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For Immediate Release

Attorney General's Asylum Decision Puts Victims at Risk, Violates Asylum Law

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (June 12, 2018)

Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced yesterday that victims of domestic violence and other persecution by private actors generally do not qualify for asylum. The attorney general announced his decision in Matter of A-B-, a case which he overturned after referring to himself following a grant of asylum by the federal Board of Immigration Appeals. The case concerns a woman from El Salvador who fled more than a decade of domestic violence due to the government's failure to protect her.

The Advocates for Human Rights has represented asylum seekers since 1983 and is the largest provider of free legal services to asylum seekers in the region. The Advocates is also a global leader in women's human rights, with more than 50 reports and two decades of research and training on domestic violence worldwide.

Experts from The Advocates for Human Rights are available to respond to yesterday's decision by Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

Robin Phillips, The Advocates' executive director and an attorney, is a global expert in women's human rights. For more than 25 years, Phillips has documented domestic violence and trained women's human rights defenders from more than a dozen countries. Contact Phillips at 612-746-4679 or rphillips@advrights.org.

Sarah Brenes directs The Advocates' legal services program, overseeing more than 1000 asylum and other cases. Brenes leads The Advocates' efforts to train and support attorneys providing pro bono representation to asylum seekers in domestic violence and other gender-based asylum claims. Contact Brenes at 612-746-4684 or sbrenes@advrights.org.

Women's Human Rights Director **Rosalyn Park** has documented domestic and other gender-based violence for more than a decade. Park leads The Advocates' research, training, and advocacy initiatives relating to women's human rights, teaches gender violence in the global context at the University of Minnesota, and is an internationally recognized expert on violence against women. Contact Park at 612-746-4676 or rpark@advrights.org.

Staff attorney **Theresa Dykoschak** has extensive experience in the implementation of domestic violence laws, especially in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, and specializes in the international and regional legal frameworks on violence against women. She regularly reports on and advocates to UN human rights mechanisms on violence against women issues from around the world. Contact Dykoschak at 612-746-4693 or tdykoschak@advrights.org.

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