



PO Box A147, Sydney South NSW 1235
info@alhr.org.au alhr.org.au

Media release

For release on Tuesday 24 January 2017

Australian Lawyers for Human Rights supports the Day of the Endangered Lawyer

Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (**ALHR**) calls on all countries to ensure that lawyers are able to perform their professional obligations without fear of retribution.

ALHR has always been saddened by news of lawyers facing consequences such as being silenced, harassed, kidnapped, imprisoned, injured and killed for fulfilling their roles as advocates.

24 January 2017, the Day of the Endangered Lawyer, gives lawyers across the world a specific opportunity to reflect on the grave infringement of human rights experienced by some of our colleagues and advocate for systemic change in their treatment. ALHR finds it highly concerning that lawyers risk danger for upholding the human rights of others and protecting vulnerable clients.

The mistreatment of lawyers contravenes a number of international human instruments, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers.

ALHR President Benedict Coyne said, "on the Day of the Endangered Lawyer ALHR gives thought to the many human rights lawyers around the world who remain in prison or are at risk simply for doing their job and attempting to carry out their duties in line with international standards."

"ALHR calls on all countries to comply with the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers and ensure that lawyers can act in accordance with the law and without improper interference or persecution," Mr Coyne said.

ALHR notes that in 2017 the Day of the Endangered Lawyer focuses on the experiences of lawyers in China. ALHR thanks these lawyers for their work in upholding the rule of law and defending human rights in challenging circumstances.

To arrange an interview with Benedict Coyne, please contact Matt Mitchell on 0431 980 365 or media@alhr.org.au

ALHR was established in 1993 and is a national organisation of Australian solicitors, barristers, academics, judicial officers and law students who practise and promote international human rights law in Australia. ALHR has active and engaged National, State and Territory committees and a secretariat at La Trobe University Law School in Melbourne. Through advocacy, media engagement, education, networking, research and training, ALHR promotes, practices and protects universally accepted standards of human rights throughout Australia and overseas.