

IMPACTS 2013-2016

THE FIDH IN ACTION WITH AND IN SUPPORT
OF ITS 178 MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

fidh



August 2016



Community leader and defender of the right to land, Manuel Trujillo, President of the San Pablo de Amalí community in the province of Bolívar, and Manuela Pacheco, another community member who stood for the right to water and land, leaving the Bolívar Guarantee Court after being found innocent of the charges "organised terrorism" under Article 160.1 of Ecuador's criminal code. [Ecuador, 25 January 2016 - credit: all rights reserved]





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The FIDH carried out numerous actions with and in support of its 178 members between 2013 and 2016, in accordance with the strategic guidelines laid down by the 2013 Congress and its representatives in the International Bureau.

These actions aimed to achieve the objectives, set out in the FIDH's Multiyear Strategic Action Plan 2012-2016, of defending the rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and additional international and regional conventions for the protection of human rights in accordance with six priorities: support for human rights defenders; promotion and protection of women's and migrants' rights; promotion of the administration of justice and of combating impunity; strengthening human rights as part of economic globalization; and defence of democratic principles and support for the victims of the most serious violations in countries where there are conflicts or which are closed or in transition.

Through its offices in Paris, Abidjan, Tunis, Geneva, Brussels, Lima, Bamako, Conakry, The Hague, New York and Thailand, the International Secretariat of the FIDH used all available means in order to influence the behaviour of states, individuals and private operators such as businesses and the media to encourage them to promote and protect human rights. These means included: fact-finding, contact, solidarity and judicial observation missions; providing material assistance, sharing experience and exchanging strategies in order to strengthen NGOs' and defenders' security and ability to act; advocacy with international and regional intergovernmental bodies and rights protection mechanisms; mobilizing the support of the public at large; and strategic litigation.

Despite a difficult global geopolitical, economic, political and diplomatic environment, characterized by civil society's shrinking field of action, FIDH's activities with and in support of its members led to significant results and impacts.

10 EXAMPLES OF RESULTS AND IMPACTS IN ORDER OF PRIORITY

Priority 1 - Support human-rights activists

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- **209** activists released from arbitrary detention;
- **114** NGOs and activists benefited from material assistance, providing them with more protection and improving their ability to act;
- The prosecution in Senegal, based on a complaint made by the FIDH, of Paul Mwilambwe, a former major in the Congolese National Police, for his alleged part in the assassination of the Congolese (**DRC**) activists Chebeya and Bazana;
- The non-adoption, abrogation or postponement of bills contrary to the rights of activists and freedom of association, in countries including **Bahrain, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Kenya** and **Uganda**;
- **Dozens** of statements on the protection of defenders in danger and observance of the right of association, by the United Nations Security Council, General Assembly and Council of Human Rights, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and several influential states;
- **2** Decisions of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, against **Uzbekistan** (on the case of the activist Mutabar Tajibaeva, a victim of torture and ill-treatment) and **Belarus** (on the arbitrary detention case of Ales Bialiatski, FIDH Vice President and Chairman of its member organization, CDH Viasna);
- **9** Decisions of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) confirming the arbitrary nature of the imprisonment of activists in **Syria, Iran, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, Burma** and the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** (2);
- **2** Decisions of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights against **Sudan** (on the torture of activists and arbitrary detention);
- **1st** referral to the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights of a case linked to freedom of association (in **Rwanda**);
- The adoption of the **OSCE** guidelines on the protection of activists; and the adoption of joint **OSCE** and **Venice Commission** guidelines on freedom of association.

Priority 2 - Promote and protect women's rights

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- The inclusion of provisions in the new **Tunisian** Constitution, adopted on 26 January 2014, guaranteeing the protection of women's rights (non-discrimination, equality before the law, elimination of violence against women);
- Formal notification to the Secretary General of the United Nations that Tunisia was lifting reservations to the CEDAW Convention with effect from 17 April 2014;
- The dropping of proceedings against Meriem Ben Mohamed in **Tunisia**, accused of indecency after she had been raped by police officers, and, in 2014, the sentencing on appeal of the police officers for rape and extortion; the release of Amina Sboui 'Tyler' in Tunisia, prosecuted for having written 'FEMEN' on a wall;
- The prosecution of 14 people in **Guinea** for their direct responsibility for the massacre of 28 September 2009, the bloody repression of a peaceful demonstration during which numerous rapes were committed;
- In **Egypt**: the creation of a unit for the victims of sexual violence within the Ministry of the Interior; the adoption of an amendment to the Criminal Code in June 2014 to include a definition of sexual harassment; the launch of a process to draw up a national plan for combating violence against women; and in July 2014 the sentencing by an assize court in Cairo of seven men for sexual attacks;
- legal representation and access to justice for 80 women and girls who had suffered rape and other forms of sexual violence during the occupation of northern **Mali** by armed groups, in 2012 and 2013;
- In February 2014, the adoption by **Libyan** authorities of a decree acknowledging victims of sexual violence during the Revolution as victims of war, and of a second in June 2014 establishing a system to identify and provide benefits for the victims;



- In **Ivory Coast**, the adoption in March 2014 of a circular emphasising that a medical certificate is not a requirement in cases of sexual violence; and support for access to justice for 43 women subjected to sexual violence during the post-electoral crisis;
- Final observations by **CEDAW** on **Tunisia, Guinea, Bahrain, Vietnam, Russia** and **Senegal**, and reports by the **United Nations Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice** on **Spain, Tunisia** and **Senegal**, which reiterated the concerns and recommendations of FIDH and its members;
- The adoption during the 55th Ordinary Session of the **African Commission on Human and People's Rights** of two resolutions condemning the continuation of **sexually violent crimes** in Africa and putting concrete recommendations to the member states..

Priority 3 - Promote and protect migrants' rights

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- **Morocco's** adoption of a new migration policy based on dignity, following the United Nations Commission's conclusions on migrant workers denouncing violations of migrants' rights;
- The systematic regularization in **Morocco** of the status of women (5,060) and the leaders of migrants' associations by the Moroccan Appeals Commission; followed by the National Monitoring and Appeals Commission's announcement in October 2015 of relaxation of the criteria for regularizing the status of undocumented people, as advocated by FIDH and its member organizations and partners, in order to regularize the status of 92% of the foreigners who had submitted applications;
- The submission of criminal complaints in **France, Spain, Italy** and **Belgium** and of **requests for information in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States**, in the case of the "left-to-die", in which migrants drifted in a boat in the Mediterranean for a fortnight without receiving any help from the military they came across, leaving 63 dead;
- The **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe's (PACE)** adoption in 2014 of a report on the case of the "left-to-die" boat, asking states to comply with the demands of FIDH and its partners to indicate the position of their ships while the vessel was drifting, the messages received by their ships, and to grant the survivors residence permits. In addition, PACE passed FIDH's more general demands by encouraging the member states to take concrete steps to save a greater number of human lives at sea, create legal and safe migration channels and share the responsibility for dealing with applications for asylum in Europe more equitably;
- The ratification by **Mozambique** of the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and members of their families;
- The adoption of the **PACE** Commission's report on migration, refugees and displaced persons, which largely reiterates FIDH's concerns and recommendations relating to the need for the EU Frontex agency to commit to transparency, responsibility and its duties in protecting human rights;
- The **European Union** Agency for Fundamental Rights and the European Ombudsman's adoption of recommendations calling on the EU, member states and Frontex to remedy violations committed at the borders, as advocated by FIDH and its partners; the European Commission's instigation of a case against recent amendments to **Hungarian** legislation relating to the right to asylum, some provisions of the law being deemed incompatible with European Union law;
- The **United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants'** adoption of recommendations reiterating those put forward by FIDH. In particular, the Special Rapporteur advised Frontex to increase resources and independence given to the person at the agency responsible for fundamental rights, or to create an independent system for individual complaints about violations of migrants' human rights and to suspend or end its operations in the event of persistent and serious violation. In accordance with FIDH recommendations, the Special Rapporteur also advised the European Commission to investigate the violations and to take immediate steps against member states that violate the provisions of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights regarding migrants' rights and the European experience of asylum;
- The concluding observations of the United Nations Commission on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the report denouncing serious discrimination against migrants in **Russia**;
- The United Nations Commission on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' adoption of recommendations to authorities in **Tajikistan** relating to migrant workers, reiterating the concerns and recommendations of FIDH and its partners.





Priority 4 - Promote the administration of justice and combat impunity

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- Significant developments in national legal proceedings instigated by FIDH and its members in support of almost 900 victims of international crimes committed in **Ivory Coast** (during and after the post-electoral crisis), **Guinea** (the massacre of 28 September 2009) and **Mali** (during the occupation of the north of the country by armed groups in 2012-2013);
- The reinstatement of accusations of crimes against humanity against Jean-Claude Duvalier by the Court of Appeal of Port-au-Prince in **Haiti**, and the authorization of an additional investigation into the crimes;
- The sentencing of Pascal Simbikangwa by the Assize Court in Paris to 25 years' imprisonment for genocide and complicity in crimes against humanity committed in 1994 as part of the genocide in **Rwanda**; and the sentencing in July 2016 of Octavien Ngenzi and Tito Barahirwa to life imprisonment for genocide and crimes against humanity committed in April 1994 in Rwanda;
- The designation of the Qosmos company in April 2015 as an 'assisted witness' for complicity in torture committed in Syria. Qosmos allegedly sold a system for monitoring electronic communications to the régime of Bashar al-Assad, which was used for identification, then arbitrary arrest and torture, of opponents of the regime (SAME SENTENCE BELOW) and human rights activists in **Syria**; the decision of the Investigation Chamber of the Court of Appeal in Paris on 15 January 2013 allowing the continuation of an investigation begun in May 2012 into the case against the French company Amesys for complicity in torture by supplying surveillance equipment to the Gaddhafi régime in **Libya**, and the inclusion of five Libyan victims represented by FIDH as civil plaintiffs;
- The **Extraordinary Chambers in the Cambodian Courts'** sentencing of Khieu Samphan, and 'Brother Number Two', Nuon Chea, respectively former head of state and former ideologue of the Khmer Rouge régime, to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity;
- The sentencing of **Hissène Habré**, former President of Chad, to life imprisonment for torture, crimes against humanity and war crimes, including sexual crimes, by the Extraordinary African Chambers in the Senegalese Courts; the adoption and promulgation of the law on the Special Criminal Court charged with investigating the most serious crimes committed in the **CAR** since 2003 and with pursuing their perpetrators;
- The **Ukrainian** authorities' decision in September 2015 to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC) over the international crimes committed throughout the country; the ratification by **Palestine** of the Statute of the ICC and the opening of a preliminary inquiry by the prosecutor's office into the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in particular in East Jerusalem, since 13 June 2014; **Central African** authorities' referral to the ICC Prosecutor and the opening of an inquiry by the latter into crimes committed in the country since 1 August 2012; the opening of an ICC inquiry in January 2016 into the international crimes committed in **Georgia** during the 2008 conflict; the opening of a preliminary inquiry by the ICC Prosecutor in April 2016 into the situation in **Burundi** since April 2015;
- The ICC's sentencing of **Jean-Pierre Bemba** for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in CAR in 2002-2003. During the hearing, the prosecutor's office and the judges reiterated numerous elements of FIDH's investigative reports sent to the Court under Article 15 of its Constitution;
- The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' adoption of the draft **Protocol to the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights on the abolition of the death penalty in Africa**;
- Numerous resolutions of the **European Court of Human Rights** in favour of the rights of LGBTI people.



Priority 5 – Strengthen respect for human rights in the context of economic globalization

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- The multinational company Vale replied to FIDH and confirmed its intention – despite the difficulty of obtaining acknowledgement of the Group's direct and indirect responsibility for the consequences of industrial pollution for the communities of Piquia de Baixo and California (**Brazil**) – to contribute financially to relocating the Piquia de Baixo community. The company also confirmed its intention to use its influence with the steelmaking companies concerned;
- The World Bank's May 2014 review of its plan of action to support the activities of the Dinant palm-oil business in **Honduras**. The decision followed pressure from civil society and related to the conclusions of FIDH and its member organizations and partners resulting from an international fact-finding mission in 2011;
- The **Orange Group's** decision, announced on 30 June 2015, to terminate within two years the agreement linking it to Partner in the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and thus conform to international law;
- The **Greek Government and Parliament's** reference to the FIDH report on the impact of austerity measures on human rights, in the desire that its recommendations guide their political action; the recommendation formulated by the United Nations Independent Expert on External Debt and Human Rights in his report calling on the IMF and Greece to come to an agreement on the Greek debt crisis that respects human rights, and calling on the European Union to draw up policies that take into account their potential impacts on human rights in order to forestall them; the recommendations of the study requested by the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, which analysed the impact that the financial crisis and austerity had had on some fundamental rights in Greece; the conclusions of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights relating to the impact of austerity policies on human rights, calling on the operators involved to evaluate the potential impact;
- The European Committee of Social Rights' decisions confirming deficiencies of the **Greek** State in regard to industrial pollution in the River Asopos basin and confirming the **Belgian** State's shortcomings in relation to the standard of day centres and accommodation for high-dependency handicapped adults; the decision to allow the complaint against **Ireland**, submitted by the FIDH, its member organization FLAC and their partners to the European Committee of Social Rights, citing the deplorable situation and frequently substandard conditions encountered in some 20 groups of social housing;
- The **Commission of the European Union's** decision to launch an impact study as part of its review of the regulation on dual-use technology, in accordance with the concerns of FIDH and CAUSE regarding the sale of surveillance equipment to regimes that use it to repress criticism;
- The **European Parliament's** adoption on 21 May of a bill proposing compulsory certification for European companies operating in conflict zones when importing minerals from developing countries; the **European Commission's** adoption on 11 November 2015 of an interpretative communication relating to the origin of products from the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967. The aim is to ensure that European Union member states observe the current conditions for labelling and indicating the real origin of products from the settlements;
- The **European Ombudsman's** upholding of the complaint submitted by FIDH accusing the European Commission of maladministration for refusing to carry out a human-rights impact study before signing trading and investment agreements with Vietnam;
- The **United Nations Human Rights Council's** adoption, during its 26th session, of a resolution calling for an intergovernmental group to be established to draw up a legally binding international instrument on the issue of businesses and human rights;
- The entry into force of the **Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** in 2013, and the ratification of the Protocol by several countries.



Priority 6 - Conflicts, closed countries or countries in transition: defending democratic principles and supporting the victims of the most serious violations

North Africa – Middle East

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- The acquittal of the Dean of La Manouba University in **Tunisia**, unjustly accused of violence against a female student; the abandonment of proceedings against Meriem Ben Mohamed, raped by police officers but prosecuted for indecency, and the sentencing of the police officers who had taken part in the rape; the President's pardon granted to Jabeur Mejri, sentenced to seven and a half years in prison for having published articles and drawings deemed to be blasphemous; the release of Amina Sboui, prosecuted for writing «FEMEN» on a wall, and the dropping of some charges against her; the release of rapper Weld el 15, given a prison sentence with no possibility of remission for causing offence to someone in authority because the words of one of his songs were deemed insulting to the police;
- The inclusion of equality between women and men and the recognition of freedom of conscience and of expression in the draft **Tunisian** Constitution; the official lifting of the specific restrictions issued by the Tunisian State when it ratified the CEDAW in 1985;
- The release of Mazen Darwish, Director of the Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM), an FIDH member organization, and of four members of his team following the announcement of a political amnesty (**Syria**);
- The charter for reforming the justice system in Morocco included several key recommendations mentioned by FIDH in its Memorandum on reform of the justice system relating in particular to the independence of the judiciary;
- **Libyan** authorities' adoption of a decree acknowledging victims of sexual violence during the Revolution as victims of war, and a decree establishing an entity to identify and provide benefits to the victims;
- The release, under a presidential pardon, of Yara Sallam, a member of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR), and of Sanaa Seif, a member of 'No to Military Trials for Civilians', who had been detained for taking part in a demonstration; the Court of Appeal's suspension of the sentence of six months' imprisonment passed on Al Manshey; the acquittal, as the result of a protest campaign, of 26 homosexuals in **Egypt** accused of debauchery;
- The accession of **Palestine** to the Statute of the International Criminal Court, and its referral of the situation in Gaza to the prosecutor's office under Article 12.3, leading to the opening of a preliminary inquiry by the ICC into the situation in Gaza since June 2014;
- The contents of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations' report on sexual violence in conflicts presented to the Security Council on **Syria**;
- The French courts' decision to allow FIDH and its member organization, the LDH, to be civil plaintiffs alongside the **Kurdish** complainants in the judicial inquiry opened in 2013 relating to the chemical attack by Saddam Hussein's forces which killed 5000 people in the town of Halabja; The designation of the Qosmos company in April 2015 as an 'assisted witness' for complicity in torture committed in Syria. Qosmos allegedly sold a system for monitoring electronic communications to the régime of Bashar al-Assad, which was used for identification, then arbitrary arrest and torture, of opponents of the regime (SEE SAME SENTENCE ABOVE); the decision of the Court of Appeal in Paris to allow continuation of the investigation begun in May 2012 against the French company Amesys for complicity in torture by supplying surveillance equipment to the Gaddhafi régime in **Libya**;
- The United Nations Working Group's resolutions declaring the imprisonment of the following to be arbitrary: Nabeel Rajab, President of the **Bahrain** Center for Human Rights and FIDH Deputy Secretary General of the FIDH; Mazen Darwish, Mohamed Hani Al Zaitani and Hussein Hammad Ghrer, Director and members of the Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression (**Syria**); and nine Saudi activists – Waleed Abu al-Khair, Dr Mohammed Al-Qahtani, Dr Abdullah Al-Hamid, Dr Abdulkarim Al-Khodir, Raif Badawi, Mohammad Al-Bajadi, Fadel Al-Manasef, Sheikh Sulaiman Al-Rashudi and Omar al-Sa'id.



Sub-Saharan Africa

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- Positive developments in investigations by the Ivorian judiciary on crimes committed during the post-election crisis in **Ivory Coast**, including the indictment of 150 Gbagbo and 20 Ouattara supporters; the inclusion of sexual crimes in these investigations and supporting access to justice for 43 female victims of sexual violence during the crisis; the progress of investigations into crimes committed in 2012 in the Nahibly IDP camp for displaced persons;
- The indictment of Moussa Dadis Camara, former military head of the Guinean Junta, by **Guinean judges** for his direct involvement in the 28 September 2009 massacre (a bloody repression of a peaceful demonstration), bringing the total number of people indicted to 14; the closure of an investigation regarding victims of torture in 2010; progress in the investigations into repression of the 2007 protests; legal clinics set up by FIDH and its member organizations that have benefited dozens of people; advocacy contributing to a more progressive reform of the Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure;
- Judicial developments in **Mali** following the filing of a complaint by 33 victims of Timbuktu and 7 associations (including FIDH) against 15 alleged perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well FIDH's filing of a complaint on behalf of 80 victims of sexual crimes committed by armed groups in the north of the country; the closure of the investigation and the upcoming trial of the coup's former president, Amadou Aya Sanogo, and of 17 other high-ranking military members for the execution of 23 red beret soldiers in 2012 during the seizure of power by the CNRDRE junta;
- The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) decision which provides for the opening of an investigation into human rights violations in **Burundi**, the adoption of targeted sanctions against actors who contribute to violence, and the initiation of an international Burundian dialogue; the African Commission on Human Rights and Peoples' Rights' (ACHPR) adoption of a resolution calling on the authorities to allow deployment of an ACHPR mission to investigate human rights violations; the suspension of direct aid from the European Union to Burundi (Brussels now offers support to finance the population and its humanitarian aid), and open consultations with the authorities, in accordance with Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement; examining the level of independence of the independent national commission on human rights (CNIDH);
- The decision handed down by the ACHPR, with input from FIDH, denouncing Sudan's violation of the rights of the African Charter with regard to the arbitrary detention and torture of three international human rights defenders;
- The indictment of Paul Mwanambwe in the case of the assassination of Congolese (**DRC**) human rights defenders, Chebeya and Bazana, before the Senegalese courts under the principle of universal jurisdiction;
- The adoption of a Security Council resolution in the **Central African Republic**, establishing United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (minusca), with a strong mandate to protect human rights and support the fight against impunity; the creation of the Special Unit of Inquiries and Instructions (CSEI), and the adoption of a law establishing the Special Criminal Court (CPS) to investigate the most serious crimes committed in the Central African Republic territory since 2003, as well as prosecution of the perpetrators;
- The sentencing of **Hissène Habré**, former President of Chad, to life in prison for crimes against humanity, war crimes and rape, by the Extraordinary African Chambers operating under the Senegalese judicial system.
- The ACHPR's adoption of resolutions proposed by FIDH and its members regarding sexual violence in Africa, human rights violations in **Burundi, South Sudan, Mali, DRC and CAR**, and on **elections** in Africa;
- The ICC's conviction of **Jean-Pierre Bemba** for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the CAR in 2002-2003; the opening of the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation into crimes committed in the **CAR** since 2012 and in **Mali**; the Security Council's vote opposing the suspension of ICC proceedings on the situation in **Kenya**; the refusal of state parties to proceed with the proposal initiated by Kenya and South Africa to revise Article 27 of the Rome Statute on the absence of immunity.





The Americas

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- The **Colombian** Supreme Court of Justice's 30 April 2015 judgment condemning Maria del Pilar Hurtado, former head of the Administrative Department of Security (DAS) of Colombia, and Bernardo Moreno, former secretary general of the Presidency, to 14 and 8 years in prison respectively. The Court convicted Hurtado of falsifying public documents, conspiracy, embezzlement, illegal wiretapping, and abuse of power. Bernardo Moreno was convicted of conspiracy, illegal wiretapping, and abuse of power. The DAS targeted human rights defenders for many years;
- The **Colombian** authorities' acceptance of the "falsos positivos" ("false positives") phenomenon and its scope, particularly at the hearing initiated by FIDH before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- The Haitian Court of Appeal's reinstatement of charges of crimes against humanity against Jean-Claude Duvalier in Port-au-Prince, and the scheduling of a further inquiry into these crimes;
- The growth of the national debate in **Mexico** on the role of the International Criminal Court in facing the most serious crimes; the confession in the press by Calderon, former President of the Mexican Republic, that «errors» were committed by government forces in the war against drug trafficking; the confession of the Mexican government at a hearing, (in the presence of FIDH, at the American Commission on Human Rights) that it lacks the ability to prosecute those responsible for the most serious crimes committed in Mexico;
- The landmark decision of the Inter-American Court against **Chile** following the use of anti-terrorism legislation that criminalized protests and claimed traditional lands belonging to the Mapuche community; the Chilean government's acceptance of extending the reparations ordered by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in favor of victims and their families to all Mapuche communities to which they belong;
- The Inter-American Court of Human Rights' 2 September 2015 decision condemning the Chilean state in the case of Omar Humberto Maldonado Vargas and others v. **Chile**. The Court declared the Chilean State responsible for the inability of former military members to have proper access to effective legal remedy in order to quash the judgments of the martial courts that were pronounced against them, and also for confessions obtained under torture. In addition, the Court found the state responsible for a 12-year delay in opening an investigation into the torture of some of the petitioners;
- The meeting between the European Union (EU) and representatives of Cuban civil society on the occasion of the third session of negotiations for the agreement on political dialogue and cooperation between the EU and **Cuba**;
- Honduras' creation of a special Fiscalía unit on the crimes committed in Bajo Aguan; the audit of the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman, who, in these findings published in January 2014, mentioned the FIDH report in acknowledging shortcomings in the treatment by World Bank officials of the situation in the Bajo Aguan region and issued a series of recommendations;
- The attention of the prosecutor's office of the International Criminal Court on the situations in **Mexico** and **Colombia**;
- The attention of the international community on the trial of former President Rios Montt, who was accused of genocide in **Guatemala**.

Asia

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- The release of dozens of political prisoners in **Burma** (e.g. human rights defenders Tun Aung, Thaw Zin, Kyaw Hla Aung, and Phyu Hnin Htwe); Vietnam's liberation of Nguyen Huu Cau, who was sentenced to life imprisonment in May 1983 for writing poems denouncing corruption and abuse of power, and was accused of «harming the image of the regime»; the release in the same country of blogger Le Anh Hung, kidnapped on January 24 before being forcibly sent to the Centre for Social Support n.2 in Ung Hoa - a psychiatric hospital; liberation in Iran for human rights advocates Nasrin Sotoudeh and Mohammad Seifzadeh, member and founder respectively of FIDH member organization Defenders of Human Rights Center; the Phnom Penh Supreme Court's decision to release Yorm Bopha, a defender of land rights in **Cambodia**, on bail;
- The April 2015 lifting of the suspension of lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh's license, which was implemented by the **Iranian Bar Association** in 2014;
- The sentencing (on Aug. 7) by the **Extraordinary Chambers of the Cambodian Courts** of Khieu Samphan, the former head of state, and «Brother Number Two», and Nuon Chea, a former ideologist of the Khmer Rouge regime, to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity;
- The concluding observations issued by the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations (April 27 2015), which took into account many concerns and recommendations of FIDH and its members on the situation of human rights in **Cambodia**;
- The concluding observations of the UN Committee on the economic, social and cultural rights, which include FIDH concerns and recommendations with regard to the abuse of "lèse majesté" crimes and calling for the amendment of Article 112 of the Penal Code in **Thailand**;
- The decisions of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (in December 2015), which asserted the arbitrary nature of the following detentions, and called for the immediate release of: 'Golf' in **Thailand** (she was accused of lèse-majesté for having acted in a theatrical performance, and has been detained since 15 August 2014), Adilur Rahman Khan in **Bangladesh** (secretary of FIDH member organization Odhikar), Su Changlan Ilham Tohti, and Chen Kegui in **China**, as well as, in Iran, the Khosro Kordpour brothers and Massoud Kordpour (editor and correspondent, respectively, of Mukrian News Agency), Bahareh Hedayat and Zeinab Jalalian (WGAD decisions of 4 May 2016), Bahman Ahmadi Amouee (WGAD decision in November 2013), and Abdolfattah Soltani and Amir Hekmati (GTA decision in August 2013);
- The UN Human Rights Council's renewal of the mandates of the Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights in **Iran** and **Burma**, according to advocacy led notably by FIDH; the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of resolutions on **Iran** and **Burma**;
- The United Nations Human Rights Council's establishment in March 2013 of a UN commission to investigate the human rights situation in **North Korea** and the creation of an expert group to devise a legal mechanism to establish the liability of North Korean leaders for crimes against humanity;
- The European Parliament's adoption of resolutions denouncing, in accordance with the appeals of FIDH and its members, violations of human rights in **Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Burma, Iran, Laos** and **Pakistan**;
- The European Ombudsman's support of the complaint filed by FIDH, accusing the European Commission of maladministration for its refusal to conduct a study on the human rights impact before signing trade and investment agreements with **Vietnam**.

Europe and Central Asia

FIDH's work with its members contributed to the following results/impacts:

- The release of Ales Bialiatski, FIDH Vice President and President of its member organization, HRC Viasna, in **Belarus** a year and a half before the end of his political conviction;
- The liberation of **Azerbaijan** human rights defenders Khadija Ismayilova, Rasul Jafarov, Intigam Aliyev, Leyla Yunus, Arif Yunusov, Rauf Mirqadirov, Anar Mammadli and Hilal Mammadov, all arbitrarily detained;
- A report on **Kyrgyzstan's** presentation to parliament regarding a draft law infringing on the freedom of association and rights of LGBTI persons; the definitive abandonment in the same country of another bill on «foreign agents», which is also likely to undermine freedom of association;
- The collection and dissemination of information on draconian laws and practices of **Russian** authorities which contributed to international pressure and lead to an amnesty for members of the Pussy Riot group, for arbitrarily detained demonstrators, and for political opponent Khodorkovsky;
- The **Ukrainian** authorities' recognition, on September 8 2015, of the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court for crimes committed during the repression of the Maidan movement and for crimes committed in its territory as of 20 February 2014, including in the east and in Crimea;
- The UN Human Rights Council's renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations on the situation of human rights in **Belarus**;
- The adoption of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' concluding observations, which call for the abolition of state-sponsored forced labor, better protection of workers' rights and guaranteed trade union rights, in accordance with the conclusions of the FIDH investigative report;
- The United Nations Human Rights Committee's decision on 6 October 2015 that held the **Uzbek** government responsible for acts of torture and ill-treatment suffered by human rights defender Mutabar Tadjibyeva. The Committee requested the opening of an investigation and criminal prosecution of those responsible for serious violations of human rights;
- The United Nations Human Rights Committee's concluding observations on **Russia** which take many FIDH concerns and recommendations into account, in particular: the presence of Russian-influenced forces in the conflict in east Ukraine; the impunity for the most serious crimes committed during the conflicts in Chechnya and South Ossetia; the proliferation of racist and xenophobic acts; discrimination against LGBTI people; counter-terrorism measures that violate human rights; acts of harassment and violence against journalists and human rights defenders; laws and practices that intrude on freedom of expression, association and assembly;
- Renewed attention and declarations of the European Union, including the Parliament and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, on the situation of «disputed territories» in Eastern Europe.



THE ACTIONS OF FIDH AND ITS MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS IN NUMBERS

Between 2013 and 2015 FIDH, with its member organizations, has:

Facts and alerts

- 146** joint missions of inquiry, advocacy and solidarity
- 33** judicial observation missions
- 106** joint FIDH-member investigation reports
- 1800** press releases, open/private letters, and joint FIDH-member op-ed
- 844** urgent appeals to the Observatory for the protection of human rights defenders

Mobilization

- 19** communication campaigns
- 1,962,832** visitors and **3,619,291** page views on the FIDH website
- 178,000** Facebook Fans / **568** Facebook posts that reached **28** million people and generated over **1,327,167** reactions
- 56,000** Twitter followers / **6158** tweets that reached **14** million people and generated more than **46,000** retweets
- 48,000** articles mentioning the joint action of FIDH and its members on the web

Advocacy

- 330** representatives of member NGOs invited to appear before international and regional intergovernmental bodies and rights protection mechanisms

Strategic litigation

- 110** claims initiated or supported in cases concerning the most serious crimes, in support of almost **1000** victims
- 15** referrals initiated or followed up from international and regional quasi-judicial mechanisms on human rights violations

Support for NGOs and human rights defenders to protect and act

- 114** instances of material assistance provided to NGOs and advocates to support their protection and action **50** workshops, strategic exchanges and experience-sharing activity, involving members and experts from all regions
- 6** Guides / Manuals: on the methodology of investigation into judicial vocation; on complaints and eligibility before the African Court of Human Rights and Peoples; on how to file a communication before the African Commission on Human Rights and Peoples; on strengthening the capacities of affected communities of investment projects; on existing remedies for victims of human rights violations committed by companies; on «*Arab Spring: what a season for women*».

AMESYS CASE - les victimes attendent des avancées concrètes **AMERICAS** - Criminalization de defensores de derechos humanos en el contexto de proyectos industriales ; un fenomeno regional en America Latina **ANGOLA**: "They want to keep us vulnerable" : human rights defenders under pressure **ARMENIA**: Évaluation à mi-parcours de la mise en œuvre des recommandations de l'Examen périodique universel ASIA - The death penalty for drug crimes ASIA : Asia and human rights: debunking the myths **AZERBAIDJAN**: Repression Escalates in Run-up to European Games **AZERBAIDJAN**: If you can't beat them, jail them : the case of human rights defender Rasul Jafarov **BANGLADESH**: Alarming escalation of threats to human rights defenders **BAHRAIN**: Sentenced to two years in prison for advocating and exercising the right to peaceful assembly **BAHRAIN**: Imprisonment, torture and statelessness : the darkening reality of Human rights defenders in Bahrain **BAHRAIN**: Human rights in Bahrain: EU must pursue efforts and deepen its search for results **BAHRAIN**: Failed promises in Bahrain: Human rights violations linger on BEIJING+20 : la promesse d'égalité n'a pas été tenue **BELARUS**: Forced Labor and the Pervasive Violation of Workers' Rights in Belarus **BELARUS**: Arbitrary Preventive Detention of Activists in Belarus **BELARUS**: Note on political prisoners **BURMA** - Half empty : Burma's political parties and their human rights commitments **BURMA**: "FIDH/ALTSEAN BURMA recommendations concerning EU-Burma investment relations" **BOLIVIA**: FIDH y APDHB instan a respetar el derecho a la consulta previa, libre, informada, concertada y de buena fe con las comunidades indígenas del TIPNIS **BURUNDI**: Avoiding an explosion in Burundi **CAMBODIA** – Briefing note: a mounting Human rights crisis **CAMBODIA**: Deteriorating Human Rights Situation Calls for Urgent EU Action **CAMBODIA**: Q&A. 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FIDH SEEN BY...

« The reason I'm free today is in particular because of mobilisation by FIDH, by my friends ... Thank you for the simple fact that I can be with you today, that I am alive. »

Mazen Darwish, President of the Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM), 2016

« FIDH is important to the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur, primarily because that mandate would not exist without FIDH's fight which has helped to expose the rights infringements suffered by human rights defenders, and to raise the curtain on the very concept of human rights defenders. »

Michel Forst, UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, 2015

« I myself have benefitted from FIDH's support. Also, I wish to bear witness to the importance of the support and solidarity I received when – like many others today – I was dealing with the solitude of my fight: that is, the isolation of detention. »

Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, President of DHRC (Defenders of Human Rights Center), member of FIDH in Iran, 2014

« I felt supported by FIDH and each of you personally throughout those years. The reason I am free today is thanks to all of you. »

'It is the support of all of you, all the national and international mobilisation which took place from the day of my arrest, which made possible my release today. »

Ales Bialiatski, Vice-President of FIDH and President of Viasna, 2014

« We have been able to make progress with most of our investigations thanks to the support of FIDH on the ground ... I am therefore truly grateful for the support which FIDH has given my office in particular but also the ICC in general. »

Fatou Bensouda, prosecutor at the International Criminal Court, 2015

« FIDH is now recognised as one of the most dynamic human rights organisations. »

Ford Foundation, 2013

« I have just spoken to my son Onyx on the telephone this morning. Hearing his voice reassured me after those difficult periods of anxiety we experienced together following his capture and imprisonment. You are in my thoughts because, through your messages and strategic advice, you were close to me and my family. Thanks to your support, my child is alive and back within our little circle in the country. For all that support, I say to you, on behalf of my family and myself, thank you. We are impressed by it and we are very grateful to you. »

Paul Nsapu Mukuku, President of the Ligue des électeurs (RDC), refugee in Belgium

« During the difficult situation which REDHAC, my colleagues and my family are going through, the moral support you have given us is considerable. The Network of Human Rights Defenders wishes to express to you its most profound thanks for your efforts to ensure the security of our offices, my safety and that of my children. REDHAC also thanks you for your efforts to help it to work in better conditions. »

Maximilienne Ngo Mbe, President of REDHAC (Cameroon)

« Thank you for all your help and all your support which made me stronger and showed the world that I wasn't alone. »

Nabeel Rajab, Deputy Secretary General of FIDH and President of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR), following his release in May 2014

« In my case, I am sure that FIDH's action helped me to make it through; otherwise, I would undoubtedly have been murdered in Colombia when I returned to the country in December 1998. »

Luis Guillermo Pérez Casas, human rights lawyer in Colombia, 2012



Keep your eyes open

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Karim Lahidji

Editor:
Antoine Bernard

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FIDH

FIDH

Establishing the facts - Investigative and trial observation missions

Supporting civil society - Training and exchange

Mobilising the international community - Advocacy before intergovernmental bodies

Informing and reporting - Mobilising public opinion

For FIDH, transforming societies relies on the work of local actors.

The Worldwide movement for human rights acts at national, regional and international levels in support of its member and partner organisations to address human rights abuses and consolidate democratic processes. Its work is directed at States and those in power, such as armed opposition groups and multinational corporations.

Its primary beneficiaries are national human rights organisations who are members of the Mouvement, and through them, the victims of human rights violations. FIDH also cooperates with other local partner organisations and actors of change.



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FIDH
represents 178
human rights organisations
on 5 continents

fidh

ABOUT FIDH

FIDH takes action for the protection of victims of human rights violations, for the prevention of violations and to bring perpetrators to justice.

A broad mandate

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.

A universal movement

FIDH was established in 1922, and today unites 178 member organisations 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 organisations, FIDH is not linked to any party or religion and is independent of all governments.

www.fidh.org