

**Statement at 38th session of the UN Human Rights Council**

**Item 6: Consideration of UPR outcomes - Mali**

**Speaker: Salma El Hosseiny**

Mr President,

ISHR takes the opportunity of the adoption of Mali's UPR report to congratulate the government on the adoption of a specific human right defenders protection law earlier this year. With this enactment, Mali becomes the 3<sup>rd</sup> African country after Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso to adopt such a law.

While the adoption of the law is an important step towards the protection of human rights defenders, we encourage the government to further the work done during a workshop organised jointly by civil society and the national human rights commission and adopt the implementation decree. This decree will ensure the effective implementation of the law through the establishment of an efficient and effective protection mechanism which should prevent, protect against and investigate all attacks and violations against defenders. Such a mechanism is essential to guarantee a safe and enabling work environment for defenders in Mali.

We also welcome the establishment of a Ministry solely responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

Therefore, ISHR further calls on Mali to:

- Investigate and prosecute all attacks and false accusations against journalists.
- Develop and support a two year strategic plan for the National Human Rights Commission aiming to build the Commission's institutional capacity and independence so it is fully compliant with the Paris Principles.
- Provide the National Human Rights Commission with the necessary resources for it to be fully functional and able to fulfil its mandate as a defender protection mechanism.

I thank you.