

ASF FRANCE NEWSLETTER

Your quarterly newsletter with Avocats Sans Frontières France

FOCUS ON...

THE JOINT FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN IN GREECE

Samos Legal Centre : a project to guarantee the rights of asylum seekers in the face of a failing migration system

"The migration situation in Europe, particularly in Greece, continues to be marked by dramatic conditions. On the island of Samos, almost 10,000 people disembarked in 2024, and the reception centre for registering asylum seekers, the Closed Control Access Centre, was at its most alarmingly overcrowded, with 132% of its capacity occupied. This model, the only one of its kind in Europe, which is supposed to facilitate the procedure, is actually worsening the living conditions of people seeking protection. In this climate, the Samos Legal Centre project provides a response by offering full legal support for asylum seekers at every stage of the procedure, from registration to a possible appeal against a rejection decision, including support for family reunification, for example.

In Greece, the challenges are many: inhumane reception conditions, a lack of interpreters that complicates and slows down the procedure, repeated human rights violations, and practices such as de facto detention. It is against this backdrop that the Samos Legal Centre and a number of other NGOs are working together to provide free and independent legal support to displaced people. Our work focuses on one of the most delicate stages of the procedure: the asylum interview, which is based solely on an oral account, without any written documents, making this exchange even more decisive for the applicants.

But solidarity in the face of this situation requires much more. On 3 December, ASF France and four other non-profit organisations in Greece (Mobile Info Team, Equal Legal Aid, Human Rights Legal Project, and Legal Centre Lesbos) launched the [#JointLegalAidFundraising](#) campaign.

This initiative aims to ensure access to legal aid and justice for displaced people in Europe, particularly in the face of rising xenophobic policies and anti-migrant rhetoric that make access to rights even more complex.

The number of arrivals and the worsening living conditions of refugees call for immediate action. Forced expulsions (pushbacks) and unjustified arrests, often violent, have intensified. Once in Europe, people fleeing war and persecution face overcrowded camps with no access to essential services. Against this backdrop, our joint fundraising aims to ensure that these vulnerable people can defend their rights and access fair justice.

To date, over £2,625 (approx. €3,132) has been raised for this cause, and the aim is to reach £15,000 (approx. €17,900) to support our actions and those of other organisations, strengthen our legal services and offer every asylum seeker the chance to defend themselves. Every donation counts, because it amplifies the voices of those whom the system tries to silence.

The campaign is open until 31 January 2025. Contribute today to support us! To make a donation, click here: [fundraising_link](#). Thank you for your support!"

Lucile MACÉ
Project Manager, Samos Legal Centre





FRANÇOIS CANTIER ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS PRIZE OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, SPECIAL MENTION, RECEIVED BY ASF FRANCE AND SEMA UKRAINE

On 10 December 2024, Avocats Sans Frontières France received a Human Rights Prize, Special Mention from the French Republic.

This is the first time that a lawyers' organisation has received such a distinction in France.

ASF France is sharing this prize with a Ukrainian NGO, SEMA, with which it has set up a project to defend Ukrainian women who are victims of sexual violence. SEMA provides medical and psychological care and ASF France assists with their legal and judicial defence in proceedings against their aggressors.

The award was presented to us on 10 December 2024 in the presence of the Minister of Justice, the President of the National Advisory Council on Human Rights and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

This recognition also rewards our 27 years of efforts to achieve our raison d'être: to bring the protection of the law to the most vulnerable.

We hope that all those involved - public institutions, private companies, justice-loving citizens and legal professionals - will provide us with the financial support we need to continue our work.



François Cantier, at the presentation of the French Republic Human Rights Prize on 10 December 2024, at the Ministry of Justice.



OUR PARTNERS BY OUR SIDE !



- Thank you to the **Bar Associations** of Meaux, Chambéry, Dijon, Amiens, Coutances-Avranches and Haute-Loire for confirming their support in the last quarter of 2024.
- Thank you to **L'Artisan Costumier** for more than 10 years of partnership ! Since 2013, L'Artisan Costumier and ASF France have been working together to defend human rights. This partnership began with the creation of a lawyer's dress decorated with military trellis motifs, presented in Marseille, followed by the making of the blue dress bearing the message 'Là où la défense n'a plus la parole', highlighted at major events such as the Convention Nationale des Avocats in Bordeaux in 2017. Through its presence at trade fairs, exhibitions and collaborations with law schools, L'Artisan Costumier helps to promote ASF France's commitment to justice and solidarity.
- Would you also like to get your company, law firm, association or bar association involved? Contact us on **05 34 31 17 83** or at **secretariat@avocatssansfrontieres-france.org**.

QUARTERLY NEWS

FRANCE

- [Night of Law in Toulouse: conference-debate in tribute to Robert Badinter](#)
- [ASF France co-signs a report on reprisals against human rights defenders in the DRC](#)
- [ASF FRANCE supports LGBTQIA+ Mauritians](#)

NIGERIA

- [ASF France Nigeria reaffirms its commitment against the death penalty](#)
- [Digital rights in Africa: Call for action at the 81st session of the ACHPR in Banjul](#)
- [New activity in the e-RIGHTS project: inter-school competition on digital rights](#)
- [New activity in the e-RIGHTS project: drawing up a guide to digital policy reform](#)

CAMEROUN

- [New PAGOC project activity: organisation of a training course for Cameroonian lawyers](#)

HAÏTI

- Les nouvelles activités du projet IMPLIC :
[1st video from the awareness campaign](#) [2nd video in the awareness campaign](#)
[3rd video in the awareness campaign](#) [4th video in the awareness campaign](#)

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE QUARTER

Matthieu Bagard appeals to the UN Human Rights Committee

On 21 October 2024, ASF France volunteer expert Matthieu Bagard appeared before the United Nations Human Rights Committee on behalf of the association. He was able to question the French authorities about the situation of nationals detained in Iraq and north-eastern Syria, who are facing violations of their fundamental rights.



ASF France Annual General Meeting and new governance structure

On 16 November 2024, in Toulouse and online, the 15 elected directors appointed François Cantier as Chairman, Patrice Dreiski as Treasurer and Isabelle Durand as Secretary.

Presentation of a cheque as part of the Permanences Solidaires initiative

On 25 November 2024, the Toulouse Bar Association presented ASF France with a cheque for €6,588 from Permanences Solidaires. A big thank you to the Bar for 10 years of organisation and to the 23 Toulouse lawyers who contributed this year by waiving their fees for free legal consultations.



Webinar on women's digital rights

On 13 December 2024, a webinar on combating online GBV in Nigeria announced the winner of the 'Tech, Not Terror: Challenging Online Gender Based Violence' video competition, part of the eRIGHTS project run with our partners Spaces for Change and CITAD.

ON THE MOVE AT ASF FRANCE !

We would like to thank the following people for their work at ASF France:

- **Louise LE STER**, caseworker in Samos (Greece)
- **Alexia BOUR**, caseworker in Samos (Greece)
- **Jean KOWE**, PAGOC project manager (Cameroon)
- **Aminata MILLIMONO**, LIBRE Project Manager (Guinea)

JOIN US !



By becoming a member, you are showing your commitment to defending fundamental rights and taking concrete action to defend human rights ! The membership runs for the calendar year 2024.

[I JOIN ASF FRANCE](#)