



'20

ANNUAL REPORT



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 supports 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.

The map shows countries where we run extensive programme activities or work together with partner organisations. However, in total we support human rights defenders in more than 50 countries.

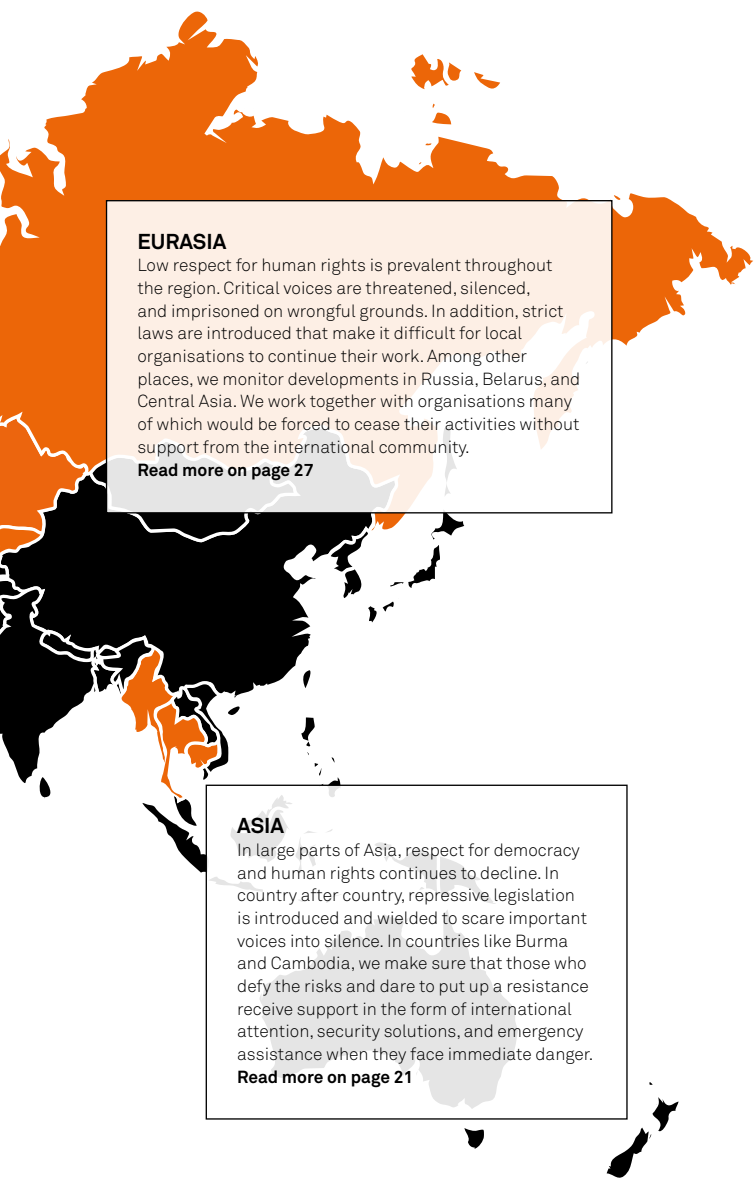


730

In 2020, 730 human rights defenders in 34 of the most repressive countries in the world received support from Civil Rights Defenders' Emergency Fund.

200

At the end of 2020, more than 200 people have been included in the Natalia Project – the world's first alarm and positioning system for human rights defenders at risk.



EURASIA

Low respect for human rights is prevalent throughout the region. Critical voices are threatened, silenced, and imprisoned on wrongful grounds. In addition, strict laws are introduced that make it difficult for local organisations to continue their work. Among other places, we monitor developments in Russia, Belarus, and Central Asia. We work together with organisations many of which would be forced to cease their activities without support from the international community.

Read more on page 27

ASIA

In large parts of Asia, respect for democracy and human rights continues to decline. In country after country, repressive legislation is introduced and wielded to scare important voices into silence. In countries like Burma and Cambodia, we make sure that those who defy the risks and dare to put up a resistance receive support in the form of international attention, security solutions, and emergency assistance when they face immediate danger.

Read more on page 21

CONTENTS

Foreword	4
Vision and Mission	6
Our Strategy 2020	7
Security	8
Capacity	10
Accountability	12
Awareness	14
Civil Rights Defender of the Year Award	16
Fundraising and Communications	18
Civil Rights Defenders on Four Continents	20
Asia	21
Africa	22
Latin America	24
Europe	26
Eurasia	27
Sweden	28
Annual Report 2020	30
Management Report	31
Income Statement	38
Balance Sheet	39
Changes in Equity	40
Cash Flow Analysis – Indirect Method	40
Notes	41
Audit Report	46
Board of Directors	48
Departments and Regional Offices	49

Printing: AMO-tryck

Copyright © 2021 Civil Rights Defenders

Graphic design: Petra Handin/Poppi Design

Cover photo: Jana Shnipelson via Unsplash

50

Civil Rights Defenders supports human rights defenders in more than 50 countries and maintains a local presence in 10 countries.

300

Civil Rights Defenders works together with more than 300 human rights organisations across the world.

86

In 2020, 86% of Civil Rights Defenders income went to special purpose costs.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND STRONG CIVIL SOCIETIES MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER IN THE WAKE OF THE PANDEMIC

2020 was an extraordinary year. As the world reeled in the throes of a pandemic of unprecedented proportions in modern times, previously unthinkable restrictions on people's social, political, and economic activity rapidly became a reality for billions across the world.

While many of the restrictions are crucial for combatting the spread of COVID-19, they also pose a stress-test for democratic societies built on rights-based principles. The major challenge brought by the pandemic consists in the opportunity for autocrats and dictators to strengthen their grip on power by attacking civil rights and seizing institutions while cracking down on dissidents, women, as well as vulnerable groups, such as ethnic minorities and the LGBTI+ community. At the same time, autocratic ideas and methods continue to spread, leaving too few critical voices to demand accountability and enabling regimes to violate human rights with impunity.

According to the V-Dem Institute's annual Democracy Report, 2020 exacerbated the already existing trend of democratic decline and increased autocracy. 68 per cent of the global population now

live in autocracies, and the proportion enjoying the benefits of living in a democracy is at its lowest since 1990.

The pandemic and its effects have created more space for major autocratic powers like China and Russia to spread autocratic ideas and methods. Liberal democracies must rise to meet the challenge. The increasing influence of anti-democratic ideas in Europe and North America is therefore particularly troubling. We cannot allow the systematic dismantling of democratic principles and institutions. Democracy must be protected. At the same time, we have witnessed inspiring stories of incredible bravery by those who stand up for and defend democracy and human rights around the world. Popular movements in countries like Belarus and Burma, to name just two of many, have risen up against autocrats and dictators.

Frustrated by years of stagnation, yet another rigged election, and President Lukashenka's handling of the coronavirus pandemic, the people of Belarus united in their struggle for a free and democratic country. The regime responded with a harsh crackdown on civil and political rights, including the rights to freedom of peaceful



assembly and association, freedom of speech, and freedom of the media, but has thus far been unable to break the protesters' determination.

After the Burmese election at the end of November, the people of Burma rose to resist a military coup that seized power by overturning the election results and detaining State Chancellor Aung San Suu Kyi. The military responded with violence and ruthless methods of oppression, leaving thousands injured and many dead. Human rights defenders whom we partner with, such as Naw Ohn Hla – the 2020 recipient of the Civil Rights Defender of the Year Award – have been key figures in demanding accountability and democracy. Through our Emergency Fund we have been able to provide rapid security assistance to our Burmese partners. In 2020, our Emergency Fund supported a total of 730 human rights defenders from 34 countries. It is just one of many ways in which we support our partners.

Thus, we strongly believe that our mission is more important than ever. When the space for civil society shrinks and civil and political rights are under attack at a scale unheard of in the 21st century, the need for human rights defenders and a strong civil society is most clear. Without them,

hope for democracy and freedom dies.

Civil Rights Defenders' strategy is focused on expanding the space for human rights defenders by improving their security and capacity, and by increasing awareness and accountability in relation to civil and political rights. We have responded to the impact of the pandemic by doubling down on providing direct support to human rights defenders standing up for democracy and human rights around the world, while also increasing our efforts to hold the line in Sweden and Europe.

To succeed, we depend on support from people like you. Together, we can stand up for a world of democratic societies in which we all enjoy our civil and political rights.



*Benedicte Berner,
Chairperson of the Board*



*Anders L. Pettersson,
Executive Director*



**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 in order to increase their security, capacity, and access to justice.

We work as 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.

OUR STRATEGY 2020

In 2020, Civil Rights Defenders adopted a new three-year strategy. The overall goal is to expand the space for human rights defenders by improving their security and capacity, and by increasing awareness and accountability in relation to civil and political rights.



SECURITY

Through training, emergency assistance, and innovative security solutions, Civil Rights Defenders aims to support as many human rights defenders as possible, so they can continue their important work. Together with our partner organisations, we offer training in digital, physical, as well as psychosocial security, among other areas.



CAPACITY

A strong civil society is key to sustainable democracy. We partner with local human rights organisations and provide support in skills development as well as long-term financial support based on their needs to increase their capacity to drive change.



ACCOUNTABILITY

We work to ensure respect for people's fundamental rights and freedoms and demand accountability when this is not the case. On our own, or together with local human rights defenders, we evaluate laws and proposed legislation, as well as their implementation by the authorities. We also engage in legal processes and hold those in power to account when human rights are violated.



AWARENESS

Knowing one's rights is a precondition for being able to exercise them. Through information activities, public campaigns, and advocacy, we strengthen the knowledge of and engagement for democracy and human rights in Sweden and globally.



SECURITY

SEVERE RISKS REQUIRE INNOVATIVE SECURITY SOLUTIONS

Many human rights defenders across the world are subject to serious threats. Whether it may be harassment and persecution, smear campaigns, arbitrary arrests and disappearances, break-ins at their offices, or having their email accounts hacked, many front-line activists face a qualified and powerful opposition to their daily efforts. Living and working in such environments takes its toll, on both the physical and the mental wellbeing of the individual. Only the synergies of a range of interventions can help strengthen their security. To aid human rights defenders at risk, Civil Rights Defenders provides support through a combination of innovative security solutions.



THE NATALIA PROJECT

Initiated in 2013, the Natalia Project is the world's first security alarm system for human rights defenders at risk. 2020 has been a difficult year, particularly for the training

of new human rights defenders joining the project. Despite this, we were able to include another 15 individuals during the year. In total, this means that over 200 human rights defenders have now been a part of the Natalia Project over the past 8 years.

The Natalia Project alarm device is equipped with GPS technology. When activated, the individual's location is sent to Civil Rights Defenders' offices and to selected allies in the human rights defender's own network. In the event of an attack, these people can quickly begin the work of locating and helping the human rights defender in danger, while Civil Rights Defenders informs the international community of the ongoing situation.

THE MOBILE TRAINING CENTRE

Our Mobile Training Centre 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. Working closely with Civil Rights Defenders' regional departments, our Training Centre organises training events, conducts research and development, and performs security audits to strengthen the ability of human rights defenders to avoid or withstand the threats they face.

Throughout 2020, the pandemic brought several challenges to our work with the Mobile Training Centre. By conducting training remotely and in collaboration with local partners, we nevertheless successfully carried out 14 training sessions during the year for 186 human rights defenders, of which 97 were women and 89 were men.

THE EMERGENCY FUND

Civil Rights Defenders' Emergency Fund provides rapid support and assistance to human rights defenders and their families at risk. It can be legal aid, security assistance, relocation to safe housing, or help to leave the country when threats become too serious. Due to the pandemic, the demand for relocations within rather than between countries increased. Despite the challenges brought by travel restrictions and lockdowns, we increased our support to human rights defenders with more than 30 per cent compared to the previous year. During 2020, more than 730 human rights defenders in 34 countries received support through the Emergency Fund.



EDMUND YAKANI

In February 2020, the South Sudanese human rights defender Edmund Yakani was invited to participate in a consultative meeting held in Juba. Edmund Yakani is the executive director of the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO). The meeting had been arranged to discuss South Sudanese states and their boundaries, a key issue during the formation of a unity government in the country. Ahead of the meeting, Edmund received several anonymous phone calls involving death threats, urging him to support other solutions to the issue.

As a leading voice for human rights in South Sudan, Edmund faces a variety of risks in his daily work. He joined Civil Rights Defenders' security programme, the Natalia Project, in 2020.

Since then, he has received tailor-made security training and been equipped with an alarm with a GPS transmitter. In the event of an attack, he can activate the alarm, which sends a signal with his geographical location to Civil Rights Defenders and Edmund's closest colleagues.

Edmund is among the most tenacious and vocal voices in the country when it comes to defending and promoting human rights, democratic transition, and justice. He actively works to ensure respect for the rule of law and justice, as well as inclusion of civil society in the ongoing peace talks. Through the Natalia Project, we want to help increase his safety so that he can continue his crucial work for human rights in South Sudan.



CAPACITY

A STRONG CIVIL SOCIETY – THE KEY TO SUSTAINABLE DEMOCRACY

Civil Rights Defenders believes that a strong local civil society is key to long-term progress toward sustainable democracy. That is why we focus on partnering with and supporting local human rights defenders who are fighting for change in countries where their rights are not recognised. Based on our partners' needs, we provide security training, expertise, organisational development, and long-term financial support. We also bring our partners together so that they can exchange experiences, as well as learn from and inspire each other.

DEFENDERS' DAYS BOOTCAMP

Defenders' Days is Civil Rights Defenders' biennial conference taking place in Stockholm, aimed at empowering human rights defenders by strengthening their organisational capacity, supporting cooperation, and creating opportunities for networking among Civil Rights Defenders' partners. Due to the pandemic, this year's conference had to be cancelled. Instead, we created the Defenders' Days Bootcamp – a new training concept for partners within our network.

The Defenders' Days Bootcamp offers remote training and skill sharing opportunities for human rights defenders. The bootcamps give human rights defenders a chance to take part in a variety of Civil Rights Defenders' training opportunities, as well as for Civil Rights Defenders to evaluate and develop our training concepts. Throughout the year, we successfully carried out remote psycho-social support sessions for 39 human rights defenders (of which 25 were women) from 14 countries – both in group and individual therapy sessions.

THE ACTIVIST ACADEMY – CAPACITY TRAINING FOR SWEDISH ACTIVISTS

In November 2020, Civil Rights Defenders launched the Activist Academy, a one-year training programme that aims to strengthen the work of

activists in Sweden. The programme provides 20 activists with the tools they need to work more effectively and strategically against discrimination and social injustice, such as anti-black racism or other forms of oppression, including islamophobia, antigypsyism, transphobia, homophobia, sexism, antisemitism, ableism, or hate crime.

Participants learn how to deal with hate or threats that come with their work. They also take part in workshops in strategic advocacy, strategic communications, legal advocacy, security, and how to handle hate online. During 2020, Civil Rights Defenders organised the first two Activist Academy workshops, with a focus on strategic advocacy.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS ACADEMY

In November, Civil Rights Defenders invited young activists, recent graduates, and students from the Western Balkans with an interest in human rights to the Human Rights Defenders Academy – a programme aiming to provide the next generation of human rights defenders with the tools to make a difference in the fight for human rights.

The programme extended over eight days and offered participants the opportunity to learn from experts and gain practical experience of current human rights issues in the Western Balkans. 30 activists from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia were selected to participate in a series of online discussions and lectures on human rights issues impacting the region. The topics discussed included, among other things, human rights in the Western Balkans, human rights advocacy within the EU, and campaigning for human rights.



PHOTO: TERJE SOLLIE/PEXELS

JOURNALISTS' DAYS

THE STATE OF MEDIA FREEDOM IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

In October, Civil Rights Defenders organised the conference Regional Journalists' Days. The event brought together renowned journalists, media experts and policymakers in a series of virtual panel discussions and meetings to discuss the state of media freedom in the Western Balkans and Turkey in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The topics discussed ranged from physical and digital security, information sharing during times of crisis to fact-checking in election reporting, new technologies, misinformation, social media, and

journalism. The online events were live streamed via a multilingual web-conferencing platform in English, Albanian, Macedonian, as well as Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, and Bosnian-Croatian-Montenegrin-Serbian. Over 60 participants followed the events each day.

For the second year in a row, Journalists' Days continued to represent a cornerstone of discussions on media freedoms under threat in the Western Balkans.



ACCOUNTABILITY

HOLDING THOSE IN POWER TO ACCOUNT

Civil Rights Defenders holds governments and those in power to account when people's civil or political rights are violated. We do this ourselves, or together with local human rights defenders. We evaluate laws and propose legislation, as well as their implementation by the authorities. We bring those in power to court when human rights are violated by pursuing cases at national and international courts, committees, and tribunals.

THE DEFENDERS' DATABASE

Human rights violations happen every day, across the world. Because of the risks and difficulties involved in documenting and reporting such violations, many perpetrators are not held accountable for their actions.

The Defenders' Database is a multifaceted and adaptable tool that helps human rights defenders and organisations document, analyse, and visualise human rights violations globally. The database offers a safe place to store information until it can be used for advocacy purposes and to achieve justice and accountability.

In 2020, the tool underwent some important developments, and was made available in Kenya and Uganda. LGBTI+ organisations in these countries were instrumental in improving the tool's sensitivity to gender and identity. During the year, both an accessibility review and a security assessment were also carried out to ensure the highest standard of accessibility and security.

SHADOW REPORT TO THE UN

In November, the UN Committee against Torture was set to review Sweden's compliance with the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The review was postponed due to the pandemic, but before this decision had been made Civil Rights Defenders sent a shadow report to the UN,

highlighting a number of human rights violations that Sweden needs to address.

The report showed that significant human rights concerns persist in Sweden, in particular with regards to the use of human rights-based working institutions and a human rights-based interpretation of national law, as well as ensuring that victims of human rights violations have access to legal remedies. Another important issue addressed by the shadow report was the structural problem of inadequate procedural guarantees in relation to asylum cases, which endangers asylum seekers' absolute right to protection against arbitrary expulsion. This is a pressing issue – one in which Sweden has completely ignored a number of the committee's previous recommendations, such as the recommendations to include torture as a separate and specific crime in Swedish legislation and to limit the length of pre-trial detention.

DEMANDING ACCOUNTABILITY

When human rights are violated, civil society plays a crucial role in demanding accountability from those in power. In addition to demanding legal redress by providing legal aid or engaging in legal processes, Civil Rights Defenders works to directly address those in power when violations occur. On our own or together with other organisations, we publish statements to draw attention to these problems and to lay out the measures we consider necessary. During 2020, we published close to 70 statements. Reports and op-eds are other ways to shine a light on rights violations and shape public opinion on these issues. Throughout the year, we have contributed to the public debate of discrimination and the rights of EU citizens, human rights violations under COVID-19, stricter measures against the Belarusian dictator Lukashenka, and the human rights situation in Sweden's closed institutions among other things.



BELARUS: PUTTING PRESSURE ON EUROPE'S LAST DICTATOR

In August, rigged elections in Belarus triggered a massive protest movement across the country. The world watched as Belarusians took to the streets in nationwide, peaceful demonstrations against their authoritarian leader, President Lukashenko – often referred to as Europe's last dictator. The authorities tried to silence the demonstrations using vicious methods, such as mass detention, widespread use of disproportionate violence, torture, and even sexual violence. The total number of people detained for taking part in the protests during 2020 exceeded 30,000, and at least five people died as a result of the actions of law enforcement agencies.

Despite the brutal response from the authorities, protesters in Belarus continued to show their discontent and rise up against a shaken regime.

Civil Rights Defenders has followed the developments closely. We have shared eyewitness accounts and issued a number of statements demanding the release of human rights activists. In addition, Civil Rights Defenders and 15 other human rights organisations have called on the United Nations Human Rights Council to convene a special session to address the human rights violations committed in the leadup to, during, and after the Belarusian elections.

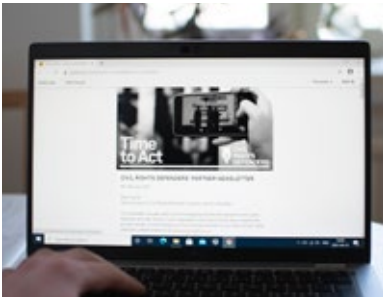


AWARENESS

A PRECONDITION FOR EXERCISING ONE'S RIGHTS

Civil Rights Defenders works to increase awareness of and the engagement for 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 activities, 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 repressive countries without a free press, we provide independent information through alternative media outlets and encourage discussion and debate.

PHOTO: CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS.



THE TIME TO ACT NEWSLETTER

Access to relevant and reliable information was key for human rights defenders during the pandemic year of 2020. That is why we created Time to Act – a biweekly

newsletter that we send to our partners and other human rights defenders working closely with us.

Through the newsletter, we disseminate information about Civil Rights Defenders' activities as well as guidance and recommendations on, for example, security practices, along with news from our wide network of organisations. It also offers unique opportunities to participate in skill sharing events. Some 260 human rights defenders received the newsletter throughout the year. In addition to providing access to relevant and reliable information, Time to Act contributes to creating a sense of community within our network, where many feel isolated and out of touch with the rest of civil society.

THE 2020 ROMA SUMMIT

In November, Civil Rights Defenders organised the sixth consecutive Western Balkans Roma Summit. Over two days, we held a series of virtual panel discussions with a focus on the disproportionate impact COVID-19 is having on Roma communities in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

Since 2015, the Roma Summit has formed the cornerstone of constructive dialogue on issues concerning Roma, Egyptians, and Ashkali in the Western Balkans and Turkey. For a sixth consecutive year, we brought together influential figures from different contexts – ranging from key policymakers to human rights defenders. Discussions focused on the various challenges relating to the inclusion of Roma and other minorities in the region. Due to the pandemic, all six panels took place online, via the multilingual web-conferencing platform KUDO.

VOICES FROM VENEZUELA

On 6 December 2020, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro seized control of the country's national assembly after systematically dismantling Venezuela's democracy over a period of several years. Leading up to the election, his government had made it impossible for the national assembly to legislate and achieve oversight over the government.

But across Venezuela, people continued to fight for democracy. During the year, we interviewed a number of human rights defenders who each play a central role in the struggle for a new and democratic Venezuela, free from corruption and human rights violations. In our newsletter *Cartas desde la cuarentena*, read by close to 200 decision makers, 18 human rights defenders described the pandemic's impact on the human rights situation in Venezuela.



Ledi Bianku (right), former Judge for Albania at the European Court of Justice, interviewed for the podcast The Human Rights Defender during the Rule of Law Forum 2020 in Albania.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER PODCAST

There are many human rights defenders with incredible stories that deserve to be heard. We created the Human Rights Defender Podcast series to explore the work and lives of brave individuals standing up for human rights. During 2020, we spoke to human rights defenders from the Western Balkans and Eurasia about their work for human rights and democracy in the region.

In Warsaw, we interviewed Julia Maciocha, president of Warsaw Pride, and Bart Staszewski, an LGBTI+ activist and film director, in connection with the large-scale protests taking place in Poland in October. They gave us valuable new perspectives on systematic human rights violations in Poland and the long road to gender equality.

We also interviewed Mary Lawlor, the UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, who regularly speaks to hundreds of human rights defenders from across the world. She spoke of the challenges she faces in her work to defend human rights in the midst of a global crisis.

Other topics covered during the year include the pro-democracy movement in Belarus, LGBTI+ rights in Kosovo, as well as crime, corruption, and power in Montenegro. The podcast can be found on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Civil Rights Defenders' Youtube channel.

“

*To achieve democracy,
we must continue
the struggle. If my
generation does not
make it, then the next
generation will.*

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, they must carry out their work as part of an independent human rights organisation and without resorting to violence.

NAW OHN HLA CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2020



“The military has always said that we are free to do whatever we like, but they will never let us have democracy. The political leadership of this country preaches democracy, but it is not the democracy that we dreamed of. A true democracy would not allow widespread human rights violations and arrests of activists fighting for their basic rights,” says Naw Ohn Hla, one of Burma’s most outspoken human rights defenders and the recipient of the 2020 Civil Rights Defender of the Year Award for her exceptional perseverance in the fight against oppression and for her continued courage to stand up to those in power.

“Democracy activist Naw Ohn Hla is one of the most important human rights defenders in Burma. A grassroots activist for over three decades, she has faced grave risks and made immense personal sacrifices. Nevertheless, she has always stayed true to her cause – the struggle for democracy and human rights. Her deep experience and tireless commitment have made her an invaluable source of guidance and strength for countless others,” said the Board of Directors of Civil Rights Defenders in their motivation statement for the Civil Rights Defender of the Year Award 2020.

Burma has been afflicted by armed conflicts for over half a century. Recently, civil war and violent

persecution of ethnic minorities have escalated in many parts of the country. In the western state of Rakhine, violence has intensified significantly while journalists and human rights defenders who are trying to report about the situation are increasingly forced or threatened into silence. Many who stand up against human rights violations have been sentenced to long prison terms.

Naw Ohn Hla has been a loud proponent of democracy and human rights for more than 30 years. During her career, she has stood up for the rights of women, ethnic minorities and other discriminated groups. She has been arrested more than 20 times and received several long prison sentences for her critical statements about the military and the government as well as her involvement in peaceful protests and demonstrations. Still, she refuses to be silenced. Despite pressure, she stands her ground and continues to criticise the persecution of ethnic minorities, widespread land grabbing, and systematic violations of women’s rights. To her, the continued struggle for democracy is the only option.

“Democracy is not impossible, but we have a long way to go. To achieve democracy, we must continue the struggle. If my generation does not make it, then the next generation will,” says Naw Ohn Hla.

FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNICATIONS

During 2020, we continued to raise awareness of as well as engagement and support for our human rights work. On all our digital channels, we highlighted the struggles of brave human right defenders we cooperate with worldwide. When the pandemic escalated and governments around the world introduced severe restrictions, we shifted the focus of our spring campaign to keep an eye on those in power. In a long line of articles during the spring, we monitored the way repressive

governments use the pandemic as an excuse to restrict rights and freedoms in its shadow. Through our second major campaign of the year – Congratulations Oppressors! – focusing on the right to free and fair elections, we gained a lot of attention as well as new donors and met our fundraising goals. Moreover, we managed to integrate advocacy, awareness-raising, and fundraising in the same campaign.

THE CAMPAIGN: CONGRATULATIONS OPPRESSORS!

Democracy is declining in many countries around the world. Authoritarian leaders appear to hold free and fair elections while doing all they can to stay in power. But brave human rights defenders and democracy activists are daring to put up resistance. This was the backdrop to our fundraising campaign Congratulations Oppressors!, where we invited people to help create a future in which oppressors can no longer take their power for granted. In outdoor ads, we ironically congratulated three authoritarian leaders – Russia's Putin, Syria's al-Assad and Hungary's Orbán – on their future election victories. The campaign created immediate engagement, particularly in Hungary. After two

weeks, our criticism of Orbán's undemocratic methods inspired a Swedish parliamentarian to question our sources of funding in letters to the Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde. This made us shift our focus, and we subsequently published a full-page ad in Sweden's biggest newspaper, thanking him for the attention and so plainly proving our point about threats to civil society. That day, we raised more funds from private individuals than on any other day. The campaign as a whole was a success, and the meta campaign "Thank you, Mr Parliamentarian" later received an honorary award from the Swedish Fundraising Association, Giva Sverige.

90

GRATTIS, ORBÁN!

ÅR 2034. VIKTOR ORBÁN VÄLJS TILL UNGERNS PREMIÄRMINISTER. IGEN.

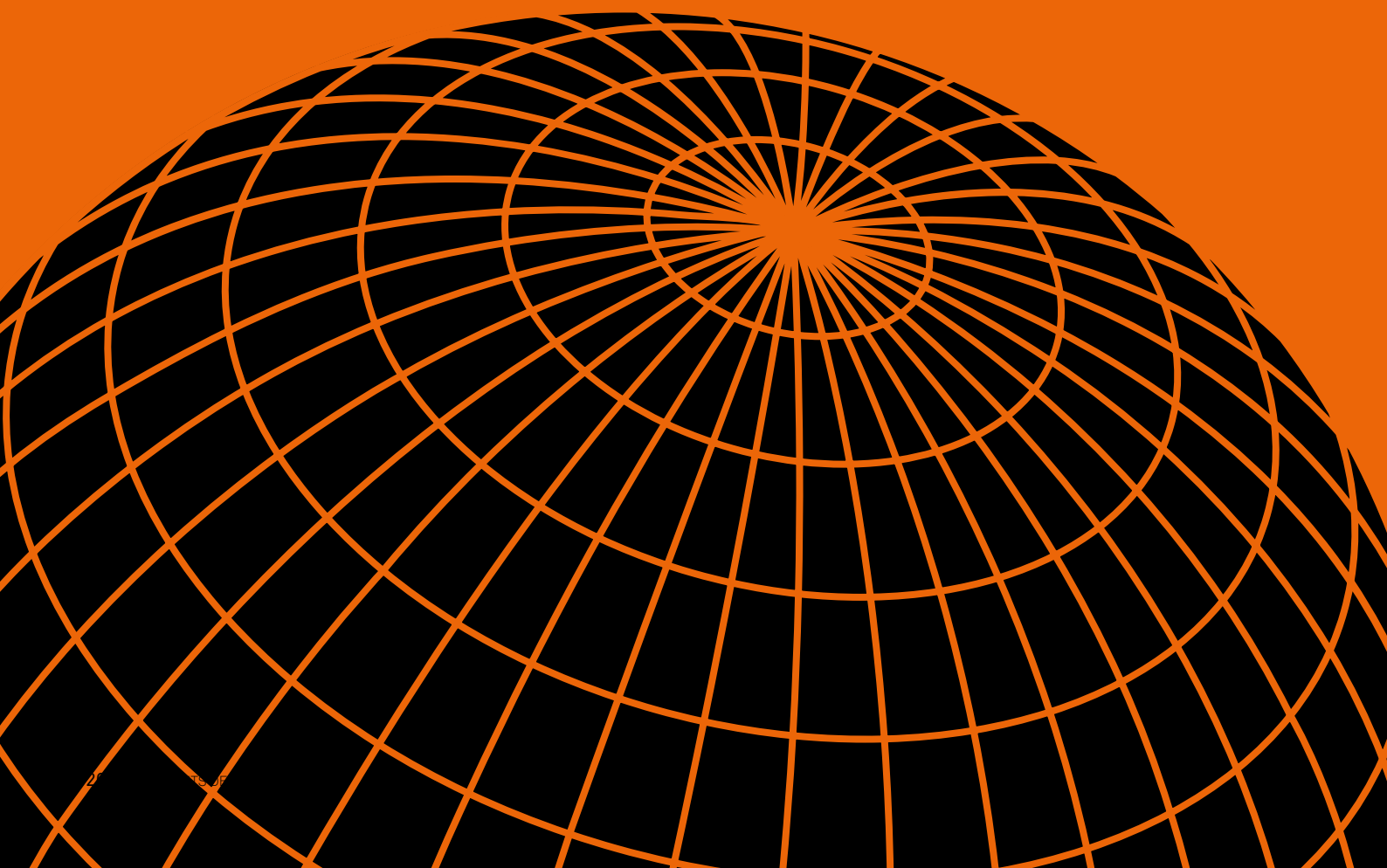
Är det väl riktigt för att berömma honom för hans betydelsefulla insatser? Eller för att påminna oss om att han är en av de mest inflytelserika och kontroversiella politiker i Europa? Vi vill höra din åsikt. Skicka ett brev till oss på info@civilrightsdefenders.org eller ring oss på 020 100 0000.

CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS

VINYL
Record
Sale!
Up to
50%
VINYLSHOP

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 2020, Civil Rights Defenders continued its collaboration with more than 300 local human rights defenders in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eurasia, and Europe. We maintain a long-term perspective and support human rights defenders in over 50 countries.



ASIA

In Asia, 2020 was a year of upheaval. Thailand saw an unprecedented wave of demonstrations, initiated by school students protesting the authoritarian education system, eventually growing into the strongest and most sustained calls for democracy ever seen in the country. In Burma, the country geared up for general elections where, once again, the people responded with a massive call for democracy which could not be suppressed, despite the military's best efforts to manipulate and distort calls for freedom. Autocrats in the region scaled up their efforts, but so did our partners.

We maintained our long-term financial support to some 20 dissidents who largely work in the shadows, as one of few organisations offering hands-on assistance when legislation puts a stop to foreign support and limits the activities that can be pursued in the open. Through moral and practical support in the form of training and joint advocacy efforts, we have kept up the struggle together.

MAUNG SAUNGKHA – THE BURMESE POET FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Freedom of expression continued to decline in Burma during 2020. In September, the Burmese free-speech organisation Athan, a key player when it comes to conducting research and promoting freedom of expression in Burma, reported that the situation had worsened drastically since the country's "transition to democracy" in 2015. Behind the scenes the military remained in control, they argued, and the number of dissidents who faced prosecution and imprisonment was growing.

"These statistics show that respect for freedom of expression is declining rather than improving. Our report proves that the highly anticipated government now continues to limit freedom of expression, just like its predecessor did," says Maung Saungkha, executive director of Athan.

In addition to the arbitrary detention of hundreds of civilians, activists, journalists, politicians, religious individuals, and artists, the internet was shut down in Rakhine and Chin States – which were also affected by escalating warfare during 2020. Maung Saungkha was charged for demanding an end to the internet shutdowns in the regions. He confessed to the so-called crime and accepted the consequences in order to illustrate the severe limitations on freedom of expression in Burma.

Civil Rights Defenders urged the Burmese authorities to drop the charges and condemned the verdict against Maung Saungkha. He was sentenced to fines instead of prison, but the court's judgement was a clear violation of his rights to freedom of expression and peaceful protest. We continued to call on the Burmese authorities to stop harassing those who dare to speak up against injustice and human rights violations. We also called on the authorities to immediately lift the internet restrictions in Rakhine and Chin States and to keep Burmese civilians out of the armed conflict.



PHOTO: CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS

AFRICA

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on human rights and democracy in Africa during the year. Civil Rights Defenders adopted new approaches and intensified partnerships to respond to the impact of the pandemic. To tackle the deteriorating safety of human rights defenders we conducted basic security assessments for 48 organisations in Uganda, South Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia to inform our support strategy.

During the year, we trained seven human rights defenders through our virtual Training of Trainers programme on digital security. The majority of them were women human rights

defenders, and in turn they managed to reach 152 human rights defenders in Africa. We have also organised a capacity building programme focused on institutional capability and networking. 11 civil society organisations benefited from the programme, with the aim of revitalising civil society and improving conditions for reform initiatives in Ethiopia. In addition, we have also worked with women journalists in Ethiopia to amplify their voices. A feminist handbook for human rights defenders was developed during 2020 and will be launched in 2021.

COMMUNICATION AS A TOOL FOR CHANGE

Human rights defenders in Sub-Saharan Africa operate in a politically unstable and legally unreliable environment where they often face extremely challenging conditions. Many work and live under constant threat of intimidation, arrests, attacks, imprisonment, and even death. But even as the civic space has continued to shrink in the past years, human rights defenders are standing up to demand that their rights be respected.

In January, Civil Rights Defenders organised a workshop together with the organisation Defend

Defenders in Kampala, Uganda. The aim was to enhance the capacity of human rights defenders in the Sub-Saharan region. The workshop focused on how to use communication as a tool to promote and protect human rights defenders. The civic space for freedom of expression and press freedom has been under attack in many countries in the region, and strategic and effective communication is essential to ensure human rights defenders' protection and promotion. During the interactive workshop, we identified common challenges and opportunities connected to communications work, including how to carry out effective communication with limited resources, how to work with mainstream as well as social media, and how to develop and implement strategic campaigns.

The workshop resulted in a joint campaign for all participating organisations in the lead-up to International Women's Day on 8 March. In a series of films, women human rights defenders from Togo, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, and Uganda spoke about their work for justice, peace, and gender equality – in the face of great challenges such as sexual harassment, violence, smear-campaigns, and defamation.



PHOTO: CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS



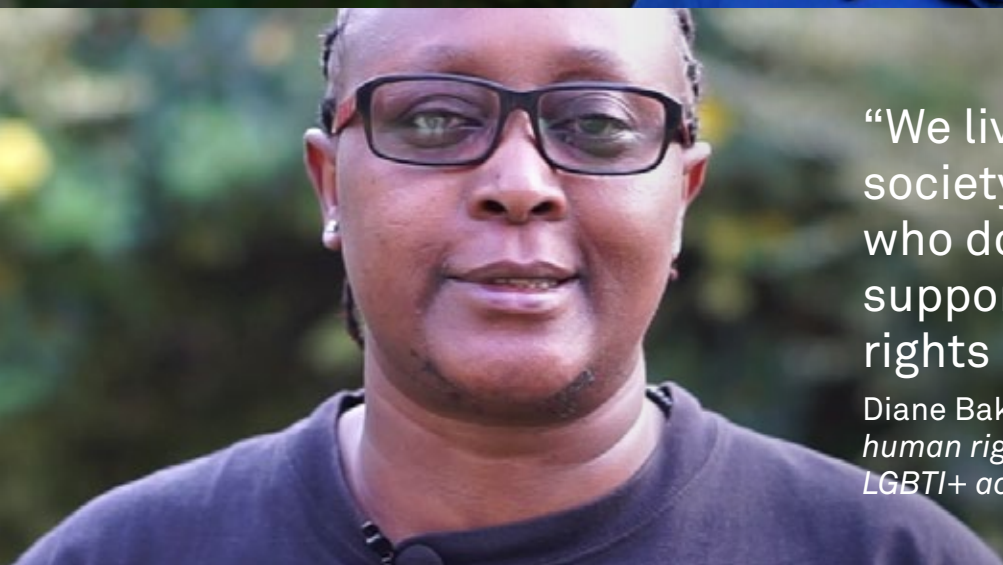
“The fight goes on and we must not give up.”

Bernadette Ntumba,
human rights defender, DR Congo



“Women’s rights issues and any other rights come together. You cannot separate one right from another.”

Maysaa Osama,
human rights defender, Sudan



“We live in a very patriarchal society that demeans women who do any kind of work supporting and defending rights of others.”

Diane Bakuraira,
human rights defender and LGBTI+ activist, Uganda



“We’re the ones who can lead the change.”

Maximilienne Ngo Mbe,
human rights defender, Cameroon



LATIN AMERICA

2020 was a challenging year for human rights defenders in Cuba and Venezuela. The difficult economic and political situations in the countries prior to the pandemic deteriorated rapidly when the governments ramped up repression in an attempt to control protests against scarcity of goods and political repression in the streets. Arbitrary detention, threats, smear campaigns, and the number of political prisoners increased.

During the year, we organised online training sessions and workshops on digital and physical security, stress relief, gender-based violence, and documenting human rights violations in the Defenders' Database for a number of Cuban and Venezuelan human rights organisations. Civil Rights Defenders' work in Cuba has also focused on increasing human rights defenders' impact on the international community's policy towards the country.

In Colombia, the number of killed human rights defenders has increased continuously since the peace agreement was signed in 2016. According to conservative estimates, more than 100 people were killed in 2020. The lack of commitment from the Colombian government to improve the situation is also worrying. During 2020, we initiated a new project focusing on Colombian human rights defenders in the regions along the Venezuelan border where the situation has been severe, due both to the continuation of the armed conflict in Colombia and to the deteriorating human rights crisis on the Venezuelan side of the border. We cooperate with human rights organisations in Colombia, contributing to their security, capacity to document human rights violations, and impact on the international community's policy towards the region.

LETTERS FROM CUBA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

Since 2014, when the EU and Cuba initiated negotiations about a *Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement* (PDCA), independent Cuban civil society has been excluded from the process. To ensure that their analysis and suggestions on the agreement were brought to attention of the EU, Civil Rights Defenders invited Cuban organisations and human rights defenders to write policy recommendations to the EU on how to promote democracy and respect for human rights in Cuba, and the role of civil society. In January 2020, we published these recommendations in a report with 31 letters as part of our project *Letters from Cuba to the European Union*.

In February, Civil Rights Defenders and José Ramón Bauzá, a member of the European Parliament for Spain, hosted a seminar at the European Parliament in Brussels to present the report. Eight leading human rights defenders from Cuba were invited, but five of them were prohibited

from leaving the country by the Cuban security services. At the end of the year, we followed up on the report with a survey circulated to 110 Cuban human rights defenders in and outside the country. The respondents clearly stated that the human rights situation in Cuba had deteriorated since the signing of the agreement with the EU, and that they would like to participate openly in the human rights dialogue with the EU.



EUROPE

As harsh measures were introduced in all the European countries in which we operate, the pandemic significantly influenced Civil Rights Defenders' and our partners' work in the region. The pandemic affected the situation for human rights in two major ways: Firstly, extraordinary measures were introduced to combat the spread of the virus, some going far beyond legal norms, and freedom of movement and expression were unjustifiably restricted. Secondly, the pandemic exacerbated pre-existing patterns of discrimination impacting vulnerable groups, mainly minorities, LGBTI+ communities, refugees, migrants, and the elderly. To empower these groups, we carried out capacity building exercises for over 300 human rights defenders on topics ranging from countering smear campaigns to digital security.

Despite the restrictions of the pandemic, we managed with some modifications to organise all our flagship events planned for the year, some of them digitally. The Rule of Law Forum, Journalists' days, Roma Summit, and South East European Legal Days were all attended by 100–200 participants and each had over 1,000 viewers on social media. In addition, we organised the second regional hackathon EqualiTECH 2020 together with Free Libre Open Source Software Kosova. Young programmers, graphic designers, and IT professionals with an interest in human rights put their minds together to create innovative solutions to aid the fight against injustice and discrimination in the Western Balkans.

THE SEVENTH RULE OF LAW

The annual Regional Rule of Law Forum, established in 2014 by the AIRE Centre and Civil Rights Defenders, is one of the most important events of the year for members of the judiciary, lawyers, and NGOs in the Western Balkans. The forum aims to promote the national implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights,

encourage regional cooperation, and assist the process of EU integration in the region.

In October 2020, we hosted the seventh Regional Rule of Law Forum for South East Europe. The forum was comprised of a central conference bringing together representatives from the European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights. Discussions centred around the COVID-19 pandemic and rights protected by the European Convention of Human Rights.

Meanwhile, representatives from across the region gathered in national working hubs, including active and former supreme and constitutional court judges as well as legal experts, ombudspersons, national authorities, and representatives from NGOs.

During the forum, Civil Rights Defenders and the AIRE Centre also presented the report *COVID-19 and the Impact on Human Rights*. Prepared by rule of law experts, the report takes an in-depth look at rights affected by the pandemic and relevant cases in the European Court of Human Rights.



EURASIA

2020 brought challenges for civil society in Eurasia. In July, activist Azimjon Askarov passed away in a Kyrgyz jail after being imprisoned for life on dubious charges. We advocated for Askarov's release and will continue to seek vindication. In Belarus, thousands demonstrated after Lukashenka declared himself the winner of the presidential election on 9 August. Activists and journalists faced excessive police force and detention. We called on the Belarusian authorities to cease their crackdown on peaceful demonstrations and worked actively to raise awareness about the events.

The persecution of activists in Crimea continued, with several being tried and imprisoned in Russia. The pandemic posed a challenge to democratic reforms in Georgia, and tensions between

Azerbaijan and Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh region divided civil society. Russian lawmakers pushed restrictive laws through the Duma at the end of 2020 that may be a death sentence for independent civil society. The changes to the law may spell the end of unregistered civil society initiatives and independent organisations. The limitations brought by the amendments will cause severe harm to freedom of association and civil society at large, both of which are key to a functioning democracy. In response, we called on the authorities to abide by their international human rights obligations through statements and active advocacy efforts.

AZIMJON ASKAROV

In July, we received the sad news of Azimjon Askarov's death. Askarov was an Uzbek activist and journalist in Kyrgyzstan, tenacious in his work for human rights. He passed away after spending ten years in a Kyrgyz prison, serving a life sentence on what many claim were dubious and politically

motivated charges. Civil Rights Defenders' Eurasia department has advocated for Askarov's release and right to a fair trial for several years, and it became a particular issue of focus in 2020.

Askarov was sentenced on a series of charges, including incitement to ethnic hatred, hostage taking, and participation in the killing of a local police officer. He denied these accusations. At the time of his arrest, Askarov was collecting information that he shared with international organisations and the media. He was the director of the now defunct human rights organisation Vozdukh. Civil Rights Defenders called on the Kyrgyz authorities to have him released on multiple occasions during his incarceration, urging them to ensure that Askarov receive a fair trial.

"We are deeply saddened by the passing of such a courageous and dedicated human rights defender. Azimjon Askarov should have never been imprisoned in the first place," says Ana Furtuna, director of Civil Rights Defenders' Eurasia Department.



PHOTO: ANZHAMAL ISTANBEKOVA/GOLO'S SVOBODY NEWS PORTAL

SWEDEN

As the Black Lives Matter movement sparked protests around the world, the issue of institutional racism and ethnic profiling by the police authority resurfaced in the public debate in Sweden.

We continued our advocacy efforts towards the Swedish government and the police authority to bring this issue to the top of their agenda, which contributed to the commission of a government inquiry aiming to strengthen Swedish discrimination law by prohibiting discriminatory measures by law enforcement agencies. In their dialogue with Civil Rights Defenders, top decision makers within the Swedish police authority have shown an increased interest in working constructively with the issue of discriminatory profiling.

Measures to combat gang-related crime have also become a focus of debate in Sweden during the year. Like recent years' measures to combat terrorism, these proposals are often characterised

by the lack of a human rights analysis and an undermining of the rule of law. This is a worrying development that Civil Rights Defenders has followed closely throughout the year, and we have worked hard to ensure that measures do not go beyond what is permitted according to human rights standards.

As part of an EU-funded project, we investigated the degree to which the rights of crime victims are respected when a person is subjected to a crime in detention or in one of the Migration Agency's detention centres in Sweden. The results from all of the countries included in the project were sent to the EU, which – after active advocacy efforts from Civil Rights Defenders – announced that it will examine how best to provide effective assistance, facilitate easier documentation, and offer protection to victims of crime.

LOCKED UP – BUT NOT WITHOUT RIGHTS

In 2020, Civil Rights Defenders initiated a three-year project aimed at improving the human rights situation in compulsory care institutions. The goal of the project is to spread awareness about people's rights in Swedish compulsory care. It is a first step toward developing a method for examining the state of human rights in all compulsory care institutions in Sweden.

Through focus groups and interviews, we have investigated how individuals view the support they are offered in compulsory care. Developing digital tools, adapting the Defenders' Database to a

Swedish context, and organising training sessions on human rights to strengthen relevant actors in their work are central parts of the project, as it will improve opportunities for individuals to receive support in relation to human rights violations even after the project has been completed.

Civil Rights Defenders and the Swedish National Association for Social and Mental Health (RSMH) also sent out a survey to map compliance with human rights within compulsory care. The survey is aimed at those with personal experience of compulsory care in Sweden, and who are currently or have been under compulsory care in a closed institution during the last five years. It will be circulated around the same time of year annually. In this way, we can monitor the situation as it develops over time.

An important and concrete result of our work in this area is that, when the guidelines for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Sweden were presented, the human rights of children deprived of their liberty was held up as a key issue.



PHOTO: ADAM WALSTAD/UNSPLASH

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS OF THE SÁMI

Together with our indigenous Sámi partners in Sweden, Civil Rights Defenders has engaged in advocacy efforts and strategic litigation to ensure that the Swedish government guarantees the Sámi people real influence concerning the use of their traditional lands in decision-making processes at national, regional, and local levels. In 2020, several judicial decisions clarified the protection of the indigenous rights of the Sámi people, including the historic verdict from the Supreme Court of Sweden in the so called Girjas case, as well as the decision from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) against the development of a nickel mine in Rönnbäcken.





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 2020 FINANCIAL YEAR

FÖRVALTNINGSBERÄTTELSE

MANAGEMENT REPORT

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 supports 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 and engages in advocacy activities as well as legal processes, and provides information on the situation with regard to 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 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.

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 for the strategic planning period 2020–2022 is to expand the space for human rights defenders to act by improving their security and capacity, and by increasing awareness and accountability in relation to civil and political rights.

1. Support human rights defenders at risk by:
 - providing emergency assistance and innovative security solutions.
 - organising training in digital, physical, and psychosocial security.
2. Strengthen the work of local human rights defenders and increase their capacity to affect and drive change by:
 - providing skills development and project support.
 - providing long-term support for organisational development.
3. Empower people to exercise their civil and political rights and induce states to take responsibility for the fulfilment of human rights by:
 - reviewing and influencing legislation and the implementation of human rights.
 - improving access to legal aid and engaging in legal processes.
4. Improve the awareness of and engagement for civil and political rights by:
 - increasing access to information for human rights defenders.
 - informing, campaigning, and working with public advocacy to strengthen the engagement of the general public and to influence states and decision makers

WORKING METHODS

Security and innovation:

Human rights defenders around the world are regularly subjected to threats, harassment, forced disappearances, and arbitrary arrests by authoritarian regimes. Through training, emergency support, and innovative security solutions, Civil Rights Defenders aims to support as many human rights defenders as possible, so they can continue their important work. Together with our partner organisations, we offer trainings within digital, physical, and psychosocial security, among other areas.

Strong human rights actors:

A strong civil society that can protect the rights of its citizens is Civil Rights Defenders' founding idea and key to sustainable democracy. We partner with local human rights organisations and provide support in skills development as well as long-term financial support based on their needs to increase their capacity to drive change.

Holding those in power to account:

Civil Rights Defenders works toward respect for people's fundamental rights and freedoms and demands accountability when this is not the case. On our own, or together with human rights defenders, we evaluate laws and proposed legislation, as well as their implementation by the authorities. We also engage in legal processes and hold states as well as other actors to account when human rights are violated.

Awareness leads to change:

Knowing one's rights is a precondition for being able to exercise them. Civil Rights Defenders works to increase the awareness of and commitment to civil and political rights among the public, and to influence states and decision makers at a national and international level. Through information activities, public campaigns, and advocacy in

media as well as through seminars and reports, we strengthen the commitment to democracy and human rights in Sweden and globally.

ORGANISATION

Civil Rights Defenders is a non-profit 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 2020, the board discussed Civil Rights Defenders' organisational form and will continue to review the issue in 2021. Membership dues for 2020 were SEK 300. The AGM elects the board, which at the end of 2020 consisted of eight members – four women and four men. Six 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
- Carin Norberg (formerly Director, Nordic Africa Institute) 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
- Lena Svensson (Economist) Board Member

BOARD OF CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS



Benedicte Berner



Carin Norberg



Christian Åhlund



Christoffer Lindblad



Anne Ramberg



Fredrik Andersson



Lars Häggström



Lena Svensson

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Therese Reinfeldt, Viveka Risberg, and Kerstin Brunnberg make up the nominations committee.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Anders L. Pettersson

MEMBERS

In 2020, Civil Rights Defenders had 18 members.

CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS' PERSONNEL

Civil Rights Defenders' work is primarily carried out by employed staff at the organisation's head office in Stockholm, in regional offices, or through stationings in Asia, Africa, Belgrade, Bogotá, Brussels, Istanbul, Pristina, Sarajevo, and Tirana. The total number of employees at the end of 2020 was 75, compared with 65 at the end of 2019.

Distribution by office

Stockholm	51
Asia	2
Africa	1
Belgrade	7
Bogotá	4
Brussels	2
Istanbul	2
Pristina	2
Sarajevo	2
Tirana	2
Total	75

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS DURING THE FINANCIAL YEAR

In January 2020, Civil Rights Defenders entered into its next strategic planning period, running 2020–2022. The year came to be dominated by the pandemic, however, and in February a COVID-19 task force was formed to systematically tackle the challenges the pandemic posed to our staff and activities. The group has continuously monitored restrictions in all countries where we operate.

Guidelines and follow-up with regards to working from home were aided by the organisation's maturity and investments in digital technologies and management systems made in 2019. Internal communications were also developed to meet new needs among the staff.

Due to the pandemic, the 2020 Operational Plan was adjusted in dialogue with our partners as well as institutional donors during the spring.

The organisation's historical experience of and expertise in working digitally and online aided the process of controlling and executing activities. Planned activities, such as security training (Mobile Training Centres), could therefore to a large extent be executed in a different way and with good results. Despite all our adjustments, however, a few of our bigger activities could not be carried out, including Defenders' Days, and the award ceremony of Civil Rights Defenders of the Year Award.

In September, Civil Rights Defenders moved its main offices from Sergels Torg to Södermalm in Stockholm, which became necessary due to financial reasons. This has meant lower costs and also enabled the planned expansion of activities within the scope of the strategic plan. In connection with the move, investments were made in security and digital capacity, increasing our physical and digital security in multiple ways.

In June 2020, Civil Rights Defenders submitted an application to Sida to become a strategic partner organisation (formerly known as a framework organisation). In light of the strategic efforts and the organisational development that Civil Rights Defenders has undergone over the past few years, Civil Rights Defenders was the only organisation selected by Sida at this time. The application was approved in December 2020 and will increase Civil Rights Defenders' turnover and broaden our operations ahead of 2021.

In order to manage the planned development and growth that the organisation is facing, Civil Rights Defenders carried out an organisational review during the second half of the year. As a result of this, a couple of functions were phased out and new functions were added in line with the strategy and in dialogue with the local branch of the labour union.

The work to develop and strengthen the organisation's financial activities has continued during the year and four new staff members were recruited to the finance team at the same time as support from consultants was discontinued. In addition to competence-building, our focus has been to develop our financial management system Maconomy and continue to define and simplify the organisation's financial processes. One of these redeveloped processes is Civil Rights Defenders' allocation keys, where a new model was launched in February 2020. In connection with the launch, the new financial model was presented to Civil Rights Defenders' current partners and forms the basis of all new contracts.

These investments in our broader human resource efforts generally and in the work environment specifically have had positive effect. During the fourth quarter, a new recruitment system was launched and Civil Rights Defenders also laid the groundwork for a new, extensive introduction programme for new employees as well as a leadership programme for managers. Despite the pandemic, Civil Rights Defenders has managed to maintain a very good work environment and largely remains at the same level as in 2019, with an engagement index of 81.

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' efforts in relation to the work environment have focused on the impacts of COVID-19 and subsequent adjustments to the psychosocial and physical work environment. Employees and management have received guidance in working remotely as well as individually designed support. In August, the main office moved to new premises, which were designed with a clear focus on the work environment and possibilities to dynamically scale up operations.

The HR manager has had monthly check-ins with the safety representative as well as the local branch of Unionen to systematically follow up on efforts to improve the work environment. During the year, two safety rounds were carried out at Östgötagatan 90.

In the autumn, the management team took part in a course on constructive feedback with the aim of strengthening the manager–employee dialogue.

Staff Survey

In the autumn of 2020, Civil Rights Defenders carried out its annual staff survey with added questions about working remotely and the organisation's response to COVID-19. The results show that information and the response to COVID-19 were distinctly above average within the non-profit sector but with somewhat lower results than the previous year in other areas. A large part of the explanation is the direct, negative effect of COVID-19 on group efficiency as well as the

psychosocial and physical work environment as the result of a speedy adjustment to working remotely.

The leadership index dropped from 80 to 76 while the engagement index remained at 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. Civil Rights Defenders uses competence-based recruitment as its 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 is party to a collective labour agreement for professional employees through IDEA, Unionen, and Akademikerförbunden 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 significantly compared to the previous year. In 2020, the organisation had an operating profit of SEK 3,265 thousand. The work to redesign Civil Rights Defenders' financial model, where projects are to cover their own costs, which launched in February 2020 has started to show results, though we still use some of our funds raised to cover older agreements that partly lack full coverage. We have also increased the funds raised during the year by 15 per cent compared to 2019, which had a positive impact on profits.

The organisation's low equity ratio, which improved during the year, will remain a focus moving forward as we need to secure sustainable growth while maintaining, and preferably increasing, the equity ratio. Due to movements in exchange rates, the profit for the year was impacted by a foreign exchange loss, yielding a profit after financial items of SEK 2,771 thousand.

During the year, grants were paid out from Civil Rights Defenders' Emergency Fund to a sum of SEK 123 thousand, using funds raised in previous years. We have also added funds to the Emergency Fund to a sum of SEK 76 thousand. The profit after the change in special purpose funds, SEK 2,818 thousand, is brought forward. Equity brought forward thus amounts to SEK 5,789 thousand.

FUNDRAISING

Civil Rights Defenders' operating income during 2020 amounted to SEK 101,771 thousand, which represents an increase of SEK 12,817 thousand compared to 2019. 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 continue developing both partnerships with businesses and philanthropists as well as individual donating.

Civil Rights Defenders is a member of Giva Sverige, which advocates for 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, so-called 90 bank account, which is a stamp of quality for non-profit organisations, foundations, and religious communities approved as 90-account holders by the charity monitoring organisation the Swedish Fundraising Control.

Public Grants

In 2020, Civil Rights Defenders' income from grants from public bodies amounted to a total of SEK 57,272 thousand, which is close to the same level as in the previous year (SEK -232 thousand). The biggest grant-awarding bodies are Sida and the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, followed by the Swedish Inheritance Fund and the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society. Grants from state actors are important for maintaining long-term engagement, in Sweden and in the world.

Foundations and Organisations

Foundations and organisations are an important source of funding for Civil Rights Defenders. The biggest contributions came from the Open Society Foundations, National Endowment for Democracy, and Civicus.

The General Public

During the year, Civil Rights Defenders raised SEK 5,419 thousand from private individuals, which corresponds to an increase of just under 5 per cent. The largest increase was seen in monthly donations. At the end of the year the organisation had roughly 1,800 monthly donors, which corresponds to an increase of 12 per cent compared to the previous year. Monthly donations allow for long-term planning and stability, and reduce administrative costs. In addition to growing our base of donors, the drive to recruit monthly donors continues to be prioritised in the coming years.

Companies

During the year, companies and organisations contributed SEK 14,709 thousand to Civil Rights Defenders, either through long-term partnerships or by making a one-off donation. In 2019, the corresponding income from companies was SEK 19,357 thousand. During the year, the organisation was awarded a three-year grant of SEK 16,700 thousand from the Swedish Postcode Lottery's Dream Project Fund, of which only a small portion was used during the year.

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 10,000 thousand in the annual distribution of funds, as well as ca SEK 1,000 thousand in additional COVID-19 support. In 2020, we entered into a long-term partnership with Tele2. Other important partners that supported our operations included, among others, the Swedish Football Association, the Swedish Olympic and Paralympic Committees, and Twitter. Several new corporate donors made contributions in connection with the 2020 end-of-year campaign.

EXPECTED FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The 2020 pandemic points to an accelerated autocratisation and shows that human rights as an idea and foundation for international relations are to an increasing degree being put into question, particularly in multilateral contexts. Our strategic goals are thus highly relevant.

During 2020, we have continued to strengthen the organisation and it is our assessment that, despite the pandemic, we will be able to pick up pace during the remainder of the current strategic planning period. During the coming year, a number of new functions will be added that are necessary in order to allow us to act in line with the strategy, including a critical mass of expertise at our main office and in the regions in the world where we work together with partners.

Civil Rights Defenders' expansion with a focus on building a stable organisation with great leadership and governance as well as an effective programme of activities continues during 2021 and we aim to maintain a good work environment with high results in staff surveys.

In the coming years we will establish ourselves at a substantially higher budget level. Our strategic partnership with Sida contributes to long-term stability in the support we offer to the human rights defenders we work with. At the same time, we will continue to invest in fundraising from the private sector, identifying new donors and creating more partnerships with companies in order to ensure that the organisation can meet its needs for non-special purpose funds.

CODE REPORT BASED ON GIVA SVERIGE'S GUIDELINES

Civil Rights Defenders follows the Code of Quality issued by Giva Sverige. See www.givasverige.se.

INCOME

Total income incl. interest income and similar profit items for 2020: SEK 101,771 thousand (2019: SEK 89,042 thousand).

The distribution of income is shown below:

- Public bodies – 56% (65%)
- Foundations and organisations – 24% (8%)
- The general public – 5% (6%)
- Companies – 14% (21%)

The outer circle shows the distribution of income for 2020 and the inner circle for 2019.



SPECIAL PURPOSE EXPENSES

Special purpose expenses for 2020 were SEK 87,538 thousand compared to SEK 80,431 thousand in 2019, corresponding to an increase of 9%.

- Africa – 7% (5%)
- Asia – 6% (7%)
- Eurasia – 18% (21%)
- Europe – 42% (39%)
- Security and Innovation – 14% (16%)
- Latin America – 8% (7%)
- Other – 4% (5%)

The outer circle shows the distribution of special purpose expenses for 2020 and the inner circle for 2019.



MULTI-YEAR COMPARISON

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total income including net interest income (SEK thousands)	101,771	89,042	91,454	82,800	79,185
Operating income	101,771	88,954	91,125	82,782	78,655
Profit/loss after financial items	2,772	-1,335	-2,384	-353	1,602
Project expenses/total income	86%	90%	91%	87%	89%
Fundraising expenses/total income	5%	4%	5%	7%	4%
Administrative expenses/total income	6%	7%	7%	6%	5%
Equity ratio	7%	8%	11%	13%	13%

INCOME STATEMENT

Amounts in SEK

	Note	2020	2019
Operating income	3		
Membership dues		5,400	5,700
Donations		17,386,614	15,121,778
Grants		84,364,765	73,786,108
Other income		14,191	40,229
Total operating income		101,770,970	88,953,815
Operating expenses	4, 5		
Project expenses	6	-87,538,378	-80,431,407
Fundraising expenses		-4,932,472	-3,464,945
Administrative expenses	7	-5,979,956	-6,480,701
Depreciation expenses		-55,437	0
Total operating expenses		-98,506,243	-90,377,053
Operating profit/loss		3,264,727	-1,423,238
Other interest income and similar profit items	8	5	106,220
Interest expenses and similar loss items	8	-492,503	-18,130
Total profit from financial investments		-492,498	88,090
Profit/loss after financial items		2,772,229	-1,335,148
Tax on profit for the year		-1,331	-2,736
Profit/loss for the year		2,770,898	-1,337,884
Changes in special purpose funds			
Profit/loss for the year according to the income statement (see above)		2,770,898	-1,337,884
Utilisation of special purpose funds from previous year		123,066	26,895
Designation of special purpose funds		-75,946	-123,066
Remaining amount for the year/changes in equity brought forward		2,818,018	-1,434,055

BALANCE SHEET

Amounts in SEK

ASSETS	Note	2020-12-31	2019-12-31
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets			
Movables, equipment, and installations	9	1,343,596	0
Total tangible fixed assets		1,343,596	0
Current assets			
Current receivables			
Accounts receivable		26,964	122,250
Current tax asset		10,000	4,182
Other receivables		1,603,757	876,910
Prepaid expenses and accrued income	10	2,454,705	1,298,677
Total current receivables		4,095,426	2,302,019
Cash and bank balances		72,093,039	37,595,041
Total current assets		76,188,465	39,897,060
Total assets		77,532,061	39,897,060
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity			
Special purpose funds		75,946	123,066
Profit brought forward		5,713,004	2,894,985
Total equity		5,788,950	3,018,051
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable		1,214,398	1,790,180
Income tax liabilities		132,266	70,591
Liabilities – received, unutilised grants	11	63,020,592	27,563,898
Other liabilities		1,347,356	1,058,413
Accrued expenses and deferred income	12	6,028,499	6,395,927
Total current liabilities		71,743,111	36,879,009
Total equity and liabilities		77,532,061	39,897,060

CHANGES IN EQUITY

Amounts in SEK

	Special purpose funds (Emergency Fund)	Profit/loss brought forward	Total equity
Opening balance 2020-01-01	123,066	2,894,985	3,018,051
Special purpose designated by donor	75,946	-75,946	0
Utilisation of special purpose funds from previous year	-123,066	123,066	0
Profit for the year	0	2,770,898	2,770,898
Closing balance 2020-12-31	75,946	5,713,003	5,788,950

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

Amounts in SEK

	2020-01-01 –2020-12-31	2019-01-01 –2019-12-31
Operating activities		
Operating profit/loss	3,264,727	-1,423,238
Adjustments for non-cash transac-tions		
Depreciation expenses	55,437	0
Interest received	5	2,711
Interest paid	-5,994	-18,130
Income tax paid	-1,331	-2,736
Cash flow from operating activities before changes in working capital	3,312,844	-1,441,393
Changes in working capital		
Change in accounts receivable	95,286	2,769
Change in other current receivables	-1,888,692	-469,313
Change in accounts payable	-575,782	387,031
Change in other current liabilities	35,439,885	392,228
Cash flow from operating activities	36,383,541	-1,128,618
Investment activities		
Acquisition of tangible fixed assets	-1,399,033	0
Cash flow from investment activities	-1,399,033	0
Cash flow for the year	34,984,508	-1,128,618
Cash and cash equivalents at begin-ning of year	37,595,041	38,620,150
Exchange rate differences related to cash and bank balances	-486,510	103,509
Cash and cash equivalents at year end	72,093,039	37,595,041

NOTES

NOTE 1 ACCOUNTING AND VALUATION PRINCIPLES

The accounting and valuation principles comply with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act, BFAR 2012:1 (K3), Giva Sverige's governing guidelines for annual reports, and BFAR 2020:1 (on certain accounting issues due to the corona virus).

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 Giva Sverige's code of quality, 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 fundraising 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

	2020	2019
General public	5,419,074	5,181,375
Companies:		
Swedish Postcode Lottery	11,003,570	9,002,210
Other companies	403,970	203,580
Other organisations	555,000	600,000
External foundations	5,000	134,612
Total funds raised (a)	17,386,614	15,121,778

Pro-bono services received have not been recognised in the income statement and in 2020 mainly related to services within data communication, advertising, and law (b).

Grants recognised as income

Funds raised (grants according to private law)

Foundations and organisations:

National Endowment for Democracy	3,218,667	1,602,828
Open Society Foundations	15,592,062	3,973,820
CIVICUS	2,872,164	332,931
Fair Trials	565,721	428,967
Gerald & Monica Nagler Foundation	500,002	499,998
Other	1,603,086	27,155

Companies:

Swedish Postcode Lottery	2,741,113	9,416,729
Total funds raised (c)	27,092,815	16,282,428

Public grants

EU	270,378	2,013,295
Sida	40,821,744	46,629,891
Sida – Strategic Partner Organisation	1,092,545	0
MUCF	1,893,235	1,647,057
Swedish Inheritance Fund	2,663,709	0
Swedish Institute	1,151,802	485,273
Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	5,029,889	5,037,542
Vinnova	1,464,412	581,673
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	826,033	138,527
German Ministry of Foreign Affairs	703,190	345,566
Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0	13,203
Other	1,355,012	611,653
Total public grants (d)	57,271,950	57,503,680

Amounts in SEK

NOTE 3 FUNDS RAISED, CONTINUED

	2020	2019
Total funds raised comprise the following		
Donations recognised in the income statement (a)	17,386,614	15,121,778
Donations not recognised in the income statement (b)	0	0
Grants in accordance with private law recognised as income (c)	27,092,815	16,282,428
Total funds raised	44,479,429	31,404,206

NOTE 4 SALARIES, OTHER BENEFITS, AND SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS

	2020	2019
Salaries		
Board of Directors	–	–
Executive Director	1,016,424	1,049,319
Other employees	25,778,101	21,894,598
Social security contributions	7,411,691	7,555,050
Pension expenses	2,930,334	2,264,292
Total salaries and benefits	37,136,550	32,763,259

The Executive Director's pension expenses accounted for SEK 384,237 (SEK 376,824) 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 56,414 (SEK 124,947) and relates to expert groups within projects.

Geographical distribution of salaries and other benefits:

Sweden	19,739,835	19,712,929
Other countries	3,872,313	3,251,274
Total	23,612,148	22,943,917

Average number of employees, Sweden

Men	19	17
Women	32	22
Total	51	39

Average number of employees, other countries

Men	10	8
Women	14	12
Total	24	20

Members of the board

Men	4	4
Women	4	4
Total	8	8

Directors

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 3,854,255. Future office expenses are due as follows:

	2020	2019
Within 1 year	3,880,144	3,819,000
2–5 years	12,565,430	2,545,000
After 5 years	5,422,095	2,484,000

As of 1 September 2020, Civil Rights Defenders has signed a seven-year lease with a new landlord for offices in Stockholm. The notice period for the contract is 12 months and the extension period is three years. From December 2020, Civil Rights Defenders transitioned to leasing its computers. The expenses for the period of “2–5 years” and “After 5 years” are not index-adjusted.

NOTE 6 PROJECT EXPENSES

	2020	2019
Africa	5,993,165	3,950,347
Asia	5,560,793	5,934,646
Eurasia	16,006,349	16,416,052
Europe	27,963,735	23,779,995
Latin America	6,810,951	5,683,344
Security and Innovation	12,071,980	12,827,050
Sweden	9,216,013	7,868,015
Globally	1,092,545	0
Other	2,822,847	3,971,958
Total project expenses	87,538,378	80,431,407

NOTE 7 ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

	2020	2019
Accounting expenses and administration	224,527	1,034,530
Human resource expenses	4,537,744	3,595,040
Project management and financial management system	182,656	301,222
Office expenses	1,007,011	1,478,559
Board and membership expenses	28,018	71,349
Total administrative expenses	5,979,956	6,480,701

NOTE 8 OTHER INTEREST AND SIMILAR PROFIT/LOSS ITEMS

	2020	2019
Interest income	5	2,711
Interest expenses	-5,994	-18,130
Exchange rate differences, cash and bank balances	-486,509	103,509
Total	-492,498	88,090

NOTE 9 MOVABLES, EQUIPMENT, AND INSTALLATIONS

	2020-12-31	2019-12-31
Opening acquisition cost	0	0
Purchase costs	1,399,033	0
Closing accumulated acquisition costs	1,399,033	0
Opening accumulated depreciation	0	0
Depreciation for the year	-55,437	0
Closing accumulated depreciation	-55,437	0
Closing carrying value	1,343,596	0
Total	1,343,596	0

Depreciation as per schedule is calculated based on a useful life of seven years.

Amounts in SEK

NOTE 10 PREPAID EXPENSES AND ACCRUED INCOME	2020-12-31	2019-12-31
Prepaid expenses:		
Rent	795,082	929,593
Rent deposit	1,273,745	24,855
Other items	385,878	344,229
Total	2,454,705	1,298,677

NOTE 11 LIABILITIES – RECEIVED, UNUTILISED GRANTS	2020-12-31	2019-12-31
Liability, unutilised grant from Sida	11,927,319	15,391,231
Liability, Sida Strategic Partner Organisation	20,386,452	0
Liability, unutilised grant from the Swedish Postcode Lottery	15,166,628	1,208,365
Liability, unutilised grant from others	15,540,193	10,964,302
Total	63,020,592	27,563,898

NOTE 12 ACCRUED EXPENSES AND DEFERRED INCOME	2020-12-31	2019-12-31
Accrued social security contributions	1,016,530	1,566,263
Holiday pay liability	3,372,610	2,904,547
Other items	1,639,359	1,925,117
Total	6,028,499	6,395,927

NOTE 13 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AFTER THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR

The board continues to follow developments concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.

This annual report has been signed digitally.
Stockholm, 2021

Benedicte Berner
Chair

Anne Ramberg
Board Member

Carin Norberg
Board Member

Christoffer Lindblad
Board Member

Fredrik Andersson
Board Member

Lars Häggström
Board Member

Lena Svensson
Board Member

Christian Åhlund
Board Member

Anders Pettersson
Executive Director

Our audit report was submitted in Stockholm, 2021.
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 2020. The association's annual accounts are included on pages 30–45 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 on 31 December 2020 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 2020 (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 2020.

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, 2021

Grant Thornton Sweden AB

Lena Johnson

Authorised Public Accountant

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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 lectured on freedom of expression at Harvard University and is an associate at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard. Benedicte

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. She is also a member of the Swedish Society for International Affairs.



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 as 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.



Anne Ramberg

Lawyer (Board Member)

Anne Ramberg is an honorary doctor at the Faculty of Law and chair of the University Board at Uppsala University. For twenty years, she served as Secretary General of the Swedish Bar Association. 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. Anne also holds a range of board assignments in Sweden, including as chair of the board of the Stockholm Prize in Criminology and a member of the board of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute.



Lena Svensson

Economist and Advisor within the Non-Profit Sector (Board Member)

Lena Svensson previously worked as an authorised accountant and partner at PwC. She has many years of experience as an accountant and advisor within the non-profit sector and has worked with fundraising and international development

organisations, among others. Within PwC, Lena has held a number of leading roles, such as business area manager and responsible for PwC's development of a unit for the non-profit sector. Today, she serves on a number of boards while also offering advisory services to associations and foundations.



Carin Norberg

Chair of the Board, formerly Director, Nordic Africa Institute (Board Member)

Carin Norberg holds a master's degree in Political Science from Uppsala University. She worked for Sida in 1971–2002, as an advisor to the United Nations Commissioner

for Namibia in New York in 1984–1987, and as the director of the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala in 2006–2012. Carin has also served on several boards, including for the Swedish Institute in Alexandria, TI Sweden, the Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies, and the Center for Economic and Social Rights in New York.



Christoffer Lindblad

Founder and Partner, Pelago AB (Board Member)

Christoffer Lindblad is 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 holds a law degree from the University of Lund and has previously worked for the law firm Mannheimer Swartling.



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 in and a member of the board of the Milton Group,

a leading communications company 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.



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 CCEB (Conseil Consultatif des Barreaux Européens). Since 2005 he also represents Sweden on the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

DEPARTMENTS AND REGIONAL OFFICES AT THE END OF 2020

HEAD OFFICE STOCKHOLM (SWEDEN)

Anders L Pettersson, *Executive Director*

Östgötagatan 90, 116 64 Stockholm, Sweden
Phone: +46(0)8545 277 30, Email: info@crd.org

DEPARTMENTS, HEAD OFFICE

Global Programme

Gabrielle Gunneberg, *Global Programme Director*

Africa Department

Mesfin Negash, *Director Africa Department*

Asia Department

Gabrielle Gunneberg, *Global Programme Director*

Eurasia Department

Anna Furtuna, *Director Eurasia Department*

Europe and MENA Department

Goran Miletic, *Director Europe and MENA
Department and Deputy Global Programme Director*

Latin America Department

Erik Jennische, *Director Latin America Department*

Legal Department (incl. activities in Sweden)

John Stauffer, *Legal Director and Deputy Executive
Director*

Security and Innovation Department

Marcin de Kaminski, *Security and Innovation
Director*

Communications Department

Maria Granefelt, *Communications Director*

Finance Department

Karin Ancker, *Chief Financial Officer*

Fundraising and Partnerships Department

Anna Magnard, *Development Director*

REGIONAL OFFICES/STATIONINGS

AFRICA

Email: africa@crd.org

ASIA

Email: asia@crd.org

BELGRADE, SERBIA

Kralja Milana 10/5, 11 000 Belgrade, Serbia
Phone: +381 11 2686 894
Email: belgrade@crd.org

BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

Wework Usaquén, Cra. 7 # 11650, Usaquén, Bogotá,
Colombia
Email: bogota@crd.org

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Rue de la Pépinière 1, 1000 Bruxelles, Belgium
Email: brussels@crd.org

ISTANBUL, TURKEY

Email: istanbul@crd.org

PRISTINA, KOSOVO

Gazmend Zajmi no 21, 10 000 Pristina, Kosovo
Phone: +386 49 505 050
Email: pristina@crd.org

SARAJEVO, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Kalmija Baruha 1, (502), 71 000 Sarajevo,
BosniaHerzegovina
Phone: +387 33 558 515
Email: sarajevo.office@crd.org

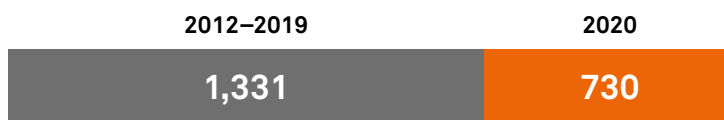
TIRANA, ALBANIA

Rruga Pjetër Bogdani, Pallati Teuta nr. 12 Kati 6,
Ap 26, Tirana, Albania
Phone: +355 68 40 41 869
Email: tirana.albania@crd.org

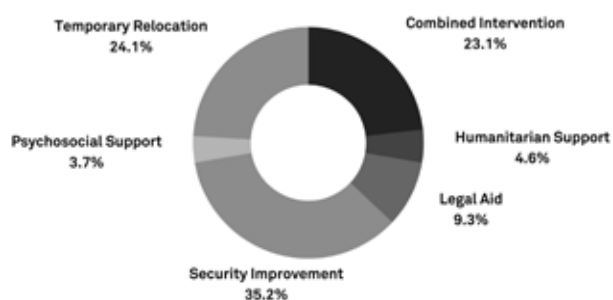
THE EMERGENCY FUND DURING THE 2020 PANDEMIC YEAR

The past year has been challenging in many ways, not least for human rights defenders. The global pandemic led more countries to introduce emergency laws, which in turn opened up for human rights violations. On the frontline, many of the brave people demanding change are subjected to threats and harassment on a daily basis. When situations escalate, we offer immediate support through the Emergency Fund. During 2020, the fund supported a total of 730 human rights defenders from 34 countries.

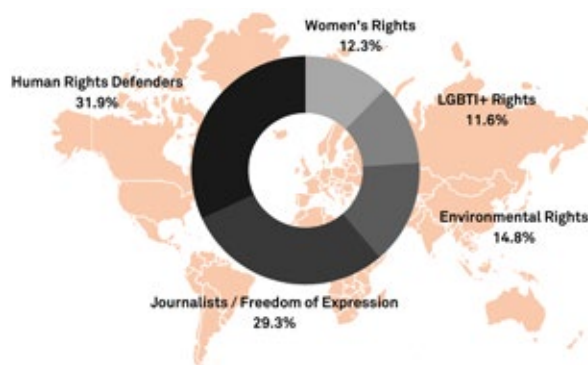
NUMBER OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS WHO RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM THE EMERGENCY FUND



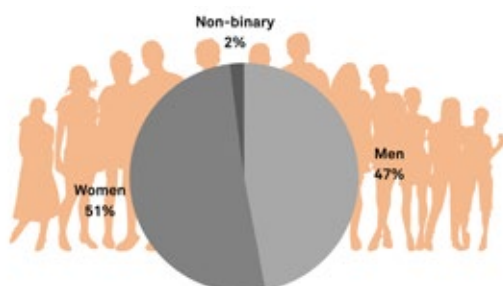
DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE OF SUPPORT



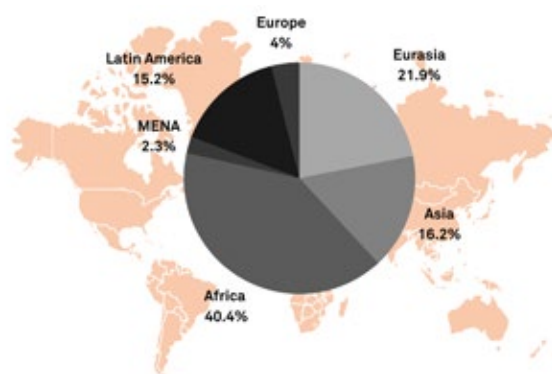
DISTRIBUTION BY AREA OF ACTIVITY



DISTRIBUTION BY GENDER IDENTITY



DISTRIBUTION BY REGION



The Colombian human rights defender and environmental activist Angela Maldonado is one of the human rights defenders who have received assistance through our Emergency Fund over the past few years. She is head of the environmental organisation Entropika, which defends the Amazon rainforest and its biodiversity in the world's most dangerous region for human rights defenders. Read more about the Emergency Fund on page 8.



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.

COMPANIES

Do you share our values and want to develop your organisation in a positive direction with respect for human rights? Contact us to discuss how we can set up a partnership.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



FACEBOOK
Civil Rights Defenders



TWITTER
@crdefenders



INSTAGRAM
@crdefenders