



AVOCAT.ES EUROPÉEN.NES DEMOCRATES
PARÉTEREN DEMOKRAT YEN IWROPAYE
AYRUPALI DEMOKRAT AVUKATLAR
EUROPAISCHE DEMOKRATISCHE RECHTSANWALT_INNEN
ABVOCATS EUROPEUS DEMOCRATES
ABOGADOS EUROPEOS DEMOCRATES
ΕΥΡΩΠΑΙΟΙ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΕΣ ΔΙΚΗΓΟΡΟΙ
AVVOCATI EUROPEI DEMOCRATICI
EUROPESE DEMOKRATISCHE ADVOCATEN
EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS



Legal professionals in danger:

1. Mumtaz SHERZAI:

On 15 July 2022, Mumtaz Sherzai went missing from his home in the city of Khost, in Khost province in southeast Afghanistan. He was a law professor at Khost University and a former prosecutor for the National Directorate of Security. The following day, on 16 July, his remains were discovered near the Khost province airport. His bruised and bloodied body bore obvious signs of beatings and severe torture, presumed to be his cause of death. He was survived by his wife and three-year-old daughter, and was the sole breadwinner for his extended family.²⁷

2. Faizullah JALAL:

In one of the most recent high-profile cases involving the persecution of an Afghan legal professional, the Taliban arrested Faizullah Jalal, a prominent professor of law and political science at Kabul University who has been a highly-vocal critic of the Taliban on Afghan TV and in other public fora. When the professor was arrested at his home on 8 January 2022, the international community was seized with fear for his life. His release by the Taliban, unharmed, mere days later has been attributed to the swift worldwide condemnation of the Taliban's actions. Absent that global outcry, the professor might well have met a very different fate.²⁸

3. Mrs Freshhta KARIMI:

Since 2002, Freshhta Karimi has devoted her career to improving access to justice and promoting women's and children's rights in Afghanistan. In 2006, she co-founded the NGO Da Qanoon Ghush-tonky ("DQG") specifically to combat violence against Afghan women and to increase public awareness of the law in communities at the district and provincial levels, through the publication of a variety of popular legal awareness materials.

²⁷ See Statement Condemning the Murder of Mumtaz Sherzai in Afghanistan and Calling on the International Community to Demand Taliban Compliance with International Law (New York City Bar Association, 4 Aug. 2022) (and sources cited there), <https://www.nycbar.org/media-listing/media/detail/condemning-murder-of-mumtaz-sherzai-in-taliban-afghanistan>; Collapse of Afghanistan's Judiciary as Over 2,000 Prosecutors Fired (Afghanistan International, 18 July 2022), <https://www.afintl.com/en/202207185576>.

²⁸ See Statement of the New York City Bar Association re: the Taliban Takeover of the Afghanistan Independent Bar Association (New York City Bar Association, 6 May 2022), n.13 (and sources cited there), <https://www.nycbar.org/member-and-career-services/committees/reports-listing/reports/detail/taliban-takeover-of-afghanistan-independent-bar-association>.



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In just the first eight years of DQG's existence, DQG lawyers handled more than 24,000 criminal and family law cases. Today, DQG continues to provide legal aid services for women, children and men in 16 provinces across Afghanistan.

The events of August 2021 forced Mrs Karimi to leave Afghanistan and find refuge in Canada. In September 2021, she was awarded the prestigious Ludovic Trarieux International Human Rights Prize



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