

## Statement of Commendation

### **Alison Des Forges Memorial Award for Human Rights Activists in Western New York**

The Alison Des Forges Memorial Committee is pleased and honored to present Julia Anne Hall, International Human Rights lawyer, with the Alison Des Forges Memorial Award for Human Rights Activists in Western New York. Created in 2016, the Award is given each year to an individual or organization whose actions exemplify Alison's uncompromising commitment to advancing the cause of human rights and social justice.

Julia Anne Hall is a graduate of the University at Buffalo Law School and a member of the New York State Bar Association. She has been a ceaseless advocate for human rights for nearly a quarter of a century, and is an internationally known and respected expert on criminal justice, counter-terrorism and human rights. In her current position at Amnesty International in London, England, Ms. Hall focuses on accountability for human rights violations in countries with a history of political violence, and for violations committed in the context of the global "war on terrorism."

From 1996-2009, Ms. Hall served as senior legal counsel in the Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Program at Human Rights Watch, working to end violations committed in the context of national political conflicts and counter-terrorism operations. Following the 9/11 attack on the United States, she focused on counter-terrorism operations by the U. S. and in Europe, including the military commissions and resettlement of Guantanamo Bay detainees. During the past decade, as Amnesty International's expert on criminal justice, counter-terrorism, and human rights in Europe, she has covered the conflicts in Northern Ireland and Bosnia, and researched migration and asylum issues in the European Union.

Ms. Hall promotes human rights as author of numerous reports, articles and *amicus* briefs on multiple topics. She was a member of the research and editing team for Amnesty International's report in 2013 titled "Northern Ireland: Time to Deal with the Past." Her fieldwork and publications over the years have covered a wide range of issues, such as criminal justice and counter-terrorism, and pertained to a wide variety of countries, such as rights-protective states (e.g. Netherlands and Scandinavia) and increasingly authoritarian governments (e.g. Hungary, Poland, and Azerbaijan). Ms. Hall has conducted sustained advocacy at the United Nations, Council of Europe, and the European Union, all of which have drawn upon her expertise. In addition, she serves as an expert witness in individual and court proceedings before U.S. federal courts and treaty-bodies, the European Court of Human Rights, the United Kingdom Special Immigration Appeals Commission, and the Commission of Inquiry into the Actions of Canadian Officials.

In addition, Julia Hall has worked tirelessly to spread awareness about human rights in Western New York, advocating for the rights of racial minorities, and women and girls, and supporting quality education as well as participatory representation. Many groups in Buffalo look to her as a voice of reason and a source of enlightenment. Moreover, she serves as a committed mentor to students and a fundraiser for various local causes.

Commenting on her nomination for the award, one expert in the field wrote: "I have met many human rights advocates in the course of my own career, and can assure you she ranks with the most efficacious and dedicated among them." Another wrote that "Julia exemplifies the spirit of Alison Des Forges and the Memorial Award in every way."

April 10, 2019

