



Parlamento Europeo

Maite Pagazaurtundua - Parlamento Europeo
Bât. Altiero Spinelli 08G354
60, rue Wiertz / Wiertzstraat 60
B-1047 Bruxelles/Brussel

Federica Mogherini
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels

Brussels, 4 of December 2018

Dear Mrs Mogherini,

The Sakharov Prize of the European Parliament represents a key milestone for the Union. Once a year, despite our nationality or political group, we stand together in Strasbourg to play tribute to exemplary people who fight for freedom of thought around the world.

From its first edition, 30 years ago, this award has been a tribute that gives visibility to persons and organizations that have dedicated their lives or actions to defend Human Rights and fundamental freedoms. Thanks to that, the Sakharov Prize has become the highest EU distinction to the defenders of Freedom and Democracy in the world.

However, right now, four of the laureates are political prisoners: blogger Raif Badawi (Saudi Arabia), opposition leader Leopoldo López (in house arrest in Venezuela), Ukrainian Oleg Sentsov (imprisoned in Russia) and Nasrin Sotude (Iran) are deprived of freedom. Not to forget that laureate Arab Spring activist Razan Zaitouneh is missing in Syria.

They were awarded for defending freedom and we must now demand theirs. The European Union must be strict when demanding the release for these four imprisoned laureates. Freedom is a key EU value and freedom is what they fight for and were recognised for with the Sakharov Prize. We have to act so they are free without more delay.

We, the undersigning Sakharov laureates and MEPs, ask you, in the exercise of your duties, to demand the Saudi Arabian, Venezuelan, Russian and Iranian Governments to immediate release them all and to promote all levels of mobilization of the international community to speak out in favour of their urgent liberation.

Yours sincerely,

Maite Pagazaurtundúa, MEP and co-founder of ¡Basta Ya!, Sakharov Prize 2000

Belarusian Association of Journalists, Sakharov Prize 2004

Lorent Saleh, Sakharov Prize 2017

Nurit Peled-Elhanan, Sakharov 2001

Guillermo Fariñas, Sakharov 2010

Damas de Blanco, Sakharov Prize 2005

Oslobođenje, Sakharov Prize 1993

Ensaf Haidair, wife of Raif Badawi, Sakharov Prize 2015. Political prisoner in Saudi Arabia

Fernando Savater, Sakharov Prize 2000

Memorial, Sakharov Prize 2009

Andrea González, Sakharov Prize 2017

Karim Lahidji, FIDH, Iran

Theresa Griffin, MEP, S&D

Ramón Luis Valcárcel, MEP and VP European Parliament, EPP

Rebecca Harms, MEP, Verdes

Beatriz Becerra, MEP, ALDE

Gabriele Zimmer, MEP, Gue

Barbara Spinelli, MEP, Gue

Julie Ward, MEP, S&D

Rozière Virginie, MEP, S&D

Dennis de Jong, MEP, GUE

Pavel TELIČKA, MEP, ALDE

Teresa Jimenez Becerril, MEP, EPP

Constantin Laurențiu Rebeca, MEP

José Inácio FARIA, MEP, EPP

Javier Nart, MEP, ALDE

Brando Benifei, MEP, S&D

Juan Fernando López Aguilar, MEP, S&D

Enrique Guerrero, MEP, S&D

Ramón Jáuregui, MEP, S&D

Urmas Paet, MEP, ALDE

Ana María Gomes, MEP, S&D

Teresa Giménez Barbat, MEP, ALDE

Esteban González Pons, MEP, EPP

Michael Boni, MEP, EPP

Barbara Lochbihler, MEP, Greens

Francisco Millán Mon, MEP, EPP

Eva Joly, MEP, Greens

António Marinho e Pinto, MEP, ALDE

Hilde Vautmans, MEP, ALDE

Carlos Coelho, MEP, EPP

Petri Sarvamaa, EPP

Rosa Estarás, EPP

José Ignacio Salafranca, EPP

Nathalie GRIESBECK, ALDE

Petr JEŽEK, ALDE

Roberta METSOLA, EPP

Marietje Schaake, ALDE

Jozo RADOŠ, ALDE

Catherine Bearder, ALDE

Petras AUŠTREVICIUS, ALDE

Milan Zver, EPP

Gesine MEISSNER, ALDE

Mirja Vehkaperä, ALDE

Ivo VAJGL, ALDE

Renate Weber, ALDE

Josef WEIDENHOLZER, S&D

Charles GOERENS, ALDE

David Casa, EPP

Frédérique Ries, ALDE

Jerzy BUZEK, EPP

Elmar BROK, EPP