

**SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**No. 6/2018**

**DISCOVER THE NOMINEES FOR THE 2018 SAKHAROV PRIZE**

13-09-18: The European Parliament nominated 8 candidates for this year's Sakharov Prize. Discover them in alphabetical order:

- **AFRIFORUM**, an NGO that aims at protecting the rights of minorities in South Africa with a specific focus on the rights of Afrikaners;
- **Seyran ATEŞ**, a lawyer of Turkish origin and an activist fighting against political and religious extremism, including the oppression of women. She opened the Ibn Rushd Goethe Mosque in Berlin in June 2017 where women and men can pray together;
- **CAESAR** is the code name of a former Syrian military photographer who smuggled more than 55,000 photographs documenting the gravest crimes out of Syria;
- **Dewayne JOHNSON**, a former groundskeeper who just won a landmark case against Monsanto. JOHNSON was the first person to take the company to trial over allegations that their herbicide sold under the brand Roundup cause cancer.
- **NGOs protecting human rights and saving lives of migrants across the Mediterranean Sea:** Boat Refugee Foundation, Jugend Rettet, Lifeline Rescue Boat, Médecins Sans Frontières international, MOAS, Proactiva Open Arms, PROEM-AID, Save the Children, Sea Eye, Sea-Watch, and SOS Méditerranée: since 2015, the workers and volunteers of these NGOs have been saving lives of migrants crossing the Mediterranean, while risking their own;
- **Oleg SENTSOV**, a Ukrainian film director who was detained on 10 May 2014 in Simferopol, Crimea, and convicted to 20 years of imprisonment on charges of plotting terrorist acts against Russian "de facto" rule in Crimea;
- **Mary WAGNER**, a Canadian pro-life activist who has been imprisoned over a dozen of times and accused of "disturbing the business" of an abortion clinic in Toronto, where she tried to talk to women entering the clinic and gave each a rose;
- **Nasser ZEFZAFI**, the leader of the Hirak, a social movement in the Moroccan Rif region to which the Moroccan authorities have reacted by imprisoning more than 2,000 people, including ZEFZAFI who was condemned in June 2018 to 20 years in prison.

**Kofi Annan and Adem Demaçi pass away**

18-08-18: We deplore the loss this summer of two Sakharov Prize laureates: **Adem Demaçi**, the 1991 Laureate from Kosovo, passed away on 26 July; and the former Secretary General of the United Nations **Kofi Annan**, who was awarded the prize together with the UN staff in 2003, died on 18 August. Their achievements were widely commented in the media.

**Nasrin Sotoudeh on hunger strike**

25-08-2018: Detained in Evin prison/Tehran since 13 June, Iranian human rights lawyer and **Sakharov Prize laureate 2012 Nasrin Sotoudeh** started a hunger strike to protest various detentions and pressures by the judiciary against her family, associates and friends. She thus joined in solidarity human rights activist **Farhad Meysami** who was arrested on 31 July for protesting against forced headscarf and has been on hunger strike since. In a letter sent to Iran's President **Hassan Rohani** at the initiative of Member of Parliament **Marietje Schaake** on 22 August, 60 MEPs call for Nasrin Sotoudeh's release. "Her case signifies that the Iranian judiciary continues to criminalise legitimate human rights activism", the MEPs state. [Center for Human Rights in Iran](#), [Agence Europe](#)

### **New information guarantees to help democracy survive**

11-09-18: Fake news, growing political and corporate control over the media, threats to journalists and quality journalism seriously jeopardise the survival of democracy. **2005 Sakharov Prize laureate Reporters Without Borders (RSF)** launches an important initiative to help building forms of governance which can counter this trend. RSF entrusted a panel of 25 outstanding personalities including **2005 Sakharov Prize laureate Hauwa Ibrahim** to draft an “International Declaration on Information and Democracy”. The panel, which is co-chaired by Nobel peace laureate **Shirin Ebadi** and RSF secretary-general **Christophe Deloire**, shall lay the basis for an “International Covenant on Information and Democracy” where governments, private-sector companies and civil society representatives commit. The ultimate goal is to spell out guarantees for an informed, open and dynamic public debate, which is essential for democracy. [Reporters Without Borders](#)

### **Mobilisation for the release of Lorent Saleh**

04-09-18: To mark the four years of the arbitrary detention of Venezuelan activist and **Sakharov Prize laureate 2017 Lorent Saleh**, an important forum on democracy and peace, street action and religious services were organised in Caracas. Lorent Saleh who had been held incommunicado since the uprisings in Heliocoide prison earlier this year, finally succeeded in publishing a letter with an encouraging message of hope for his country. We attach the Spanish original and an English courtesy translation of his text to this newsletter.

### **Arrest warrant against Julio Borges**

08-08-2018: The Supreme Court of Venezuela issued an arrest warrant against opposition leader and **Sakharov Prize laureate 2017 Julio Borges**. The former President of the Venezuelan Parliament has been living in exile in Columbia since a couple of months. Together with MP **Juan Requesens** he is accused of masterminding a failed drone attack on **President Maduro** during a military parade. [Excelsior](#)

### **Raif Badawi's sister Samar arrested**

01-08-18: Saudi authorities detained **Samar Badawi**, the sister of **Sakharov Prize laureate 2015 Raif Badawi** along with **Nassima al-Sada**, another prominent women human rights activists in Saudi Arabia. Samar Badawi has been repeatedly harassed for her human rights work. In January 2016, she was briefly detained in the same prison as Raif. The recent arrest is part of a broader crackdown on women's rights activists since May, targeting mainly activists who campaigned to end the driving ban for women and the male guardianship system that places women under the rule of a male relative for major decisions. [Amnesty International](#)

### **Memorial's Oyub Titiev kept in Chechnya prison**

13-09-2018: The Head of **Sakharov Prize laureate 2009 Memorial's** Chechnya office **Oyub Titiev** has been imprisoned since January 2018 on fabricated charges. Despite a strong international outcry in defence of Titiev, the court refused to consider the evidence that his case is fabricated and extended his detention until 22 December 2018. The latest, 11th, court session in his case is ongoing. In June 2018, the European Parliament adopted a resolution demanding the immediate release of Titiev and all other political prisoners in the Russian Federation. Titiev has been nominated for the 2018 Václav Havel Human Rights Prize of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. EP Vice-President **Heidi Hautala** is among those who nominated him for this prize. Mr Titiev will be invited to the award ceremony in Strasbourg on 8 October. [European Parliament resolution of 14 June 2018 on Russia; Václav Havel Human Rights Prize](#)

### **EP RESOLUTIONS ON CAMBODIA, UGANDA AND MYANMAR**

13-09-18: MEPs urge the government of **Cambodia** to put an end to all forms of harassment and politically-motivated charges and rulings against politicians, human rights defenders, trade unionists, civil society activists and journalists. Parliament also expresses its serious concerns over the conduct and results of the 2018 elections, demands that the Cambodian authorities drop all charges against prominent opposition leader **Kem Sokha**, and calls for his immediate and full release from house arrest. Following the arrests of opposition parliamentarians in connection with the 15 August

municipality elections in Arua/**Uganda**, MEPs call on the Ugandan authorities to drop charges against independent parliamentarian, musician and government critic **Bobi Wine**, and to stop the crackdown against the political opposition and supporters. After the **Myanmar** authorities' arrests on 12 December 2017 of the two Reuters journalists **Wa Lone** and **Kyaw Soe Oo**, who were investigating the massacre of the Rohingya people, MEPs demand the overturn of their seven-year prison sentences and their immediate release. [Uganda](#); [Cambodia](#); [Myanmar](#)

**On-line info:** [Sakharov Prize Network website](#)