

PRESS RELEASE, Stockholm 24 September 2014

2014 Awards honour courageous and effective work for human rights, freedom of the press, civil liberties and combatting climate change

The 2014 Right Livelihood Honorary Award goes to EDWARD SNOWDEN (USA) *“for his courage and skill in revealing the unprecedented extent of state surveillance violating basic democratic processes and constitutional rights”*.

and to

ALAN RUSBRIDGER (UK) *“for building a global media organisation dedicated to responsible journalism in the public interest, undaunted by the challenges of exposing corporate and government malpractices”*.

Three Laureates will equally share the cash award of SEK 1,5 million:

The Jury recognises ASMA JAHANGIR (Pakistan) *“for defending, protecting and promoting human rights in Pakistan and more widely, often in very difficult and complex situations and at great personal risk”*.

It is the first time that a Right Livelihood Award goes to Pakistan.

The Jury awards BASIL FERNANDO/ASIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (Hong Kong SAR/China) *“for his tireless and outstanding work to support and document the implementation of human rights in Asia”*.

The Jury recognises BILL McKIBBEN (USA) *“for mobilising growing popular support in the USA and around the world for strong action to counter the threat of global climate change”*.

The Foundation will fund legal support for Edward Snowden.

The 2014 Right Livelihood Awards were to be announced at the Swedish Foreign Office pressroom on September 25, where the announcement has been taking place since 1995. But the Foreign Office has decided to cancel the press conference this year. The Right Livelihood Award Foundation thus decided to publish the news already today on its website and via newswires.

Further information and material supporting this press release can be accessed via www.rightlivelihood.org

For high-resolution pictures and videos, please also refer to <http://download.rightlivelihood.org>

Please check the credit information provided before publication.



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Founder and Chairman:
Jakob von Uexkull



Quote

Ole von Uexkull, Executive Director of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation, said:

“This year’s Right Livelihood Laureates are stemming the tide of the most dangerous global trends. With this year’s Awards, we want to send a message of urgent warning that these trends – illegal mass surveillance of ordinary citizens, the violation of human and civil rights, violent manifestations of religious fundamentalism, and the decline of the planet’s life-supporting systems – are very much upon us already. If they are allowed to continue, and reinforce each other, they have the power to undermine the basis of civilised societies.

But the Laureates also demonstrate that the choice is entirely in our hands: by courageous acts of civil disobedience in the public interest, through principled and undeterred journalism, by upholding the rule of law and documenting each violation of it, and by building social movements to resist the destruction of our natural environment, we can turn the tide and build our common future on the principles of freedom, justice, and respect for the Earth.”

Phone interview opportunities

- * To contact Alan Rusbridger, please email Jo Murray: jo.murray@theguardian.com.
- * Asma Jahangir is travelling in India. She will be reachable at +91-98 18 75 93 86.
- * For Basil Fernando and AHRC in Hong Kong, please contact Mr. Nilantha Ilangamuwa, press officer, at +852 59777613.
- * Bill McKibben, Vermont, USA. Media should contact Jamie Henn, press officer at 350.org, at +1 415-601-9337.

- * Executive Director Ole von Uexkull (English, Swedish, German) and board member Juliane Kronen (English, German), Right Livelihood Award Foundation: +46-8-70 20 340 or +46-723-16 33 28.

Upcoming: Award Ceremony

The Awards will be presented at a ceremony in the Swedish Parliament on December 1, 2014, at 4 pm, hosted by the Society for the Right Livelihood Award in the Swedish Parliament.

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Background

Founded in 1980, the Right Livelihood Awards are presented annually in the Swedish Parliament and are often referred to as 'Alternative Nobel Prizes'. They were introduced "to honour and support those offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today".

Jakob von Uexkull, a Swedish-German professional philatelist, sold his business to provide the original funding. Since then, the Awards have been financed by individual donors.

This year, there were 120 proposals from 53 countries. From today, there are 158 Right Livelihood Award Laureates from 65 countries.

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