

**EP SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK
NEWSLETTER
April 2014**

FIRST EDITION OF ONE WORLD FILM FESTIVAL IN CONJUNCTION WITH SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK TAKES PLACE AT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Four screenings of human rights documentaries took place in the European Parliament between 31 March and 2 April, as part of 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. Laureates Hauwa Ibrahim (2005), Reporters Without Borders (2005), Oleg Orlov (2009) and Aliaksandr Milinkevich (2006) took part in debates with MEPs, officials from the External Action Service (EEAS) and activists after the screenings.

The visiting Laureates, with the exception of Reporters Without Borders, who has a Brussels office, also attended parliamentary committees and met with MEPs. Mr Orlov and Mr Milinkevich spoke on prison conditions in Russia at the Subcommittee on Human Rights alongside Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina from Pussy Riot, 2012 Sakharov Prize nominees. Mr Orlov also spoke at the Foreign Affairs Committee and met with the Chair of the Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, Mr Fleckenstein, and the Vice-Chair of Delegation to the EU-Armenia, EU-Azerbaijan and EU-Georgia Parliamentary Cooperation Committees, Mr Vytautas Landsbergis. Mr Milinkevich spoke on the political and economic situation in Belarus at the Foreign Affairs Committee and attended the Euronest working group on the country.

Ms Ibrahim met with MEP Ana Gomes, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and with Unicef focusing on children's rights, as a follow-up to the pledge by the Sakharov Prize Network in the November 2013 conference and final declaration to support the global 'end violence against children' campaign. Ms Gomes and Ms Ibrahim discussed support by the EP to the education of girl children in the Western African region, transparency in registering voters in Nigeria, and the possibility of inviting Nigerian first lady Mrs Patience Jonathan to the EP. EEAS officials led by Ms Elisabeth Tison, Head of the Human Rights Strategy and Policy Implementation Division, outlined the current EEAS campaign on child rights: early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, children in armed conflict and hazardous work lists. The Director of Unicef's Brussels office Philippe Cori agreed with Ms Ibrahim on the benefits of educating children and girls, also for the fight against terrorism, as unemployed and uneducated youths in Northern Nigeria are ripe for recruitment by Boko Haram. Both the EEAS and Unicef expressed strong interest in cooperating with the Sakharov Prize Network and Ms Ibrahim to sensitize the European and Nigerian publics to children's rights through education and action on the ground.

Link: <http://bit.ly/QYFfEB>

ADC Memorial forced to close as Oleg Orlov criticises Russian Constitutional Court while Kovalev warns of the danger of occupation of Eastern Ukraine

9-04-2014: ADC Memorial, a Russian Human Rights NGO that has in the past worked closely with Memorial, the 2009 Sakharov Laureates, has been officially liquidated, as their appeal against a court order to register as a foreign agent was denied. Russia's Constitutional Court also ruled that the "foreign agents" law is legitimate; Oleg Orlov, a member of the board of Memorial said: "this is the worst decision in the history of the court, and a clear sign that the screws are going to be tightened to the fullest extent". Sergei Kovalev, Chairperson of Russian Memorial, has appealed to the Council of Europe on the increasing threat to Ukraine's Eastern regions. Links: <http://bit.ly/1mZzZej>; <http://bit.ly/1blAcl>

Over 70 Ladies in White Arrested

31-3-2014: 79 members of Ladies in White, 2005 Sakharov Prize Laureates, were arrested and some beaten on Easter Sunday. One Lady in White, Haydeé Gallardo Salazar, has been charged with "disrespect". Links: <http://bit.ly/1qkoQa2>; <http://bit.ly/1hPAN6v>; <http://bit.ly/RRYpgm>; <http://bit.ly/1gWJlhh>; <http://hrld.us/1px0BIQ>

Nasrin Sotoudeh declined to turn up at Intelligence Ministry after summons and expresses concern over discrimination

1-4-2014: Nasrin Sotoudeh, the 2012 Sakharov Prize Laureate, declined to turn up at Iran's Intelligence Ministry after receiving a summons, as it was done illegally by telephone. The summons could relate to a speech she posted on Facebook where she referred to the Islamic Republic as a prison. Ms Sotoudeh also expressed concern over discrimination by hardliners, concerning the injustices faced by Iran's Baha'i community. Links: <http://bit.ly/1lMeEVM>; <http://bit.ly/1kl8n31>

Iran cancels parliamentary meeting following resolution

8-4-2014: A meeting between Iranian parliamentarians and the European Parliament's Iran delegation has been cancelled following the EP's adoption of a resolution, on 3 April, on "An EU Strategy towards Iran", which condemned "continued, systematic violation of fundamental rights," in Iran. Chair of the EP Iran delegation, MEP Tarja Cronberg commented: "I regret the decision of the Iranian Parliament to cancel this inter-parliamentary meeting" adding that the resolution: "contains constructive elements which Iran itself has deemed important". Link: <http://bit.ly/1ix8dlx>

Nurit Peled-Elhanan calls for the release of ailing convicts in Turkey

A group of intellectuals, including 2001 Laureate Nurit Peled-Elhanan have addressed a petition calling for the release of ailing Turkish political prisoners to the Turkish Prime Minister.

Link: <http://bit.ly/1hjVN49>

Malala to be UN ambassador on education, launches silent campaign and welcomes Pakistani government increase on education spending

31-3-2014: Malala Yousafzai, 2013 Sakharov Laureate, is to be an ambassador for Ban Ki-moon's new "Emergency Coalition for Global Education Action", to accelerate progress towards the education MDG. The Laureate also welcomed the Pakistani government's commitment to increase education's share of the budget in the next five years. She has also participated in the "We are Silent" campaign to raise awareness for girls who have been denied the right to attend school.

Links: <http://bit.ly/1i4ecS7>; <http://bit.ly/1r2qJGK>; <http://bit.ly/1eWGQjS>

Belarus appeal court upholds decision to ban Ales Bialiatski's book while human rights organisations call for a boycott of the World Ice Hockey Championships in Belarus

1-4-2014: The ban on 2013 Sakharov Prize nominee Ales Bialiatski's book has been upheld in court. Viasna Human Rights Centre reported that the applicants were not allowed to convey their full views to the court. Human rights organisations called for a boycott of the World Ice Hockey Championships in Belarus while the political prisoners were incarcerated and grave human rights violations continued. Links: <http://bit.ly/R57mT8>; <http://bit.ly/1f8mbyR>

Hu Jia still under house arrest, against anti-corruption campaign and supportive of Cao Shunli human rights award nomination

1-4-2014: Hu Jia, 2008 Sakharov Laureate declared: "It seems that my house arrest is continuous now; first Cao Shunli, then the parliamentary sessions, then it was because of Michelle Obama. Since March 30, it has been because of Liu Xia's (*wife of jailed Nobel Laureate Liu Xiaobo*) birthday". Hu Jia also hit out at President Xi Jinping's anti-corruption drive saying: "he is just pursuing people who are

against him in the name of fighting corruption". Mr Hu welcomed Cao Shunli's posthumous nomination for the 2014 Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders.

Links: <http://bit.ly/1k7H7W4>; <http://bit.ly/1h6CcRb>; <http://bit.ly/1m1b3a3>

Reporters Without Borders (RWB) part of coalition to regulate trade in surveillance equipment, hails UN Resolution, issues recommendations on Libya's constitutional framework and writes open letter to French foreign minister on Cuba

4-4-2014: RWB became part of the newly formed Coalition Against Unlawful Surveillance Exports (CAUSE) which aims to keep surveillance technologies away from oppressive regimes. The group also welcomed the UN Human Rights Council's resolution on "the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of peaceful protests" for recognizing the essential role of journalists. It sent the French foreign minister an open letter making clear that the improvement in relations between the EU and Cuba must not be at the expense of the country's journalists. Recommendations on Libya's constitutional framework have also been published by the NGO. Links: <http://bit.ly/1jawPDD>; <http://bit.ly/1NIVpQ>; <http://bit.ly/1gbKBWe>; <http://bit.ly/1lbH5Lu>; <http://bit.ly/1nyD6wW>

EP draft human rights resolutions April 2013 (adopted text still to be published)

Syria: situation in certain vulnerable communities

The Parliament called for "the EU and its Member States to make all possible efforts to achieve the release of 2011 Sakharov Prize winner Razan Zaitouneh and all other human rights activists" while urging "all parties to the conflict to adhere to international humanitarian and human rights law".

Situation in North Korea (DPPK)

MEPs, following the UN Commission of Inquiry's (COI) report on human rights in North Korea, asked EEAS "to ensure the implementation of the COI's recommendations" and demanded "that those most responsible for crimes against humanity committed in DPPK be held accountable".

Pakistan: recent cases of persecution

Following recent death sentences issued pursuant to Pakistan's blasphemy laws, MEPs called on the "Pakistani authorities to release prisoners who are convicted on the grounds of blasphemy" and "to carry out a thorough review of the blasphemy laws" while expressing "its deep concern at the sharp increase in sectarian violence and religious intolerance towards minorities" in the country.

Briefs:

International Press Institute and World Association of Newspapers and Publishers focus attention on Eskinder Nega and Reeyot Alemu: They called for the EU to put greater pressure on Ethiopia to release the two journalists, nominated for the Sakharov prize in 2013, while announcing that Mr Nega would be the focus of the World Press Freedom Day campaign.

Newspapers that publish Snowden revelations win Pulitzer: The Washington Post and the Guardian have been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for reporting based on the revelations of Edward Snowden, the 2013 Sakharov Prize nominee.

Aung San Suu Kyi wins Willy Brandt Prize: The 1990 Laureate visited France, where she called for constitutional reform in Myanmar and Germany where she was awarded the prize which honours individuals who promote understanding and peace.

Hopes for release of Dawit Isaak: The release of eight Eritrean political prisoners has raised hopes for the release of the 2009 Sakharov Prize nominee, who was jailed in 2001 and who has neither been charged nor stood trial.