

ANNUAL REPORT



At the end of 2019, six members of the Burmese theatre company Peacock Generation were sentenced to prison for criticising the country's military during one of their performances. Read more on page 21.

CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS is an international human rights organisation that is politically and religiously independent. The organisation defends people's civil and political rights and empowers human rights defenders at risk. Civil Rights Defenders operates in Sweden and in the countries of the world where respect for human rights is at its weakest. We engage in advocacy activities and legal processes, and provide information on the situation with regard to human rights globally.

SWEDEN

In Sweden, it is becoming increasingly difficult for opinion makers and journalists to carry out their work without being subjected to threats and hate speech. When the space for open democratic debate shrinks, we take responsibility for ensuring that our democracy remains strong. We monitor the government and are not afraid to act when human rights are being violated. We keep a close eye on issues such as hate crime, ethnic/racial profiling, the rights of indigenous peoples, and the situation in locked institutions. **Read more on page 23**

EUROPE

Nationalists and populists are gaining ground, in some countries even seizing power – resulting in an increased risk of human rights violations. Even though national legislation is often aligned with international conventions on human rights, its practical application tends to be lacking. We work with human rights defenders in Turkey, Hungary, Poland, and several of the countries in the Balkans. We also have a presence in Brussels to ensure that human rights are high up on the EU's agenda. **Read more on page 22**

LATIN AMERICA

In Latin America, we work in Colombia, Cuba and Venezuela – some of the world's most dangerous places for human rights defenders. In Colombia, attacks by armed and criminal groups against human rights defenders have increased sharply. In Cuba and Venezuela, the governments' repression of civil society aims to silence all demands for democracy and human rights. In addition to long-term support, we provide a database that enables human rights defenders to safely document human rights violations.

Read more on page 19

AFRICA

In a number of African countries, standing up for human rights can be very dangerous. Despite the risks, courageous human rights defenders are continuing to fight for everyone's rights. In Sudan, South Sudan, and Ethiopia, the struggle for peace and democracy continues. Often, young people are at the forefront of the fight to govern their own future. Civil Rights Defenders is working to support a new generation of human rights defenders.

Read more on page 18

500

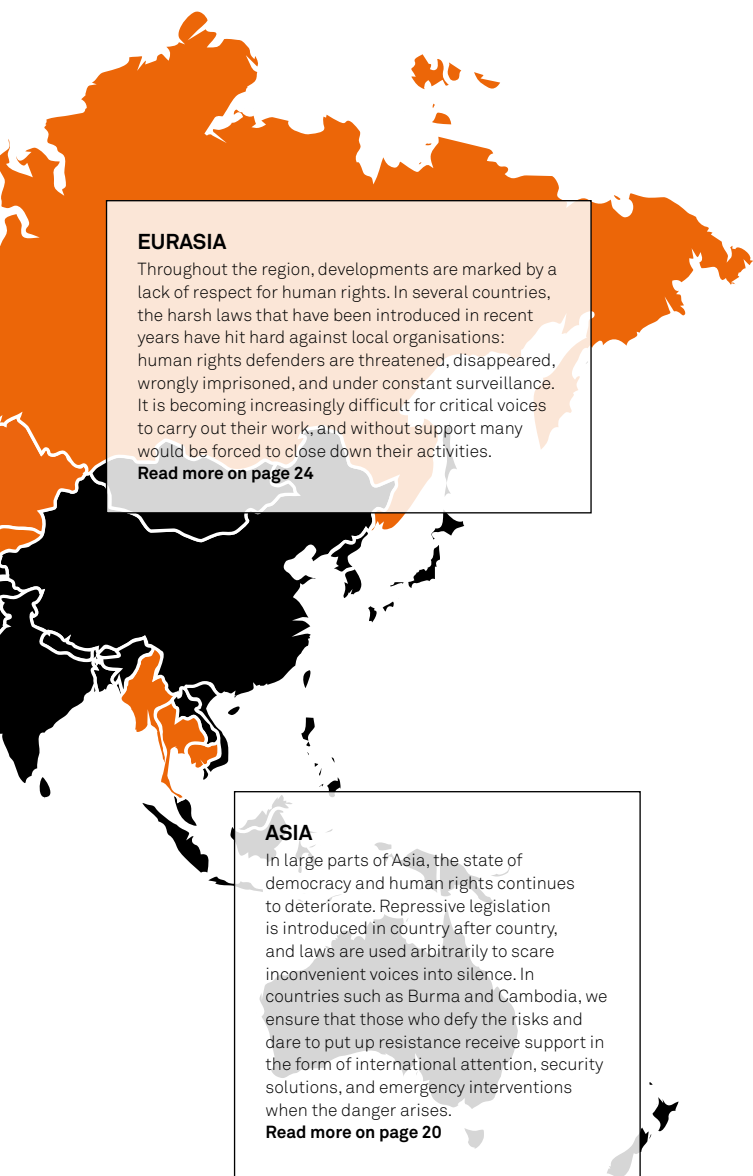
In 2019, more than 500 human rights defenders, in 23 of the world's most repressive countries, received support through Civil Rights Defenders' Emergency Fund.

170

By the end of 2019, more than 170 persons were part of the Natalia Project – the world's first alarm and positioning system for human rights defenders at risk.

30

Civil Rights Defenders operates in more than 30 countries, with a local presence in 12 countries.



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200

Civil Rights Defenders collaborates with more than 200 human rights organisations across the world.

4,700

In 2019, 4,700 human rights defenders received education and training through Civil Rights Defenders and our partner organisations.

90

In 2019, 90 per cent of Civil Rights Defenders' income went to special purpose expenses.



WORKING FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

Just over a year ago, we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but these rights have begun to be challenged at an increasing rate, both in Europe and even more so globally.

Democracy is being eroded in countries previously regarded as free and open. The respect for civil and political rights has decreased for 13 consecutive years. In China, but also in Russia, developments have since long been towards an increasingly authoritarian rule. Statistics on the state of democracy around the world indicate that countries like Turkey, Venezuela, the Philippines, and Bangladesh are sliding backwards. Not so many years ago, democracy was thought to be on the rise in some of these countries. Now, they are increasingly moving toward autocracy, and the space for civil society and the level of freedom are decreasing. This is also the case in countries within the EU, such as Poland and Hungary, where democratic institutions are being eroded and independent media is

attacked, challenged, or marginalised.

States need thriving civil societies, but when populations are deprived of influence, critical voices fade. In many cases, they are not just excluded, but also persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, or even murdered for criticising the state and its representatives.

Civil Rights Defenders works to protect and empower human rights defenders, to increase knowledge of rights and democracy, and to demand accountability. A symbol of those we seek to support is the prize we award each year to a prominent human rights defender. In 2019, the Civil Rights Defender of the Year Award went to Márta Pardavi, for her work with vulnerable groups and her tireless fight against the systematic dismantling of democracy in Hungary.

Thanks to resilient civil societies around the world, there is still optimism. During the past year, pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong and Moscow have highlighted the need for open and free



States need thriving civil societies, but when populations are deprived of influence, critical voices fade.

societies. Fragile but very promising developments in Ethiopia have given citizens, who were previously silenced or forced to flee, new hope and amplified voices.

Mass protests against corruption and economic deprivation are shaking the regime in Iran, while the fall of Sudan's Omar al-Bashir is proof that, despite the shortcomings of the Arab Spring, resistance against dictatorship and autocracy has not been eradicated in the Middle East.

During the past year in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Serbia, and Poland, people has reacted with large-scale demonstrations and challenged governments' policies, all of which, have shown every sign of autocracy, undermining both the independent media and the rule of law while reinforcing executive power.

Autocrats and dictators fear organised democratic resistance. They react with claims that foreign powers are the driving force behind such movements. Organisers of civil society are referred

to as "foreign agents", to smear critical voices and quell resistance.

Civil Rights Defenders' work, together with hundreds of our partners, is becoming increasingly important as pressure on civil society is mounting around the world. We will continue our work in close cooperation with our partners in Albania, Cuba, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Venezuela, or wherever we operate, until the trend has been reversed and human rights and democracy regain foothold in an unstable world.



Benedicte Berner,
Chairperson



Anders L. Pettersson,
Executive Director

“

We in civil society will continue to defend democratic values. It has probably been both unwanted and unintended, but the pressure on civil society has made us better at working together, making us stronger.

ABOUT THE CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Since 2013, Civil Rights Defenders annually presents the Civil Rights Defender of the Year Award. The recipient of the award is a human rights defender who, in the face of great risk to their own safety, continues to fight for recognition of and respect for human rights. As a requirement, the work must be carried out within an independent human rights organisation and without resorting to violence.

MÁRTA PARDAVI

CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2019



“Democracy is under threat all over the world and now we see what authoritarians do when they get to power. They target critics, human rights defenders, and treat marginalised groups as threats to society. We see this happening in Hungary, but also in other countries such as Poland,” says Márta Pardavi, one of Hungary’s foremost human rights lawyers and the recipient of the 2019 Civil Rights Defender of the Year Award for her tireless and much needed work for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.

Since 2010, Hungary has become the clearest case in Europe of the global decline of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. After victories in the 2010, 2014, and 2018 elections, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his Fidesz party have gradually been undermining Hungarian democracy. With a majority in parliament, Fidesz has made constitutional amendments benefitting their party at the expense of the opposition. Orbán’s government has installed loyalists in independent institutions, electoral districts have been redrawn to maximise the number of seats for Fidesz in parliament, and the government has expanded its control over the privately owned media as well as public service. Restrictive laws against civil society organisations have been introduced, and smear campaigns are silencing those who choose to speak out in defence of human rights.

Márta Pardavi is one of the leaders of the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, an organisation that monitors the enforcement of the rule of law, defends the rights of refugees, and provides legal assistance to people seeking asylum in Hungary. She is among those who have been subjected to threats and smear campaigns because of her work. After the 2018 election, a pro-government weekly published a list of more than 200 people, including the entire staff of the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, accusing them of being part of George Soros’ private army: a group whose intention it is to overthrow the government and open the country’s borders to immigrants. The Helsinki Committee and other human rights organisations have also been portrayed as enemies of the state who want to introduce an amnesty for immigrants. Despite the hostile atmosphere in Hungary, where civil rights and liberties are portrayed to as foreign and undesirable, Márta and her colleagues continue to challenge the government’s laws and propaganda. And, it has had some unforeseen consequences:

“The government’s preassure against civil society have made us better at working together, making us stronger,” says Márta. [“On several occasions, we have seen that civil society support is growing as an unintended consequence of the state propaganda.”

A photograph of a large crowd of people at a protest or rally. Many hands are raised in the air, some with painted symbols. A rainbow flag is visible in the background, partially obscured by the text. The scene is outdoors with trees and buildings in the distance.

OUR VISION
IS A WORLD OF
DEMOCRATIC
SOCIETIES IN WHICH
WE ALL ENJOY
OUR CIVIL AND
POLITICAL RIGHTS.

OUR MISSION

is to defend civil and political rights together with local human rights defenders to increase their safety, capacity, and access to justice.

We work as a part of a global movement of human rights defenders and partner with those at risk. Through legal means and public advocacy, we hold states, individuals, and non-state actors accountable for human rights violations.

We advocate for the norms and values of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other relevant human rights standards, as we encourage people to use these rights to promote democratic societies.

In the following pages, you can read about our work during 2019 in the areas of:

- investigation and accountability
- public opinion and advocacy
- support and training

HOLDING THOSE IN POWER ACCOUNTABLE

Without a strong civil society, the possibility of holding those in power accountable is diminished. Human rights defenders all over the world are regularly subjected to threats, harassment, enforced disappearances, and arbitrary imprisonment at the hands of authoritarian regimes. Civil Rights Defenders monitors states and those in power by scrutinising laws, draft legislation, and regulatory activities. Independently or in collaboration with local human rights defenders, we pursue legal action at the national or international level, demanding accountability when the law or its application is contrary to civil and political rights.

In 2019, together with our partners, we led the efforts against the controversial defamation law in **Albania**, which can be used to block or impose fines on media actors without a court order. Civil Rights Defenders has called on the Albanian authorities to respect the freedom of the media, and has been supported on this issue by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Throughout the year, we worked to ensure that the detained **Russian** journalists Ivan Golunov and Igor Rudnikov were acquitted and that those responsible were held to account. In June 2019, they were released, the police officers responsible for arresting Golunov were charged, and the governor who fabricated evidence in Rudnikov's case was dismissed. We have also seen violent crackdowns on peaceful protests in **Azerbaijan**. Civil Rights Defenders has supported Azeri human rights

lawyers, who have brought a number of cases to the European Court of Human Rights despite being under enormous pressure from both the Azerbaijani state and the bar association.

Together with Cuban human rights organisations, we have been working to prevent the approval of an agreement on political dialogue, development aid, and trade between **Cuba** and the EU. The EU and its member states have failed to take action against mounting human rights violations in Cuba, either by interrupting the process or by using the clauses on human rights contained in the agreement to put pressure on the Cuban government. Read more on page 13.

In **Ethiopia**, we have collaborated with our partners to organise workshops and training sessions for young human rights defenders. This is an important part of the work to strengthen civil society, providing the tools needed to hold the Ethiopian government accountable for its commitments to uphold human rights during the ongoing reform process.

In **Sweden**, we have continued our efforts to promote the right to a fair trial for persons with disabilities. In one case, involving a man with a mental disability who had been sentenced to prison despite lack of support, we reported the police, and prosecutor to the Chancellor of Justice and filed a disciplinary complaint against the lawyer to clarify who is responsible for ensuring that adequate support is provided. A retrial was also requested.



DEMANDING REDRESS FOR CRIMES IN SYRIA

“I survived torture at two of the intelligence service’s sites in Damascus, but hundreds of thousands of prisoners in Syria are at risk of dying.”

These words belong to Abdalnaser, one of nine Syrians living in Sweden who, together with Civil Rights Defenders, reported 25 high-ranking members of the Syrian intelligence service for crimes against humanity and war crimes in the spring of 2019. The nine Syrians testified about torture, aggravated beatings, starvation, rape, executions, and other crimes committed at four detention centers operated by the Syrian Intelligence Services and Saydnaya Military Prison between 2011 and 2015.

Those responsible for gross human rights violations often go unpunished in Syria, while those affected and their families are denied justice. The 250-page police report was filed to put an end to the

unconditional impunity of human rights offenders in Syria. The process may last years, but the police have begun to hear several of the nine Syrians as plaintiffs in an ongoing investigation. We will continue to follow the case in the years to come.

ON UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION

The gross human rights violations that the individuals within the intelligence service are being suspected of fall under the principle of universal jurisdiction, which means that Swedish authorities can investigate, prosecute, and try the case in Sweden, thus holding those responsible to account. In other European countries, such as Germany and France, similar reports have resulted in the issuing of arrest warrants against high-ranking officials within Syria’s torture system.

EFFECTING CHANGE

Civil Rights Defenders works to increase knowledge about human rights among the public, and to influence states and decision makers at the national and international level. We engage in opinion-shaping and advocacy work, independently or together with local human rights defenders and organisations. We drive debate, run campaigns, and highlight key issues in the media, through seminars, and in reports. When people have limited knowledge or are denied information about their rights, there is an increased risk that these rights may be violated. In totalitarian states, we communicate independent information through alternative media outlets and other forums for discussion and debate.

In 2019, Civil Rights Defenders worked with international and regional actors to bring the deteriorating human rights situation in **Tanzania** to the attention of the international community through op-eds, joint statements, and advocacy efforts. The increased levels of repression led the Swedish government to re-evaluate Sweden's development cooperation with the country.

In the report "What Worries Youth in Enlargement Countries", we invited young people from **Europe** to share their experience of the human rights challenges they face in their everyday lives. The report, highlighting issues ranging from freedom of the press in **Montenegro** and visa restrictions in **Kosovo** to minority rights in **Turkey**, was presented

by the authors at a roundtable discussion in the European Parliament at the end of 2019.

In **Burma**, we cooperated with organisations working on the situation of the Rohingya and other minority groups in the northern parts of the country. With our support, they have shaped public opinion and mobilised resistance against violations committed by the military. They have been a driving force in the formation of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, and the extension of its mandate to include Kachin and Shan States. Our partner organisations have documented violations committed by the Burmese military, which are now being used as evidence in the legal proceedings in the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

In **Sweden**, we launched the report "When Society Falls Silent" in the spring of 2019. The report shows the far-reaching and systematic threats and hate campaigns that many independent opinion makers in Swedish civil society are subjected to, and the effect this has on public discourse. The report received significant attention through well-attended seminars and substantial media impact.

In Sweden, we also intensified our work against ethnic profiling in the law enforcement activities of the police. We organised seminars and conducted dialogue with both the National Police Commissioner Anders Thornberg and the Swedish Police Union on how to counteract ethnic profiling in police work.

WHEN THE EU TURNS A BLIND EYE TO REPRESSION IN CUBA, CIVIL SOCIETY SPEAKS UP

“Since 2016, the human rights situation in Cuba has steadily deteriorated: arbitrary arrests, gender-based violence, as well as physical and psychological torture are being used by both the central government and local authorities against civil society activists, artists, and cultural workers. Entrepreneurs are punished, and so are workers who express social concern. This, despite the fact that Cuba has signed the UN Convention against Torture and several important ILO agreements.”

These were the words of 391 Cuban human rights defenders in an open letter to Sweden’s then-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Margot Wallström. The letter called for Sweden not to approve the EU’s agreement on political dialogue and cooperation with Cuba. The agreement aims to improve relations between Cuba and the EU, but does not contain any requirements on democratisation or reforms guaranteeing human rights. Cuban civil society has not been consulted during the process of drawing up the agreement.

Throughout 2019, Civil Rights Defenders has worked with partner organisations to have Cuban civil society included in the dialogue between Cuba and the EU.

In October, the annual human rights dialogue

between Cuba and the EU took place in Brussels.

Only three Cuban civil society organisations were invited – all of them pre-approved by and dependent on the Communist Party of Cuba. A month later, the Swedish parliament approved the agreement with Cuba. Among EU member states, only Lithuania had not approved the agreement by the end of the year.

With the aim of including independent civil society in shaping EU policy toward Cuba, Civil Rights Defenders invited 31 Cuban human rights defenders and civil society organisations to write open letters with suggestions on how the EU could promote democracy and human rights in Cuba. The texts were published on a rolling basis on Civil Rights Defenders’ website and in a report at the beginning of 2020, later presented at a seminar in the European Parliament.

Our work throughout the year allowed the newly elected European Parliament to forge relations with the Cuban movement for democracy and integrate its proposals into its own positions. At the end of November 2019, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on Cuba that included clear elements from both Civil Rights Defenders’ and our partners’ proposals for action.



SUPPORT AND TRAINING

EMPOWERING THOSE WHO STAND UP FOR THEIR RIGHTS

Promoting strong human rights actors who can assert their rights is Civil Rights Defenders' core idea and key to long-term change. We work together with local human rights organisations and, based on their needs, conduct security training and provide emergency support, expertise, competence development, and long-term financial support. Important are also the conditions created for human rights defenders to meet and exchange experiences safely.

In July 2019, we organised our first Human Rights Defender Academy in **Montenegro**, where 30 young people participated in a week-long course. It covered advocacy initiatives at the EU level, communication in relation to human rights, and how human rights defenders work to monitor human rights violations.

During the year, we have been able to establish a more formal collaboration with **Uzbek** journalists who have participated in trainings in **Russia** and **Georgia**. In addition to offering an opportunity for capacity building, this training has also expanded their professional networks.

Our **Latin America** Department has organised training sessions for Cuban human rights defenders in Colombia and other countries in the region.

The sessions, which were held together with Latin American human rights organisations, were based around successful examples of human rights work aimed at governments, the Inter-American Human Rights System, and the United Nations. Of particular importance was the opportunity for Cuban human rights defenders to share their experiences with other human rights organisations in Latin America.

Through our work in **Asia**, we have provided financial support to more than 20 human rights organisations in the region. Among other things, our support resulted in training opportunities for more than 2,500 people, for example in advocacy work targeting the UN. With Civil Rights Defenders' support, our partner organisations went on four visits to the EU in Brussels and two to the UN Human Rights Committee in Geneva, resulting in communications from six UN Special Procedures.

We also have a comprehensive training programme in security for human rights defenders, covering both physical and digital security as well as psychosocial support. By training human rights defenders and providing support through the Natalia Project, we strive to strengthen resilient civil societies around the world. Read more on page 26.



THE YOUNG GENERATION BUILDING ETHIOPIA'S CIVIL SOCIETY

After decades of oppression, the prospect of a democratic Ethiopia looked dim. But in 2018, something happened. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed came to power and soon journalists, human rights defenders, figures of the opposition, and other critical voices imprisoned because of their work began to be released from the country's overflowing prisons. New media outlets were established, Ethiopians living in exile returned home, and a cautious hope for democracy was ignited.

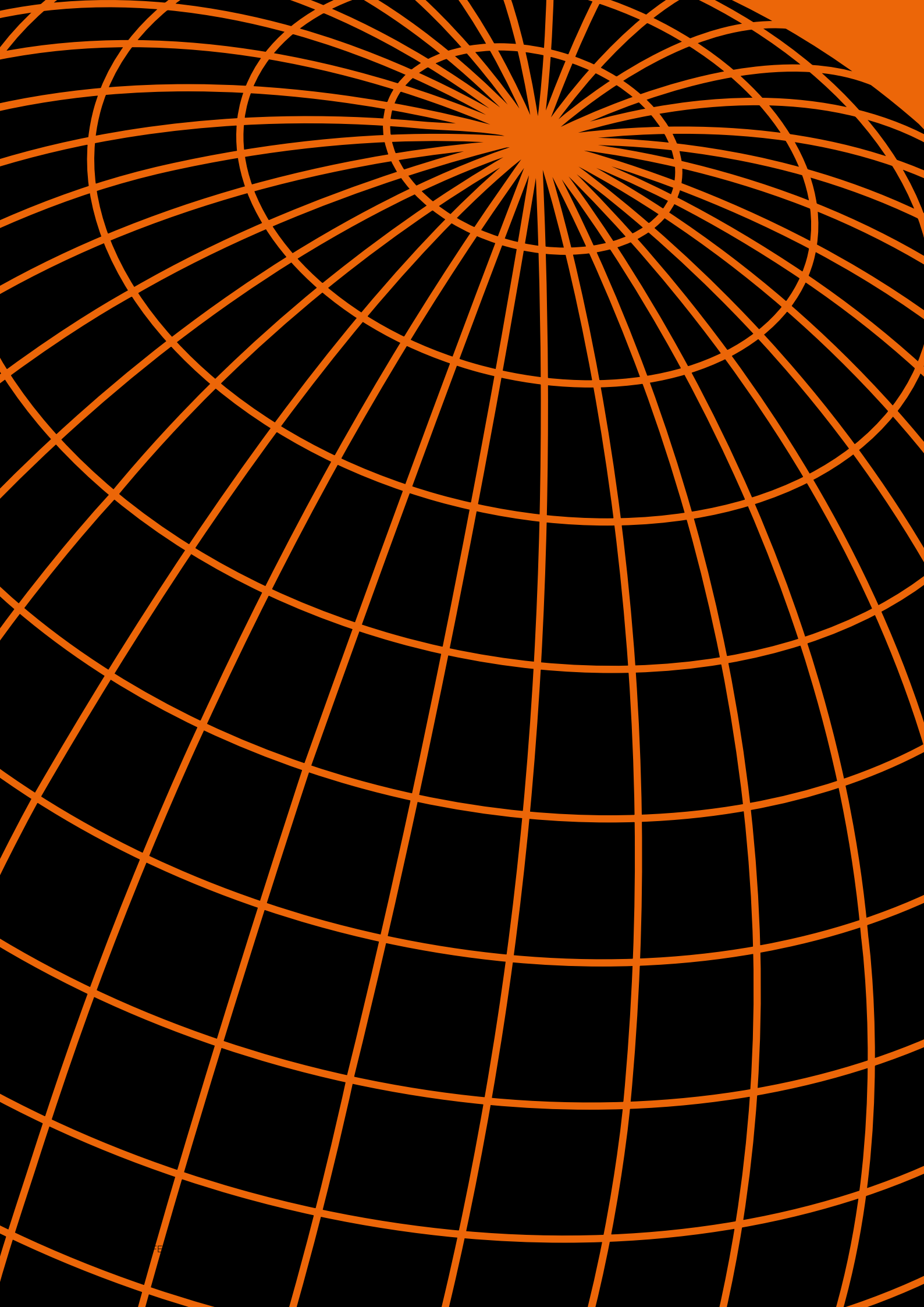
Every democracy needs a strong civil society that can demand accountability and ensure that human rights are respected. In Ethiopia, years of repression and harsh laws have led to an all but non-existent civil society. The younger generation has never experienced a functioning civil society. Many have never been in contact with the few organisations that have carried on the fight despite limited resources.

In order to effect real change and fill this void, a new generation of civil society must emerge – with new visions, methods, and people. Together with two

of our Ethiopian partner organisations, we therefore decided to launch a traineeship programme for young Ethiopians with an interest in human rights. By pairing driven students with experienced pro-democracy campaigners, we want to contribute to providing new knowledge and energy to everyone involved. In 2019, four trainees were given the opportunity to take a first step in what they hope will be their new careers. Lydia Engda was one of them.

“I want to be able to contribute to my country and my generation by creating a better, democratic Ethiopia. A country where human rights are respected,” says Lydia Engda.

Today, Ethiopia's future looks far brighter than we could have hoped just a few years ago. The country has made extensive legal reforms that will allow an independent civil society to emerge. Change and improvement will take time. But with the help of young people, hope is kept alive and democracy may slowly be built.



A stylized graphic of a globe on the left side of the page, composed of intersecting orange lines forming a grid pattern on a dark blue background.

CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS ON FOUR CONTINENTS

For almost 40 years, Civil Rights Defenders has been working to defend and promote people's civil and political rights around the world. We are a global organisation with a presence on four continents. In 2019, Civil Rights Defenders continued its efforts to support human rights defenders in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eurasia, and Europe. We maintain a long-term perspective and work with over 200 local human rights organisations in more than 30 countries.

GOOD PROGRESS, CONTINUED UNCERTAINTY

Throughout the year, Civil Rights Defenders has expanded its work in Africa. Together with our partner organisations, we have worked to support and train a new generation of human rights defenders. Young human rights activists will be crucial to continued democratisation processes in the region.

In Ethiopia, the political reform process continued in 2019, but so did the increasing polarisation of society and the emergence of new security risks. While legal and institutional reforms were introduced that benefit civil society and human rights work, the country continues to be threatened by violent conflict. The reforms created more space for human rights defenders to implement various projects to support local partners in their work and promote the participation of a new, younger generation of human rights defenders. Read more

about the traineeship programme that Civil Rights Defenders organised together with two partners in Ethiopia on page 15.

For South Sudan, 2019 marked yet another year in a continued peace process that remains uncertain. Despite reports of a slight decrease in violence during the year, gross human rights violations continue to be committed. Throughout the year, Civil Rights Defenders and local partners initiated collaborations in order to work together to hold those responsible for human rights violations accountable. In neighbouring Sudan, the popular uprising against the country's dictator Omar al-Bashir resulted in the toppling of the regime, and a process of democratisation could begin. This was a decidedly positive development for the country and the region, but the outcome remains unclear.



LGBTI+ RIGHTS IN UGANDA

During the autumn, violence against LGBTI+ persons in Uganda increased after the country's ethics minister stated that the death penalty may be introduced for same-sex acts. The statement was later rejected by the government, but this did not curb the violence. During an intervention at an LGBTI+ friendly meeting place on 10 November, 125 people were arrested by the police and military under brutal circumstances. Our partner organisation, Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG), documented more than 150 violations of LGBTI+ rights, including brutal attacks, forced examinations, and restrictions on freedom of assembly.

Through Civil Rights Defenders' Emergency Fund, an LGBTI+ activist who had been attacked and subjected to hate crimes received support for an emergency relocation. This included safe housing and transport as well as psychosocial support. Thanks to the Emergency Fund, the activist can continue the fight for LGBTI+ rights in a safe manner. The activist says: "I feel safer than I did before. I've been able to settle in an area where my sexual orientation and gender identity are not widely known."

LATIN AMERICA

IN THE SHADOW OF POWER, THE STRUGGLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CONTINUES

In 2019, the killings of human rights defenders in Colombia reached levels not seen in years. The government's efforts to stop the violence and hold the perpetrators accountable have been inadequate. However, the regional elections in October showed an improvement in guaranteeing the citizens's rights to vote in a democratic system. Together with our Cuban partners, Civil Rights Defenders acted as election observers in Cúcuta, on the border with Venezuela, as part of the Colombian Electoral Observation Mission.

In Cuba, the pressure on civil society actors and human rights defenders has grown. No public protests were tolerated and prominent human rights defenders were kept under constant surveillance by the security police. A total of 226 Cubans were banned from leaving the country and the number of political prisoners rose to 126. The Cuban government adopted a new constitution and electoral law in 2019, but neither provides guarantees for civil and political rights. Throughout the year, we have offered

training in human rights work, security, and political influence for Cuban human rights defenders. Read more on pages 10 and 13.

The situation for democracy and human rights in Venezuela has been deteriorating for years. After Nicolas Maduro was sworn in as president for a second term in January, following an election marked by electoral fraud and undemocratic practices, the situation deteriorated even further. However, more than 50 governments chose to recognise the national assembly as the country's only democratic representative, demonstrating that Maduro's presidency was not legitimate. The Venezuelan human rights organisation Foro Penal reported that the number of political prisoners was as high as 900 in February, but that it dropped to 388 by the end of the year. Several reports also showed that the authorities used brutal methods to combat crime, killing thousands of suspected criminals in the marginalised suburbs of Venezuela's largest cities.

GENESIS DÁVILA

For several years, repression of human rights defenders, the political opposition, and civil society organisations has been on the rise in Venezuela. Genesis Dávila, founder and head of Defiende Venezuela, documents human rights violations together with her colleagues in order to be able to hold perpetrators accountable in the future. "The Venezuelan regime sees us human rights defenders as enemies, and we are often subjected to threats and violence," says Genesis Dávila. Since 2019, Genesis is a participant in Civil Rights Defenders' security programme, the Natalia Project – the world's first alarm and positioning system for human rights defenders at risk. "I carry my alarm with me every day, it's one of the things that make me feel more secure. It's a good thing that the government knows we're using the alarms. If something were to happen to me, and they know that someone else is watching, and that an international alarm is activated, our chances increase."



DESPITE GROWING THREATS, CIVIL SOCIETY REFUSES TO BE SILENCED

Across Asia, democracy as well as civil and political rights are being disregarded by authoritarian regimes. Individuals and organisations that stand up for human rights are constantly subjected to threats, surveillance, and arbitrary detention. In order to empower the crucial work of human rights organisations in the region, Civil Rights Defenders has during 2019 provided financial support both for core activities and to increase their capacity for documentation of human rights violations, financial management, and to work for gender equality issues. We have provided security trainings and emergency support, and collaborated with the organisations on international advocacy efforts to put pressure on authoritarian leaders.

The legal process initiated by the Gambia in November 2019 at the International Court of Justice in The Hague (ICJ), where Burma stands accused of violating the Genocide Convention, is a glimmer of hope in an otherwise dismal situation. The process builds on the findings of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar and is a great success for our partners, who have been deeply involved in supporting its mandate and its collection of evidence.

The ICJ procedures demonstrates that states have a duty to respect human rights and international law. Above all, it is proof that human rights defenders, by organising themselves and persistently working together, can put up resistance against even the worst human rights offenders and demand accountability. Though the court does not have a mandate to sanction the Burmese government or military, the process offers redress for those who have suffered their abuse. With our financial and capacity developing support, our partner organisations have pursued the issue internationally and in Burma through frequent engagement with international as well as domestic media and through political advocacy efforts.

During the year, ten trips were organised to enable our partners in the region to meet with representatives of the UN, the EU and the Swedish government. Among other things, they participated in panel discussions with the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights and more than 30 meetings with MEPs and top officials in EU institutions.

In Cambodia, the human rights situation has deteriorated drastically in recent years, both for the political opposition and for human rights defenders and the media. In 2019, we worked with five partner organisations, primarily groups working for land rights and standing up for freedom of assembly and expression. Among other things, we contributed to a comprehensive review and development of the security efforts of one of the country's most targeted human rights organisations.



PHOTO: CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Security cameras outside one of our partner organisations' offices in Rangoon, Burma.



PEACOCK GENERATION

In October 2019, five young members of the satirical theatre company Peacock Generation were sentenced to 12 months in prison. The year before, these five individuals had made fun of generals in the Burmese military during a Thangyat performance, a traditional form of theatre. Due to the content of the performance, a court in Rangoon ruled that they were guilty of “undermining the military”. They also stand accused of crimes in relation to streaming the performance live on Facebook.

The laws restricting freedom of expression were introduced over five decades of military dictatorship in Burma. Few changes have been made under the leadership of Aung San Suu Kyi. The authorities have continuously used these laws to harass and imprison human rights defenders, journalists, and other critics of the government.

In November, the prison sentence for the five members of Peacock Generation was extended by another year, and yet another member of the group was imprisoned. They also risk additional convictions, as the group faces new charges in courts in every city where they have performed. With funding from Civil Rights Defenders, our partners are organising support for the activists. They are gathering outside the trials, documenting the process, and fighting for redress – a campaign that has received substantial support in the Burmese and foreign press. With the accusations, the regime wants to deter other activists from criticising the military. But they are continuing to make themselves heard, and through the campaign our partners have shown the military that its strategy does not work.

EUROPE

WHEN POPULISM TAKES ROOT DEMOCRACY IS ERODED

Human rights have long been taken for granted in Europe, but in several places in Central and Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans, and Turkey, we are seeing a decline. Even though national human rights legislation is often aligned with international conventions, we are seeing serious shortcomings in its practical application. Populism and increased discrimination against minority groups are spreading.

In 2019, our work in Europe reached a number of milestones, despite an increasingly harsh climate for human rights defenders. For the first time ever, Pride parades were organised in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia. Civil Rights Defenders has supported efforts throughout the region, and in 2019 Pride was celebrated in all the capitals in the Western Balkans. In Serbia, our project “Who Defends Defenders” contributed with capacity building, legal aid, and security recommen-

dations to human rights organisations throughout the country, with a particular focus on reaching out into smaller cities.

Together with the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, we organised meetings with partners and activists in Istanbul, where the situation of human rights defenders is becoming increasingly serious. In Kosovo, we teamed up with civil society organisations and experts on the subject to organise a conference on criminal justice reform, and published a report on the treatment of human rights defenders in closed institutions in the region. Through our office in Brussels, we worked to improve our cooperation with EU institutions and influence the EU’s work on human rights. In 2019, we organised a large number of visits and meetings between our partner organisations and MEPs, as well as several key EU institutions.



PHOTO: ANADOLU KÜLTÜR

OSMAN KAVALA

In Turkey, attempts to dismantle independent civil society continue. Journalists are being imprisoned and activists are subjected to legal threats and harassment. In several cases, the courts have handed down harsher prison sentences than ever before in response to legitimate, peaceful protests and opposition. In 2013, the Turkish businessman and philanthropist Osman Kavala was arrested for taking part in protests against the redevelopment of Gezi Park in Istanbul. Since 2017, he has been imprisoned in Silivri Prison on charges of attempting to overthrow the government.

Civil Rights Defenders has participated in the court proceedings and pursued advocacy efforts through a variety of channels. In February, we organised a meeting with the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, to bring the situation to his attention. In 2019, the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg ruled that Kavala had been arbitrarily arrested, demanding his immediate release. But despite its international commitments, Turkey chose to ignore the court’s decision. Since then, Kavala has been acquitted of all charges, only to be arrested immediately thereafter, this time accused of orchestrating an attempted coup on 15 July 2016.

SWEDEN

HUMAN RIGHTS MUST NOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED

Civil Rights Defenders' work in Sweden spans a number of areas, including racism and hate crime, ethnic discrimination, Sámi rights, and the right to asylum. We also monitor the situation in the country's closed institutions, such as in compulsive psychiatric care. Through advocacy efforts aimed at politicians and decision makers, we want to ensure that those in power take responsibility for respecting human rights.

During 2019, we have pursued legal action against authorities and other actors when human rights have been violated. In May, we reported the Swedish state to the Chancellor of Justice in a case where the human rights of an underage boy were violated in connection with his medical age assessment as part of his asylum review. The methods used in age assessments have been heavily criticised by experts, who question the reliability of the outcome. As a result, children are deemed to be adults and wrongly deported to countries where they are at risk of suffering gross human rights violations.

Racism is taking up more space in society and recent years have seen an increase in right-wing extremist activities. The number of hate crimes remains high – as well as unrecorded incidents. Despite this, very few cases lead to prosecution and conviction. That is why we have trained the police in combatting hate crime. Below you can also read about our work against incitement to racial hatred.

We have been watching with concern as a ban on begging has been imposed in several municipalities around the country. Banning begging is discriminatory and contrary to freedom of expression. Throughout the year, we have continued to pursue the issue in court.

At the international level, we continued our advocacy efforts and submitted a report to the UN pointing to serious shortcomings in Sweden. The report was used by the UN in connection with a major review of Sweden's compliance with human rights at the beginning of 2020.

HATE SPEECH AT THE EXPENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

In September, the high-profile trial against several supporters of the Nazi organisation the Nordic Resistance Movement (NMR) began. Civil Rights Defenders reported several of the organisation's members to the police after a demonstration in Gothenburg in 2017, which led to 15 individuals being charged with hate crimes. It is our opinion that their combined expression of Nazi ideology during the demonstration – through symbols, banners, clothing, and slogans – constituted incitement to racial hatred and were thus criminal.

Freedom of expression is, and should be, strongly protected. But the NMR's activities are carried out at the expense of the human rights of others, scaring both organisations and individuals into silence. Unfortunately, all were acquitted of the charge of inciting racial hatred. It is our opinion that the law was interpreted too narrowly by the court and that Swedish hate crime legislation is failing, as we are unable to combat racist activities effectively. This is something Sweden has been criticised for repeatedly by the UN, and we hope that the Swedish Court of Appeal, now set to review the case, interprets Swedish legislation in line with international law.



THE FIGHT FOR FREE SPEECH

In 2019, the Russian law on “foreign agents” was extended to include independent journalists and bloggers as well as mass media. This underlines the great need for our continued collaboration with lawyers in the media industry. Our advocacy efforts and support for this group of lawyers have led to the release of several imprisoned journalists in Russia, illustrating the importance of this work.

Over the course of 2019, the state of democracy and human rights did not improve significantly in Belarus. The parliamentary elections in November were neither fair, transparent, nor free, and fundamental freedoms continued to be disregarded. Not a single candidate from the opposition was allowed a seat in parliament. Civil Rights Defenders drew international attention to maladministration in connection with the election, demanding a strong and unanimous reaction from the EU.

In Azerbaijan, more than 50 political prisoners were released in 2019, but arrests and violence in connection with protests showed no real regime change to be in sight. On the Crimean peninsula, activists and Crimean Tatars continued to be arbitrarily searched and detained on a regular basis as part of their daily lives.

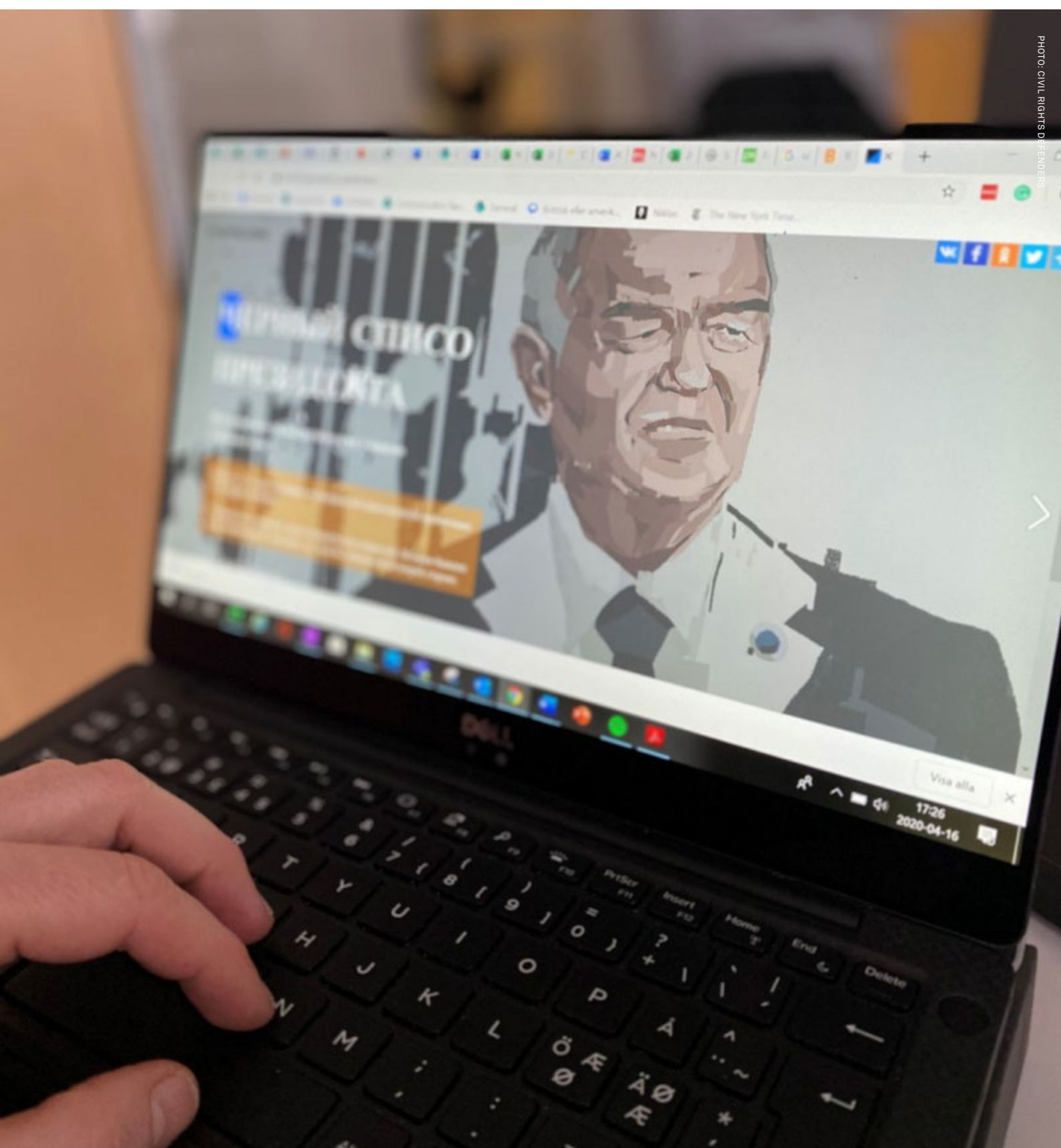
The ongoing work on political reform in Uzbekistan has given us more room for manoeuvre. We have been able to start a formal collaboration with Uzbek journalists who have participated in trainings. With financial support from Civil Rights Defenders, one of our partners was able to launch a report on political prisoners in Uzbekistan. The web-based report, 7x7 Journals, was awarded the Free Media Award for 2019 and has received substantial attention in Russia and other parts of the region. There are plans to translate the journal into English to reach an international readership.



OYUB TITIEV

On 9 January 2018, the Chechen human rights defender Oyub Titiev was arrested on his way to work, falsely accused of illegal drug possession. Titiev, who is the head of the human rights organisation Memorial in Grozny, is a prominent and clear-spoken voice against Ramzan Kadyrov's authoritarian regime. Previously, two other critics of the regime in Chechnya had been arrested and convicted of drug possession. It is, in other words, a common approach to eliminate critics, as the crime can lead to up to ten years in prison.

The legal process, which resulted in Titiev being sentenced to four years in a penal colony, can only be likened to a farce. In a country without an independent judiciary, the outcome was a foregone conclusion and Civil Rights Defenders has aimed strong criticism at the legal proceedings. Memorial is one of few human rights organisations with a permanent presence in the country. In its absence, few critical voices remain that can draw attention to the regime's abuses. However, thanks to public-opinion shaping and pressure from Civil Rights Defenders and other human rights organisations, Titiev was released in June 2019. Today, he continues his work to promote human rights in Chechnya.



The web-based report on political prisoners in Uzbekistan, 7x7 Journals, has received substantial attention in Russia and was awarded the Free Media Award for 2019.

PROTECTION AND SECURITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

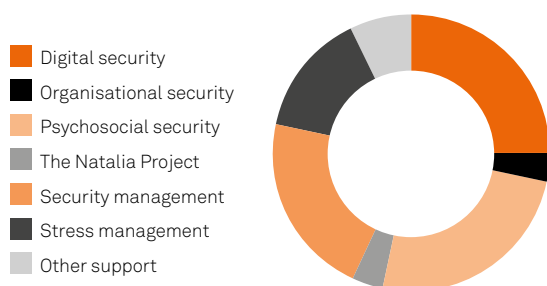
In recent years, being a human rights defender has become increasingly dangerous. Many on the front lines are exposed to risks and threats on a daily basis, putting their lives and safety in danger. Persecution, surveillance, harassment, arbitrary arrests, attacks on offices, and interrogation by the security services – the list of the risks faced by

human rights defenders in their work goes on. Living and working in a hostile environment often takes its toll, on both the physical and the mental health of the individual. Civil Rights Defenders therefore works to increase the security of human rights defenders in several different ways.

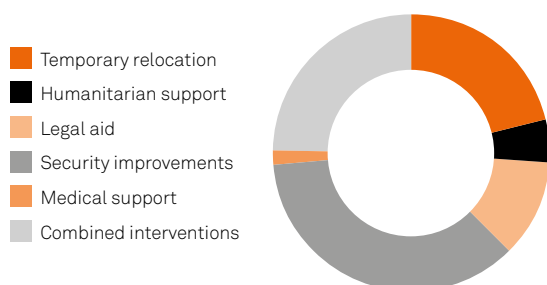
THE MOBILE TRAINING CENTRE

In 2019, we carried out training sessions with 196 participants through our Mobile Training Centre. The programme has been running since 2012 and offers training within a number of different areas. Security training, with a focus on digital security and security management for human rights defenders, has long formed the core of our programme. But in 2019, we saw an increased demand for psychosocial support, such as strategies to prevent burnout and to feel more confident in the face of difficult conversations with, for example, the police and security services.

The Mobile Training Centre offers training in a range of areas. The distribution of courses in 2019 is shown below.



The Emergency Fund has provided various types of support to more than 500 human rights defenders. The distribution of support in 2019 is shown below.



THE EMERGENCY FUND

Civil Rights Defenders' Emergency Fund exists to provide support and assistance to human rights defenders and their families at risk as quickly as possible. In 2019, more than 500 human rights defenders, in 23 of the world's most repressive countries, have received support through the Emergency Fund in form of legal aid, security assistance, relocation to safe housing, or help to leave the country when threats become too serious. Some 92 per cent of those who received support from the Emergency Fund in 2019 have been able to continue their crucial work.



THE NATALIA PROJECT

During the year, another 21 persons joined the Natalia Project – the world's first alarm and positioning system for human rights defenders at risk. Since the launch in 2013, the Natalia Project has grown steadily. It now provides increased personal security for a total of over 170 individuals. The alarm is equipped with GPS technology. When activated, the individual's location is sent to Civil Rights Defenders' offices and to selected people in the human rights defender's network. In the event of an attack, these people can quickly begin the work of locating and trying to help the person in danger, while Civil Rights Defenders informs the outside world of what is happening.



The Ukrainian LGBTI+ activist Olena Shevchenko is one of the participants in the Natalia Project. Olena and her colleagues are an important voice for human rights in Ukraine. They have been subjected to threats and violence a number of times in recent years because of their work.

OLENA SHEVCHENKO

THE LGBTI+ ACTIVIST WHO REFUSES TO BE SILENCED

In March of 2018, Olena Shevchenko, head of the Ukrainian LGBTI+ organisation Insight, organised a women's rights parade in the Ukrainian capital Kiev. A large group of right-wing extremists armed with sticks and tear gas attacked the parade. Olena was arrested by the police and charged with "violation of the procedure for conducting peaceful assemblies".

The allegations were entirely based on claims by a right-wing extremist group that also launched hate campaigns against Olena on social media. In November 2019, Olena was assaulted by two unknown assailants who beat her, shouting homophobic insults.

Since 2017, Olena is a participant in our security

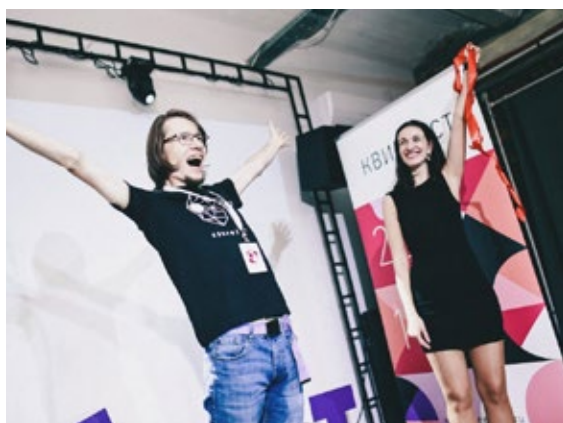
programme, the Natalia Project. She has received tailor-made security training and been equipped with an alarm with a GPS transmitter. In the event of an attack, she can activate the alarm, which sends a signal with her geographical location to Civil Rights Defenders and Olena's closest colleagues. In just a few seconds, we can determine where the attack is taking place and quickly get help to Olena. The ability to act quickly can make the difference between life and death.

Despite repeated attacks, Olena refuses to be silenced. Through the Natalia Project, we want to help increase her safety so that she can continue her crucial work for human rights in Ukraine.



INNOVATION FOR INCREASED SECURITY

In a time when respect for democracy and human rights is in decline in many parts of the world, people from different places, with different backgrounds and experiences, need to work together. The autumn of 2019 thus saw the launch of the first semester of the LiU Changemakers programme – an innovation collaboration between Civil Rights Defenders and Linköping University. The programme is part of a larger collaboration with the purpose of supporting social innovation, with a particular focus on human rights. By connecting human rights defenders with students in the programme, we are able to find new innovative solutions to the difficult challenges that our partners face on a daily basis.



QUEERFEST – RUSSIA

In Saint Petersburg, thousands of people gathered to participate in one of Russia's largest LGBTI+ festivals, Queerfest. Since Queerfest's launch eleven years ago, the Russian state has introduced a series of laws restricting LGBTI+ rights in the country. Nevertheless, this year's edition of the festival was carried out without any pressure – a great success for the organisers. Queerfest is a cultural festival addressing topics such as human rights, identity, gender, and sexuality. Civil Rights Defenders has supported the festival since its inception in 2009.

THE SAME COUNTRY – BUT NOT THE SAME RIGHTS

The exploitation of resources such as minerals and forests continues in Sápmi, limiting Sámi people's ability to influence land use and their own future. There is a need for greater knowledge of the situation of Sámi people in Sweden among politicians and the public. To improve the situation, we are working with the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation and representatives from Sámi civil society. Together with an expert group consisting of Sámi organisations and activists, we carry out advocacy efforts aimed at decision makers with the purpose of empowering Sámi people and increasing their influence over land and water use. Throughout the year, we have hosted several expert group meetings, organised seminars in the Swedish parliament and met with politicians to bring about change.



THE MOOT COURT COMPETITION

For many years, Civil Rights Defenders has been gathering law students from south-eastern Europe to compete in mock human rights trials. During 2019, 20 universities and teams from seven countries in the Western Balkans participated, presenting a human rights case before judges from national constitutional courts and the European Court of Human Rights. The competition provides the participants with practical experience of human rights work while bringing together young lawyers from the region. The goal is also to increase knowledge among future decision makers and inspire an interest in working with human rights. The 2019 winner from Kragujevac proceeded to and won the finals in Strasbourg in November 2019.





THE ROMA SUMMIT

On 20–21 November, the fifth edition of the Western Balkans Roma Summit took place in Pristina, Kosovo. The conference is a cornerstone of a constructive dialogue on the rights of Roma, Egyptians, and Ashkali in the Western Balkans. For two days, decision makers and human rights defenders gathered for panel discussions on the participation of Roma and other minority groups in public and political life, discrimination, and access to the rule of law. Keynote speakers were Albin Kurti, then-Prime Minister of Kosovo; Dan Pavel Doghi, head of the OSCE Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues; and Sweden's Ambassador to Kosovo, Karin Hernmarck Ahlmy.

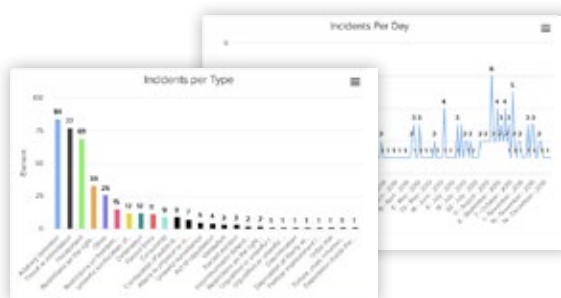
ONLINE IQ

Around the world, governments are using digital surveillance, online censorship, and other coercive measures to track and control their opponents. Applying security measures for apps and digital platforms are very important for human rights defenders to be able to safely carry out their work. That is why Civil Rights Defenders' digital security team released a series of video guides in 2019 showing how to secure a smartphone and its apps, step-by-step. The videos can be found on crd.org.



DIDI – THE DEFENDERS' DATABASE

In many parts of the world, human rights violations go unnoticed and .The Defenders' Database helps human rights defenders and organisations to digitally document and secure evidence of human rights violations. The database also enables human rights defenders to make information about human rights violations available, thus ensuring that they do not go unnoticed. In 2019, the database, which was first introduced in Cuba, has been adapted and developed to meet the needs of human rights actors in several countries where human rights violations are becoming increasingly common.



EUROPRIDE 2022 GOES TO BELGRADE

Five years ago, celebrating Pride was prohibited in Serbia's capital, but in September 2019 Belgrade won the bid to host EuroPride in 2022. The historic victory means that, for the first time ever, the event will take place outside the European Economic Area (EEA). Despite strong competition from Barcelona, Dublin, and Lisbon, Belgrade secured a landslide victory with 71 per cent of the vote. The message from the LGBTI+ movement in Europe is clear: Pride has always been a protest and EuroPride will have a huge impact for LGBTI+ people in Belgrade, Serbia and the whole region. Civil Rights Defenders has supported the efforts around Belgrade's nomination and has for a long time been working hard to increase respect for LGBTI+ rights in the Western Balkans.

FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNICATION

In order to engage more people in our human rights work and ensure long-term financial independence, during 2019 we strengthened the cooperation between our programme, communications, and fundraising departments. Always putting the voices of human rights defenders front and centre, we have accomplished a broader outreach and increased the knowledge of our work through both the media and our own digital channels. Through strategic brand building and integrated fundraising activities aimed at selected target groups, Civil Rights Defenders has engaged more people who want to follow or support our work financially.

During the year, we ran two major campaigns. The first one, linked to the European Parliament election, with a focus on the decline of democracy around the world, had a significant impact on social media.

The second was the organisation's first major integrated Christmas campaign, "A High Price". The campaign stands out as a successful example of highlighting the stories of human rights defenders while engaging broad groups to follow and spread our message as well as contribute financially to our work.



THE CAMPAIGN "A HIGH PRICE"

Freedom of expression is under serious threat. Journalists and opinion makers throughout the world are being persecuted, silenced, and imprisoned. To demonstrate the high price that many are forced to pay for freedom of expression, we put the world's most expensive article behind a paywall. An article written by Pulitzer Prize winner Esther Htu San, who has been forced to flee her country due to repeated threats as a result of her revelations.

The article was unlocked when we reached our target of 1 million Swedish krona. All donations went toward empowering the struggle for freedom of expression and supporting those whose words and work have cost them dearly. The campaign "A High Price" exceeded all our expectations in terms of fundraising, reach, as well as brand building. It was nominated for the Golden Egg Award, Sweden's oldest and most prestigious competition for the communication industry.

A close-up portrait of Josefin Ekermann, a young woman with light brown hair tied back, looking directly at the camera with a gentle smile. She is wearing a dark top and a grey textured cardigan. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting with trees and a building.

JOSEFIN EKERMANN

21 AUG. 1988 – 10 MAR. 2019

On Sunday, 10 March 2019, we lost our friend and colleague in a tragic plane accident outside Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

She will be back soon, looking us in the eye, giving us a hug, and sharing our grief. Silently, she comes. Walking barefoot through the corridor, unnoticed.

Over time, grief takes on a different shape, and our memory organises itself around a hard-working, principled, and responsible human rights defender. Close friend to a few, but with compassion for anyone who needed it.

In the spring of 2019, Josefin was supposed to finish her work on developing a database in which human rights defenders can record violations, which she was in charge of. The idea behind the database is that violations must not be forgotten, that they must be documented and organised so that those responsible can be held accountable when the time comes. It is dangerous work, both for those who document the violations and for those who testify.

Up until the spring of 2019, the database had mainly been used by Cuban organisations, but the new version would be made available to many more. On Sunday 10 March, she was on her way to Nairobi to meet with a group of East African organisations, and many more meetings were scheduled. The loss of Josefin was thus also a major blow to those who would have received her support and solidarity in the future.

As we now take Josefin's work forward, it is not just a professional and a colleague who is being missed. It is a much larger personality who was present, full of life, integrity, laughter, and wisdom. This loss is immeasurable, but her power inspires us in our work moving forward.

ANNUAL REPORT

ORGANISATION ID NO. 802011-1442

**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS
HEREBY PRESENT THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE 2019 FINANCIAL YEAR.**

MANAGEMENT REPORT

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORGANISATION'S ACTIVITIES

Civil Rights Defenders is an international human rights organisation that is politically and religiously independent. The organisation defends people's civil and political rights and empowers human rights defenders at risk in Sweden and in the countries around the world where respect for human rights is at its weakest. Civil Rights Defenders maintains a head office in Stockholm, engages in advocacy activities and legal processes, and provides information on the situation of human rights globally.

Registered office: Stockholm, Sweden

VISION AND MISSION

Civil Rights Defenders' Vision

A world of democratic societies in which we all enjoy civil and political rights.

Civil Rights Defenders' Mission

Our mission is to defend civil and political rights together with local human rights defenders in order to increase their safety, capacity, and access to justice.

We are part of a global movement of human rights defenders and work together with those at risk. Through legal processes and advocacy efforts, we hold states, individuals, and non-state actors to account for human rights violations.

We stand up for the norms and values expressed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and in other relevant human rights instruments. We encourage people to claim these rights to promote democratic societies.

WHY IS CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS' WORK IMPORTANT?

On the basis of the principle of equal dignity for all, Civil Rights Defenders works toward a world of democratic societies in which we all enjoy civil and political rights. Conflicts and human rights

violations increasingly pervade our world, and we believe that a well-functioning, strong, and local civil society is becoming even more important. Civil Rights Defenders wants to drive politics, business, and civil society forward by working and developing together on the important issues of human rights. We believe that our commitment, and expertise within our areas of knowledge, affect change and contribute to a better world for all.

GOAL

Civil Rights Defenders' overall goal is to improve people's access to freedom and justice through greater respect for their civil and political rights. To achieve this, the work is guided by subsidiary goals. Civil Rights Defenders shall:

1. Support people to exercise their civil and political rights through:
 - Increased access to legal aid
 - Increased access to information
2. Induce states to take responsibility for the fulfilment of human rights by:
 - Influencing legislation
 - Improving the implementation of existing human rights laws
3. Strengthen the work of local human rights defenders by:
 - Improving their ability and capacity to advocate for their rights and fight for change
 - Improving the security for human rights defenders at risk

WORKING METHODS

Investigation and Accountability Mechanisms

Civil Rights Defenders investigates and holds governments and other decision makers accountable when legislation or its implementation violates people's civil or political rights. This work is carried

out independently, or in collaboration with local human rights defenders. The organisation evaluates laws, proposed legislation, and regulatory activities, as well as litigates against states and those in power who violate human rights.

Public Opinion and Advocacy

Civil Rights Defenders affects change and influences states, decision-makers, and public opinion. The organisation engages in opinion shaping and advocacy work, independently or together with local human rights defenders and other organisations to increase the capacity for national and international impact. Civil Rights Defenders drives debate, runs campaigns, and highlights key issues in the media, through seminars, and reports. In totalitarian states, we support local independent media outlets and other platforms offering constructive discussion and debate.

Support and Education

Civil Rights Defenders' founding principle is to promote strong local human rights actors. The organisation partners with and supports local actors, through security training, emergency support, education, professional development, and financial support. Based on local needs, we support developments to increase the ability and capacity for work that affects change locally. It is also a question of human rights defenders' methods as well as access to tools and systems for reporting and performance management. Furthermore, it is important to create conditions for local human rights defenders to safely meet and exchange experiences to strengthen and inspire each other.



ORGANISATION

Civil Rights Defenders is a non-profit expert organisation working to promote human rights. **Gerald Nagler** is the organisation's founder and

honorary chair. The annual general meeting (AGM) is the organisation's highest decision-making body. Membership is conditional on supporting the organisation's goals and core values (as expressed in international human rights treaties) as well as a willingness to work towards them. The organisation's activities are funded not primarily by membership dues but through fundraising and grants received. During 2019, the board discussed Civil Rights Defenders' organisational form and will continue to review the issue in 2020. Membership dues for 2019 were SEK 300. The AGM elects the board, which at the end of 2019 consisted of eight members — four women and four men. Four board meetings were held during the year. There is no remuneration for the work carried out by the organisation's honorary chair, the chair of the board, or the board members.

BOARD OF CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS:

- Benedicte Berner (Political Scientist) Chairperson of the Board
- Anna Jonsson Cornell (Professor) Board Member
- Carin Norberg (Chair, Center for Economic and Social Rights) Board Member
- Christian Åhlund (Lawyer) Board Member
- Christoffer Lindblad (Founder and Partner, Pelago AB) Board Member
- Anne Ramberg (Lawyer) Board Member
- Fredrik Andersson (Entrepreneur) Board Member
- Lars Häggström (Executive in Residence, IMD Business School) Board Member

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Amelie Silfverstolpe, Therese Reinfeldt, and Kerstin Brunnberg make up the nominations committee.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Anders Pettersson

MEMBERS

In 2019, Civil Rights Defenders had 19 members.

BOARD OF CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS



Benedicte Berner



Fredrik Andersson



Anna Jonsson Cornell



Lars Häggström



Christoffer Lindblad



Carin Norberg



Anne Ramberg



Christian Åhlund

CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS' PERSONNEL

Civil Rights Defenders' work is primarily carried out by employed staff at the organisation's head office in Stockholm, in field offices or through stationing in Asia, Africa, Belgrade, Bogotá, Brussels, Istanbul, Pristina, Sarajevo, and Tirana. The total number of employees at the end of 2019 was 65, compared with 57 at the end of 2018.

Distribution by office

Stockholm	45
Asia	2
Africa	1
Belgrade	7
Bogotá	2
Brussels	2
Istanbul	1
Pristina	2
Sarajevo	2
Tirana	1
Total	65

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS DURING THE FINANCIAL YEAR

Over the past decade, Civil Rights Defenders has grown in terms of both turnover and number of employees; today we work in more countries than ever before. This growth has entailed some teething problems, partly in communication and partly relating to our financial processes.

Through in-depth analyses and a process that have been linked to our strategic work, in 2019 we established a new way of working supported by a new financial management system and new cutting-edge expertise in the Finance Department. The former CFO left Civil Rights Defenders in spring 2019 and a new CFO began on 1 September. The change of business system in late 2018 continued to be implemented and fine-tuned in 2019. The change of system was necessary and there was a strong focus in 2019 on securing and testing the system and on training the organisation in the new working methods and reports that are now available.

Our communication efforts were also bolstered in 2019 with resources to create an internal critical mass of skilled communicators in the press, marketing, and PR.

In 2019, Civil Rights Defenders developed a new strategy, a process that involved the whole organisation and the board. The work resulted in

a new strategy for the period 2020-2022, which is firmly rooted in an annually updated plan of action and accompanying budget. Our new way of working, evaluating, and following up increases our efficiency and agility.

During the year we also developed a new organisational structure, including updated and new processes. This has led to greater clarity, which permeates the entire organisation and is described in our new central cloud-based management system, 'the CRD Way'. The entire organisation is now using Microsoft SharePoint and Teams, which has brought the organisation closer to achieving an even more uniform working method with the goal of 'One Civil Rights Defenders', wherever someone is based in the world. The CRD Way has also helped us to act based on the same frameworks and information. The CRD Way is a shared space where we bring together policies and governing documents, as well as supporting documents and guidelines.

In August 2019, the accountancy firm Ernst & Young conducted an operational audit on behalf of Sida which highlighted our work on the CRD Way in a very positive way. It emerged, for example, that our internal procedures had evolved considerably since the last audit by Ernst & Young in 2015.

The extensive internal efforts regarding our vision and mission, strategy, governance, processes, and systems during the year have also improved the working environment. The results for the 2019 survey were the best the organisation has had to-date with a staff satisfaction index of 81, which can be viewed as a very positive development.

USE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

All of Civil Rights Defenders' assets are deposited in bank accounts. No other financial instruments have been used.

SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

Work Environment

Throughout the year, Civil Rights Defenders continued to focus on the psychosocial work environment, with respect to both organisational structure and creating clearer roles and expectations. The organisation has continued to use the performance review process. Directors and other employees alike acquired greater expertise in order to ensure quality control throughout the process.

In 2019, a HR specialist was recruited who will continue the systematic efforts to improve the work environment.

Staff Survey

In autumn 2019, Civil Rights Defenders carried out its annual staff survey. The results show excellent progress in all of the areas, with an increase in the Leadership Index from 70 to 80 and an increase in the Engagement Index from 76 to 81.

Equality and Diversity

Civil Rights Defenders is an international organisation with employees from countries all over the world. More than 20 different languages are spoken within the organisation. During the year, Civil Rights Defenders introduced competence-based recruitment as standard as part of its work to increase and ensure diversity in the organisation. In our Code of Conduct, which all employees and interns are required to sign, clear guidelines are given on the equality of all and what to do if you discover or are subjected to harassment or discrimination.

Collective Labour Agreement and Professional Development

Civil Rights Defenders follows a collective labour agreement for professional employees signed by the IDEA (the Employers' Association for Non-Profit Organisations), Unionen, and Akademikerförbunden (the employee side) that covers staff employed in Sweden. Local law and agreements apply for staff at local offices abroad. Skills development is discussed in connection with the annual performance review. Development plans and goals are written into individual documents for each year.

Travel and Purchases

In accordance with the organisation's environmental policy, economic and social as well as environmental considerations shall be taken into account on the occasion of purchases of services, equipment, and materials for the organisation's offices, as well as in all other procurement. For travel and transport, the most environmentally friendly options must be chosen whenever possible. Civil Rights Defenders takes responsibility for waste through waste separation and recycling of materials and uses electricity from renewable energy sources.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Civil Rights Defenders performs systematic risk assessment and risk management by identifying, analysing, and working to ensure that unforeseen events or circumstances do not have a negative impact on activities and expected results. Through careful and systematic analysis, documentation,

and monitoring of risks, their adverse effects can be avoided or mitigated. We differentiate between internal risks, such as the lack of adequate human resources, capacity or management functions, reporting of results, financial control, and corruption; and external risks, such as unexpected political, institutional, economic, environmental, social, or technical circumstances. Civil Rights Defenders uses an integrated risk management approach, which involves a continuous, proactive, and systematic process to understand, manage, and communicate risks from a broad perspective. It also means making strategic decisions that contribute to achieving the organisation's overall objectives.

The board of Civil Rights Defenders conducts an annual assessment of the risks reported by the executive management and how these have been managed. Based on the analysis of risk assessment and risk management, the board decides on an annual risk management plan and assesses the extent to which it will influence strategic decisions and future operational directions. Civil Rights Defenders operates in countries with a high risk of corruption and where human rights work in many cases is prohibited. Taking preventive measures is therefore important. The organisation has a zero-tolerance policy and an anti-corruption working group. The working group deals with reported suspicions of corruption and maintains and develops best practices for compliance with the policy.

RESULT AND FINANCIAL POSITION

The organisation's results improved somewhat compared with the previous year. In 2019, the organisation had an operating loss of SEK 1,423,238. The reason is a combination of the target income not being achieved and several older agreements being extended, agreements that do not fully cover Civil Rights Defenders' core functions. During the year we also handled the creation of a new communication function to work on our projects. Our agreements with new donors reflect this, but the old agreements sometimes lack coverage for this function. The long-term investment in fundraising has not yet had a full impact.

Given the organisation's low equity ratio, the focus moving forward is on sustainable growth while maintaining, and preferably increasing, the equity ratio. Due to movements in exchange rates, the loss for the year was mitigated by a foreign exchange gain, which yields a loss after financial items of SEK 1,335,148.

During the year, grants (SEK 27,000) were paid out from Civil Rights Defenders' Emergency Fund using funds raised in previous years. We have also added funds (SEK 128,000) to the Emergency Fund. The loss after the change in special purpose funds, SEK 1,434,055, is brought forward. Equity brought forward thus amounts to SEK 3,018,051.

FUNDRAISING

Civil Rights Defenders' operating income during 2019 amounted to SEK 88,954 thousand, which represents a decrease of SEK 2,171 thousand compared to 2018. The income comes from both government and private funders and includes both donations and grants. To ensure continued financial strength and long-term stability, the organisation will continue to prioritise increasing funds raised from government and private funders. The aim is also to develop both partnerships with businesses and philanthropists as well as individual donating.

Civil Rights Defenders is a member of the Swedish Fundraising Association (formerly the Swedish Fundraising Council (FRIL)), which advocates ethical and professional fundraising and strives for increased giving in Sweden and to improve conditions for collecting donations. Civil Rights Defenders has a seven digit 90-bank account, which is a stamp of quality for non-profit organisations, foundations and religious communities approved as 90-accounts holders by the charity monitoring organisation The Swedish Fundraising Control.

Public Grants

In 2019, Civil Rights Defenders' income from grants from public bodies amounted to a total of SEK 57,504 thousand, which is SEK 613 thousand higher than in 2018. The biggest grant-awarding bodies are Sida and the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Grants from state actors are important for maintaining long-term engagement, in Sweden and in the world.

Foundations and Organisations

Foundations and organisations are becoming an increasingly important source of funding for the organisation. The biggest contributions came from the Open Society Foundations, National Endowment for Democracy, and the Gerald and Monica Nagler Foundation.

Funds Raised from the General Public

During the year, Civil Rights Defenders raised SEK 5,181 thousand from private individuals, which cor-

responds to an increase of 19 per cent. The number of both sporadic private donors and monthly donors is increasing and at the end of the year the organisation had just over 1,600 monthly donors, which corresponds to an increase of 14 per cent over the previous year. Monthly donations allow for long-term planning and stability, and reduce administrative costs. Therefore, support from monthly donors continues to be prioritised in the coming years.

Companies

During the year, companies and organisations contributed SEK 19,357 thousand to Civil Rights Defenders, either through long-term partnerships or by making a one-off donation. In 2018, the corresponding income from companies was SEK 18,937 thousand. Donations and grants from companies are of great importance for our ability to meet the challenges ahead, and the organisation will focus on strengthening its partnerships with companies and organisations. As a beneficiary of the Swedish Postcode Lottery, Civil Rights Defenders received SEK 9,002 thousand in the annual distribution of funds, a decrease of SEK 998 thousand on the previous year. In 2019, we entered into a long-term partnership with the Swedish Olympic and Paralympic Committees. Other important partners that supported our operations included the Swedish Football Association and Twitter. Several new corporate donors made contributions in connection with the 2019 Christmas campaign.

EXPECTED FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

2019 was the final year of the strategy period. Future planning efforts were initiated in September 2018 with a review of the organisation's vision and mission, and the new strategy for the period 2020-2022 was finalised in autumn 2019. The strategy gives us a three-year perspective, with an emphasis on 'expanding the scope for human rights defenders'. We do this by working with partners, improving their safety and capacity, by raising awareness of civil and political rights, and by holding those responsible to account when international norms are not upheld and rights are violated.

In light of the pandemic affecting the world at the beginning of 2020, it is clear how civil society around the world, and human rights defenders in particular, have been affected. In many cases, restrictions applied because of Covid-19 are either not related to the pandemic, not proportionate or not temporary; rather they aim to further reduce the space for civil society and restrict opposition

to what are often authoritarian regimes. However, it is worth noting that even before the pandemic, it could be observed that the number of democratic states in the world has been decreasing in recent years, while the number of authoritarian states has been increasing for more than a decade. The work that Civil Rights Defenders carries out with its partners will therefore be extremely relevant in upcoming years, not least in order to manage the effects of government actions on civil society in the shadow of Covid-19.

In order to strengthen ourselves and our partners, we have continued to invest in our ability to raise funds and process agreements with institutional donors. The effect of the restructuring of Civil Rights Defenders' financial engine has already yielded results, and efforts are continuing so that we will have a big impact and be cost efficient.

On 1 September, Civil Rights Defenders will relocate its head office to Östgötagatan 90 in

Stockholm and, in doing so, will decrease its rental expenses by 15 per cent.

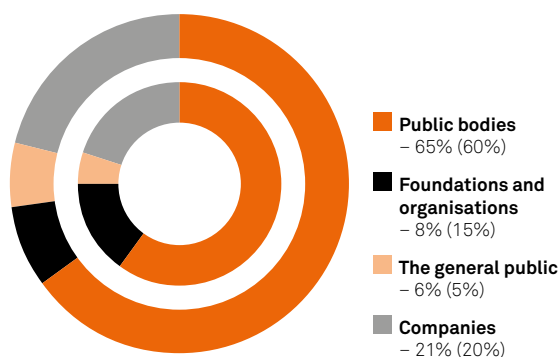
Needless to say, our geographical expansion in the world has been affected by Covid-19. We see a general risk to growth and expansion. This encompasses the organisation's ability to travel and work with partners or establish new partnerships, the impact on private fundraising, and establishing ourselves in more countries and regions. For example, the planned expansion in the Middle East and North Africa, which has already begun, will now take longer to complete.

CODE REPORT BASED ON FUNDRAISING ASSOCIATION GUIDELINES

Civil Rights Defenders follows the Code of Quality issued by the Swedish Fundraising Association. See www.givasverige.se/.

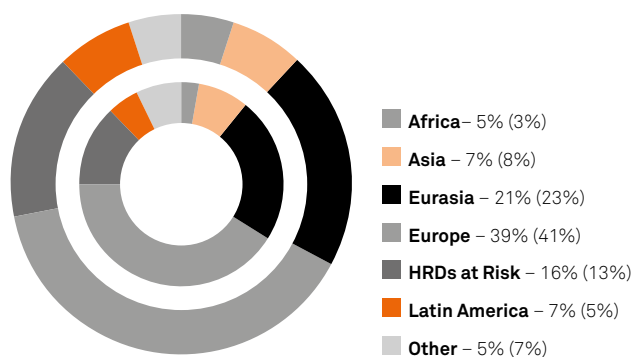
MULTI-YEAR COMPARISON

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Total income including net interest income (SEK thousands)	89,042	91,454	82,800	79,185	85,582
Operating income	88,954	91,125	82,782	78,655	85,436
Profit/loss after financial items	-1,335	-2,384	-353	1,602	3,902
Project expenses/total income	90%	91%	87%	89%	91%
Fundraising expenses/total income	4%	5%	7%	4%	1%
Administrative expenses/total income	7%	7%	6%	5%	3%
Equity ratio	8%	11%	13%	13%	11%



INCOME

Total income incl. interest income and similar profit items for 2019: SEK 89,042 thousand (2018: SEK 91,454 thousand)
The outer circle shows the distribution of income for 2019 and the inner circle for 2018.



SPECIAL PURPOSE EXPENSES

Special purpose expenses for 2019: SEK 80,431 thousand (2018: SEK 82,871 thousand)
The outer circle shows the distribution of special purpose expenses for 2019 and the inner circle for 2018.

Income statement

Amounts in SEK

	Note	2019	2018
Operating income			
Membership dues	3	5,700	5,400
Donations		15,121,778	15,368,517
Grants		73,786,108	75,261,547
Other income		40,229	489,413
Total operating income		88,953,815	91,124,877
Operating expenses	4, 5		
Project expenses	6	-80,431,407	-82,871,235
Fundraising expenses		-3,464,945	-4,512,025
Administrative expenses	7	-6,480,701	-6,449,798
Total operating expenses		-90,377,053	-93,833,058
Operating profit/loss		-1,423,238	-2,708,181
Other interest income and similar profit items	8	106,220	328,837
Interest expenses and similar loss items	8	-18,130	-4,271
Total profit from financial investments		88,090	324,566
Loss after financial items		-1,335,148	-2,383,615
Tax on profit for the year		-2,736	0
Loss for the year		-1,337,884	-2,383,615
Changes in special purpose funds			
Loss for the year according to the income statement (see above)		-1,337,884	-2,383,615
Utilisation of special purpose funds from previous year		26,895	839,227
Designation of special purpose funds		-123,066	-380,281
Remaining amount for the year/changes in equity brought forward		-1,434,055	-1,924,669

BALANCE SHEET

Amounts in SEK

ASSETS	Note	2019-12-31	2018-12-31
Current assets			
Current receivables			
Accounts receivable		122,250	125,019
Current tax asset		4,182	1,338
Other receivables		876,910	442,282
Prepaid expenses and accrued income	9	1,298,677	1,266,836
Total current receivables		2,302,019	1,835,475
Cash and bank balances		37,595,041	38,620,150
Total current assets		39,897,060	40,455,625
Total assets		39,897,060	40,455,625
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity			
Special purpose funds		123,066	26,895
Profit brought forward		2,894,985	4,329,040
Total equity		3,018,051	4,355,935
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable		1,790,180	1,403,149
Income tax liabilities		70,591	563,215
Liabilities – received, unutilised grants	10	27,563,898	27,361,788
Other liabilities		1,058,413	1,151,514
Accrued expenses and deferred income	11	6,395,927	5,620,023
Total current liabilities		36,879,009	36,099,690
Total equity and liabilities		39,897,060	40,455,625

CHANGES IN EQUITY

	Special purpose funds (Emergency Fund)	Profit/loss brought forward	Amounts in SEK Total equity
Opening balance	26,895	4,329,040	4,355,935
Special purpose designated by donor	123,066	-123,066	0
Utilisation of special purpose funds from previous year	-26,895	26,895	0
Loss for the year	0	-1,337,884	-1,337,884
Closing balance	123,066	2,894,985	3,018,051

Around the world, brave people are standing up for the rights of others – without a thought to their own safety. The Emergency Fund enables us to assist these people when at risk and in emergency situations.

CASH FLOW ANALYSIS – INDIRECT METHOD

	Note	Amounts in SEK 2019-01-01 –2019-12-01	2018-01-01 –2018-12-01
Operating profit/loss		-1,423,238	-2,708,181
		-1,423,238	-2,708,181
Interest received		2,711	3,473
Interest paid		-18,130	-4,271
Income tax paid		-2,736	0
Cash flow from operating activities before changes in working capital		-1,441,393	-2,708,979
Changes in working capital			
Change in accounts receivable		2,769	25,181
Change in other current receivables		-469,313	-386,229
Change in accounts payable		387,031	-1,081,827
Change in other current liabilities		392,288	-8,318,153
Cash flow from operating activities		-1,128,618	-12,470,007
Cash flow for the year		-1,128,618	-12,470,007
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		38,620,150	50,764,794
Exchange rate differences related to cash and bank balances		103,509	325,364
Cash and cash equivalents at year end	12	37,595,041	38,620,150

NOTES

NOTE 1 ACCOUNTING AND VALUATION PRINCIPLES

The accounting and valuation principles comply with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act, BFNAR 2012:1 (K3) and the Swedish Fundraising Association's governing guidelines for annual reports, unless otherwise stated below. The accounting principles remain unchanged from the previous financial year.

INCOME STATEMENT

Operating Income

Only the inflow of economic benefits that Civil Rights Defenders has received, or will receive, for its own use is recognised as income. Income is recognised at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable unless otherwise stated. Membership dues comprise payments received for membership of Civil Rights Defenders. Membership dues are recognised as income when payments are received from the members. A transaction in which Civil Rights Defenders receives an asset or a service with a value attached, without providing anything of the same value in return, constitutes a donation or a grant. If the asset or service is received because Civil Rights Defenders has met or will meet certain conditions, and the organisation has an obligation to repay the counterparty if such conditions are not met, such an asset or service is classified as a grant. If it does not constitute a grant, it is a donation. Donations are mainly funds raised from private individuals, companies, and organisations. Donations are reported on a cash basis, but if a donation refers to a specific time period, it is allocated to that period through provisions for special purpose funds in equity. If there are donations from companies and organisations that have been agreed but not received at the reporting date, these are recognised as income following individual assessment.

Grants are recognised as income when the conditions attached to them have been met. Grants received are recognised as a liability until the conditions attached to them have been met. This means that income is only recognised when it is highly probable that the grant will not be reclaimed. Grants forwarded to partner organisations where Civil Rights Defenders is responsible to the awarding body are also recognised as income. Grants consist mainly of cash and cash equivalents from public bodies, including the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Swedish Institute, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Postcode Lottery. Income not connected to Civil Rights Defenders' primary operations is reported under Other income for the respective period.

Operating Expenses

Operating expenses include project expenses, fundraising expenses, and administrative expenses. Joint expenses such as IT, accounting, operational management, and communication expenses are allocated to project expenses, fundraising expenses, and administrative expenses according to an allocation key. Project expenses are those that are directly associated with the fulfilment of Civil Rights Defenders' purpose according to its statutes. These include expenses for personnel engaged to carry out

activities adopted by the board, in and outside of Sweden, and any administrative expenses directly arising from the obligations the organisation has assumed in order to fulfil its purpose. Project expenses also include expenses for opinion-shaping and information activities regarding Civil Rights Defenders' mission. The monitoring, reporting, and auditing of projects are also classified as project expenses.

Project expenses also include activity-related support expenses, which are allocated to the relevant activity using allocation keys. Fundraising expenses are expenses intended to generate external income in the form of donations and grants from all donors and grant-awarding bodies, i.e. both private individuals and companies. This includes existing donors and efforts to identify new donors through campaigns, mailings, and maintenance of donor registers. Fundraising expenses also include costs of printed materials, postage, salaries, and allocated joint support expenses. Administrative expenses are those required to manage and run the organisation. The organisation's administration is a guarantee of quality for the project and the donor. Examples of such expenses relate to board meetings and annual general meetings, accounting and annual reports, the handling of payroll and social security contributions, VAT and tax declarations, audits of the organisation itself, and the Swedish Fundraising Association code, as well as administrative systems such as accounting systems, the purchasing ledger, and asset register. Expenses not related to projects or fundraising are classified as administrative expenses. Administrative expenses may also include any joint support expenses that have not been allocated to project, fundraising, or membership expenses. All leases are recognised as operating leases, which means that lease payments are recognised on a straight line basis over the term of the lease. Remuneration of employees in the form of salaries, social security contributions, and other benefits are recognised as an expense as and when the employees perform the services. Pension obligations are classified as defined-contribution pensions and recognised as an expense in the year in which the pension is earned. Civil Rights Defenders is a non-profit association and as such is not liable to pay taxes.

BALANCE SHEET

Assets and liabilities are measured at cost unless otherwise stated below. Foreign currency receivables and liabilities are measured at the closing rate. Accounts receivable are measured individually at the amounts expected to be received. Civil Rights Defenders is a non-profit association – it does not aim to make a profit and has no external owners – which means that terms such as profit/loss and equity have a different meaning than for other legal forms, such as limited companies. Equity comprises funds, such as donations, that have been provided to enable the organisation to fulfil its purposes and have not been paid out at the reporting date, and for which there is no legally binding obligation classified as a

liability or provision. As there are restrictions on the use of various funds, the following division is made:

- **Special purpose funds:** This capital may be used, but only for the purpose or purposes specified by the donor or the Board of Directors. Such funds are generally used in the following financial year. The funds include fund-raising donations where a specific project was specified, and which have not yet been utilised.
- **Equity brought forward:** This capital consists mainly of unused funds that have been provided to the organisation without restrictions, as well as the organisation's profit or loss. Unused funds that have been provided to the organisation without restrictions are at the disposal of the

Board of Directors and may be used in accordance with the organisation's statutes and to fulfil the organisation's purposes. The profit or loss for the year (before allocation), as recognised in the income statement, represents the difference between operating income, operating expenses, and profit from financial activities.

NOTE 2 ESTIMATES AND ASSESSMENTS

No material items in the organisation's income statement and balance sheet are based on estimates and assessments.

NOTE 3 FUNDS RAISED

Donations recognised in the income statement

Funds raised

	2019	2018
General public	5,181,375	4,369,684
Companies:		
Swedish Postcode Lottery	9,002,210	10,000,000
Other companies	203,580	648,833
Other organisations	600,000	350,000
External foundations	134,612	0
Total funds raised (a)	15,121,778	15,368,517

Pro-bono services received have not been recognised in the income statement and in 2019 mainly related to services within communication and law(b).

Grants recognised as income

Funds raised (grants according to private law)

Foundations and organisations:

National Endowment for Democracy	1,602,828	2,892,676
Open Society Foundations	3,973,820	5,899,663
Fair Trials	428,967	314,135
Gerald & Monica Nagler Foundation	499,998	463,958
Other	360,086	861,637

Companies:

Swedish Postcode Lottery	9,416,729	7,938,175
Total funds raised (c)	16,282,428	18,370,244

Public grants

EU	2,013,295	1,066,057
Sida	46,629,891	51,699,965
Swedish Institute	485,273	1,247,455
Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	5,037,542	1,477,954
Vinnova	581,673	320,704
Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society	1,647,057	0
Folke Bernadotte Academy	611,653	363,093
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	138,527	301,213
German Ministry of Foreign Affairs	345,566	257,097
Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	13,203	157,763
Total public grants (d)	57,503,680	56,891,300

Amounts in SEK

NOTE 3 FUNDS RAISED, continued**Total funds raised comprise the following**

	2019	2018
Donations recognised in the income statement (a)	15,121,778	15,368,517
Donations not recognised in the income statement (b)	0	0
Grants in accordance with private law recognised as income (c)	16,282,428	18,370,244
Total funds raised	31,404,206	33,738,761

NOTE 4 SALARIES, OTHER BENEFITS, AND SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS**Salaries**

	2019	2018
Board of Directors	–	–
Executive Director	1,049,319	978,247
Other employees	21,894,598	21,213,293
Social security contributions	7,555,050	7,509,494
Pension expenses	2,264,292	2,228,667
Total salaries and benefits	32,763,259	31,929,701

The Executive Director's pension expenses accounted for SEK 376,824 (SEK 321,055) of total pension expenses.

The period of notice between Civil Rights Defenders and the Executive Director is six months. There is no severance agreement.

Remuneration below one half of the base amount totalled SEK 124,947 (SEK 29,600) and relates to groups of experts in projects.

Geographical distribution of salaries and other benefits:

	2019	2018
Sweden	19,712,929	19,051,697
Other countries	3,251,274	3,139,843
Total	22,943,917	22,191,540

Average number of employees, Sweden

	2019	2018
Men	17	13
Women	22	24
Total	39	37

Average number of employees, other countries

	2019	2018
Men	8	7
Women	12	10
Total	20	17

Members of the board

	2019	2018
Men	4	4
Women	4	4
Total	8	8

Directors

	2019	2018
Men	6	6
Women	5	5
Total	11	11

Amounts in SEK

NOTE 5 LEASES

Civil Rights Defenders mainly rents office premises in Sweden and in other parts of the world. Expenses for the year amounted to SEK 3,586,000.

Future office expenses are due as follows:

	2019	2018
Within 1 year	3,819,000,	3,675,000
2–5 years	2,545,000	3,892,000
After 5 years	2,484,000	–

Civil Rights Defenders is changing offices in Stockholm from 1 September 2020 and has signed a seven-year lease with the new landlord. The notice period for the contract is 12 months and the extension period is three years. The new contract represents a decrease in CRD's rental expenses. The expenses for the period of 2–5 years are not index-adjusted.

NOTE 6 PROJECT EXPENSES

	2019	2018
Africa	3,950,347	2,203,687
Asia	5,934,646	6,491,881
Eurasia	16,416,052	19,419,249
Europe	23,779,995	29,230,185
Latin America	5,683,344	4,235,795
Human Rights Defenders at Risk	12,827,050	10,327,112
Sweden	7,868,015	4,931,554
Other	3,971,958	6,031,772
Total project expenses	80,431,407	82,871,235

NOTE 7 ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

	2019	2018
Accounting expenses and administration	1,034,530	913,898
Human resource expenses	3,595,040	3,528,155
Project management and financial management system	301,222	1,259,000
Office expenses	1,478,559	591,717
Board and membership expenses	71,349	157,028
Total administrative expenses	6,480,701	6,449,798

NOTE 8 OTHER INTEREST AND SIMILAR PROFIT/LOSS ITEMS

	2019	2018
Interest income	2,711	3,473
Interest expenses	-18,130	-4,271
Exchange rate differences, cash and bank balances	103,509	325,364
Total	88,090	324,566

NOTE 9 PREPAID EXPENSES AND ACCRUED INCOME

	2019-12-31	2018-12-31
Prepaid expenses:		
Rent	929,593	896,431
Other items	369,084	370,405
Total	1,298,677	1,266,836

Amounts in SEK

NOTE 10 LIABILITIES – RECEIVED, UNUTILISED GRANTS

	2019-12-31	2018-12-31
Liability, unutilised grant from Sida	15,391,231	16,411,671
Liability, unutilised grant from the Swedish Postcode Lottery	1,208,365	7,515,333
Liability, unutilised grant from others	10,964,302	3,434,784
Total	27,563,898	27,361,788

NOTE 11 ACCRUED EXPENSES AND DEFERRED INCOME

	2019-12-31	2018-12-31
Accrued social security contributions	1,566,263	1,378,642
Holiday pay liability	2,904,547	2,919,411
Other items	1,925,117	1,321,970
Total	6,395,927	5,620,024

NOTE 12 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AFTER THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR

The board concludes that there is uncertainty regarding the scale of the impact the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus will have on Civil Rights Defenders' budgeted income for 2020, the organisation's ability to carry out planned activities financed through grants, and ultimately the consequences for our organisation in terms of personnel and organisation. Altogether, this creates uncertainty about how the organisation's results will be affected in the new year. The management and board are actively monitoring developments and continuously taking action to mitigate the effect.

This annual report has been digitally signed.
Stockholm, 30 April 2020

Benedicte Berner
Chair

Anna Jonsson Cornell
Board Member

Anne Ramberg
Board Member

Carin Norberg
Board Member

Christoffer Lindblad
Board Member

Fredrik Andersson
Board Member

Lars Häggström
Board Member

Christian Åhlund
Board Member

Anders Pettersson
Executive Director

Our audit report was submitted on 8 May 2020.
Grant Thornton Sweden AB

Lena Johnson
Authorised Public Accountant

AUDIT REPORT

**TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS,
ORGANISATION ID NO. 802011-1442**

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Opinion

We have audited the annual accounts for Civil Rights Defenders for the year 2019. The association's annual accounts are included on pages 32–45 of this document.

In our opinion, the annual accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act and present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the association at 31 December 2019 and its financial performance and cash flow for the year then ended. The statutory administration report is consistent with the other parts of the annual accounts.

We therefore recommend that the annual general meeting adopt the income statement and the balance sheet.

Basis for opinion

We conducted the audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISA) and generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden. Our responsibilities under these standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities section. We are independent of the association in accordance with ethical requirements for professional accountants in Sweden and have otherwise fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Information other than the annual accounts

The Board of Directors and the Executive Director are responsible for other information. The other information consists of the annual report for 2019 (but does not include the annual accounts and our audit report concerning these).

Our opinion on the annual accounts does not extend to this information and we do not express any form of confirmation regarding this other information.

In connection with our audit of the annual accounts, it is our responsibility to read the information identified above and consider whether the information is materially inconsistent with the annual accounts. During this procedure, we also take into account our knowledge otherwise obtained during the audit and assess whether the information appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work performed concerning this information, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors and the Executive Director

The Board of Directors and the Executive Director are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the annual accounts in accordance with the Annual Accounts Act. The Board of Directors and the Executive Director are also responsible for such internal control as they determine necessary to enable the preparation of annual accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or mistake.

In preparing the annual accounts, the Board of Directors and the Executive Director are responsible for the assessment of the association's ability to continue as a going concern. They disclose, as applicable, matters related to the going concern and use of the going concern basis of accounting. The going concern basis of accounting is, however, not applied if the Board of Directors and the Executive Director intend to liquidate the association, cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibility

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the annual accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or mistake, and to issue an audit report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISA and generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or mistake and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users made on the basis of these annual accounts.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISA, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the annual accounts, whether due to fraud or mistake, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinions. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from mistake, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of the association's internal control relevant to our audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate to the circumstances,

but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.

- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board of Directors and the Executive Director.
- draw a conclusion on the appropriateness of the Board of Directors' and the Executive Director's use of the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual accounts. We also draw a conclusion, based on the audit evidence obtained, as to whether any material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our audit report to the related disclosures in the annual accounts or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion about the annual accounts. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our audit report. However, future events or conditions may cause an association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the annual accounts, including the disclosures, and whether the annual accounts represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We must inform the Board of Directors of, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit. We must also inform them of significant findings during our audit, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we have identified.

REPORT ON OTHER LEGAL AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Opinion

In addition to our audit of the annual accounts, we have also examined the Board of Directors' and the Executive Director's administration of Civil Rights Defenders for the year 2019.

We recommend that the annual general meeting discharge the members of the board and the Executive Director from liability for the financial year.

Basis for opinion

We conducted the audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden. Our responsibilities in this regard are further described in the Auditor's

Responsibilities section. We are independent of the association in accordance with ethical requirements for professional accountants in Sweden and have otherwise fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors and the Executive Director

The Board of Directors and the Executive Director are responsible for administration in accordance with the statutes.

Auditor's responsibility

Our objective for the audit of the administration, and therefore our opinion regarding discharge from liability, is to obtain audit evidence to assess with a reasonable degree of assurance whether any member of the Board of Directors or the Executive Director in any material respect has undertaken any action or been guilty of any omission which could give rise to liability to the association.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden will always detect an action or omission which could give rise to liability to the association.

As part of an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. The examination of the administration is based primarily on the audit of the accounts. Additional audit procedures performed are based on our professional judgement, with a starting point in risk and materiality. This means that we focus the examination on such actions, areas and relationships that are material for operations and where deviations and violations would be of particular importance for the association's situation. We examine and test decisions made, support for decisions, actions taken, and other circumstances that are relevant to our opinion concerning discharge from liability.

Stockholm, 8 May 2020

Grant Thornton Sweden AB

Lena Johnson

Authorised Public Accountant

BOARD



Benedicte Berner,
*Political Scientist (Chairperson
of the Board)*

Benedicte Berner is a lecturer in Media and Democracy at Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris. She has also lectured on freedom of expression at Harvard University and is an associate at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard. She has previously worked at the International Red Cross and IOM (International Organization for Migration) in Moscow, and as Director of International Issues at the European Institute for the Media.



Anna Jonsson Cornell,
Professor (Board Member)

Anna Jonsson Cornell is Professor of Comparative Constitutional Law and Vice Dean of the Faculty of Law at Uppsala University. She teaches constitutional law, comparative constitutional law, and security law. Her specialist areas include state-building processes, rule of law, and rights protection, as well as international police cooperation and human trafficking.



Fredrik Andersson,
Entrepreneur (Board Member)

Fredrik Andersson has extensive experience in strategic communications consultancy and entrepreneurship, both in Sweden and internationally. He also has a long track record working with social, political, and rights issues. Fredrik is a partner and a member of the board of Miltton Group, one of the leading communications companies in the Nordic countries with 250 employees in Helsinki, Tallinn, Stockholm, Brussels, and Washington D.C. He is also a partner in Fotografiska and a member of the board of the MEDEA Award for Dramatic Arts in Sweden. In 1998, he founded the Public Affairs Section at the PR agency Prime, where he worked for 14 years.



Lars Häggström,
*Executive in Residence, IMD Business
School (Board Member)*

Lars Häggström is Executive in Residence at IMD Business School in Lausanne, Switzerland, where he works with clients and is a lecturer and researcher in leadership and change. He is also the founder and CEO of the corporate and personal development company Enable Performance AB. Lars previously worked as HR Director of Stora Enso and before that as HR Director of Nordea. He has also worked in the pharmaceutical industry in the UK and the US. Lars has a degree in Behavioural Science and Economics from Uppsala University.



Christoffer Lindblad,
*Founder and Partner, Pelago AB
(Board Member)*

Christoffer Lindblad is the founder of and a partner in Pelago, a prominent Nordic leadership services company. Christoffer was previously the Country Manager for Sweden and a partner in Alumni, a leading company in executive recruitment and leadership development. He has a broad network within the Nordic business community and extensive experience in board and executive recruitment for large international corporations and organisations. Christoffer has a law degree from the University of Lund and has previously worked for the law firm Mannheimer Swartling.



Carin Norberg,
*Center for Economic and Social
Rights (Board Member)*

Carin Norberg holds a master's degree in Political Science from Uppsala University. She worked for Sida from 1971 to 2002. She was Advisor to the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia in New York from 1984 to 1987 and Director of the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala from 2006 to 2012. Carin has also been a member of several boards, including for the Swedish Institute Alexandria, TI Sweden, and the Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies.



Anne Ramberg,
Lawyer (Board Member)

Anne Ramberg is an honorary doctor at the Faculty of Law at Uppsala University and was Secretary General of the Swedish Bar Association for 20 years. She is one of Sweden's ad hoc judges on the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), a member of the board of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), and co-chair of the International Bar Association (IBA) Human Rights Institute, as well as a board member of the IBA's management board, the Southern Africa Litigation Centre, and the eyeWitness Trust. She also has a range of board assignments in Sweden, including chair of the board of the Stockholm Centre for the Rights of the Child and member of the board of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute.



Christian Åhlund,
Lawyer (Board Member)

Christian Åhlund has been a member of the Swedish Bar Association since 1983 with a focus on international humanitarian law, labour law, and criminal proceedings. Christian was a driving force behind the founding of the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) in 2002 and acted as its Executive Director until 2015. Christian has previously chaired the Swedish Bar Association's Committee on Human Rights and the European joint Human Rights Committee within the CCBE (Conseil Consultatif des Barreaux Européens). Since 2005 he also represents Sweden on the Council of Europe European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

DIRECTORS AND FIELD PROGRAMME OFFICERS AT THE END OF 2019

HEAD OFFICE STOCKHOLM (SWEDEN)

Anders L Pettersson, *Executive Director*

Karin Ancker, *Chief Financial Officer*

DEPARTMENTS, HEAD OFFICE

AFRICA DEPARTMENT

Gabrielle Gunneberg, *Department Director*

ASIA DEPARTMENT

Martin Gemzell, *Department Director*

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Maria Granefelt, *Director of Communications*

EURASIA DEPARTMENT

Ana Furtuna, *Department Director*

EUROPE DEPARTMENT

Goran Miletic, *Department Director*

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Karin Ancker, *Chief Financial Officer*

FUNDRAISING DEPARTMENT

Anna Magnard, *Development Director*

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

AT RISK DEPARTMENT

Marcin de Kaminski, *Department Director*

LATIN AMERICA DEPARTMENT

Erik Jennische, *Department Director*

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

John Stauffer, *Legal Director and Deputy Executive Director*

REGIONAL OFFICES

AFRICA

Gabrielle Gunneberg, *Department Director*

ASIA

Martin Gemzell, *Department Director*

BELGRADE (SERBIA)

Goran Miletic, *Department Director*

BOGOTÁ (COLOMBIA)

María Pía Alvira, *Programme Officer*

BRUSSELS (BELGIUM)

Tommaso Nodari, *Programme Officer*

ISTANBUL (TURKEY)

Goran Miletic, *Department Director*

PRISTINA (KOSOVO)

Sarah Maliqi, *Programme Officer*

SARAJEVO (BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA)

Ena Bavicic, *Programme Officer*

TIRANA (ALBANIA)

Megi Reci, *Programme Officer*

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"Don't choose a career that will land you in prison." That was my family's first response when I told them that I was going to be a journalist.

criminalizing journalists. a well-known blogger and comedian, sentenced to 35 years imprisonment

prisonment for investigationary's

I could in prison.

dictatorship, cape changed significant

censorship

articles about politics

THE WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE ARTICLE

Many journalists and opinion-leaders have to pay a high price for freedom of expression. To demonstrate this, we locked away the world's most expensive article, written by Burmese Pulitzer Prize winner Esther Htu San. At first the article was behind a paywall, but it was unlocked thanks to all the donations made to Civil Rights Defenders' 'A High Price' campaign. You can read the article at crd.org/ahighprice

censors.

press freedom controlled by the military.

inspired me to become a journalist.

violent confiscation of more than 500 acres of farmland military

interrogate

serious warning freelance journalist

brutally murdered while in military custody.

killed for reporting the truth

journalism means losing forever.

fear and

held

remains weak.

our legal system is flawed

15 years under house arrest,

SUPPORT THE WORLD'S BRAVEST PEOPLE

Civil Rights Defenders is an international human rights organisation founded in Sweden in 1982. We work for and together with thousands of human rights defenders who fight for democracy and the respect for people's civil and political rights across the world. Our task is to make sure that they can be safer, smarter, and faster in their work. We engage in advocacy activities and legal processes, and we provide information on the situation with regard to human rights globally. With your support, we can accomplish more.

SUPPORT US with a private donation, become a monthly donor or make a corporate donation. Please visit crd.org/support-us for more information.

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