



PRESS RELEASE

Stockholm, 25 November 2016

2016 Right Livelihood Award Laureates Show Courage Against All Odds

- Syria's White Helmets, Russia's Svetlana Gannushkina and Turkish newspaper Cumhuriyet receive awards in Stockholm
- Egyptian feminist Mozn Hassan barred from attending the ceremony

The Laureates of the 2016 Right Livelihood Award will receive their prizes at tonight's ceremony in Stockholm. Meanwhile, the Egyptian Laureate Mozn Hassan has been prevented from travelling to Europe, and 10 journalists from Turkey's leading independent newspaper Cumhuriyet remain in prison.

Jakob von Uexkull, Founder President of the Right Livelihood Award, said: "Our 2016 Laureates work in some of the most difficult circumstances. Hailing from Syria, Egypt, Russia and Turkey, they have witnessed some of the most turbulent events in modern times. Amid the failed coups and stalled peace negotiations, despite propaganda wars and persecution, they stand up for the fundamental rights to life, equality, education and freedom of expression, and are not afraid to speak truth to power."

Raed al Saleh, Director of Syria Civil Defence, commonly known as "The White Helmets", said: "In 2013, the Syrian regime gave us a choice: leave or be killed. For most of our communities, leaving was not an option. But nor was waiting to be killed. Three years on we are now 3,000 volunteers working in 120 teams across Syria. It is not only on their behalf that I am with you today, but also on behalf of all the Syrian civilians that daily face indiscriminate bomb attacks and that live in fear."

The White Helmets were recognised by the award jury "for their outstanding bravery, compassion and humanitarian engagement in rescuing civilians from the destruction of the Syrian civil war".

In her video address, Mozn Hassan, who shares the award with her organisation Nazra for Feminist Studies, said: "The award is not only a recognition of Nazra's work, it is a recognition of a century of feminist activism in this country that has inspired us. Back in 2011, when everything seemed possible, hundreds of thousands of young men and women were



politicized and introduced to the public sphere. A new feminist wave is being formed in the aftermath of the 2011 revolution.”

Hassan, who was commended “for asserting the equality and rights of women in circumstances where they are subject to ongoing violence, abuse and discrimination”, is under a travel ban imposed on her by the Egyptian authorities.

Russian human rights defender Svetlana Gannushkina received the award “for her decades-long commitment to promoting human rights and justice for refugees and forced migrants, and tolerance among different ethnic groups”.

She used the occasion to draw the attention to the current political discourse surrounding migrants and refugees: “The political trends we are now witnessing cause great alarm. Right-wing political forces are becoming stronger around the world. The rhetoric of their leaders is built upon anti-immigration sloganeering, as they posit themselves as the defenders of the people in their countries. Radicalism has become a serious challenge to civil society,” Gannushkina said.

Turkey’s leading independent newspaper Cumhuriyet received the award ‘for their fearless investigative journalism and commitment to freedom of expression in the face of oppression, censorship, imprisonment and death threats’.

Representing Cumhuriyet in Stockholm, Zeynep Oral, columnist at the newspaper and President of PEN-Turkey, read out a statement from Orhan Erinc, Chairman of the Cumhuriyet Foundation, who has not been allowed to leave the country: “Cumhuriyet represents the enlightened and the contemporary face of Turkey. The only force that can defeat darkness, oppression, violence and non-existent justice is the unconditional defence of freedom and secularism. The ‘Alternative Nobel Prize’ that we receive during these very crucial days is therefore a light of hope and solidarity that is so essential for us.”

The Right Livelihood Award Foundation urged the governments of Egypt and Turkey to lift undue restrictions on Laureates Mozn Hassan and immediately release Cumhuriyet staff.

2016 Right Livelihood Award Ceremony

The 2016 Right Livelihood Award Ceremony takes place in the Vasa Museum in Stockholm, Sweden, on **25 November**, and is a by-invitation-only event.

A live-stream will be available via www.rightlivelihoodaward.org from **7:00 pm Stockholm time**. Swedish public broadcaster SVT will also provide a live link via EVN/EBU at this time.

The Award Ceremony will be conducted in English.



Ceremony programme:

- **6.00 pm – 7:00 pm:** Guided tours of the Vasa Museum and welcome by Eva-Lena Jansson, M.P., Chair of the Association for the Right Livelihood Award in the Swedish Parliament (SÄRLA), and Lisa Månsson, Director of the Vasa Museum
- **7:00 pm – 7:30 pm:** Jakob von Uexkull, President Founder of the Right Livelihood Award, Speech & Presentation of the 2016 Awards
- **7:25 pm (estimate):** Group photo of the Laureates
- **8:00 pm onwards:** Laureates' Speeches. Each Laureate will be introduced by a member of the Swedish Parliament

Media materials

Laureates' acceptance speeches will be available online at <http://www.rightlivelihoodaward.org/2016-award-ceremony/> from 7:00 pm Stockholm time on 25 November.

Further information materials including videos and high-resolution photos for media use can be accessed via www.rightlivelihoodaward.org

Laureates' Programmes

In addition to the award ceremony, the Laureates will attend a series of public events in Sweden, Germany and Switzerland. The programme is available online at <http://www.rightlivelihoodaward.org/2016-award-ceremony/>

Interview opportunities

If you are interested in interviewing one or several Laureates, or representatives of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation, please contact:

International media: Xenya Cherny-Scanlon, Director of Communications, Right Livelihood Award Foundation, xenya@rightlivelihood.org or +41 76 690 8798

Swedish-speaking media: Johannes Mosskin, Communications Manager, Right Livelihood Award Foundation, johannes@rightlivelihood.org or +46 70 437 11 48

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About the Right Livelihood Award

The Right Livelihood Award was established in 1980 to "honour and support courageous people and organisations offering visionary and exemplary solutions to the root causes of global problems". It has become widely known as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize' and there are now 166 Laureates from 68 countries. In addition to presenting the annual awards, the Right Livelihood Award Foundation supports its Laureates, particularly those who may be in danger due to the nature of their work. 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. The four 2016 Right Livelihood Award Laureates will share the cash award of SEK 3 million (ca. EUR 320 000).

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