



SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK NEWSLETTER 9/2015

2015 SAKHAROV PRIZE NOMINEES PRESENTED

28-09-2015: the six candidatures for the 2015 Sakharov Prize were presented at a joint meeting of the Parliament's Committees for Foreign Affairs and Development and the Sub-Committee on Human Rights. Members discussed the merits of the various candidatures and the context of the nominated human rights defenders' current action. The nominees are:

Edna Adan Ismail, a Somali activist for the abolition of female genital mutilation and a former government minister who has successfully advanced the cause of gender equality. She was nominated by the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) Group;

Raif Badawi, a Saudi Arabian blogger and editor of the website Free Saudi Liberals, who was sentenced to 10 years in prison, 1000 lashes and a hefty fine for insulting Islamic values. He was nominated by the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D), the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) Group and the Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) Group;

The Democratic opposition in Venezuela embodied by the *Mesa de la Unidad Democrática* and political prisoners, nominated by the Group of the European People's Party (EPP) and MEPs Fernando Maura Barandiarán and Dita Charanzová;

Boris Nemtsov, a Russian opposition politician and former deputy prime minister who was assassinated in Moscow in February 2015. He was nominated posthumously by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Group;

Nadiya Savchenko, an Ukrainian military pilot and a member of the Verkhovna Rada and of Ukraine's delegation to the PA Council of Europe, who was captured on 18 June 2014 and illegally transferred to Russia where she remains in prison. She was nominated by the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) Group;

Edward Snowden, Antoine Deltour and Stéphanie Gibaud all whistle-blowers who were nominated by the European United Left - Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) Group.

Candidates for the Sakharov Prize can be nominated by political groups within the European Parliament or at least 40 individual Members of the European Parliament supporting a nomination. In 2015, all nominations were submitted by political groups. The nomination deadline was 10 September 2015.

The next step in the 2015 award procedure will be a vote for three finalists by the Members of the Foreign Affairs and Development Committees on 15 October.

The winner/s of the 2015 Sakharov Prize will be announced on 29 October, following the decision of the Conference of Presidents, which includes the leadership of all political groups and the non-attached Members in Parliament.

The Sakharov Prize 2015 award ceremony will take place on 16 December in Strasbourg.

Links: [EP news](#); [Sakharov Prize Network website](#)

Leyla Zana threatens a death fast and President Schulz calls for resumption of peace talks as Turkey cease-fire is violated

10-09-2015: Sakharov Prize Laureate 1995 and member of the Turkish Parliament elected from the pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HDP), **Leyla Zana**, said she might go on a hunger strike if the

cease-fire between Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) and the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) is resumed after the recent killings in the Hakkari and Igdir provinces. According to the BBC World Service reports, 14 Turkish police officers died in a bomb attack in Igdir and 16 Turkish soldiers died in the Hakkari region after another bomb attack. The PKK is suspected to be behind both incidents.

Zana said that Turkey must return to the period before the June 7 general election when there was a cease-fire in place between Ankara and the PKK. In the meantime, Turkey is gearing up for snap elections on 1 November, called after the ruling party lost its overall majority in the June elections and failed to form a coalition government. It was Leyla Zana's HDP party that deprived the ruling party of its majority, polling over 13% of the vote and entering parliament as the first pro-Kurdish political party.

Earlier, European Parliament **President Martin Schulz** condemned in a statement the attacks in Turkey and expressed his condolences to the families of the deceased and to the Turkish authorities. 'I am very concerned about the spiral of violence which is engulfing Turkey. I condemn all kind of attacks and aggressions against security forces and civilians'.

'Turkish political leaders have the responsibility to show the greatest restraint, work for social peace, avoid any spirit of confrontation and the development of blame-games. Turkey is today more than ever in need of unity, not division. This situation is undermining the social and political achievements reached over the last decade'.

'I call on the Turkish authorities and the Kurdish leaders to resume the peace process and to urgently re-establish the cease-fire. All voices calling for peace and reconciliation must be allowed to speak out,' President Schulz said.

Links: [Today's Zaman](#); [Kurdpress](#); [IMC TVA](#); [BBC news](#); [President Schulz](#)

Malala urges world leaders to promise children peace and quality education

25-09-2015: 'Promise peace to all children in Pakistan, in India, in Syria and in every corner of the world,' **Malala** implored the leaders gathered in New York for the United Nations General Assembly summit just minutes before the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The youngest-ever Sakharov and Nobel Laureate addressed the leaders surrounded by 193 youth representatives from the UN's 193 Member States, each holding up a solar powered blue lantern, from the highest mezzanine of the General Assembly Hall.

'Dear sisters and brothers, world leaders, please look up because the future generation is raising their voice,' Malala said. 'In my life, I have experienced terrorism, displacement and denial from education. And these are the tragedies that millions of children are still suffering'.

Malala emphasised that 'the world needs a change. It cannot change itself. It is me, it is you, it is all of us who have to bring that change'. She is hopeful that the UN will be united in the goal of education and peace, as 'education is hope, education is peace.'

The UN adopted 17 non-binding Global Goals, in a fifteen-year plan building on the eight Millennium Development Goals adopted by world leaders 15 years ago. The new plan aims to eradicate extreme poverty, ensure quality education and combat climate change. The agenda is an 'important sign of hope', said Pope Francis, pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, addressing leaders at the UN's sustainable development summit before Malala.

Links: [Malala Fund Blog](#); [UN sustainable-development-goals](#); [UN News Centre](#)

Lyudmila Alexeyeva receives the Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize

28-09-2015: the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has awarded its annual Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize to **Lyudmila Alexeyeva**, Sakharov Prize Laureate 2009. The 60,000 euro prize honours individuals or organizations who have undertaken 'outstanding civil society action in defence of human rights in Europe and beyond.' Alexeyeva is a co-founder of the Moscow Helsinki Group, and renowned for campaigning for fair trials for dissidents. Born in 1927, she is one of the few Soviet-era dissidents still active in modern Russia. In 2015 she re-joined Russia's

Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights in order to focus on investigating the application of the law on foreign agents that is targeting a growing number of NGOs, as well as the operation of the courts and the many human rights violations in prisons.

Links: [Europe news](#); [PACE News](#); [Radio Svoboda](#)

Hauwa Ibrahim at EP seminars in Zanzibar

04-09-2015: Sakharov Prize Laureate 2005 **Hauwa Ibrahim** took part in a joint high level seminar of the European Parliament and the House of Representatives of Zanzibar on preventing electoral violence, empowering women in political life, and the responsibility of young political leaders. The seminars took place in Zanzibar, Tanzania between 2 and 4 September 2015.

Hauwa Ibrahim spoke at several panels during the seminars. In her intervention she highlighted the need for involvement of women in African politics. She drew regional comparisons between Tanzania and her native Nigeria where the general election took place in March this year.

The European Parliament sent a 4-Member delegation led by David Martin and included Eduard Kukan, Ryszard Czarnecki and Urmas Paet.

EP URGENCY RESOLUTIONS

10-09-2015: During the September session the European Parliament adopted three human rights urgency resolutions. In the resolution on **Russia, in particular the cases of Eston Kohver, Oleg Sentsov and Olexandr Kolchenko**, the MEPs urge the Russian Federation to release them and to guarantee their safe return to Estonia and Ukraine respectively. They also call for 'the release of all illegally detained Ukrainian citizens, including Nadiya Savchenko' and strongly condemn 'the blatant violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and Estonia through the illegal kidnapping of citizens of both countries so that they could be charged before a Russian court'. In the resolutions on **Azerbaijan** and **Angola** the MEPs call these countries to release all political prisoners and express concerns at the human rights situation in them. Link: [EP](#)

[Sakharov Prize Network website](#)