

**SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK
NEWSLETTER
11/2016**

SAKHAROV WEEK 2016

The Sakharov Prize 2016 will be awarded to **Nadia Murad and Lamya Haji Bashar** of Iraq at a ceremony in the European Parliament in Strasbourg on **13 December**. The two Yazidi women, **survivors of sexual enslavement by so called Islamic State (IS), are public advocates for victims** of IS's campaign of sexual violence. The Prize will be presented by **President Martin Schulz**. Both Laureates also campaign for the recognition of the genocide by IS against the Yazidi community in Iraq. They will take part in a series of meetings with EP Committees and Delegations, media interviews, and discussions with youth and on Facebook. The Sakharov Prize 2016 Finalists **Can Dündar** and **Mustafa Dzhemilev** will also attend the ceremony and meet with MEPs in Strasbourg.

Links: [Info about the laureates](#); [Info about the finalists](#)

Lamya Haji Bashar attends film festival and meetings in Austria

03-12-2016: **Sakharov Prize Laureate 2016 Lamya Haji Bashar** was invited by the European Parliament Information Office in Vienna to represent the **Sakharov Prize Network** at three days of events from 1 - 3 December. She attended the opening ceremony of the human rights film festival "this human world" alongside **Vice President Ulrike Lunacek**, where she **addressed around 800 people in the opening speech**. She also met Austrian **Chancellor Christian Kern** to discuss the plight of Yazidi refugees. At a press conference with Vice-President Lunacek and Yazidi activist **Mirza Dinnayi**, Haji Bashar said "It is not about me, **I want to call the world's attention to the destiny of thousands of women and girls whom the "IS" treat like animals**, so that this happens never again." Ulrike Lunacek added that "If you think that there is no more space for refugees, listen to Lamya's story and imagine that this happens to your own children." Links: [thw](#)

Dr Denis Mukwege meets Prime Minister and Grand Duke of Luxembourg to discuss mineral trade

27-10-2016: **Sakharov Prize Laureate 2014 Dr Denis Mukwege** visited Luxembourg on the 27 October. The visit has been organised by the European Parliament as a part of the Sakharov Prize Network (SPN) activities. He spoke about his work treating women who have suffered **sexual violence** in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and discussed **the mineral trade**. After having been welcomed by the **Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Luxembourg**, Dr Mukwege held a series of meetings, including with Prime Minister **Xavier Bettel** and members of the Luxembourg Parliament. In the evening Dr Mukwege delivered a **Sakharov Prize Network Lecture** at the Luxembourg Philharmonic, alongside **Charles Goerens MEP** (LU, ALDE). The panellists discussed Dr Mukwege's work and the important contribution of the European Parliament in DRC, notably its work amending EU legislation to require due diligence by EU importers of conflict minerals. Links: [rtl](#)

Ali Ferzat meets President and College of Art students in Malta

16-11-2016: **Sakharov Prize Laureate 2011 Ali Ferzat** spoke at a **Sakharov Prize Network Lecture** in Malta. After having shared his first-hand experience about the war in Syria in meetings with media and with **Maltese President H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca**, Mr Ferzat met over 200 students from the Malta College of Arts and Science in Mosta. In his lecture Mr Ferzat talked about art, politics and the role of the media in reporting the Syrian conflict. Despite the horrific situation there, Ferzat was confident that Syria will attain the democratic values its people strive for. The visit was a part of the **SPN action** supported by the European Parliament.

Salih Osman attends the EU-NGO Human Rights Forum

01-12-2016: **Sakharov Prize Laureate 2007 Salih Mahmoud Mohamed Osman** opened the annual EU-NGO Human Rights Forum, organised by the European External Action Service in cooperation with the European Commission and the Human Rights and Democracy Network. This year's event was dedicated to **combatting all forms of torture**. Mr Osman spoke of the widespread **practice of torture in Sudan's "ghost houses"** where people are detained, and insisted on the need for legislative and political changes to address this. **MEP Josef Weidenholzer** stressed the EU should use all tools at its disposal to fight torture, help civil society and protect the values which underpin the EU. Mr Osman also took part in conference workshops on ensuring accountability and redress to the victims, while **Sakharov Fellow 2016 Nicolas Opiyo** spoke on the panel on groups vulnerable to torture and ill-treatment. The visit of both participants, Mr Osman and Mr Opiyo has been coordinated by the European Parliament and is a part of the 2016 **SPN action**.

Salih Osman expresses his concern over Sudan's Commitment to UN Rule of Law Project for Darfur

23-11-2016: **Sakharov Prize Laureate 2007 Salih Mahmoud Mohamed Osman** has voiced doubts at the Sudanese government's intention to implement the tripartite programme, designed to strengthen the rule of law in Darfur. Mr Osman said that the programme, launched by the United Nations and the Sudanese Ministries of Justice and International Cooperation "will not succeed unless the international community who designed the programme are responsible for managing these resources and oversee its implementation". Link: Allafrica.com

Guillermo Fariñas urges U.S. to suspend trade and investment in Cuba until regime stops oppression

18-11-2016: **Sakharov Prize Laureate 2010 Guillermo Fariñas** said the **Trump** administration should halt or undo the Obama administration's move to open up trade and business deals with Cuba until the Cuban government commits to making democratic reforms. Fariñas travelled to several US states to build support for a U.S.-Cuba policy that takes a tougher approach to the Cuban government and to push for a halt or suspension of U.S.-Cuba trade and investment changes, which he says are enriching and empowering the Cuban regime. "The people of Cuba see very little of the money that comes in from foreign investment and trade," Fariñas said. "The iconic figure of the so-called Cuban Revolution has died," said Fariñas in reference to the recent death of former Cuban **President Castro**, "We believe there will be more repression. **This is the moment we need more support from the international community** and democratic governments". Links: FoxNews, Clarín.com

Arrests prevent Ladies in White march for 80 consecutive Sundays

21-11-2016: For 80 consecutive Sundays, the police prevented **2005 Sakharov Prize Laureate Damas de Blanco** from attending their traditional mass at the Church of Santa Rita and marching peacefully through the streets of Havana. According to a member of the association around 30 activists were detained on Sunday 20 November and released hours later with the exception of **Berta Soler, Lismarys Quintana** and **Angel Moya**, who were held until midday on Monday. Link: MartiNoticias

Memorial under scrutiny by Russian government

3-11-2016: *The Economist* published a profile of **2009 Sakharov Prize Laureate Memorial** highlighting that it is under scrutiny by the Russian government. Since its foundation following the fall of the USSR, Memorial's human rights activists have constantly been under pressure. However, the situation worsened in October 2016 when the Russian government officially declared Memorial a "foreign agent", a new legal classification which impedes the work of NGOs and can even be used to shut them down. Link: Economist

Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo start a new "March of the Resistance" against the Macri Government

23-11-2016: Ten years after their last rally, **Sakharov Prize Laureate 1992 Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo** will resume the "March of Resistance", starting December 8, alongside several social

organizations. **Hebe de Bonafini**, president of the association, said that "**the mobilizations will be extended for 24 hours** in protest of the neoliberal measures of the Macrista government, and in support of former president Cristina Fernandez". Bonafini also highlighted that she was threatened with death after she wrote to Pope Francisco asking for help in the face of a worsening social situation in the country. Links: [Telesur](#), [LaJornada](#)

EP URGENCY RESOLUTIONS ON GUARANI-KAIOWÁ PEOPLE IN BRAZIL, MR MINHAI GUI IN CHINA, AND MR ILDAR DADIN IN RUSSIA

24-11-2016: In its November Plenary sitting the Parliament strongly condemned the violence committed against the Guarani-Kaiowá people in the Mato Grosso do Sul region of [Brazil](#), the disappearance of publisher Mr Minhai Gui in [China](#) and the detention and torture of Mr Ildar Dadin in [Russia](#), in three resolutions voted on Thursday. Link: [EP Press Release Urgency Resolution November 2016](#)

SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK EVENTS IN DECEMBER

During December, the Sakharov Prize Network will host the following events:

9 December (Sofia) European Parliament Information Office

Kiril Koroteev, Legal Director of Sakharov Prize Laureate 2009 Memorial, will deliver a Sakharov Prize lecture on human rights and freedom of expression in Russia.

Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought 2016

Nadia MURAD and Lamiya HAJI BASHAR

Nadia Murad Basee Taha and Lamiya Haji Bashar Taha are survivors of sexual enslavement by the so-called Islamic State (IS) and have become spokespersons for women afflicted by IS's campaign of sexual violence. They are public advocates for the Yazidi community in Iraq, a religious minority that has been the subject of a genocidal campaign by IS militants.

On 15 August 2014, IS slaughtered all the males in the village of Kocho, Haji Bashar and Murad's hometown in Sinjar/Iraq. Following the massacre, women and children were enslaved: all young women, including Haji Bashar, Murad and their sisters were kidnapped, bought and sold several times, and exploited as sex slaves. During the Kocho massacre, Murad lost six of her brothers and her mother, who was killed along with eighty older women deemed to have no sexual value. Haji Bashar was also exploited as a sex slave along with her six sisters. She was sold five times among the militants and was forced to make bombs and suicidal vests in Mosul after IS militants executed her brothers and father.

In November 2014, Murad managed to escape with the help of a neighbouring family who smuggled her out of the IS controlled area, allowing her to make her way to a refugee camp in Northern Iraq, and then to Germany. A year later in December 2015, Murad addressed the UN Security Council's first ever session on human trafficking with a powerful speech about her experience. In September 2016, she became the first UN Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking, participating in global and local advocacy initiatives to raise awareness around the plight of the countless victims of trafficking. In October 2016 the Council of Europe honoured her with the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize.

Haji Bashar tried to flee several times before finally escaping in April 2016 with the help of her family, who paid local smugglers. On her way over the Kurdish border, and while racing towards Iraq's

government-controlled territory with IS militants in pursuit, a landmine exploded killing two of her acquaintances while leaving her injured and almost blind. Luckily, she managed to escape and was eventually sent for medical treatment in Germany, where she was reunited with her surviving siblings. Since her recovery Haji Bashar has been active in raising awareness of the plight of the Yazidi community and continues to help women and children who were victims of IS enslavement and atrocities.