



Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti  
Bureau des Avocats Internationaux

For Immediate Release  
March 6, 2009

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## **HAITI'S MOST PROMINENT HUMAN RIGHTS ATTORNEY TO RECEIVE HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD**

(Washington D.C., March 6, 2009). On March 8, Haitian Attorney Mario Joseph will be recognized by Santa Clara University School of Law for his legal contributions to Human Rights in Haiti.

Mario Joseph, Managing Attorney for the *Bureau de Avocats Internationaux* (BAI) will receive the 2009 Katharine and George Alexander Law Prize recognizing his passion and contributions to improve the justice system in Haiti. "Mr. Joseph has not only freed individuals from injustice but has placed systematic pressure on the dictatorship to respect the rule of law. We honor him for his courageous leadership, his tireless service to those in need, and his dedication to preserving the rights of all" said Santa Clara Law Dean Donald Polden.

Joseph served as the lead lawyer in one of the most complex human rights cases in the Americas and BAI's most successful case, the Raboteau Massacre trial. From 2004 to 2006, he defended dozens of political prisoners arrested by the unconstitutional Interim Government of Haiti. None of Joseph's political prisoner clients were convicted. Joseph himself was the subject of a 2005 Amnesty International Action Alert, when threats forced him into hiding.

The New York Times called Mr. Joseph "Haiti's most prominent human rights lawyer."

Brian Concannon, Director of the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH) said "Mario has put his career and his life on the line for 15 years, making the justice system work for the poorest people in the hemisphere. The Alexander Prize provides well-deserved recognition for these efforts."

Mario Joseph called the Alexander Prize "one of the greatest honors of my life, which I accept in the name of the courageous victims I have had the privilege of joining in their fight for justice."

### **About BAI and IJDH**

BAI and IJDH are partner organizations based in Haiti and the U.S. BAI is public interest law office serving Haiti's poor in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. <http://www.ijdh.org/bureau.htm>. IJDH is an Oregon-based human rights organization that works for constitutional democracy, justice and human rights in Haiti through litigation, information dissemination and grassroots advocacy. [www.HaitiJustice.org](http://www.HaitiJustice.org).

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