

**Questionnaire for International Organizations and Civil Society by the  
UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders  
Mary Lawlor, 9 February 2021**

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Ms. Mary Lawlor invites you or your organization to respond to the questionnaire below. Submissions received will inform the thematic report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of long term detention of human rights defenders, which will be presented to the UN General Assembly in October 2021.

The questionnaire on the report is available at OHCHR website in English (original language) as well as in French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic (unofficial translations): <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/SRHRDefenders/Pages/SRHRDefendersIndex.aspx>.

All submissions received will be published in the aforementioned website, unless you/your organization clearly indicated that you did not wish to have your input be made publicly available when submitting your response.

There is a word limit of 2500 words per questionnaire. Please submit the completed questionnaire to [defenders@ohchr.org](mailto:defenders@ohchr.org)

Deadline for submissions: **19 March 2021**

**Contact Details**

Please provide your contact details in case we need to contact you in connection with this survey. Note that this is optional.

Type of Stakeholder (please select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> International or Inter-governmental Organisations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Civil Society Groups or Organisations <input type="checkbox"/> Individual human rights defender <input type="checkbox"/> Academic/training or research institution <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
Name of Stakeholder/ Organization (if applicable) Name of Survey Respondent	Falun Dafa Information Center
Email	levib@faluninfo.net

<p>Can we attribute responses to this questionnaire to you or your organization publicly*?</p> <p>*On OHCHR website, under the section of SR on human rights defenders.</p>	<p><u>Yes</u>      No</p> <p>Comments (if any):</p>
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## Questions

Human rights defenders are persons, who individually, or in association with others, work peacefully to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Defenders around the world peacefully promoting and defending human rights operate under national legal frameworks not always fully consistent with the United Nations Charter and international human rights law. In some instances, as echoed in multiple Human Rights Council and General Assembly resolutions<sup>[1]</sup> national legislation, in particular national security and counter-terrorism laws, or regulations on civil society and public freedoms have been misused to target defenders in a manner contrary to international law, that might result in long-term arbitrary deprivation of liberty.

1) Do you know of any human rights defender(s) currently detained by States, who have been imprisoned on charges that carry a prison sentences of at least 10 years or more? Please provide a list of cases.

The enclosed list of cases is representative, if incomplete, and includes individual human rights defenders who received sentenced of 10 – 15 years within the last five years.

2) Do you know of any human rights defender(s) currently detained by States, who have been imprisoned on continuous sentences amounting to 10 years or more? For example, a defender who completes a sentence of four years in detention but instead of being released is given another six year sentence? Please provide a list of cases or examples if possible.

3) Do you know of any human rights defender(s) whose time in pre-trial detention and/or administrative detention by States combines with a sentence that amounts, or would amount to 10 years or more? Please provide a list of cases.

4) Do you know of any human rights defender(s) falling under any of the previous categories above, who were released before ending their long-term prison sentences for any reasons (e.g. granted a pardon, as a result of an appeal, or released on humanitarian or other grounds)? Please provide a list of cases.

5) What actions do you suggest the Special Rapporteur can take to:

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<sup>[1]</sup> See [A/HRC/RES/22/6](#) (2013) and [A/RES/68/181](#)(2014). See also: [A/HRC/RES/25/18](#) (2014), [A/HRC/RES/27/31](#) (2014), [A/HRC/RES/32/31](#) (2016) and [A/HRC/RES/34/5](#) (2017)

- a) Prevent defenders from being detained for long terms in connection to their human rights work? and
- b) Have those human rights defenders arbitrarily detained under long sentences released?

We recommend that the Special Rapporteur take steps to document and publicize instances where Falun Gong human rights activists have received long-term sentences for their advocacy, and that their activities are the non-violent expression of their civil and political rights.

The cases provided in this submission often involve violations of the right to freedom of conscience and religion, as well as violations of their rights to freedom of expression and assembly. Although these individuals are not advocating for human rights within the legal system per se, their actions nonetheless constitute human rights defense. Given the context of the suppression of Falun Gong, we deem that any advocacy that calls for an end to the persecution, or that involves defending the right to freedom of conscience or religion, or attempts to document or publicize human rights violations, is human rights defense work.

**NOTE:** When providing the list of cases/examples under each question, please include: the name of the human rights defender(s), a summary of their human rights work, history of detention (date of arrest(s), charges and conviction including articles of the relevant law(s)), a brief explanation of facts relevant to their case).