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Statement on the sentencing to 38 year's imprisonment and 148 lashes of human and women rights defence lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh

The Madrid Bar Association shares its deep concern regarding the information available on the personal and procedural situation of Iranian lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, who defends human rights and in particular women rights, as a consequence of the ruling, not final, that enhanced a previous sentence, also a conviction, ruled by the same court. For this reason, we want to express our utmost solidarity and recognition for her work in the defence of human rights.

Our colleague Nasrin was awarded the "Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought of the European Parliament" in 2012, she undertook the defence of opposition activists in her country and defended the freedom of speech where it does not exist, taking up the defence of women prosecuted for taking off their hijab and of important Human Rights defenders, such as Nobel Peace Prize 2013 Shirín Ebadi. She also represented opponents who were arrested during the reformist protests of the Green Movement of 2009.

Human Rights lawyers, and any other lawyer, must be able to exercise their profession with the full guarantee of freedom of expression and freedom to manifest, as expressly enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a State party.

The fight against discrimination and in favour of women rights and their effective participation in all areas of the society, especially in Iran, must equally be strengthened.



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The Defence of the Madrid Legal Profession cannot remain passive in the face of arbitrary proceedings that are leading to convictions with flagrant violation of the right of defence and, therefore, without a fair trial; especially when those who are harassed and convicted are those who are waving the flag of freedom, social peace and are, “de facto”, the protection of the right of defence.

From the Defence of the Legal Profession, we demand:

1. The immediate and unconditional release of lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, as well as of all the other human rights defenders who were arbitrarily arrested in Iran.
2. The guarantee of Nasrin Sotoudeh’s physical integrity and psychological well-being, and the respect of her inalienable rights, as well as those of all the other human rights defenders in Iran.
3. The review of Nasrin Sotoudeh’s sentences and the guarantee that all judicial proceedings she is involved in are carried out with full respect of the right to a fair trial, which is protected by International Law.
4. The end of all judicial prosecution actions against the lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, as well as against all the other human rights defenders who were arbitrarily arrested in that country, ensuring that they are able to exercise their profession without any obstacles or limitations.
5. The respect of the regulations and provisions contained in the United Nations declaration on human rights defenders, adopted by the United Nations’ General Assembly, in the treatment of professional human rights defenders.