

**EP SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK  
NEWSLETTER  
May 2014**

**EUROPEAN YOUTH EVENT (EYE) ATTENDED BY SAKHAROV LAUREATES**

Olivier Basille, representing 2005 Sakharov Prize Laureate Reporters Without Borders, and Kirill Koroteev representing Memorial, the 2009 Laureate, took part in the EYE in Strasbourg from 9-11 May. The event brought together 5,000 Europeans aged 16-30. Basille urged Europe's youth to get involved in the promotion of human rights saying that "courage has to be learnt; people should not be afraid to adopt non-anonymity when tackling issues that require courage"; he also highlighted the importance of social media for democracy, and the need to fight restrictive media laws. Koroteev suggested that young people use social media to spread the word about rights contraventions, and that the EU not condone violations: "those who do not take measures against those who do not respect human rights are considered supporters of the wrongdoings of non-democratic regimes".

**Memorial to register as a foreign agent; criticises the Justice Ministry's proposal to close NGOs extra-judicially and expresses concerns about the possibility of turning off social media**

23-03-2014: A District Court of Moscow confirmed the Prosecutor's order that Memorial Human Rights Centre, the 2009 Sakharov Laureate, is obliged to register as a "foreign agent". The decision came on the same day as the adoption by the Russian Duma of provisions that will allow the Ministry of Justice to register NGOs as "foreign agents" at its own initiative, without a court decision. 2009 Sakharov Prize Laureates Lyudmila Alexeyeva and Memorial have spoken out against the proposal. Ms Alexeyeva said: "This is a further attack on the civil sector". Aleksandr Cherkasov, of Memorial, said: "What will the new procedure bring? For now, this only means admission of one's own inability to prove statements in courts, even in our courts, which are usually fairly loyal to the prosecutor's office". After the Telecommunications administration informed that they would consider turning off social media networks promoting 'extremism', Ms Alexeyeva replied: "This will be a blow to freedom of speech. To place us behind the 'iron curtain', but no 'iron curtain' will succeed". Links: <http://bit.ly/TdceWR>; <http://bit.ly/1pCqdTG>

**Sakharov Prize nominee speaks at the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Forum**

14-05-2014: Nadhezdha Tolokonnikova, a member of Pussy Riot, a 2012 Sakharov Prize nominee, spoke at the EIDHR forum in Brussels organised by the European Commission. Ms Tolokonnikova and fellow Pussy Riot activist Maria Alyokhina have created the prisoners' rights NGO, Zona Prava, following their imprisonment. Ms Tolokonnikova stressed that key challenges for prisons in Russia were healthcare, forced labour and living standards: "any human rights activist has to be healthy" she cautioned: "Magnitsky died in prison after being denied healthcare" while she also said that forced labour of up to sixteen hours a day was normal. There were however "reasons to be hopeful - people don't like our state, they just don't know how to tell the state they don't like it" she said. Ms Tolokonnikova and Ms Alyokhina also met on 6 May with members of US Congress, calling for sixteen officials to be included on the list of human rights violators who face US sanctions. Links: <http://nydn.us/1jZi4FB>; <http://bsun.md/1lFqlwa>

**Men found guilty for murdering Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya**

21-05-2014: A court found 5 men guilty of murdering Anna Politkovskaya (nominee 2007). However, her family lawyer said: "The murder will only be solved when the name of the person who ordered it is known". Link: <http://time.com/#107052/russia-convicts-killers-journalists/>

### **Cuba: Guillermo Fariñas and Ladies in White arrested in May while Pope Francis meets the family of Oswaldo Paya**

05-05-2014: 2010 Sakharov Prize Laureate Guillermo Farinas has been arrested every week for the last 19 weeks and on 1 June received a death threat from an official. In addition 90 members of the Ladies in White, 2005 Laureates, were arrested on the 10-11 May alone. The Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation found that 905 "peaceful" activists were arrested for "purely political reasons" in April and that there had been "at least" 1120 "political arrests" in May. Berta Soler of Ladies in White was arrested twice in the week of the 19th of May and 60 of the Ladies in White were arrested trying to attend an event at the organisation's headquarters. Pope Francis met with the family of Oswaldo Paya, 2002 Sakharov Prize Laureate, on the 14th May where they discussed Mr Paya's death and repression in Cuba. Guillermo Farinas has also spoken out against the signing of a memorandum on cooperation between Russia and Cuba, saying that intelligence sharing could be seen as "a resumption of the Cold War in retaliation for recent moves by NATO and the United States with respect to Ukraine".

Links: <http://bit.ly/1kwvWaw>; <http://bit.ly/RP2xNs>; <http://bit.ly/1nROjH0>; <http://bit.ly/RP5RZ5>; <http://bit.ly/1l2J8nx>; <http://bit.ly/1uUvE1b>; <http://bit.ly/1l4Soaz>

### **Hu Jia, under house arrest, condemns the detention of Chinese lawyer; Wei Jingsheng opens commemoration of Tiananmen Square massacre; RWB denounces the "confession" of Gao Yu**

Hu Jia, under house arrest since February, has been interviewed about his experiences of dissidence in China and the continuing crackdown on activists. He mentions the police has told him: "You absolutely won't get near Tiananmen Square!". Earlier this month Hu condemned the detention of Pu Zhigiang, a Chinese Human Rights lawyer and at least five others, following a meeting in Beijing in the run up to the anniversary Tiananmen Square massacres. Wei Jingsheng, Laureate in 1996, has opened a commemoration of this event in Washington. 2005 Laureate Reporters Without Borders has condemned the detentions of Chinese journalists Gao Yu, Wu Wei and Xiang Nanfu.

Links: <http://bit.ly/1lj6SRN>; <http://bit.ly/1mNJoHm>; <http://bit.ly/1jN7Rar>; <http://bit.ly/1nN5KLL>; <http://bit.ly/1oRQb5v>; <http://weijingsheng.org/>

### **Hauwa Ibrahim appointed to Nigerian President's Committee to search for Nigeria's abducted schoolgirls as Malala and Kofi Annan speak out on the issue**

05-05-2014: Hauwa Ibrahim, the 2005 Sakharov Prize Laureate has been appointed to Nigeria's Presidential Committee on the Rescue of Abducted Female Students from the School of Chibok, which is liaising with the authorities and the parents to establish the number and identities of the girls abducted, and the circumstances of the kidnapping. President Jonathan has emphasised that it is not meant to replace the search and rescue mission. Malala Yousafzai, the 2013 Sakharov Prize Laureate has campaigned for the release of the girls, supporting the #BringBackOurGirls campaign and stressing that "if we remain silent then this will spread, this will happen more and more and more". The Malala Fund has also pledged funds to an NGO supporting female education in Nigeria. Kofi Annan, the 2003 Sakharov Prize Laureate, called the kidnappings "abominable".

Links: <http://bit.ly/Tm9BCE>; <http://ind.pn/1oL6uxH>; <http://cnn.it/1k5msmv>; <http://bbc.in/1fQqkYo>; <http://bit.ly/1mNKanT>; <http://bit.ly/1k5mN8K>

### **Nasrin Sotoudeh says that she is hopeful for change in Iran, supports the "My Stealthy Freedom" Campaign and denounces the hanging of Khosevi in an open letter, alongside Jafar Panahi**

1-06-2014: The 2012 Sakharov Prize Laureate believes she is a target for hardliners, especially after a meeting last year at the Greek Embassy in Tehran with a European delegation. Ms Sotoudeh is "hopeful" about the future in Iran, and in her view the priorities for human rights campaigners in Iran are to: "First, reduce capital punishment, which has been increasing under the new government, and second, press Mr Rouhani to react to actions that are against human rights in Iran

like the attack on prisoners in Evin jail three weeks ago". Ms Sotoudeh was also one of the high-profile signatories to the Step by Step to Stop Death Penalty Campaign's letter against the hanging of Mahafarid Amir Kosevi, alongside fellow 2012 Sakharov Prize Laureate, Jafar Panahi. They stress that: "the continued judicial crackdown", "the death penalty" and "heavy prison terms" for financial and administrative crimes cause "anger and disappointment among the public". Posting a picture of herself without a veil on the Facebook "My Stealthy Freedom" campaign against the Iranian government's discrimination against women, Ms Sotoudeh commented that "when thousands of women defy the hijab laws on social media, we cannot deny the existence of pressure for change". Links: <http://bit.ly/TufQEz>; <http://n.pr/1npPcVU>; <http://bit.ly/1n3Shfz>; <http://bit.ly/1p4eZEY>

#### **New campaign calls for the release of Razan Zaitouneh**

Activists have launched a media campaign and signed a petition calling for the release of Razan Zaitouneh, Samira Khalil, Wael Hamada and Nathem Hamadi of the Violations Documentation Center in Syria, who were abducted by unknown militiamen on December 9th 2013.

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

#### **Nurit Peled-Elhanan highlights Institute of Middle East Understanding Initiative**

30-04-2014: The 2001 Laureate is drawing attention the Institute's awareness raising regarding the plight of Palestinian Children. The institute has found that 1397 Palestinian children have been killed by Israeli forces since 2000. Source: Nurit Peled-Elhanan

#### **Kofi Annan launches Africa Progress Report and Cartooning for Peace awards, speaks out against "dangerous tug of war" in Ukraine and death sentences in Egypt and awards 2014 Prix Pictet**

08-05-2014: Mr Annan, Chairman of the Africa Progress Panel, launched the 2014 Africa Progress Report: "when countries sign up to the new global development framework, they should pledge not only to meet ambitious targets but also to narrow the region's indefensible gaps between rich and poor, urban and rural, and men and women". As Chair of the Elders, he has warned that: "the tug of war" in Ukraine is "growing ever more dangerous for the people" and on the recent death sentences passed by an Egyptian Court on 693 people, for rioting in 2013: "harsh sentences of this kind risk creating greater instability in Egypt rather than reducing it". As Honorary President of the Cartooning for Peace Foundation he awarded prizes to: "recognise those who commit their voices and artistic talent to the cause of peace and tolerance and who use a universal language of images to inform and educate and celebrate our common humanity". Links: <http://bit.ly/1mGJRNY>; <http://bit.ly/1tkaKqG>; <http://bit.ly/1mYIRnn>; <http://bit.ly/1jURcSf>; <http://bbc.in/TxcAYZ>

#### **Amnesty International campaign for Belarus' political prisoners**

02-05-2014: The NGO launched a campaign for the release of 2013 Sakharov prize nominees and Belarusian political prisoners Ales Bialiatski, Eduard Lobau and Mykola Statkevich. The campaign coincided with the Ice Hockey World Championship in Minsk in May. Link: <http://bit.ly/1my2GmB>