

OUR RECORD OF IMPACT

In 2015, working in close partnership with our network of human rights defenders, diplomatic allies and financial supporters, we contributed to significant human rights progress and helped prevent or slow damaging human rights regress.

Over the last year we:

Empowered human rights defenders

- Provided intensive training, advice and advocacy support to more than 150 frontline human rights activists from over 70 countries
- Developed and shared tactics and strategies to enhance the protection and effectiveness of human rights defenders and organisations in some of the world's most repressive countries
- Assisted and advised a wide range of NGOs and human rights defenders to access and gain accreditation to the UN and have their voices heard on the international stage
- Published three major manuals for human rights defenders in multiple languages, with our website and information products reaching more than 150,000 people worldwide



ISHR training participants and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' Rapporteur on human rights defenders discuss the situation of defenders in Latin America. Geneva, June 2015

Strengthened human rights laws and systems

- Established a legal duty on the UN Human Rights Council, formally recognised by more than 65 States, to prevent intimidation and reprisals against human rights defenders and to ensure accountability where they occur
- Secured the passage of a landmark resolution through the UN General Assembly leading to national human rights institutions being granted the right to participate in UN meetings and processes
- Worked with the UN human rights treaty monitoring bodies to develop and adopt the historic San José Guidelines on combating reprisals, and with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to effectively implement a resolution to address reprisals
- Defeated an attempt by China to censor the work of the UN Committee on NGOs
- Successfully lobbied for at least 70 percent of ISHR recommendations on the protection of human rights defenders and civil society space to be formally made by States through the Universal Periodic Review



UN Photo, Jean-Marc Ferré



ISHR co-sponsored a side event on 'Torture and the Chinese Government' during the 30th session of the UN Human Rights Council. Geneva, September 2015

Promoted accountability for violations

- Contributed to successful international efforts to secure the release of human rights defenders from arbitrary detention in countries including Angola, Bahrain, Egypt and Kuwait, among others
- Worked with Chinese human rights defenders and democratic States to expose torture, ill-treatment and widespread civil society repression in China and to increase international political pressure for change in the country
- Mobilised action by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and several UN Special Rapporteurs to safeguard the independence of the Maldives National Human Rights Commission
- Worked with local and international NGOs to push the UN Human Rights Council to address the rapidly deteriorating human rights situation in Burundi and prevent further atrocities



ISHR was part of a mission with the African Commission Working Group on Extractive Industries, meeting with activists to discuss human rights and natural resource industries. Lubumbashi, July 2015

Secured national implementation

- Played a leading role in developing and promoting the effective implementation of national laws on the protection of human rights defenders in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Honduras
- Lobbied Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States to develop National Action Plans on business and human rights, with the potential to lead to greater protection for human rights defenders
- Partnered with the Human Rights Law Centre in Australia to repeal excessive police 'move on' powers and to defeat proposed laws restricting the right to freedom of expression and protest
- Contributed substantially to a major report adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights giving guidance to States on how to protect the rights to freedom of assembly and association in national law



The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' first public hearing on the situation of defenders working on land and environmental rights. Washington, October 2015. Flickr, Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos

Built powerful partnerships

- Worked with the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre towards the establishment of a coalition of leading multinational companies committed to protecting human rights defenders and civil society space
- Launched a successful global campaign with Amnesty International and 180 other NGOs for the UN General Assembly to adopt a landmark resolution on the protection of human rights defenders, defeating attempts by China, Russia and others to weaken the text
- Coordinated a coalition of 39 national, regional and international NGOs to push the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to conduct its first-ever public hearing on the situation of defenders working on land and environment rights
- Convened a group of leading national-level human rights activists from around the world to jointly strategise on and document ways to protect and safeguard civil society space



*Participants of ISHR's
Human Rights Defender
Advocacy Programme.
Geneva, June 2015*