

**CONVENTION
DES AVOCATS DU MONDE
(CONVENTION BETWEEN LAWYERS OF THE
WORLD)**

This Convention supplements and expands the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, signed in Paris on the 26th of June 1987

Sixty years after the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Declaration of Human Rights, a founding text which introduced a new world order, lawyers from around the world met in Paris as part of the *Rentrée de la Conférence*, and decided to expand the provisions of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which they had signed in 1987. The expanded terms were intended to take into account the changes undergone by society and the effects of globalisation, as well as the pledge made by a number of multinational corporations to respect and fully recognise human rights for all—that being the source and end-purpose of the law.

Having regard to the adoption of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, as well as the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, this document is intended to reconfirm the willingness of the lawyers from around the world to work in concert to uphold the Rule of Law while assuming their role as sentinels of freedom.

The parties to this convention agree to unite their efforts to advocate the Rule of Law throughout the world, to build stronger links between all lawyers worldwide, and to promote the supremacy of law over arbitrary power and brute force.

ARTICLE 1: The lawyer

A lawyer is guided by five fundamental principles:

- independence and freedom in defending and advising his client;
- a duty to respect attorney-client privilege and confidentiality when handling a legal matter entrusted to him, precluding him from betraying secrets to public authorities or private individuals.
- a duty to avoid conflicts of interest, either between several clients or between the client and himself;
- self-regulation of the legal profession;

- a duty to exercise his profession while acting according to the dictates of his conscience, under his own responsibility, in accordance with the law, and while respecting his professional code of ethics and conduct.

ARTICLE 2: Bar associations and professional associations of lawyers

Lawyers may create or join independent professional associations whose object is to represent their interests, promote training and protect their reputation and good standing, and their professional autonomy.

The purpose of such associations is to ensure that lawyers can give aid and advice to their clients, in accordance with the law and recognized professional standards and ethics, without undue outside interference.

ARTICLE 3: Lawyers without borders

A lawyer is entitled to advise and give legal assistance, as well as present and defend his cases, beyond the borders of the country where he practices, provided that he complies with the general principles of the legal profession and the professional rules that apply in his country of practice and those governing the codes of ethics in the relevant foreign country.

ARTICLE 4: The lawyer and economic transactions and arrangements

When his legal practice entails dealing with clients, be they private individuals or legal entities, wishing to develop their business or activities in any country whatsoever, the lawyer must encourage them to comply with international human rights laws and, accordingly, must ensure that they do not become complicit in any violations.

ARTICLE 5: The lawyer and international criminal law

The lawyers associations having signed this convention pledge to work together toward promoting international criminal law by facilitating, by any necessary means, the right of counsel in such jurisdictions.

ARTICLE 6: Cooperative assistance among members of the legal profession

The legal organisations having signed this convention agree to actively contribute toward training young legal practitioners and experts around the world, notably through broader reliance on e-learning, internship exchange programmes, and by sending members of their bar associations to assist those who express interest.

Similarly, the signatory organisations will set up legal observatories, whose members are to be appointed by bar associations, which, by their very presence, will bring attention to issues regarding the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.

ARTICLE 7: Organisation of world bar associations

The signatory parties hereof agree to give an overview and update of their efforts, by any means they deem appropriate, to discuss any courses of action they wish to pursue, and to undertake new initiatives aimed at fostering the rule of law and respect for human rights.

Paris, 6 December 2008