

L4L is an independent, non-political Dutch foundation that seeks to promote the rule of law by pursuing free and independent legal practice. Our activities are aimed at supporting lawyers throughout the world who are intimidated, threatened or oppressed.



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# I. INTRODUCTION

## Background

Lawyers for Lawyers is an independent Dutch foundation with the status of a Public Welfare Institution (ANBI). L4L was founded in 1986 as an initiative of the Lawyers Focus Group of the Dutch branch of *Amnesty International*, supported by the *Dutch Bar Association*, the *Dutch Lawyer's Committee for Human Rights* (NJCM) and the *Centre for the Study of and Information on Human Rights* (SIM).

## Objective

L4L is dedicated to the free and independent practice of lawyers in accordance with international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers and the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders of the United Nations.

## Methods

L4L lends financial, moral and legal aid to oppressed lawyers and lawyers' organizations. We do this by bringing national and international attention to legal and political institutions in the countries where lawyers are oppressed. We also organize fact finding and observational missions as well as letter-writing campaigns. Should the need arise, we mobilize lawyers to provide legal support to oppressed lawyers. In addition, we participate in workshops, seminars and conferences which highlight the position of threatened or obstructed lawyers and we

provide support to their organizations. We also have a regular column in the periodical of the *Dutch Bar Association* ('Advocatenblad').

## Organization

L4L has a **board** that consists of (former) lawyers and human rights specialists. A **director** is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the organization.

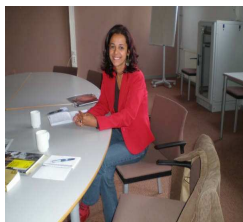
## Finances

Being a foundation, L4L does not have members. For our resources we fully depend on donations. In the main, our sponsors consist of individual lawyers, law firms and lawyers' organizations.

## II. ACTIONS FOR LAWYERS IN 2008

L4L provides financial, moral and legal support to suppressed lawyers and lawyers' organizations worldwide. L4L attempts to adapt its support to the specific needs of the lawyers or lawyers' organizations involved. In 2008 it became clear once again that a large number of lawyers are threatened in the pursuance of their profession. Therefore, we have dedicated ourselves to lawyers in, amongst others, Brazil, Cambodia, China, the Philippines, Guatemala, Iran, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Pakistan, The Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tunisia, Vietnam and Zimbabwe.

### Brazil



On 29 August 2008, L4L, together with *Amnesty International*, had a meeting with Brazilian human rights lawyer **Valdênia Aparecida**

**Paulino**. Because of threats by corrupt police, she had temporarily left her country for Madrid.

Valdênia mainly acted as legal counsel for women and children in the slums of São Paulo. She believes that members of the police are making money from drug trafficking and that in the slums impunity from prosecution and corruption are rampant. The victims of drug gang and police violence are mostly women. *Amnesty International* issued a report on this subject in March 2008. Valdênia brought such human rights violations to court, cooperating with two public prosecutors. She represented victims of assault and the relatives of murdered women.

By the end of 2008, Valdênia returned to Brazil, though not to São Paulo. In another part of Brazil she is again working as a lawyer in a slum area.

### Cambodia - (Legal Aid of Cambodia)

L4L has had close contacts with the Cambodian organization *Legal Aid of Cambodia* (LAC) for a number of years, which was founded with the support of NOVIB, among others. We provide LAC with financial aid. The lawyers working for LAC provide free legal assistance. In a country as poor as Cambodia this is almost unique. Cases often concern land rights in which the opposite parties are politicians or members of influential families.

They face impediments caused by widespread corruption in the Cambodian legal system, the independence of which is constantly under pressure.

### China

In 2008 the human rights situation in China received a lot of attention because of the Olympic Games, which were hosted there. In 2001, after the Games had been awarded to Beijing, the Chinese authorities pledged to improve human rights. It became apparent that this was not the case for human rights lawyers: as the Games were drawing nearer the pressure on human rights lawyers worsened.



A good example of this is lawyer **Teng Biao**. During the Olympics he was tailed continuously and he was forbidden from having any contact with the press. As a result of growing pressure from the

authorities to leave Beijing during the Olympics, he finally left the capital. Teng Biao is one of twenty lawyers who in April 2008 wanted to defend a number of arrested Tibetan monks. Such lawyers received a letter from the authorities, warning them that their license to practice might not be renewed if they took on such cases; a lawyer's license has to be renewed every year in China. In May 2008 Teng Biao's license was withdrawn. Since then he has not been able to continue practising as a lawyer.



**Jiang Tianyong** is also among the twenty Chinese lawyers who had offered to defend Tibetan monks.

During the annual conference of the *Netherlands Bar Association*, where he was a guest speaker at the L4L workshop, Jiang explained that the renewal of his, and his colleagues' licenses as in danger. In the end of July 2008, two months later than normal, Jiang Tianyong and his colleagues' licenses were finally renewed. Jiang said that in 2006 the renewal of his license was also initially denied. He was then forced to declare that he would no longer be involved in politically sensitive cases.



His colleague **Gao Zhisheng** is also obstructed in the performance of his profession.

In September 2007 he sent an open letter to the American House of Representatives, bringing to the attention the deteriorating human rights situation in China. He also stated that he did not support China's role as host of

the Olympic Games. On 22 September 2007 Gao Zhisheng was taken by plain clothes police, beaten to unconsciousness and imprisoned at an unknown location for six weeks. Since his release in November 2007, he was placed under house arrest, until he was arrested again in January 2009. His family has also been continuously harassed and intimidated by the state security services. On 23 June 2008 L4L organized a letter writing campaign, requesting the Chinese authorities to end Gao Zhisheng's house arrest.

These are only a few examples of the many lawyers in China who are obstructed from or hindered in the performance of their profession.

## The Philippines

In November 2008 L4L organized an International Verification and Fact Finding Mission (IVFFM) to the Philippines. This mission was a follow-up of the verification mission which L4L sent to the Philippines in June 2006. The run-up to this mission was as follows.

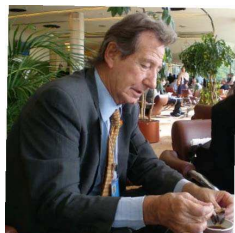
In April 2008 the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) took place in Geneva, which assesses the human rights situation in a country. During the UPR, the government of the Philippines claimed before the UN Human Rights Council that its approach to extrajudicial executions was successful and the issue had been given a high priority. The Philippine President Arroyo set up the Melo commission to investigate extrajudicial executions. The commission advised the installation of an independent body to try the offenders. However, since 2006 only one person has been found guilty, while since 2001 22 lawyers and 15 judges have been murdered.

President Arroyo invited, among others, the European Union and Philip Alston, the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, to investigate the extrajudicial executions. Their reports confirmed an established pattern of extrajudicial executions typically involving the military. This practice was also described in the report of the first Fact Finding Mission.

During the meeting of L4L at the Eight Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in June 2008, the



Philippine lawyer **Edre Olalia**, explained that although the number of executions had recently decreased, Philippine lawyers and judges still fear for their lives.



In Geneva, L4L talked to **Leandro Despouy**, UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers. Despouy intends to visit the Philippines and submitted a request to that end, but has not received an affirmative reaction until now. He considered it useful for L4L to organize a subsequent mission.

From 4 to 11 November 2008 L4L organized the International Verification and Fact Finding Mission (IVFFM).

The mission consisted of eight Belgian and Dutch lawyers and judges (Gerrard Boot, Hein Karskens, Judith Lichtenberg, Angela Meijer, Joke Dereymaeker, Adrie van de Streek, Thea Gijsberts and Nol Vermolen). In the Philippines they interviewed suppressed judges and lawyers, human rights organizations and family of victims, the President of the Philippine Supreme Court and representatives



of the relevant Philippine authorities, such as the police, the Ministry of

Justice and the Public Prosecution Service. For this purpose they visited Metro-Manilla, Quezon City and Mindanao.

The IVFFM was organized at the request of, and in cooperation with, the Philippine organization NUPL (*National Union of Peoples' Lawyers*), which also acted as host. *Lawyers without Borders Netherlands* also participated in the mission which was further actively supported by the Dutch, Flemish, Philippine and Amsterdam Bar Associations, *the Netherlands Judiciary Association* and the *Association Judges for Judges*.

The purpose of the mission was to investigate the background of the executions of Philippine lawyers and judges, to verify the status of the cases investigated in 2006, and to investigate new threats. The inquiry mission further examined in more detail the effectiveness of the measures the Philippine government claims to have undertaken to stop the extrajudicial executions and to try the offenders.

The results were alarming. The Philippine government took insufficient substantial and preventive action that was required to improve the situation. Philippine lawyers and judges are still largely under threat in their professional practice, intimidated or murdered. Between 2007 and 2008 at least 9 lawyers and 3 judges were killed.

It appeared from the meetings with Philippine lawyers, judges and families of murdered lawyers and judges, that there remains a serious lack of faith in the authorities. Even those threats that are reported are done so

only to document the case and not with any expectation that the matter will actually be followed up in a serious manner.

The mission noted a new kind of intimidation, namely the arrest of lawyers on false charges. The imprisonment of human rights activists on false charges is not new, but only recently have lawyers also been targeted in this way. One of the lawyers to be interviewed by the



mission, **Saladero**, was arrested shortly before the mission commenced, charged with involvement in multiple murders and attempted arson two years earlier. These 'fabricated charges' are an effective way to eliminate a lawyer for a long time: it could take months before the charges are dismissed and the suspect released. Besides this a group of lawyers is trying to free Saladero while his colleague has to act alone for more than 800 current labour affairs cases which would otherwise have been handled by Saladero.

None of those interviewed believed that the decrease in the number of murders is a result of the measures the government claims to have taken. The decrease is seen as a result of increased international pressure on President Arroyo. The interviewees considered the measures as 'window dressing' to reassure the international community. They expressed the fear that the decrease in murders is temporary and that the murders will increase as soon as international attention focuses elsewhere. For this reason, it is crucial that L4L keeps on monitoring the situation on the Philippines.

## Guatemala

L4L received news of an incident involving human rights lawyer **Amilcar Pop**. On the night of 2 August 2008, his car was forced to make an emergency stop.



Two masked men stood on either side of his car and screamed that they would kill him. Lawyer Pop escaped from his attackers by driving away at speed.

Amilcar Pop is chairman of the Mayan Lawyers' Association in Guatemala. Pop has been receiving telephone threats for over a year. During one such phone call last May his wife was told: 'you're getting yourselves mixed up in stupid things, take care, we're going to kill your husband'. Pop passed on the telephone number of the caller to the police and an inquiry has been started.

According to Pop these threats are related to his work as a lawyer for the residents of San Juan Sacatepéquez, near Guatemala City. He assists these people over a dispute concerning the building of a cement factory in the area. The residents are demanding the right to a hearing regarding the construction of the factory. Other members of the Mayan Lawyers' Association also received threats in writing and by telephone urging them to stop legal assistance to the residents who are opposed to the building of the cement factory. On 29 August 2008 L4L organized a protest by writing letters to the authorities.

## Iran

For some time L4L has kept a close eye on the position of Iranian lawyers, because of the hostile climate in which they work. One lawyer who is suppressed is **Nasrin Sotoudeh**. On 10 December 2008 she was planning to travel to Italy to receive a human rights award. However, at the airport her passport was taken from her without any explanation. She was again prohibited from travelling to Dubai in March 2008. Sotoudeh not only actively fights for equal rights for women in Iran, but also devotes herself to the abolishment of the death penalty for children. Furthermore, she defends human rights activists who campaigned for this cause through a petition.



Sotoudeh is not the only one who is confronted with a travel ban. At least four other women's rights activists were also banned from travelling outside Iran. One of them is human rights activist and winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2003, **Shirin Ebadi**.



On 21 December 2008, Iranian police closed down her office in Teheran. Two computers and files pertaining to her clients, including political activists, were seized. That day, Ebadi's *Defenders for Human Rights Centre* had planned a meeting to commemorate the 60-year anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

On 22 December 2008, on the initiative of, among others, the Netherlands and the EU Presidency, condemned in a statement the closing down of the office and called for the Iranian authorities to respect their

international human rights obligations, and to allow for the reopening of the office.

L4L has also called for the Iranian authorities to lift the travel bans, and to make sure human rights lawyers in Iran can perform their profession unhindered.

## Lebanon (Muhamad Mugarby)

In 2008, L4L's work in Lebanon was focused mainly on **Muhamad Mugarby**, a prominent lawyer and human rights activist in Beirut. Since the early nineties, Mugarby has been oppressed by the Syrian occupying forces, the Lebanese authorities and the *Beirut Lawyers*



*Association* (BAB), which was instructed by the government to silence Mugarby as a lawyer. Mugarby has consequently been involved in numerous

procedures, including against the BAB, who disbarred him on false grounds. Mugarby's lawyers have also been suspended and hindered, as a result of which no lawyers were willing to represent him. At the request of the *International Commission of Jurists*, L4L ensured that Mugarby is now represented by Dutch lawyers.

On 10 April 2008 L4L sent an detailed letter to dr. Barroso, President of the European Commission. This letter was also sent to the human rights ambassador of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Arjen Hamburger, and to members of parliament. On 24 June 2008 a meeting took place with Ambassador Hamburger. Afterwards Mugarby was visited in Lebanon by representatives of the Dutch Embassy. On 27 November 2008 Mugarby was acquitted on a charge of 'contempt of State officials'. The charge was based on a statement issued by in 2003 to the European

Parliament on the serious wrongs within the Lebanese judiciary system. Mugraby has always maintained that his criticism of the Lebanese authorities only served to improve the integrity, independence, and effectiveness of the judiciary system. Mugraby's acquittal is remarkable, since for many years Mugraby has been the victim of intimidation and trials before criminal and military courts. In all these trials Mugraby was, and still is, charged for his critical views towards the Lebanese authorities in general and the judiciary system in particular. Now the court has judged that Mugraby's statement before the European Parliament did not constitute contempt of Lebanese State officials. The same should apply to all other instances in which Mugraby and other human rights activists have exposed the flaws in the constitutional state of Lebanon. However, the Public Prosecutor has appealed the court's decision, and several trials against Mugraby are still pending. It appears that the pressure on Mugraby was increased in the last months of 2008. In any event, he has not been able to perform his profession during this time.

## Liberia



L4L spoke with Samuel Kofi Woods, Minister of Labour in post Charles Taylor Liberia. Many say that it is a miracle that he is still alive. For years, Woods had been a human rights lawyer in Liberia, continuously challenging the Charles Taylor regime. Several times Woods had to flee the country. Against the advice of his family and friends he returned to continue his work as a lawyer every time.

From December 1998 to December 2000 he lived as a refugee in the Netherlands, where

he studied International Law in Leiden. From the Netherlands he continued his human rights work for the *Foundation of International Dignity* (FIND), of which he is co-founder. L4L has supported Woods financially during that period.

Eight years later, on 15 September 2008, Kofi Woods returned to the Netherlands, now as a Minister. In the meeting with L4L, he mentioned the financial and, most of all, moral support he received during that time. This inspired him to continue his work: 'It is encouraging to know that this work has a universal cause'. Woods was closely involved in collecting materials on human rights violations by former president Charles Taylor. No one in Liberia had ever thought that the trial against Taylor at the International Criminal Court, which started in January 2008, would ever take place. The pessimism of those days is slowly being replaced by hope that justice will be done in due course.

## Mexico

L4L set up a writing action for Mexican human rights lawyer **Jesús Manuel Grijalva**. On 22 February 2008, when he entered his office in Oaxaca, he found an anonymous letter addressed to him. In the letter Grijalva and his colleague **Gilberto Hernández Santiago** were warned that they would die within one month if they continued with their work.

Grijalva and another colleague lawyer, **Mayen Arellanes**, had received death threats before and had been harassed by plain clothes police. Grijalva and international human rights organizations assume that the threats to the lawyers are a reprisal for their activities as lawyers. In the performance of their profession they have repeatedly criticized the authorities for severe human rights violations.

Recently Grijalva and Santiago sued both the federal and the state authorities for genocide and crimes against humanity because of their violent conduct during the political crisis in the state of Oaxaca in 2006.

After last year's threats, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights also decided that the Mexican authorities are obliged to protect these lawyers and other human rights activists. The authorities' only reaction to this was giving the lawyers mobile phones.

## Pakistan

Since President Musharraf declared the state of emergency in Pakistan on 3 November 2007, lawyers and judges have played a crucial role in the movement against Musharraf's military regime and as a consequence large numbers have been arrested.

Although the new Pakistani government has since released on bail those lawyers and judges that had been arrested after 3 November 2007, the charges against them have as yet not been dropped. At the end of 2007, the former president of the association of lawyers at the Supreme Court and chairman of Chaudry's defense team, **Munir Malik**, was also released after having been hospitalized in a critical condition. When in prison, they had taken his medication and denied him necessary medical treatment.

In April 2008, in a joint statement with *Lawyers Rights Watch Canada*, L4L called upon the Pakistani authorities to immediately restore the independent administration of justice and guarantee the safety of judges and lawyers.

L4L is part of the Pakistani NGO Support Group, which convenes regularly to continuously draw attention to the situation in

Pakistan and to exchange information. In March 2008, at a closed meeting of this Pakistani Support Group in Geneva, L4L spoke with one of the Pakistani guest speakers, who said that he had been forced to watch while his fellow prisoners were being tortured. He also said that President Musharraf had not kept his promise to reinstate all the judges that had previously been removed from office.

On 20 June 2008, L4L spoke with the well-



known lawyer and chairman of the *Pakistani Human Rights Commission*, **Asma Jahangir**. At the beginning of 2008, she

had narrowly escaped an attack. She said that at that time, the judges that had been removed from office had still not been fully reinstated. The lawyers had been campaigning against this for months by boycotting the court every Thursday, the so-called Thursday-strike. She thanks L4L for their November 2007 letter-writing campaign in support of the individual lawyers. In addition, she has asked L4L to write letters to the chairmen of all *Pakistani Bar Associations* requesting them to explain to us their views on:

- independence of judges and lawyers,
- the method of choosing judges,
- the policy of the Supreme Court with regard to accepting cases.

L4L posted these letters to the 10 *Pakistani Bar Associations* on 8 July 2008.

## Russia

In January 2008, L4L wrote in the periodical of the *Dutch Bar Association* ('*Advocatenblad*')

about the situation faced by **Irina Kodzaeva**, a lawyer in the republic of North-Ossetia. Kodzaeva regularly represents clients charged with (involvement in) terrorist activities. Many of her clients have apparently been tortured to force a confession. Research by *Amnesty International* and the UN Committee against Torture confirms that Russian detention facilities use torture to obtain confessions. Lawyers that have taken a stance against these human rights violations are themselves increasingly being intimidated, attacked and prosecuted.

## Sri Lanka

Lawyers in Sri Lanka representing victims of human rights violations are being obstructed, threatened and intimidated. According to the *Asian Human Rights Commission* (AHCR) a peculiar but also very worrisome development is that lawyers in Sri Lanka are being intimidated not only by groups within the police force, but also by members of the judiciary, and particularly by a number of judges at the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Sarath N. Silva. As a result, many lawyers refrain from conducting proceedings before the Supreme Court.

On 27 September 2008 a hand grenade was used in an attack on the home of the lawyer **J.C. Weliamuna** in the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo, while he, his wife and their two sons were asleep. A second explosive, which did not detonate, was also found. Nobody was hurt, but the explosion caused severe damage to the property. Weliamuna is mainly active in protecting human rights and fighting corruption. Apart from being a lawyer, he is also director of the Sri Lankan division of



*Transparency International*, the NGO which draws attention to corruption. A few days before the attack, Transparency International published a list of the most corrupt nations, listing Sri Lanka as number 92 out of a total of 184 reviewed countries. The attack on Weliamuna is just one example of the growing hostility against human rights lawyers and activists. L4L organized a letter-writing campaign on 7 October 2008.

## Syria

**Anwar Al-Bunni** was arrested on 17 May 2006 along with other human rights activists, after he had signed a petition in which Syria and the Lebanon were requested to improve their mutual relationship. In May 2008, Anwar al-Bunni received an Irish award, which he could not collect because he was still in custody. In the Dutch radio show *De Ochtenden* broadcast on 15 May 2008, Judith Lichtenberg of L4L and Leo Kwartan, an expert in Arab affairs, looked back on Al-Bunni's arrest.

## Tunisia



In March 2005, after an unfair trial, the Tunisian lawyer **Mohammed Abbou** was sentenced to three and a half years imprisonment. The charge against Abbou was slander, because of an internet article in which he had compared the situation in the Tunisian prison to that in the Iraqi Abu Ghraib-prison. According to Abbou and human rights organizations, the real reason was his work as a pro bono lawyer in cases on freedom of speech and other human rights abuses. Although Abbou was released in the summer of 2007, he was then prohibited from travelling abroad. L4L,

*Amnesty International* and other NGO's have repeatedly called the attention of the Tunisian authorities to Abbou's case.

## Vietnam

In May 2007, Vietnamese human rights lawyers **Nguyen Van Dai** and **Le Thi Cong Nhan** were sentenced to five and four years imprisonment respectively, for their peaceful plea to introduce a multi-party system in Vietnam. Vietnamese law only allows one political party, the reigning communist party. According to the public prosecutor, Dai and Nhan had distributed -propaganda against the government. More specifically, Dai and Nhan are said to have used their law firm 'to draft, archive and circulate documents biased against the Vietnamese state' and to have held classes in their offices

through which they distributed 'libelous and distorted news against the State'. The conviction of Dai and Nhan has been sharply criticized by the international community. According to *Amnesty International*, their conviction is part of a campaign by the Vietnamese government against lawyers and other peaceful human rights activists to silence critics of the government. Nevertheless, the Supreme Court in Hanoi has upheld the judgment against Dai and Nhan on the same grounds. Although their prison sentence was reduced by one year each due to their cooperative attitude towards the examining magistrate, their house arrest of four and three years respectively was upheld. Despite new international protests against the political show trials and long sentences that are being imposed, the campaigns against lawyers and other peaceful human rights activists continues unabated.

## Zimbabwe

The election battle between president Mugabe and opposition leader Tsvangirai of the *Movement for Democratic Change* (MDC) led to a great deal of violence and intimidation. Tsvangirai supporters were arrested without charge on a large scale. The instances of violence and intimidation increased even more during the period leading up to the second round of the presidential elections, which president Mugabe ordered after losing the first round to Tsvangirai.

On 7 May 2008 **Harrison Nkomo**, a human rights lawyer, was arrested for supposedly oppositional activities after the elections of 29 March 2008. Nkomo was charged with contempt and undermining the authority of the president, which is punishable under the *Public Order and Security Act* of 2002.

As well as Nkomo, the lawyer **Eric Matinenga** was also arrested. Lawyer **Andrew Makoni** was able to flee to South Africa in time, after receiving more and more death threats. On 17 June 2008, L4L appealed to the Zimbabwe authorities in writing to take measures to protect human rights lawyers and their clients. Even after the second election round of June 2008, the position of human rights lawyers in Zimbabwe remains worrisome. They are continuously being harassed and threatened.

**Arnold Tsunga**, a prominent human rights lawyer from Zimbabwe, was arrested on various occasions in the past, but fear does not keep him from carrying on with his work. 'Freedom is not for free', he said when L4L spoke to him on 19 June 2008.

After Tsunga had been beaten up by the police over ten years ago, he left commercial law to dedicate himself completely to the defense of human rights in Zimbabwe. He founded *Zimbabwean Lawyers for Human*

*Rights* (ZLHR), a professional and effective network of human rights lawyers. He was the architect of the so-called *Rapid Response Unit*: a sort of monitoring service of lawyers on standby around the clock, thus enabling them to act immediately in case of sudden arrests, mainly of human rights activists. This aims to prevent detainees from being moved from one police station to the next in order to force them to give a confession without the police being interrupted by lawyers.



For years, L4L has been working with ZLHR in putting regional and international pressure on Mugabe's government, including through letter-writing campaigns.

Immediately following increased threats and Tsunga's arrest, L4L organized a letter-writing campaign in September 2006. Tsunga confirms that such action is useful and that it made him feel that he was strongly supported by his foreign colleagues.

L4L also spoke to the lawyer **Dewa Mavhinga**, who is also very active at ZLHR. L4L discussed with him how L4L could be of help. Mavingha also confirmed that publicity has an impact on how the police act towards human rights lawyers.



Finally, L4L in 2008 paid for the law books of lawyer Chris Mhike, which he needed for his master's degree, but which could not afford to buy himself. Chris Mhike has played an important part in the process of democratizing Zimbabwe.

### III. COOPERATIONS/ CONTACTS WITH OTHER ORGANIZA- TIONS

In 2008 L4L has cooperated and/or kept in touch with the *Dutch Bar Association*, the office of the *Amsterdam Bar Association*, the *International Bar Association* and many other national and international legal and political institutions and human rights organizations.

In Geneva L4L spoke with, amongst others, Leandro Despouy (UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers), and Louise Arbour (UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) and with representatives of the *Asian Human Rights Commission and Lawyers Rights Watch Canada*.