon?
- **Western Sahara:** Arrest before sentence was commuted and pre-trial detention of human rights defender Mr Atiqu Barraï



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**IN THE LAST YEAR FRONT LINE DEFENDERS' PROTECTION COORDINATORS HAVE TRAVELLED EXTENSIVELY ON MISSION TO MEET HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS ON THE GROUND AND HEAR FROM THEM AT FIRST HAND THE DETAILS OF THE CHALLENGES AND DANGERS THEY FACE ON A DAILY BASIS, WHILE WORKING COURAGEOUSLY TO DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.**

**¡LA AMAZONÍA NO SE VENDE, LA AMAZONÍA SE DEFIENDE!**



Lina Solana (Centre) speaking at meeting of Frente de Mujeres Defensoras de la Pachamama

## ECUADOR

FRONT LINE DEFENDERS UNDERTOOK A MISSION to Ecuador in March 2011. The specific purpose was to meet with human rights defenders to hear the challenges they face working on issues related to extractive industry projects, including the negative impact on the livelihoods of their communities as well as related environmental concerns. The main threats reported were: arbitrary detentions, stigmatisation and discrediting of HRDs as terrorists, criminalisation of HRDs, infiltration of meetings and violent attacks. However the threats do not only come from the state but also from non-state actors, such as private security firms hired by the mining companies, and sometimes from within the communities themselves where some members may have accepted payment from the mining companies and therefore react negatively towards those who speak out against their presence.

As well as individual meetings Front Line Defenders was invited by the *Frente de Mujeres Defensoras de la Pachamama* to participate in the *First Meeting of the Guardians of the Amazon in Ecuador* which took place between 21 – 22 March in Tzawata (Napo Province in the Amazon) and whose primary objective was to bring together women human rights defenders to discuss “The role of WHRDs in socio-environmental conflicts: threats, risks and strategies

for Protection in the face of the criminalisation of the resistance movement to mega-project mining”.

Given the rural location of these communities and the lack of access to communication tools such as computers, internet and often mobile phones, in addition to lower levels of formal education, **human rights defenders reported how they rely heavily on word of mouth to share and exchange ideas and concerns relating to the extraction projects and their own anti-mining activities.** However this in itself can lead to the propagation of misinformation about the aims and objectives of the HRDs’ projects which can put them at further risk amongst their own communities or other powerful groups. The media can further aid this process of misinformation or biased reporting as HRDs reported that if and when they are invited to speak on radio shows or in the media, they are often restricted to 2 – 3 minutes presentation, while the mining company itself will be given longer to speak about their activities.

## COLOMBIA

Front Line Defenders combined the occasion of the Digital Security Training-of-Trainers in Bogotá to meet with HRDs operating under very harsh conditions on a variety of different issues in Colombia, including: women’s / campesino / indigenous rights, victims of the armed conflict including internally displaced persons, youth rights and journalists at risk.

Stigmatisation of human rights defenders and their activities, often combined with baseless accusations from high-profile public officials, including the president, criminalisation, harassment, intimidation, website hacking, death threats, forced disappearances and killings were just some of the common risks listed by human rights defenders during the visit. In many regions there is a high presence of police, military, paramilitary and armed groups, all of whom can speak out or act against those promoting human rights.

The ongoing internal armed conflict in Colombia has resulted in millions of people being forced from their homes and communities and internally displaced. One WHRD described how she had been displaced and tearfully added **“I don’t want to be displaced again, I will die in my village. I will continue fighting for the rights of the people, but they can’t move me again”.**



Caitriona Rice with Alirio Uribe of The José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers’ Collective (CCAJAR), Colombia

Given the conflict situation in which they are working human rights defenders spoke about the importance of international advocacy and lobbying for their improved protection. Many of the organisations reported having HRD staff working in communities where there are constant human rights violations. In these high risk situations they feel that it is necessary for their staff to have international accompaniment. One of the organisations that Front Line Defenders met with said that “international accompaniment is one of the only reasons why we can still exist. If we had to depend on government protection we would not be here now”.

## BURUNDI

During our visit in May 2011, we heard of intimidation, warnings and open threats as the most common risks incurred by HRDs. Instances of physical violence remain limited, while judicial harassment, arrests and physical surveillance occur frequently.

The killing of prominent HRD Ernest Manirumwa in 2009 was the first and last attack of such gravity. HRDs who have since been on the front line to obtain justice for the killing are facing increasing harassment.

The authorities resort to arrests and trials of critical voices. Journalist Jean-Claude Kavumbagu spent ten





Above left: Burundi – meeting with OLUCOME members (left to right): Jean-Claude Ndikwami, Andrea Rocca (Front Line Defenders) Leonidas Mukeshimana, Eustache Kinyogoto, Gabriel Rufyiri  
 Above right: Released HRD Jean Claude Kavumbagu, Burundi

Gabriel Bombambo, TIC pour tous, DRC

months in detention before being released in May 2011. The editor of Radio Publique Africaine (RPA) received seven summonses to appear before the prosecutor in a four-month period alone. Summonses to appear also frequently target NGO members. It also seems that the authorities attempt to mobilise the population against HRDs: in April pro-government individuals organised a protest which had banners censuring a prominent human rights defender.

**Rumours persist about the existence of a list of targets to be eliminated which would include many HRDs. While it is unclear whether such a list exists and where it originated, it does result in concern within the human rights community.**

NGO legislation is used to harass human rights defenders. FORSC had its registration suspended and was only reinstated in 2010. In June 2011, another organisation was threatened that registration would be revoked.

#### RWANDA

Front Line Defenders visited Rwanda in June 2011. Despite the apparent tranquility of Kigali, Rwanda is a country where human rights defenders live with a sense of fear and suspicion. Infiltration is pervasive and concerns local NGOs and international groups alike. **Anyone can be an informer, virtually everywhere. HRDs are scared to speak, exercise self-censorship and trust a very limited number of their colleagues.**

The Government has been successful in creating a number of GONGOs (Government controlled NGOs) to influence and control civil society, and in infiltrating independ-

ently aligned NGOs. Only a handful of organisations have managed to protect their independence. As a result, all attempts at building strong coalitions have been frustrated. Warnings and intimidation may come from anywhere: authorities but also colleagues, and they are a regular occurrence.

A number of journalists and human rights defenders have left the country fearing they could be arrested, tried or killed. In 2011, three journalists were sentenced to prison terms.

As the image of the regime is very important, those perceived to send information abroad are particularly vulnerable. This year, a journalist who the authorities believed was providing information to international NGOs was threatened, evicted and detained twice. He eventually fled.

The strategy behind the systematic harassment is to scare off critical HRDs enough to make them go into exile and therefore 'neutralise' them. On 1 December 2011, Rwandan journalist and human rights defender Mr Charles Ingabire was shot and killed in Kampala, Uganda.

#### DRC

In October, we travelled to DRC to meet with women human rights defenders in the east of the country. They described the risks and challenges they face particularly due to the context of sexual violence and conflict. **Those working in rural and mountainous areas tend to be the most vulnerable. They can be attacked at any time by militia or armed groups.** They spoke of the need for safe transport and resources for communication both to do their work and in emergency situations. Women human rights defenders in Goma found strength in working

together and participating in dynamic networks of exchange and solidarity.

We also met with *TIC pour tous*, an organisation providing training in IT skills and digital security for human rights defenders throughout DRC. TIC pour tous maintains IT centres in eastern DRC with access to internet and technical support for human rights defenders.

#### AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

Front Line Defenders attended the session of the African Commission (ACHPR) in October and the NGO Forum that precedes it. More than 200 human rights defenders from across Africa participated in the Forum, which provides a valuable platform to network and discuss the human rights situation in the region.

The African Commission reappointed Commissioner Reine Alapini-Gansou as Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders in Africa, after her two-year tenure as chairperson of the Commission.

In June, Joseph Bikanda, from Cameroon, completed his internship with Front Line Defenders on the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders at the African Commission. Dieudonné Wedi, from DRC, started in July for the internship 2011-2012.

#### SUDAN

Front Line Defenders organised a protection and security training for Sudanese HRDs in 2011. Fifteen participants including representatives of NGOs and independent HRDs took part in the training. The session which was conducted with the participation

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> of a trainer from Sudan was highly commended. One participant said “Apart from exchanging experiences with fellow participants and trainers, I also started to feel that I am not alone and I am no longer afraid to defend human rights in spite of the deteriorating situation and the persecution of defenders in my country.”



**Mrs Reine Alapini-Gansou, Chairperson of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and Special Rapporteur on HRDs**

Another commented “Personally, I enjoyed all the materials presented almost equally, and that was because of the way the training was conducted. It was in the format of a discussion which allowed everyone to participate and those that knew more than others were able to add their knowledge to the group.”

## BAHRAIN

**In 2011 Front Defenders undertook five missions to Bahrain in light of the deterioration of human rights in the country and the brutal crackdown on HRDs including former Front Line Defenders MENA Protection Coordinator Abdulhadi Alkhawaja who was detained tortured and subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment following an unfair trial before a military court.**

In April Front Line Defenders Deputy Director, Andrew Anderson, travelled to Bahrain following the arrest, beating and incommunicado-detention of former Front Line Defenders Protection Coordinator Abdulhadi Alkhawaja. Abdulhadi had stepped down from his role coordinating support for human rights defenders across the region in February in order to engage with the peaceful protests in Bahrain.



**Delegation of Irish parliamentarians and medics to Bahrain. Back row, left to right: Andrew Anderson, Front Line Defenders, Senator Averil Power TD, Professor Eoin O'Brien, former Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs David Andrews. Front row, left to right: Nabeel Rajab, Marian Harkin MEP, Professor Damian McCormack**

During the visit the Deputy Director met with Abdulhadi’s family and with human rights defenders in Bahrain. In a meeting with officials from a number of Ministries at the Ministry of Human Rights and Social Development the Deputy Director raised the organisation’s concerns about Abdulhadi’s health given reports of torture and deaths in custody. He pressed for Abdulhadi to have access to his family and lawyer and asked for confirmation that Abdulhadi was alive. Officials initially insisted that Abdulhadi had refused to see his family but shortly after the meeting the authorities allowed Abdulhadi to make a brief telephone call to his family for the first time since his arrest. The family was also allowed to provide him with medicine and clothes. We now know, as confirmed by the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), that Abdulhadi was being brutally tortured at this time and had undergone extensive surgery because of the damage to his jaw and face.

In May Front Line Defenders delegated two UK-based barristers to travel to Bahrain to observe the trial of Abdulhadi Al Khawaja before the military run National Safety Court. The observers were denied access to the court room despite the fact that the authorities had been informed in advance of the purpose of their visit.

In May/June Front Line Defenders Executive Director, Mary Lawlor went on a mission to Bahrain to raise with

the authorities Front Line Defenders’ concerns about Abdulhadi and over forty medical doctors held on charges of opposing the Government. During the visit she was allowed access to the court room where Abdulhadi was being tried but was not allowed to meet him as agreed with court authorities.

During her visit Mary Lawlor met members of Abdulhadi’s family and the families of the medical doctors who had been held incommunicado at the time. She also met members of human rights NGOs in Bahrain and the British, US and French ambassadors in Bahrain with whom she raised the case of Abdulhadi and the medical doctors.

In May, Front Line Defenders submitted a briefing paper to the European Parliament Sub-committee on Human Rights for their hearing on the situation of human rights in the Gulf States including Yemen. The paper focused on Front Line Defenders’ concerns about human rights defenders in the subregion.

In July a humanitarian mission went to Bahrain to offer solidarity to doctors, nurses and other health professionals held in prison or facing charges in Bahrain and in particular to meet with the families of the Irish trained doctors.

The delegation consisted of Professor Damian McCormack, Professor Eoin O’Brien, former Irish Foreign Minister David Andrews, Ms Marian Harkin MEP, Senator Averil



Power, photo-journalist Conor McCabe and Front Line Defenders' representatives Deputy Director Andrew Anderson and Khalid Ibrahim. The Irish delegation met with the Minister of Human Rights & Social Development (and acting Minister for Health) who agreed to call on King Hamad to release on bail the 14 medics who remained in detention at that point. Over the course of two days, the delegation met a wide range of groups. Doctors who had previously been in custody recounted how they had been subjected to torture and degradation. The families of those still in prison expressed concern about their loved ones.

"It was hugely important for the families that we demonstrated the widespread concern of the Irish medical community and broader Irish society for the detention and prosecution of our Bahraini colleagues," said Professor Damian McCormack, "we have heard many heartbreaking testimonies of torture and ill-treatment from those who were detained but were also inspired by the courage and dedication of the doctors and nurses we met."

The delegation was denied permission to visit the imprisoned Irish trained doctors Dr Ali Al Ekri, Dr Basim Dhaif and Dr Ghassan Dhaif.

In November Front Line Defenders travelled to Bahrain to meet again with human rights defenders and representatives of the Bahraini authorities around the time of the launch of the BICI report which confirmed that detainees had been systematically tortured and had not received fair trials. The organisation's representative was able to briefly meet with Abdulhadi Alkhawaja during a family visit and pass on our best wishes to him.

## MALAYSIA

The mission to Malaysia came after the participation of Front Line Defenders in the 3rd Media Legal Defence-Southeast Asia, which discussed ways to forge alliances to support and protect media activists and journalists in ASEAN.

Front Line Defenders met with HRDs operating in peninsular Malaysia as well as those working in Sarawak. **HRDs working in the field of democracy and the rule of law continue to be targeted through the use of draconian laws such as the Emergency Ordinance which allows arbitrary detention without**



**Malaysian HRDs demonstrate against the arbitrary detentions under Emergency Ordinance**

**trial for up to two years.** Front Line Defenders visited and met with staff of Bersih 2.0, whose office was raided and their staff arrested after it called on PM Najib Tun Razak to ensure that public institutions fulfill their obligations to the public prior to the election. Front Line Defenders had noticed a trend whereby HRDs irrespective of the issues they were working on had been the victims of internet surveillance.

Community leaders, grassroots activists, and indigenous activists working on native customary rights (NCR) in the state of Sarawak are more vulnerable compared to their counterparts in Peninsular Malaysia. Front Line Defenders met and talked to HRDs in Sarawak who had been charged with sedition for simply working to demand the indigenous peoples' right to land. Many of the HRDs to whom Front Line Defenders spoke have been banned from leaving Sarawak and Malaysia to publicise the human rights violations to the international community.

## INDONESIA

Front Line Defenders carried out a mission to Indonesia following the EU-civil society dialogue on human rights and faith. This was organised by the EU Delegation to Indonesia, Brunei, and ASEAN. Front Line Defenders also met and raised cases of HRDs at risk with the human rights focal point of the EU Delegation.

The situation in Papua continues to be an issue of concern to HRDs in the country. Front Line Defenders met with a representative of the All Indonesia Labour Federation to discuss the case where two of its members were shot dead by local police in Timika. The lack of protection for anti-corruption activists is becoming a concern as well. **Front Line Defenders heard accounts of HRDs campaigning against**

**corruption being physically attacked by paid thugs, and journalists writing about the abuse of power by politicians being systematically criminalised and charged with defamation.**

As in Malaysia rising religious fundamentalism in the country has had an effect on HRDs especially those defending sexual and religious minorities. An event organised by an LGBTI group was recently interrupted by the Defender of Islam, a self-proclaimed Islamic group while human rights lawyers representing Ahmadiyya Muslims have faced numerous death threats.

## BANGLADESH

Front Line Defenders participated in the Human Rights Defenders Conference organised by Odhakar in Savar where around one hundred HRDs from 40 districts were represented. During the conference, Front Line Defenders presented its work, the importance of security for HRDs, and the international mechanisms existing to protect HRDs at risk.



**Front Line Defenders speaking at a meeting with the Hope Foundation in Bangladesh. Left to right: Pokpong Lawansiri (Front Line Defenders), Mr Sazzad Hussein, Ms Taskin Famina.**

During the mission, Front Line Defenders spoke with HRDs who were at risk and have been the subject of urgent appeals by Front Line Defenders. This includes Shampa Goswami, a teacher and WHRD who continues to face threatening phonecalls after she helped an elderly woman who was a victim of a gang rape to file a complaint against the perpetrators. Journalists who write about human rights, abuses of power, and corruption face jail terms, arbitrary arrest and detention, as well as

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# Regional Reports

➤ physical violence. HRDs to whom Front Line Defenders talked highlighted the problem of extrajudicial killings committed by the Rapid Action Battalions (RAB) and how those HRDs who expose the violations are subjected to intimidation and harassment.

HRDs also informed Front Line Defenders of the recent amendment to the constitution in which the Government gives no recognition to the rights of indigenous peoples. This is a development which might put indigenous rights activists operating in the Chittagong Hill Tracts at risk and lead to them being further marginalised.

## BELARUS

In 2011, Belarus was under particular focus because of the dramatic deterioration in the already difficult human rights situation. **Front Line Defenders undertook a mission in January 2011 when, after the wave of repression that followed the flawed presidential elections of December 2011, the reprisals against the human rights community of Belarus were at their peak.**

Several HRDs were detained and interrogated, smear campaigns were organised in state-owned media, offices of human rights organisations were searched and documentation and electronic equipment seized. Despite the constant everyday pressure, HRDs continued to denounce the massive arrests and sentencing of peaceful demonstrators, the use of torture in KGB prisons and in overcrowded pre-trial detention facilities and to support the victims of human rights violations. Several lawyers have been disbarred just because they defended the right of their clients to decent conditions of detention and to a fair trial.

This first mission aimed at providing emergency support for local HRDs. Following the mission, several security grants were provided and 3 digital security training workshops were organised for Belarusian HRDs.

In November 2011, Front Line Defenders followed the trial in Minsk of the chairman of Human Rights Centre 'Viasna' Ales Bialiatski accused of 'tax evasion on a large scale'. This accusation was based on the details of personal bank accounts opened by Ales Bialiatski in Lithuania and in Poland to receive foreign



Jailed HRD Ales Bialiatski, Belarus

funding for the programmes of this NGO which was deprived of state registration and ipso facto made illegal since 2003.

## RUSSIAN FEDERATION, NORTH CAUCASUS

Two research missions were carried out in the North Caucasus, including in Chechnya, Ingushetia, Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkaria. **The situation of HRDs remains extremely difficult, especially for those who fight against the grave human rights violations committed by law enforcement agencies.** HRDs involved in investigations of torture, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings continued to be openly threatened by state officials. There was a prevalent climate of fear as several human rights organisations were subjected to interrogations and inspections by different state agencies.

Two years after the killing of human rights defenders Natalya Estemirova, Zarema Sadulayeva and her husband Alik Djabrailov, there is still no progress in the official investigation. The relatives of Natalya Estemirova lodged a complaint to the European

**“WE LIVE IN UNCERTAINTY, WE WORK IN A VERY DIFFICULT ENVIRONMENT, BUT WE TRY TO DEFEND TRUTH AND JUSTICE.”**  
HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER, DRC

Court of Human Rights against the ineffective investigation.

## KAZAKHSTAN

In May 2011, Front Line Defenders visited prominent human rights defender Evgeniy Zhovtis in a penal colony in Ust-Kamenogorsk. **Mr Zhovtis is serving a four year sentence following a politically motivated unfair trial after he was involved in a fatal traffic accident.** It was an opportunity to witness at first hand the 'special treatment' of this model prisoner and the determination of the authorities to ignore anything that would bring his release date forward. His last demand for conditional release lodged in August 2011, has been denied.



Yevgeny Zhovtis, director of the NGO Bureau of Human Rights sentenced to four year in prison

Following requests by Kazakh civil activists, two workshops on security and protection for HRDs representing all the regions were organised in 2011.

In August, a new research mission was carried out in the Mangistau region of Kazakhstan where a violent labour dispute broke out in May between oil industry employers and workers. Because of the economic importance of the oil sector, the Kazakh authorities did not make any effective effort to mediate in the labour conflict. On the contrary, they did everything possible to stifle the protest, disperse demonstrations by the strikers and effectively closed their eyes to violent attacks on the defenders of workers' rights.

This climate of impunity for the attacks on the defenders of workers right created the conditions which led to the scenes of violent confrontation in December 2011. □



# Front Line Award for HRDs at Risk

“The work of the Joint Mobile Group is an inspirational example of how committed individuals, despite all the pressures that are brought to bear on them, can hold the line in defence of justice, truth and the rule of law. It is the denial of access to justice that enables tyrants to prevail. This is why the work of human rights defenders like the Joint Mobile Group is so important”.

Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and founder of the Mary Robinson Foundation - Climate Justice



Joint Mobile Group, winner Front Line Defenders Award 2012  
Left to right: Dmitri Kazakov, Igor Kalyapin (Founder JMG), Anton Ryzhov and Mary Robinson

**THE WINNER OF THE 2011 FRONT LINE AWARD FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AT RISK was the Joint Mobile Group of the Russian Federation for their outstanding work investigating torture, killings and disappearances in Chechnya.**

The Award was presented at a ceremony in Dublin's City Hall on 5 May 2011 by Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and founder of the Mary Robinson Foundation - Climate Justice.

The Joint Mobile Group, headed by the Nizhny Novgorod Committee against Torture chairman Igor Aleksandrovich Kalyapin, was set up to sustain human rights work in Chechnya in the face of a spate of killings of human rights defenders.

It maintains a specialised team of three investigators in Chechnya to carry out on the spot investigations when suspected human rights abuses have occurred, and in particular they investigate crimes carried out with the alleged involvement of local officials.

The team is regularly rotated and travels to the scene of the abuse to collect evidence which may help facilitate a prosecution.

In Chechnya, the stigmatisation of human rights defenders by the government of President Kadyrov has made a difficult situation even worse. Those responsible for the killings of human rights defenders have not been brought to justice and in general the security forces behave with impunity.

The killings and threats are clearly intended to silence those who would speak out to defend human rights. The members of the Joint Mobile Group have refused to be silenced and in spite of the great risks have continued to work for truth, justice and human rights.

The other shortlisted nominees for the 2011 Front Line Defenders Award for Human Rights Defenders at Risk were:

**Mr. Jean Marc Bikoko of Cameroon**, Executive President of the Centrale Syndicale du Secteur Public (CSP) works to defend the human rights and welfare interests of public sector employees in Cameroon.

**Mr. José Antonio Zambrano of Honduras** works to defend and promote the rights of the LGBTI community in Honduras which is effectively under siege due to the climate of violent homophobia which persists in the country.

**Ms. Parveena Ahangar of India's disputed northern Kashmir Province**, founder and President of the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP), Srinagar, Kashmir, formed in 1996 in response to the disappearance of her 16 year old son 6 years previously.

**Ms. Reyhan Yalcindag of Turkey** works as a lawyer and human rights defender with the Diyarbakir Branch of the Human Rights Association in southeast Turkey (in the Kurdish region).

**Mr. Yasre Abdul-Wahab Al-Wazeer of Yemen** member of the Yemeni Organisation for the Defence of Rights and Democratic Freedoms (YODRFD) which campaigns for the protection of the rights of detainees, particularly those related to the Sa'da conflict.

The annual Front Line Defenders Award was established in 2005 to honour the work of an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the protection of human rights in the face of considerable personal risk.

It is intended that the Front Line Defenders Award and the profile gained by the nominees and winners will contribute to their security and protection. It is also an opportunity to highlight the important and courageous work of human rights defenders around the world.

**The Front Line Defenders Award includes a €10,000 donation to the work of the human rights defender as well as a €5,000 personal honorarium.** □

The nominees for the 2011 Front Line Award, as presented by (left to right) Proinsias de Rossa MEP, Minister Simon Coveney TD, Mary Lawlor, Director Front Line Defenders, Minister Ruairi Quinn TD



# Dublin Platform

The Sixth Dublin Platform for Human Rights Defenders took place in Dublin Castle, from the 14th - 16th September, 2011 bringing together 132 human rights defenders from 85 different countries.

EACH DUBLIN PLATFORM IS UNIQUE because of the rich diversity of the courageous and extraordinary human rights defenders who come together to share experiences, learn from one another, discuss relevant issues, and engage with decision makers from governmental and intergovernmental bodies.

It is also a space where human rights defenders can speak openly and freely without fear and is a chance for them to escape from the relentless pressures under which they work in their everyday lives.

The formal sessions were facilitated by simultaneous interpretation in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish with whispered interpretation provided in Bahasa, Chinese, Hindi, Portuguese and Urdu. The informal discussions were also extremely rich with participants building lasting bonds across linguistic and cultural divides.

All the HRDs who came together in Dublin Castle are at risk because of their non-violent work for the human rights of others. They face death threats and physical violence, denigration and loss of employment, arrest and harassment, and sometimes torture.

Examples of these threats and attacks were shared in often harrowing testimony. But the focus was also on strengthening mechanisms for protection, engaging the international community, holding perpetrators accountable and providing support to those under attack.

The HRDs were joined by many representatives from international human rights organisations. Nobel Peace Prize winner, Shirin Ebadi, UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Maina Kiai, and Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Eamon Gilmore TD, gave inspiring keynote speeches. The meeting was also addressed by video by Margaret Sekaggya, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.

A panel discussion on the specific risks facing women human rights defenders drew on expert presentations from Lorena Cabnal (Guatemala), Julienne Lusenge (DRC), Samira Hamidi (Afghanistan) and Mary Y. Conteh (Sierra Leone).

Mary Lawlor chaired a panel discussion involving Yuri Melini (Guatemala), Usman Hamid (Indonesia) and Isatou Touray (The Gambia) on 'Visibility, Recognition & Legitimacy: How to get it? How to keep it?'

A panel on regional mechanisms for the protection of HRDs included contributions from Santiago Canton, the Executive Secretary at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, H.E. Rafendi Djamin, representative of Indonesia and chairperson at the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and Benjamin Moreau, human rights advisor at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

The participants were able to enjoy some of the best traditional music Ireland has to offer from Colm Ó Snodaigh, Rossa Ó Snodaigh, Eoin Dillon and Seanan Brennan from the Irish band Kila, as well as Keith Donald from the Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO). At the finale event in the Old Jameson Distillery it was wonderful to see the sheer exuberance and joy of all the assembled human rights defenders. It was a privilege to feel part of a community with so many wonderful people. It is their spirit which animates our work. □



Minister Jan O'Sullivan TD, with Anton Rocke, Guyana



Qamar Naseem, Pakistan



Zanaib A A Alginami, Occupied Palestinian Territories



The Free Abdulhadi Campaign on the streets of Dublin





Panel on Protection Mechanisms; left to right: James Cavallaro, Santiago Canton, HE Rafendi Djamin and Benjamin Moreau



Panel on Risks to WHRDs, left to right: Mary Conteh, Samira Hamidi, Julienne Lusenge and Lorena Cabnal



Left: Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade, Mr. Eamon Gilmore T.D.



Above: (Left to right): Parveena Ahangar, India, Nobel Prize winner Shirin Ebadi, Iran and Usman Hamid, Indonesia



Right: Above: Maina Kiai, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Assembly and Association



6th Dublin Platform Participants (left to right): José Antonio Zambrano, Honduras, Adolfo Guzmán Ordaz, Mexico, Adam Kuleit Ole Mwarabu, Tanzania, Mutabar Tadjibaeva, Uzbekistan, Parveena Ahangar, India, Adolfo Sánchez Serrano, Colombia



# Front Line Defenders security

FRONT LINE DEFENDERS runs a Security Grants Programme for the security and protection of HRDs at risk worldwide. The purpose of the security grants programme is to enable HRDs at risk to take fast and effective action to deal with the threats they face, whether it be a direct attack on their office, threats to members of staff or a cyber attack on their computers or web site. An individual HRD or the members of staff of an organisation at risk can apply by reading our guidelines and filling out the encrypted application form on our website: <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/security-grants>

In 2011 Front Line Defenders awarded 189 grants to 306 individual HRDs and family members in 59 countries, amounting to €448,748. (We funded 97 grants for the relocation of HRDs and family members.)

With these grants, Front Line Defenders paid for the relocation of HRDs and their families, medical treatment, legal fees, and transport to court for lawyers, families and witnesses. We awarded family assistance for imprisoned HRDs, temporary relocation of office premises, counselling for staff and secure transport. As regards digital security, we funded the hosting of secure websites, USB modems, laptops and hard drives, as well as digital security workshops.

Typically, we funded security items such as CCTV systems, alarm systems, video intercom systems, metal, arms and explosives detectors, guard dogs and handlers, unarmed security guards, security gates, walls and fencing, gratings for windows, multi-lock systems, mobile phones, paper shredders and emergency shelter during periods of heightened danger.

## A look at some of the grants in 2011

In January 2011 Front Line Defenders funded a grant to l'Observatoire de Lutte contre la Corruption et les Malversations Economique (OLUCOME), an organisation based in Burundi. The members of the organisation had received intimidation and death threats by telephone, sms and in person. This grant paid for a metal and arms detector and also for security related to the trial of those accused of the assassination of Ernest Manirumva, the former vice-



Recording equipment for trial observation for OLUCOME in Burundi

president of OLUCOME. The total amount awarded was €1,590.

OLUCOME said that the grant has: *"raised awareness of the situation of insecurity faced by our members and therefore increased awareness and solidarity."*

In February 2011, following a series of threats to the organisation, Front Line Defenders awarded a grant to the Counselling Services Unit (CSU), which provides medical and rehabili-

tation services to survivors of organised violence and torture in Zimbabwe. The grant paid for a CCTV security system for their offices. The total amount of this grant was €2,974.65.

CSU wrote:

*"Thank you so very much for your positive response. It could not have come at a better time as the situation in Zimbabwe appears to be getting worse with the talk of elections and all. We have also come under scrutiny from the authorities once again making the system that you have kindly agreed to fund all the more important."*

Again in February, we awarded a grant to an indigenous organisation in Rapa Nui, the Easter Island Council, which paid for legal representation for Rapa Nui HRDs.

The Rapa Nui Council sent us the following feedback:

*"Without this grant the Rapa Nui human rights defenders would have been criminalised because we would*



Above: Security camera, and below, intercom and CCTV systems, for CSU, Zimbabwe



# grants programme

*not have been able to support legal representation for Rapa Nui in February... without the Front Line Defenders grant the indigenous rights of the Rapa Nui people could not have been defended. Additionally, because the initial grant helped turn the tide, we have been able to engage private donations and the human rights defenders themselves have been able to raise additional funds in smaller increments to support the legal efforts."*

In May 2011, we awarded a grant of €1,566.27 to the Side by Side LGBT Film Festival in the Russian Federation. This funded unarmed security guards during LGBTI film festivals in Novosibirsk, Kemerovo, Tomsk and Archangel.

The organisers of the event contacted us with the following comment:

*"The grant that we received was a significant enabling element, providing the core funding to our regional security measures. As a result of the grant we were able to provide effective security, the festivals being able to go forward without incident sent a message to the wider public that such LGBTI events are able to take place in peace and in a positive manner."*



In June 2011, Front Line Defenders awarded a grant of €3,452 to the Buffalo-Tamaraw-Limus (BTL) Farmers' Association and BTL Women's Association, through the National Foundation of Peasant Women (AMIHAN) in the Northern Mindanao Region of the Philippines, which was used for medical treatment for 6 HRDs and for the evacuation of Wennie Loable, a woman human rights defender who was under threat.

We received the following feedback:

*"The grant ensured the safety and well-being of the wounded and threatened HRDs. Ensuring the safety of these HRDs is an imperative since they are the key players in their respective organisations. Without them leading in the frontline against CMU's harassments, the organisation will fail to collectively and effectively resist any attempts of repression and suppression. The grants from Front Line Defenders addressed the practical needs of the HRDs concerned and enabled them to continue their agrarian and human rights work."*

In November 2011 we sent a grant to the Afghan Women's Resource Centre in Afghanistan. The grant of €1,500 was used to pay for driving lessons for 20 female staff members, who are constantly at risk of attack when travelling to remote rural areas.

In November, we awarded a grant of €1,496 to the Comité de Secours pour les Femmes et Enfants en Détresse in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which paid for 30 mobile phones for activists based in rural areas, along with locks for their often unsecured homes. This grant contributed to the establishment of a system of communication to enhance protection during and after the election period.

In December 2011, we assisted with legal fees in support of detained human rights defender Vidadi Asganderov in Azerbaijan, as well as providing financial support to his family.

Also in June 2011, we awarded

a grant to Pembe Hayat LGBTI Solidarity Association in Turkey. The grant of €4,392 paid for improved security and mobile phones.

The organisation sent the following feedback:

*"Following the installation of a high-level security system for our organisation, Pembe Hayat will be able to continue its activities without having any kind of deterrence that comes from the police, gangs or local people, as is the usual case. Pembe Hayat had faced several threats in the past, especially from gangs who are overtly transphobic and once a team of policemen raided the association. These issues increased the level of fear on our side which also affected our activists in terms of being free to carry out their activities."*

In July 2011 we awarded a grant of €5460 to the Iraqi Journalists Rights Defence Association (IJRDA), which paid for CCTV equipment, steel doors and a laptop.

In October, 2011 we granted €960 to la Colectivo Artesana, a women's organisation based in Guatemala, to pay for CCTV cameras.

The Security Grants Programme seeks to respond effectively to the specific security needs of WHRDs. In 2011 we awarded 49 grants to WHRDs amounting to €135,667. In assessing grant applications, we seek to ensure that the specific security needs of WHRDs are included in organisational security assessments. We awarded 5 grants to women who were victims of sexual assault.

In recognition of the dangers and threats faced by the families of human rights defenders at risk. Front Line Defenders awarded grants in 2011 to 37 families of HRDs at risk. These grants have paid for relocation, medical expenses, accommodation, transport and living expenses. □



**Alarm system for Pembe Hayat, LGBTI Solidarity Association in Turkey**



# Rest and Respite and Fellowships

Front Line Defenders' primary goal is to enable human rights defenders to continue their work to defend the rights of others. Many of them work under intense pressure. Front Line Defenders has initiated a programme of rest and respite to enable HRDs to take a break and recover their physical and mental strength.

## REST AND RESPITE

**Dmitri Kazakov**, a legal strategist, and **Anton Ryzhov**, a lawyer who represents torture victims before the European Court of Human Rights, had two weeks rest and respite in Dublin in May.

Both work with the Committee against Torture in Russia and the Joint Mobile Group, which investigates torture, killings and disappearances in Chechnya. They met with the Free Legal Advice Centre (FLAC), other NGOs and visited an Irish prison.

*"The programme of recreational events allowed us to have a fortnight's rest from the psychological viewpoint, get distracted from the routine activities and recover strength for further work. It should be said that on our return home we recommenced our work with doubled energy and enthusiasm. When you see that people on the other side of the earth are aware about your work and appreciate it so greatly, this really boosts your morale."*

**René Gradis** of the Environmental Movement of Olancho,



**Dmitri Kazakov, a legal strategist, and Anton Ryzhov, lawyer, Russian Federation**

Honduras, had a few days rest with his family in the north of the country in August.

*"The holidays were fantastic, we had a great time, we're home now with lots of energy to continue working"*

**Miriam Miranda** is President of the Organización Fraternal Negra Hondureña, which works for the promotion of the Afro-Caribbean Garífuna community's capacity for self-determination through programmes which support their political, social, economic and cultural advancement in Honduras. She was arrested and beaten for her participation in a peaceful protest with striking teachers in March 2011, and was happy to be able to take some time out to visit her sister in the US for a week in September.

**Mata Coulibaly**, National Coordinator of the Ivorian Coal-

ition of Human Rights Defenders spent a few weeks on rest and respite in Lisbon, Portugal in September/October. She had been under a lot of stress due to her human rights work during and after the 2010-2011 Ivorian crisis.

*"Before I left, I was under a lot of pressure. I was afraid when my phone rang, I was worrying all the time. I could feel a tingling sensation in my heart. I had a check-up which showed I had an ulcer and anaemia. I wasn't productive any longer. I decided to go somewhere I didn't know anyone so I was able to rest completely."*

*"I'm more relaxed since I got back. I'm more organised. Phone calls and messages don't frighten me any more. I'm more relaxed at work. I even went on mission for 15 days and visited three regions. I'm now taking the time to take care of myself."*

**Olga Tseytlina**, a Russian lawyer specialising in criminal, immigration and international human rights law, came to Dublin in September. She was facing heightened risks in St Petersburg after a guilty verdict and life sentence was handed down to two members of a Neo-Nazi group in a case she had worked on. She took English classes for the month as well as attending the Dublin Platform and general sightseeing.

*"During my stay I was also able to rest and recover from the exhausting daily work in Russia. I visited many museums and attractions of Dublin, went on an excursion to the city of Belfast and met with the history, life and traditions of Ireland. As I was in an English language environment all the time my knowledge of English has improved. Overall I am quite recovered and have already started to work with renewed energy and ideas."*



**Olga Tseytlina, human rights lawyer, Russian Federation**

**Dokka Itlsaev**, a lawyer who had been threatened due to his outspoken criticism of the situation of human right violations in Chechnya, also came to Dublin to study English for three months, August to October.

*"I was invited because for reasons of safety I needed to leave Chechnya for a time. However, Front Line Defenders did not only organise for me to leave Russia, but also did everything possible to ensure that my time in Ireland gave me the chance to rest and at the same time was beneficial to me for my professional activity. When I was in Dublin I had the unique opportunity to study English, which is essential to me in my work, as our organisation brings cases to the European Court of Human Rights. I got the chance to have a good rest and I returned to Russia with renewed energy for my work."* □



**René Gradis, Honduras**

# Digital security and training



AT A TIME WHEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS rely increasingly on electronic communications they are also increasingly at risk from cyber attacks, hacking and either the stealing or destruction of their organisation's data. This can have serious consequences for the safety of their members and the security of victims, witnesses and others on whose behalf they are working.

**The events of the Arab Spring and similar initiatives and the reactions inspired in other parts of the world in 2011 demonstrated that freedom and security of the internet and phone communication can be at the heart of the struggle for political and social change.** The internet has been used effectively by human rights defenders to disseminate information about human rights violations that authoritarian regimes have sought to repress. Social networking has been used to help coordinate and stimulate mass action. There have also been reports of authoritarian governments harvesting information from the internet in order to more effectively target human rights defenders and opponents.

Whilst many human rights defenders have consciously decided to operate in an open and public manner the security of information, contacts and sources of information remains very important. In many countries there are also problems with the blocking of communications and access to information.

Front Line Defenders' digital Security Programme aims to help human rights defenders maximise their effective and secure use of e-communications, social media and information storage.

In 2011 Front Line Defenders assisted in cases of:

- the destruction and confiscation of equipment and information
- breaking into email and web site accounts to destroy information,
- surveillance of electronic communications
- identity theft or the impersonation of organisations or individual human rights defenders.

We provided support to victims whose web sites had been blocked

## THE DUBLIN PLATFORM AND DIGITAL SECURITY

The Dublin Platform is an ideal opportunity for human rights defenders at risk to share skills, knowledge and expertise in areas such as the increased danger for all human rights defenders in the form of threats to their digital security.

As human rights defenders become increasingly dependent on electronic communications systems such as email, sms and the increasing number of social networking sites, so too does the risk of cyber attack increase. Knowledge of digital security is vital to enable human rights defenders to communicate quickly, effectively and safely.

Throughout the Platform there were digital security clinics operating in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish and some 25 HRDs took part in a 2½ day pre-Platform digital security training workshops in 5 languages to provide a more in depth focus on key aspects of digital security and to provide information on security measures which could be easily implemented by HRDs on their return home to their respective organisations. □

[WWW.SECURITY.NGOINABOX.ORG/](http://WWW.SECURITY.NGOINABOX.ORG/)

(either by DDOS attacks or internet filtering). We helped in cases where the computers of HRDs had been infected with dedicated spyware to access sensitive information .

We conducted 22 trainings for 230 human rights defenders to assist them in improving the security of their electronic information and communication.

In December 2010 and early 2011 Front Line Defenders, together with Tactical Tech, organised and conducted five digital security workshops for groups of trainers from the Middle East and North-Africa, the states of the former Soviet Union, Spanish speaking Latin America, francophone Africa and other regions. As a result of those workshops we are cooperating with more than 40 trainers around the world to provide human rights defenders with the skills to manage their on-line security.

We have continued the programme of intensive 1-3 months personalised digital security internships in Dublin to assist in the development of IT and training skills for trainers from highly sensitive countries.

Front Line Defenders together with our partner organisation Tactical Technology Collective continues to develop Security in a Box ([www.security.ngoinabox.org/](http://www.security.ngoinabox.org/))

a toolkit of peer-reviewed free and open-source software and guides for improving the security and privacy of stored information and communication. The aim of the toolkit is to simplify this complicated area, provide an understanding of the risks involved in electronic communication and provide a practical step by step guide towards the implementation of practical solutions.

**The toolkit is written for the non-**

**technical user and describes:**

- how to improve the physical security of information,
- ways to protect the computer from malware, spyware and hackers;
- procedures for the protection and encryption of sensitive information;
- how to keep your communication private and remain anonymous when posting or reading information;

**This year we added two new guides on how to use mobile phones as securely as possible and how to better protect yourself and your data when using social networking sites.**

*Security in a Box* was fully translated into Vietnamese, Farsi (Persian), Mandarin and Burmese (Ethiopian) and Bahasa (Indonesian). In addition it continues to be available in English, Arabic, Russian, Spanish and French. The content of Security in a Box continues to be revised and updated on an ongoing basis. You can download it online from [www.security.ngoinabox.org/](http://www.security.ngoinabox.org/).

A hard copy version is also available for HRDs at risk on request or through the workshops and consultations. □



HRDs taking part in digital security workshop at Dublin Platform



# Security & Protection Training

During 2011, 242 human rights defenders from 30 countries took part in 17 Front Line Defenders Security and Protection training workshops. Sixty-five percent were women human rights defenders.

## New Workbook on Security for HRDs

During security workshops, HRDs openly shared the risks they faced, their fears, their dilemmas about balancing security with effectiveness, and the creative strategies they employ in order to continue their invaluable work. These inputs, together with tools for analysing security, were brought together into Front Line Defenders' new *Workbook on Security: Practical Steps for Human Rights Defenders at Risk*. The draft Workbook was reviewed and improved by a group of HRDs from Indonesia, Kazakhstan and the Middle East.

This new publication, available online, is a step-by-step guide to producing a security plan. The chapters cover:

- Context analysis
- Risk assessment
- Analysing threats
- Wellbeing and stress
- Creating security plans

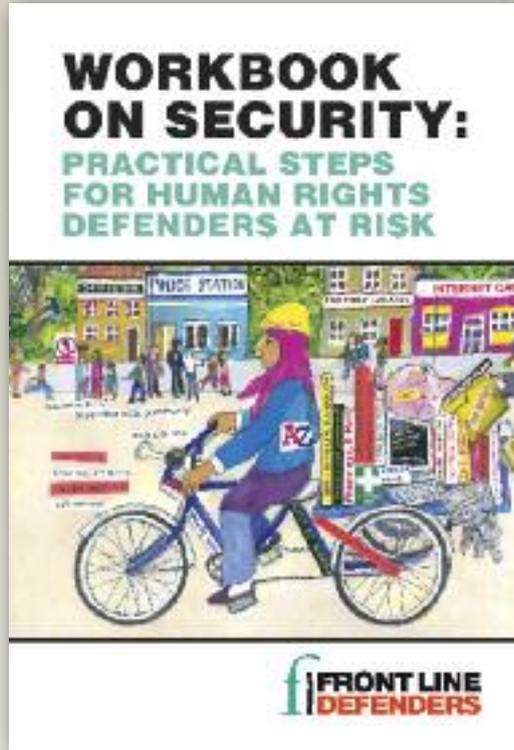
The Workbook also contains appendices with checklists on such topics as:

- Office security
  - Home security
  - Protection of others (clients, witnesses, survivors)
  - Security whilst travelling to rural areas
- and security in the face of risks of:
- Defamation
  - Surveillance
  - Assault, including sexual assault
  - Detention, arrest, abduction, kidnap.

Below is a sample of the security training workshops in which HRDs at risk from around the world took part.

## February – Seminar on Surveillance in Dublin

Front Line Defenders brought together a group of HRDs and digital security experts from around the world with security professionals from a range of backgrounds for a two day



**“THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WE NEED – A PRACTICAL, STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SECURITY”**

HRD, SOUTH SUDAN

seminar. During the discussions, a better understanding of surveillance methodology and practices was developed and the most effective strategies for HRD at risk in terms of being aware of surveillance and managing the impact on their security

were shared. The key learnings were summarised in an appendix in the Workbook on Security.

## Sept – Security Training for WHRD in Ecuador

Human rights defenders from Ecuador and Colombia previously trained by Front Line Defenders conducted a workshop for WHRD from rural areas including indigenous groups affected by natural resource exploitation projects in Ecuador. The WHRD had faced jail, trials on fabricated charges of terrorism, arbitrary detention, intimidation and assault.

The participants' educational level ranged from a law student to a participant who could only write her name. As a result the trainers used a variety of techniques - brainstorming, group discussions, dramas, drawings, graphics, and dynamic exercises to elucidate the topics.

One of the trainers reported “Because of language issues, we agreed to change the word ‘vulnerability’ used in the risk formula for assessing risk to ‘weak spots’ but at the end everyone clearly understood that being vulnerable as a woman is not the same as being weak!”. One participant’s feedback was representative of the overall reaction: “I will share our knowledge and experience in our community, so we can get organised. And when we are organised, we are stronger.”



Kazakh human rights defenders Ramina Simbinova, Assel Nurgazieva, Baktygul Kanatov, Abdila Alkuat and Mayra Abenova



**October – Front Line Defenders Security Course**

A new initiative – a longer term Course on Security, comprising written assignments and two workshops – began in August. After completing assignments on interviewing colleagues, conducting an analysis of security and assessing their office security, the 16 participants from 13 countries met for a workshop in Brussels.

The HRDs had experienced attacks on their offices, detention, imprisonment and assassination of colleagues, attacks on family members and death threats. The perpetrators of the abuses were governments, armed groups, families of victims they assisted, and criminal gangs.

Participants are now engaging their colleagues in preparing organisational security plans which will be reviewed at a follow up workshop next year. One of the participants, who said his capacity to respond to threats had increased during the workshop from 1 to 5 (on a scale of 1 to 5) said: “the style and way of teaching was very unique and it was as if the lake [of information] was flowing into me through my eyes into my heart, soul and mind.”

**Below: Brussels: HRDs taking part in role play as part of Security Course, (left to right): 1st left, Agnieszka Raczynska 2nd left Kumbirai Kembo 4th left seated: Dane Lewis**



**Emérite Tabisha Mongelwa delivering security training in eastern DRC**

**Feedback from workshop participants:**

“With the techniques learnt from the training we can analyse and reduce the risks of danger. I am arranging a workshop for my organisation to train other women human rights defenders... on security aspects of their work.” **HRD, Pakistan**

“After the relaxation exercises, it seemed as if I had been dragging around a heavy boulder which I was

able to let go” **HRD, Sudan**

“Everything was important – especially risk assessment, threats and digital security. The sessions were informative and thought-provoking - eye-openers to the things that have generally been overlooked.”

**HRD on the Security Course**

“I felt I was the only warrior standing on the battlefield. Now I know I am not alone.” **HRD, Kazakhstan** □





# Long-term campaigning

Front Line Defenders campaign “10 on the 10th,” spotlighting 10 HRDs in conjunction with the organisation’s 10th anniversary, reports progress on 3 cases in 2011.

**Released:** In May 2011, journalist and HRD Jean-Claude Kavumbagu was released by a Bujumbura court after serving almost 11 months in jail, after being charged for publishing two investigative articles detailing abuses by the Burundian Army.

**Released:** Sahrawi HRDs Ali Salem Tamek, Brahim Dahane and Ahmad Anasiri were released from a Moroccan prison in April 2011 after being detained for over 18 months for their human rights work.

**Convicted:** On 23 June a military court in the Democratic Republic of Congo delivered a guilty verdict in the trial of the accused killers of HRD Floribert Chebeya Bahizire. Though 5 of the 8 defendants were convicted, Front Line Defenders remains convinced that the person who organised the assassination has not yet been brought to justice

Front Line Defenders launched two online campaigns to support human rights defenders in Bahrain and China, respectively, in the second half of 2011 as part of a new, aggressive effort to increase online campaigning and to raise awareness and the profile of human rights defenders at risk.



**Free Abdulhadi building wrap**  
From 13 September to 20 September Front Line Defenders put up huge banners wrapping a prominent building overlooking St. Stephen’s Green in central Dublin, calling for freedom for our former colleague Abdulhadi Alkhawaja. Thousands of passersby could not but take note of the sign and at any moment people could be seen stopping to read the information printed on the banner, or taking photos of it.

As a way to globalise the impact of



## CORRIB GAS MONITORING PROJECT

Front Line Defenders and Amnesty International (Irish Section) came together in May 2011 to implement a six month joint project, the Corrib Human Rights Observation Initiative, with the support of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. The Initiative monitored protests and the policing of protests from mid-May to mid-November 2011, so as to independently observe and document human rights concerns in the context of the policing of ongoing protests about the Corrib gas pipeline project. The initiative has been staffed by a full time observer working out of Belmullet who was supplemented by a team of part-time observers when required.

The Initiative met with the various protest groups, An Garda Síochána (AGS) and with representatives of Shell and Integrated Risk Management Systems (IRMS). The Initiative will therefore continue to communicate with all parties and follow up on a number of concerns in 2012.

## INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF HRDs

The Nobel Peace Prize 2011 was awarded jointly to three outstanding women human rights defenders, **Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee from Liberia and Tawakkol Karman, from Yemen** “for their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women’s rights to full participation in peace-building work”. Tawakkol Karman was a participant in the 2007 Front Line Defenders Dublin Platform. [www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2011/](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2011/)

### Martin Ennals Award 2011 – African Gay Human Rights Defender honoured with world human rights award in Geneva

**Kasha Jacqueline Nabagesera** is the founding director of Freedom and Roam Uganda, a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTI) rights organisation. The situation of LGBTI community is extremely difficult and dangerous in Uganda where LGBTI people are threatened, imprisoned, attacked and even murdered on the simple basis of their sexual orientation. [http://www.martinennalsaward.org/?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=156&Itemid=135](http://www.martinennalsaward.org/?option=com_content&view=article&id=156&Itemid=135)

### Leading Irish human rights NGOs present award for International Gay Rights Activist of the Year to Paisarn Likhitpreechakul of Thailand

The 2011 GALAS International Prize for Gay Rights Activist of the year, organised by the National Lesbian and Gay Federation of Ireland (NLGF) was presented to Thai gay rights human rights defender to **Paisarn Likhitpreechakul** who accepted the award on behalf of the Foundation for Human Rights on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, The Award, sponsored jointly by Front Line Defenders, Amnesty International (Irish Section), NLGF and the Irish Council for Civil Liberties, was presented because of the organisation’s exceptional contribution to the cause of full equality for all sexual minorities. You can view Paisarn Likhitpreechakul’s acceptance here on YouTube <http://youtu.be/dCyeihB6qbk>



the campaign and to encourage others to participate, Front Line Defenders launched the campaign website [www.bahrainhrd.org](http://www.bahrainhrd.org) focused on Abdulhadi as well as on the medics on whose behalf the organisation had been working for months. Within days approximately 100 buildings were virtually wrapped, from China to Chicago. The site also provides background information about the defenders and latest news information about their cases. <http://www.bahrainhrd.org/>

### Visit Chen Guangcheng

Chen Guangcheng (Guang/cheng translates as light/honesty) is a blind, self-taught lawyer who exposed sterilisation and forced abortions going on in Shandong Province in China. He was targeted by local authorities and brought to court on trumped up charges, and ultimately sentenced to prison. After serving his sentence he was released, but then he and his family, including his 6-year old daughter, were placed under house arrest, and cut off from all communications with the outside world.

Chen's 40th birthday was on 12 November, and to mark his birthday and to try to reach across the isolation, Front Line Defenders launched [www.lighthonestyhrd.org](http://www.lighthonestyhrd.org) to allow visitors to blow out a virtual candle on a birthday cake and take action to call for his release.

Again, the site provides latest news items, video statements of support from Chinese supporters and ways to contact Chinese officials. The site will be used to continue campaigning for Chen Guangcheng's release. <http://www.lighthonestyhrd.org/>

With 2011 drawing to an end and a high-profile attempt at a visit to Chen and his family by Hollywood actor Christian Bale, Front Line Defenders teamed with Irish filmmaker Trish McAdam to design a short animation to the Maya Angelou poem "Caged Bird" to focus more attention on the case. Viewers were able to send letters to Chinese ambassadors in their countries demanding the release of Chen and his family from home detention. □



## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER AND ANTI-CHILD SLAVERY CAMPAIGNER JAMES KOFI ANNAN DOES SPEAKERS TOUR IN IRELAND - IN DUBLIN, CORK AND GALWAY



Peter Murtagh, Foreign Editor of *The Irish Times* in conversation with James Kofi Annan in Trinity College, Dublin.

To mark the anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders (9th December) and International Human Rights Day (10th December) Front Line Defenders invited James Kofi Annan of Ghana (pictured above, second from left) to participate in the inaugural Front Line Defenders Speaker's Tour in December 2011.

James was one of 12 children and when he was six years old he, like many of his other siblings, was sold as a slave. He was sent to work in the fishing industry on Lake Volta (Ghana) where small children are used to do heavy work with the fishing nets.

Eventually, after a long journey, James was able to complete a university education and got himself a job with Barclay's Bank. He could not however leave his memories of slavery behind and he set up a new organisation called Challenging Heights in 2003 to help other children escape child slavery.

Because James challenges the profitable status quo in the hundreds of fishing communities on Lake Volta, he is often vilified and attacked, and has received numerous death threats. Despite the danger, James refuses to cease his work to free the victims of child slavery and to end the practice in Ghana.

The story of James Kofi Annan in conversation with Peter Murtagh, Foreign Editor of *The Irish Times*, took place in Trinity College, Dublin in association with the Centre for Non-Profit Management and the Trinity College School of law on 5th December, 2011.

From Dublin, James went on to visit University College Cork, giving an informal address to a number of LLM students during the afternoon and giving a public address in the evening hosted by UCC President Dr. Michael Murphy, in association with the Centre for Global Development, the Centre for Criminal Justice and Human Rights and the Institute for Social Science in the 21st Century on 6th December 2011. From Cork, James then travelled to Galway and gave a public address in the Heuston Film School in association with the Irish Centre for Human Rights and the School of Law, NUIG on 7th December, 2011. □



# Advocacy towards the EU

FRONT LINE DEFENDERS' EU OFFICE LOBBIES for the better implementation of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders by raising cases with the EU and Member States (see box), and through constant efforts to keep the issue of protecting at-risk HRDs at the top of their agendas.

Throughout 2011, the EU Office lobbied to make the protection of HRDs "the gold standard" of EU foreign policy, and to ensure that the proposal by Front Line Defenders to have annual meetings between HRDs and EU diplomats – endorsed in 2010 by the Spanish Presidency – was kept alive.

So far, such meetings have taken place in 84 countries. Liaison officers for HRDs, whose role is twofold – coordinating the EU field work and serving as points of contact for HRDs – have been appointed in 79 countries.

## Voicing our concerns

The role of the EU Office is also to make the voices of HRDs heard in Brussels. Igor Kalyapin, from the Joint Mobile Group, Russia, (winner of the 2011 Front Line Award for Human Rights Defenders) came for a series of meetings with EU officials and NGOs.

In September, Farai Muguwu from Zimbabwe stayed in Brussels for a week. In late October, Pakistani Qamar Naseem, who works to defend vulnerable groups in Pakistan had the opportunity to meet EU Officials, including the Cabinet of High Representative Ashton.

## HRD protection should be "the gold standard" of EU foreign policy

Work on longer-term cases was central to 2011 advocacy towards the EU. This was reflected in face-to-face meetings with EU country desk officers and targeted actions.

The arrest of our former colleague Abdulhadi Alkhwaja in Bahrain led to a series of urgent appeals and updates. The President of the European Parliament (EP) referred to Abdulhadi's arrest in a statement; High Representative Ashton condemned the modalities of the trial; the UK Foreign Secretary condemned the life sentence upheld on appeal; and the EP adopted a resolution calling for the release of all HRDs, doctors, bloggers and journalists.

## Shelter in Europe

Thanks to constant lobbying efforts towards the EU, the Shelter Cities Initiative which was actively promoted by Front Line Defenders has made progress in 2011. The European Commission launched a mapping of shelter initiatives for HRDs in Europe and beyond. The EU Office also developed contacts with emerging shelter initiatives in France and the Netherlands.

## Finding one's way in the 'Schengen labyrinth'

Benefiting from temporary shelter in Europe means first getting a visa! The EU Office has published an online guidebook containing general information and tips with a view to speeding up the visa delivery process. This useful tool should help HRDs find their way in the 'Schengen labyrinth'. [http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/files/fl\\_schengen\\_visa\\_guidelines\\_0.pdf](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/files/fl_schengen_visa_guidelines_0.pdf)

## EU Guidelines workshops

The awareness-raising workshop on the EU Guidelines in Rwanda in June clarified the expectations of both HRDs and EU Diplomats. A clear outcome of the workshop is that HRDs and EU Diplomats have been able to re-establish the basis for a good working relationship in the future. The second workshop took place in Baku, Azerbaijan in early December. Concrete actions were agreed in both countries and will be followed up in 2012. □



Left to right: Mr Vincent Forest, Head of Front Line Defender's EU Office, Mr Igor Kalyapin, Head of Joint Mobile Group (winner the 2011 Front Line Award for Human Rights Defenders), Ms Veronique Arnault, Director for Human Rights and Democracy at the European External Action Service (EEAS) and Mr Engelbert Theuermann, Chair of Human Rights Working Group (COHOM)

## Case work – positive feedback

In 2011 the EU office took action on 120 cases in 52 countries with a positive response in 38% of cases.

## Cameroon: Stigmatisation of Ms Alice Nkom and fear of arrest.

In early 2011, the EU Delegation met her to provide practical support and to ensure that her association which fights discrimination against LGBTI people will continue to receive EU funding despite the position of the Cameroonian Government.

## China: Harassment of human rights lawyer Ms Ni Yulan.

Her case was raised mid-February with the Head of the EU Delegation to China requesting him to visit her given that the US Ambassador had already done so. The following week, the Head of Delegation met with the HRD for two hours to "offer moral support". They agreed to stay in touch.

## Yemen: Severe assault of human rights journalist Ms Samia Alagbry.

The case was raised with the EU Delegation in Sana'a mid-February. A few days later, Samia al-Aghbary was invited to meet all resident EU Heads of Missions extensively.

## Peru: Ongoing death threats against imprisoned HRD Estinaldo Quispe Mego.

The EU Delegation replied at the end of August that they had made the necessary arrangements to support Estinaldo Mr. Quispe, as well as his wife. The support consists of legal monitoring, funding of security measures, and actions to improve prison conditions and access to medical treatment.

## Cuba: Ongoing brutal crackdown on HRDs during peaceful demonstrations.

The UK Foreign Office confirmed that the UK Foreign Secretary had made a statement on 29 September raising concern about the aggressive treatment of the Damas de Blanco, and urging the Cuban authorities to "allow peaceful activists to go about their work free from arrest or the fear of it." □



# Thank you

FRONT LINE DEFENDERS IS GRATEFUL FOR THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS:

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EIDHR)  
THE DUTCH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
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THE BELGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
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FREEDOM HOUSE  
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ROTHCO ADVERTISING INTEGRATION

WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE MANY INDIVIDUAL DONORS WHO HAVE KINDLY MADE DONATIONS TO THE ORGANISATION THROUGHOUT 2011.

PLEASE HELP US TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS BY DONATING TO FRONT LINE DEFENDERS AT **[WWW.FRONTLINEDEFENDERS.ORG/DONATE](http://WWW.FRONTLINEDEFENDERS.ORG/DONATE)**

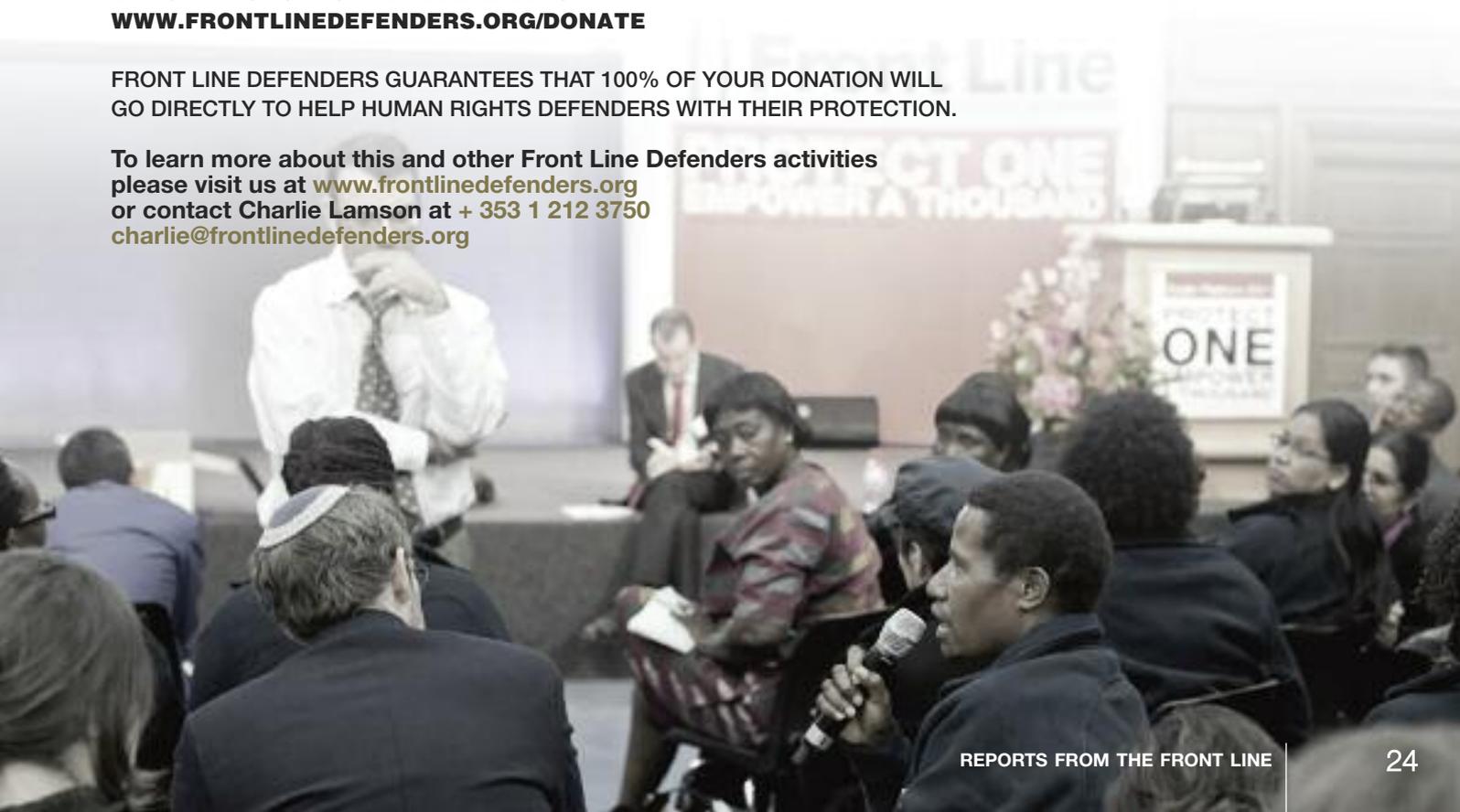
FRONT LINE DEFENDERS GUARANTEES THAT 100% OF YOUR DONATION WILL GO DIRECTLY TO HELP HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS WITH THEIR PROTECTION.

To learn more about this and other Front Line Defenders activities please visit us at [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org) or contact Charlie Lamson at + 353 1 212 3750 [charlie@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:charlie@frontlinedefenders.org)

“THE SALVATION OF THIS HUMAN WORLD LIES NOWHERE ELSE THAN IN THE HUMAN HEART, IN THE HUMAN POWER TO REFLECT, IN HUMAN MEEKNESS AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY.”

VACLAV HAVEL

1936 - 2011 RIP



# REPORTS FROM THE FRONT LINE

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2011

When despair grows in me  
and I wake in the middle of the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought  
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
waiting for their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Wendell Berry

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