

Presentation

International Federation for Human Rights and Burma Lawyers' Council



The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) takes action for the protection of victims of human rights violations, for the prevention of violations and to bring perpetrators to justice. FIDH works for the respect of all the rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights. FIDH was established in 1922, and today unites 155 member organizations in more than 100 countries around the world. FIDH coordinates and supports their activities and provides them with a voice at the international level.

An independent organisation

Like its member organizations, FIDH is not linked to any party or religion and is independent of all governments.

FIDH IN ACTION

Protecting those who defend all human rights for all

Defending Human Rights is to lay oneself open to harsh repression in over 100 countries. FIDH provides support and protection to Human Rights Defenders and lobbies the international community to recognize their vital role.

Justice for the victims

FIDH provides support to victims of torture, war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide throughout legal proceedings. FIDH supports the action of the International Criminal Court, and also participates to national processes of transitional justice.

Globalisation respectful of human rights

FIDH campaigns to ensure that globalisation respects human rights and human dignity. FIDH calls on states, companies and international institutions to design and implement their policies and strategies with full respect for universal human rights.

Respect for women's rights as fundamental human rights

FIDH supports the effective implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), to guarantee respect for women's rights as human rights and to promote their vital role in the process of peace and development.

Respect for human rights in the « fight against terrorism »

FIDH actively denounces the opportunistic diversion of anti terrorist measures for the purpose of repression and attacks against fundamental freedoms. Such measures are legitimate and indispensable, but they must be respectful of Human Rights.

Protecting the rights of migrants

FIDH is actively engaged in pressing for the recognition and protection of the rights of migrant persons, be they economic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers or internal displaced persons. In the face of the erosion and increasing violations of migrants' rights, FIDH calls for governance that is respectful of such rights at the national, regional and international level.

CONSTANT MOBILISATION

Establishing the facts : investigative and trial observation missions

Through activities ranging from sending trial observers to organizing international investigative missions, FIDH has developed over more than fifty years, rigorous and impartial procedures to establish facts and responsibility. Experts sent to the field give their time to FIDH on a voluntary basis. FIDH has conducted more than 1 500 missions in over 100 countries in the past 25 years. These activities reinforce FIDH's alert and advocacy campaigns.

Supporting civil society

Training and exchange FIDH organizes numerous activities in partnership with its organizations, in the countries in which they are based. The core aim is to strengthen the influence and capacity of human rights activists to boost changes at the local level.

Mobilising the community of States: permanent lobbying of inter-governmental bodies

FIDH supports its member organisations and its local partners in their contacts with the intergovernmental organisations. It alerts the international agencies to violations of human rights and refers specific cases to them. It takes part in the development of international legal instruments.

Informing and reporting : mobilizing public opinion

FIDH informs and mobilizes public opinion. Press releases, press conferences, open letters to authorities, mission reports, urgent appeals petitions, campaigns, website... FIDH makes full use of all means of communication to raise awareness of human rights violations.



The Burma Lawyers' Council (BLC) is an independent organization that was formed in a liberated area of Burma in 1994. After the military seized power in Burma in 1962, and after the student uprising in 1988, the pro-democracy movement consisted mainly of students who were committed to the path of armed resistance. Many townspeople, however, from all walks of life, were also committed to the return of democracy by resisting the military through the various means at their disposal. With this in mind, lawyers came together and formed what has now become an integral part of the pro-democracy movement.

The BLC is the only organization in the democratic movement of Burma which contributes to the promotion of human rights solely from the legal perspective. It is neither aligned with nor under the authority of any political organization.

Under the Burmese military dictatorship, the oppressive laws, and the non-independent system of justice, the common people are denied their basic rights. It is the Burma Lawyers' Council's aim to vigorously oppose all unfair and oppressive laws in Burma, and to restore the basic principles of the Rule of Law. We believe that the emergence of a modern, advanced, peaceful, and democratic Union in Burma is only possible when the basic principles of the Rule of Law are put into practice and adhered to. The objectives of the BLC are (1) to promote the educating, implementing, restoring and improving of basic human rights, democratic rights and the rule of law in Burma; (2) to assist in drafting and implementing a constitution for Burma, and in associated matters of legal education; and (3) to participate and cooperate in the emergence of civil society in Burma.

The BLC is also dedicated to communicating with overseas legal associations and legal academics to obtain their advice, assistance and cooperation. The BLC additionally works to assist the democratic forces to the best of its ability in all legal matters. The BLC's primary activities include:

- Assisting Burmese migrant workers who are victims, defendants or otherwise involved in legal cases in Thailand.
- Providing training in legal matters and civil society to political, ethnic, women's and youth organizations, as well as activists from inside Burma.
- Analyzing the misapplication of Burmese and international laws in legal cases and judicial decisions, and disseminating analysis statements to raise awareness and bring about action at the local and international levels.
- Publishing journals in Burmese and English on Burmese legal issues.
- Analyzing the Burmese military regime's constitution and assisting in the drafting of a parallel constitution based on the rule of law and democratic values.
- Operating a two-year Advanced Internship Program in Human Rights and Law at the BLC's Peace Law Academy.
- Spearheading a campaign to seek criminal accountability at the International Criminal Court for heinous crimes that have occurred in Burma.
- Participating in radio interviews, television programs and other media events to inform and raise awareness inside Burma and around the world about key legal issues.