



CARTOONISTS RIGHTS NETWORK INTERNATIONAL

Registered address - No. 7272, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7272, USA

December 6th 2021

Dear friends,

With pleasure I write to announce the launch of CRNI's new **Cartoonists' Legal Advisory Network**.

Overview

This initiative is a direct response to findings made prior to the pandemic when a consultative exercise with CRNI's Regional Representatives identified criminalisation as their chief concern among the various threats to cartoonists' freedom of expression.

This sentiment was echoed at September's Press & Cartooning Global Forum, where all delegates regardless of their point of origin expressed concerns about erosion of democracy and civil liberties in their respective countries.

The period of work establishing the Cartoonists' Legal Advisory Network has been supported by UNESCO's Global Media Defense Fund.

Going forward from the first quarter of 2022 the Cartoonists' Legal Advisory Network will be considered part of CRNI's core program. See APPENDIX I for a full description of what is to be offered to cartoonists.

Personnel

Naturally the strength of the project will be in the quality of guidance given. To that end we have spent the past year recruiting a new panel of experts that includes practicing lawyers and academics specialising in human rights and most particularly freedom of expression as well as journalism and media, digital rights and security.

In addition to personnel from several leading NGOs we have also secured experts from a broad geographical spread and ensured gender balance. Among those lending their time to the project are:

Name	Firm, NGO etc.	Location
Louis Gitinywa Akohoudeo	Kigali Attorneys LLP	Rwanda
Galina Arapova	Mass Media Defence Centre	Russia
Saúl Antonio Baños	Fundación de Estudios para la Aplicación del Derecho	El Salvador
Dr. Bea Bodrogi	Independent	Hungary
Jiyoun Choe	Open Net	Republic of Korea
Ochiel J Dudley	Katiba Institute	Kenya
Herman Duarte	Simple Legal Consulting	Costa Rica
Caiofhionn Gallagher QC	Doughty Street Chambers	UK
Faiga W.G. Geroro	Kalchakliqs	Papua New Guinea
Penny Karageorgi	Independent	Germany/Greece
Gosego R. Lekgowe	University of Botswana	Botswana
Prof. Laura E. Little	Temple University School of Law	USA
Prof. Andrés Calderón Lopez	Universidad del Pacifico	Peru
Iain MacKinnon	Linden & Associates	Canada
Dr. Daniel Mekonnen	Independent	Switzerland
Michelle Mwiinga	James & Doris Legal Practitioners	Zambia
Samuel Kofi Nartey	Law Plus	Ghana
Mojirayo Ogunlana-Nkanga	M.O.N Legal	Nigeria
Aditi Saxena	Human Rights Law Network	India

Please note this is not an exhaustive list; we respect our experts' rights to privacy and anonymity.

CRNI is grateful to IFEX, Media Matters, and Ms Gallagher at DCS for their assistance in assembling our panel. Please note that a series of interviews with some of these Legal Experts will be published on our blog from this week.

Publicity

When first embarking with this project with UNESCO it was assumed that there would be an opportunity for promotion of this new network at international cartoonists' events. The continuing effects of the pandemic and the necessary restrictions on travel stymied those plans.

I certainly hope there will be opportunities to speak with cartoonists next year, but in the meantime all promotional activity shall be online. I attach a small digital attachment and I would be grateful if it could be shared with the membership of your organisations. Additionally, I have prepared a short online presentation and would be happy to contribute to any meetings to be convened in the months ahead.

Confidentiality & New Reporting Mechanism

Please find overleaf (APPENDIX II) a statement of policy regarding confidentiality and digital communication. A dedicated email address specifically for inbound requests for legal guidance has been set up: legal@cartoonistsrights.org

Our colleagues' shared anxiety about the threat of criminalisation is real and well founded. I feel that CRNI is duty-bound to respond and with this new mechanism we'll help cartoonists get swift and relevant guidance.

Of course, I am well aware of the excellent work already being done by other organisations and know that many cartoonists have enjoyed first-class legal support in the past; indeed, some of our recruited experts have been responsible. We are not alone in this battle and will continue to work in partnership with others.

But of most concern to me are the cartoonists who have never had cause to use a lawyer before and who suddenly find themselves taken to a police station or in receipt of a court summons without a clear idea of what will happen next or who they might rely on. I hope that they come to think of this network as their first contact when it is needed.

Lastly, I remain at your disposal should any other questions arise.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Terry Anderson
Executive Director

APPENDIX I – DESCRIPTOR

The following is a description of the Cartoonists' Legal Advisory Network intended to be read by our constituency.

CRNI wants to hear from you if you are, or you represent, a cartoonist who fears criminalisation. The Cartoonists' Legal Advisory Network exists to provide reliable and rapid guidance to those cartoonists who face arrest, court action or harassment from the police or judiciary.

Who do we support?

- Those who have been arrested, cautioned or questioned by the police, or have reason to believe they soon will be.
- Those who have received notification of a court action pertaining to criminal charges.
- Those who believe a change in the laws of their nation will immediately render them liable to criminal prosecution.

If your experience matches any of the above, please use this helpline to contact us ([link](#)) and we will begin the process, and please be assured that all requests are confidential.

What will happen when I contact CRNI?

We will follow up and:

- **choose a secure communication channel with you**
- **discuss your case and needs**
- **confirm your information**

– As soon as possible we will seek to confirm with trusted partners that you are who you say you are. This is necessary to protect you in case you are being impersonated and ensures that we focus our support on genuine cases.

- **get support**

– Once satisfied that the case can be considered genuine, we will ask one of our panel of legal experts for their input.

You can expect:

- An assessment of the merits of the case from a relevant expert.
- Guidance on appropriate next steps.
- Referrals to amenable legal defenders in your location.

We will not provide:

- Full, legally binding opinions nor defence to those who need a lawyer in court.
- Financial aid with court costs.
- Guidance on any legal matter that does not pertain to criminal charges that arise as a result of the correspondent's work as a cartoonist i.e. we will not accept enquiries about civil law matters.

NB - Where the cartoonist is rendered unavailable, the service can be used by their next of kin. CRNI shall never levy any charge or fee.

Please note the dedicated email address: legal@cartoonistsrights.org

APPENDIX II – PROTOCOL

Cartoonists' Legal Advisory Network: Information Security Protocols

CRNI highly values responsible handling of confidential information.

The following protocol represents a “base line” requirement for those taking part in the Cartoonist' Legal Advisory Network.

When/what information is confidential?

Some considerations when communicating with clients and partners:



Content

What is being said? Would you share this with a government official or police officer?



Meta data

Could knowing that a person has had contact with CRNI (or a partner) be held against that person?



Opposition

Consider potential threats posed by different parties – who is in the chain?

Examples of confidential information:

- Case details that could generate problems for a cartoonist at risk, their family or a partner organization.
- Personal information – addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, personal identification numbers, emergency contacts.
- Administrative information - electronic documents containing confidential information, legal documents, contracts, passport copies.

For this project information between CRNI and cartoonists at risk will be shared only through the following channels:



Jitsi

Safest method for video communication.



Signal

Safest method for communication about sensitive information, especially if you need to reach someone quickly; files can be encrypted (desktop & mobile app for convenience).

wire Wire

Safest method for communication about sensitive information, especially if you need to reach someone quickly; files can also be sent encrypted (desktop & mobile app for convenience).



ProtonMail to ProtonMail

Safest method for communicating long form or non-urgent yet sensitive information (including financial data, sensitive stories, etc) with others; if one ProtonMail account sends an email to another account, the messages are encrypted and secure.



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