

**EP SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK
NEWSLETTER
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SAKHAROV LAUREATES TO TAKE PART IN ONE WORLD HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

This year's One World Human Rights Documentary Film Festival organised by the Czech NGO People in Need, in conjunction with the Sakharov Prize Network, will show 15 human rights documentaries and four of the screenings will take place at the European Parliament. On 31 March - 2 April 2014, Sakharov Prize Laureates Hauwa Ibrahim, Reporters without Borders and Oleg Orlov of Memorial will take part in debates with MEPs, officials from the External Action Service, civil society activists and film directors after the screenings at the Parliament.

For more information: <http://oneworld.cz/2014/brussels-programme>

Xi Jinping visit to the EU: RWB condemns China's growing harassment of journalists, cyber-dissidents and activists

31-3-2014: The Chinese President Xi Jinping will take part in talks, largely focused on trade but also touching on human rights, with the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission today. Last week, Reporters without Borders, 2005 Laureates, condemned China's growing harassment of journalists and its mistreatment of cyber-dissidents and activists who try to expose the constant human rights violations and persecution of human rights defenders. German chancellor Angela Merkel also discussed the importance of freedom of expression with the Chinese President during his visit to Germany last week.

Link: <http://goo.gl/u838kT>; <http://bit.ly/1gGM9lw>; <http://bit.ly/1jOBy1f>

Hu Jia under house arrest due to Obama visit and death of activist

24-3-2014: Hu Jia, the 2008 Sakharov Prize Laureate, reported that he had been under house arrest for just under a week due to the death of the activist Cao Shunli and Mrs Obama's visit to China. Cao Shunli died in custody on March 14th and activists alleged she had been denied medical treatment. Hu Jia commented: "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs categorically said that they did not do anything to Cao Shunli. But, now she's dead." Hu Jia reported that he thought he would be allowed to leave his house after Mrs Obama's visit had ended: "The Chinese government just wants to kill any chance that I might make contact with her", he said.

Links: <http://goo.gl/iqc9Fo> ; <http://goo.gl/hWlbT9>

Jafar Panahi calls for an end to the death penalty in Iran

14-3-2014: Jafar Panahi, the Iranian filmmaker and 2012 Sakharov Prize Laureate, alongside eight other Iranian human rights activists, has launched the "Step by Step to End the Death Penalty Campaign". While the campaign calls for the abolition of the death penalty throughout Iran, it also seeks an immediate end to public executions and the exemption of children and political prisoners from this form of punishment. In a report to the UN Human Rights Council this month Ban Ki-Moon highlighted that between 500 and 625 people had been executed in Iran last year, and that 57 of these executions were public.

Link: <http://iranian.com/posts/view/post/29735>; reut.rs/1gpvcU

Nasrin Sotoudeh criticises Iran's Bar Association

23-3-2014: Nasrin Sotoudeh, the 2012 Sakharov Prize Laureate, in an article for Payvand Iran News, criticised Iran's Bar Association for facilitating the presence of representatives of the Ministry of Intelligence at the Association and for providing the Ministry with the dossiers of Iran's human rights attorneys.

Link: <http://www.payvand.com/news/14/mar/1139.html>

Oleg Orlov speaks out on behalf of Mikhail Kosenko after his conviction is upheld

25-3-104: Oleg Orlov, one of the 2009 Sakharov Prize Laureates, who took part in the Bolotnaya Square Protests in 2012, said he was "100% confident that Mikhail Kosenko didn't commit the illegal actions that they have incriminated him in", after a court in Moscow upheld his conviction for taking part in "mass riots" and using violence against police officers for which he has been sentenced to indefinite compulsory psychiatric treatment. This month the European Parliament issued a resolution calling for the release of the Bolotnaya Square Protesters, for more information please look at the urgency resolution summaries below.

Link: <http://bit.ly/1haXxrp>

Pussy Riot members form an NGO, attacked, and call for peace

14-3-2014: Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina, members of Pussy Riot, 2012 Sakharov Prize nominees, launched a prisoners' rights centre on the 14th of March. They also called for peace at an anti-war rally in Moscow the following day, attended by tens of thousands of demonstrators.

Links: <http://goo.gl/WVPFzA>; <http://goo.gl/cJEHrx>

Kofi Annan and The Elders urge the EU to deploy a stabilisation force in CAR

03-2014: As European heads of state meet in Brussels, The Elders urged them to deploy a stabilisation force to the Central African Republic (CAR) to complement the African and French troops already on the ground there. Kofi Annan, Chair of The Elders and the 2003 Sakharov Prize Laureate, said: "Events in Ukraine have taken over the news cycle, but the EU must not lose sight of the terrible tragedy unfolding in the Central African Republic."

Link: <http://goo.gl/OXpgVQ>

Leyla Zana attacks the behaviour of the Turkish police

26-3-2014: Leyla Zana, the 1995 Sakharov Prize Laureate and independent deputy for Diyarbakir in Turkey, criticised police behaviour as "an attack on politics" and a "provocation", following the injury of a ten year old boy on March 25th, in a police response to attacks following an election rally by the Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party.

Link: <http://www.turkishpress.com/news/396610/>

Malala is awarded a prize for gallantry and supports talks with the Taliban

23-3-2014: Malala Yousafzai, the 2013 Sakharov Prize Laureate, was awarded the Sitara-i-Shuja'at for gallantry from the Pakistani government. Malala also urged Taliban groups to lay down their arms for the sake of peace and to take part in elections, in an interview, on the 13th March.

Link: <http://goo.gl/85oUh6>

European Parliament human rights resolutions - March 2013

On launching consultations to suspend Uganda and Nigeria from the Cotonou Agreement

MEPs called for the repeal of the Anti-Homosexuality Act in Uganda and the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Bill in Nigeria and urged "the Commission and the Member States to review their

development cooperation aid strategy with Uganda and Nigeria and to give priority to redirection of aid to civil society and other organisations". Link: <http://bit.ly/1fdCPuv>

On Russia: sentencing of demonstrators involved in the Bolotnaya Square events

Parliament expressed its "deep concern over the proceedings against the Bolotnaya Square demonstrators" which it regards as "deeply flawed" and "politically motivated". It called on the Russian judicial authorities "to release the eight prisoners" and urged the Russian Government "to take concrete steps to address the deterioration of human rights, in particular by ceasing the campaign of harassment against civil-society organisations and activists". Link: <http://bit.ly/1gSWy4Z>

On security and human trafficking in Sinai

Parliament underlined "the importance of coordinated regional action in restoring security and combating human trafficking in Sinai" and called on "the EU institution to put pressure on Israel and Egypt to take steps to tackle trafficking in Sinai". Link: <http://bit.ly/1haYpfs>

Briefs:

Reporters without Borders publish Enemies of the Internet Report 2014: The 2005 Laureates report on government units which regularly conduct online surveillance and censorship.

Eskinder Nega writes to his son from prison: The 2013 nominee wrote an open letter to his son discussing his hopes for true democracy in Ethiopia, from Kaliti Prison in Addis Ababa where he is serving an 18 year sentence, after publishing a series of articles calling for reform.

Reeyot Alemu spends her 1000th day in prison: The Ethiopian journalist and 2013 nominee was in prison for her 1000th day on March 16th. She was arrested in 2011 as part of a government crackdown on dissent and linked to a terrorist plot.

Izzeldin Abuelaish discusses the need for Israeli-Palestine dialogue: The 2011 nominee addressed a US audience on the topic, on the UN's International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Joseph Francis hopeful that sentence for blasphemy will be overturned: The 2012 nominee and the founder of the Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement in Pakistan, has said that he is hopeful that Asia Bibi's death sentence for blasphemy, will be overturned.