



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Foreign Affairs

21.9.2009

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Subject: **SAKHAROV PRIZE FOR FREEDOM OF THOUGHT 2009**

Members will find attached the list of candidates in alphabetical order, as well as the justifications and biographies received by the secretariat, for the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought 2009, which have been nominated pursuant to the Sakharov Prize statute by at least 40 Members of the European Parliament or by a political group.

DIRECTORATE GENERAL
FOR EXTERNAL POLICIES

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SAKHAROV PRIZE FOR FREEDOM OF THOUGHT 2009

Candidates proposed by political groups and individual members in alphabetical order

Candidate	Activity	Nominated by
Dr Izzeldin Abuelaish	A Palestinian gynaecologist whose home is in Jabalia, the largest refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, and who works on both the Israeli and the Palestinian sides of the 'border' as a matter of personal choice and an expression of his commitment to peace.	Nominated by Véronique de Keyser, Hans Gert Pöttering, Caroline Lucas and 52 others
Foundation Vicente Ferrer	Foundation aiming to protect and promote the rights of minorities in India and to support the eradication of extreme poverty.	Nominated by Andrés Perelló and 39 others
Mr Dawit ISAAK	Eritrean journalist, writer and playwright, political prisoner since 2001.	Nominated by Eva-Britt Svensson on behalf of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left Group (GUE/NGL) as well as Olle Schmidt and 31 others
Mariam LAMIZANA	Minister for Social Action and National Solidarity in Burkina Faso and activist in the fight against female genital mutilation.	Nominated by Francesco Speroni on behalf of Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group (ELD/EFD)
Lyudmila Alexeyeva, Oleg Orlov and Sergei Kovalev on behalf of MEMORIAL and all other human rights defenders in Russia	Organisation promoting fundamental rights in post-Soviet states.	Nominated by Rebecca Harms and Daniel Cohn-Bendit on behalf of Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
MEMORIAL	Organisation promoting fundamental rights in post-Soviet states.	Nominated by Saryusz-Wolski and 59 others
Dr Denis MUKWEGE	Medical Doctor, founder and Head of Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, he specialises in helping women and girls who have been victims of rape and brutal sexual abuse.	Nominated by Guy Verhofstadt on behalf of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group (ALDE)

Father Thaddeus, NGUYEN VAN LY	Roman Catholic priest and prominent Vietnamese dissident involved in pro-democracy movements, for which he was imprisoned for almost 15 years.	Nominated by Michael Gahler and 44 others
Shadi SADR on behalf of Neda and Iranian citizens striving for the respect of human rights	Iranian human rights attorney, feminist, activist and journalist, focusing in particular on ending the death penalty and stoning as well as on women's rights and equality.	Nominated by Marietje Schaake and Barbara Lochbihler and 38 others
Roberto SAVIANO	Italian journalist and writer, threatened by the Italian Mafia as a consequence of his uncompromising attack on organised crime.	Nominated by Sonia Alfano and 39 others



Dr Izzeldin Abuelaish

Dr Abuelaish is a gynaecologist whose home is in Jabalia, the largest refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. As a matter of personal choice and an expression of his commitment to peace, he works on both the Israeli and the Palestinian sides of the ‘border’. The pictures of the Palestinian doctor grieving for his three daughters, who were killed in a bombing raid just a few hours before the January 2009 truce, were seen around the world. Yet in spite of this personal family tragedy, Doctor Izzeldin Abuelaish continues to fight for peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples and to build bridges between the two war-torn, violence-ridden communities.

In memory of his daughters Bisan (20), Mayar (15) and Aya (14), and of his niece, Dr Abuelaish intends to set up an international foundation one of whose aims will be to help improve education for women and girls in Gaza and throughout the world.

In late March 2009 Dr Abuelaish visited the European Parliament, where he met the President, Mr Pöttering. Wherever he went during his stay he left a lasting impression as a man of charisma and eloquence, with a profound message to convey (details of the visit are attached). In Parliament he also met many politicians and members of Belgian civil society.

All those who spoke to him were struck by his tolerance, humanistic outlook and strong moral sense; in short, Dr Abuelaish came across as a man to look up to in a region where radical, obtuse and sometimes fanatical rhetoric is all too often to the fore and stands in the way of the real dialogue that is so essential if peace is to be achieved.

The award of the Sakharov Prize to such a figurehead by an international organisation with the renown of the European Parliament would **send a very strong signal** to those involved in this conflict and to public opinion worldwide.

Dr Izzeldin Abuelaish is, I believe, **the most outstanding embodiment of peace** to be found in the region, and the most deserving of encouragement.

Vicente Ferrer Foundation

The Vicente Ferrer Foundation was set up in 1969 and aims to protect and promote the rights of minorities in India and to support the eradication of extreme poverty.

The work of the Vicente Ferrer Foundation is mainly carried out in India, in the 2 278 villages of the Anantapur region, one of the least developed in the country and also one of the poorest in the world. **More than 2.5 million people, who belong to the most discriminated communities within the Hindu caste system: the Dalits or untouchables, the tribal groups and the backward castes, are beneficiaries of its development programs.**

The work of the Foundation is a clear example of success in human rights achievements. Thanks to integral development programmes focused primarily on the improvement of social and economic rights, **they guarantee people the right to education, to health and sanitation, and to decent housing. They have also developed specific programmes, which attend to the needs of people with disabilities, frequently ignored in India.**

The work done by the Foundation for women's rights in India is also important. Women in India are twice discriminated against, not only for their condition but also because they belong to the lower castes. The objectives of the Foundation's gender projects are promoting women's association rights, the right to education for girls and teenagers and the right to decent work through training programmes and access to micro-credits.

Respect for the culture and customs of men and women in India is part of the core principles and values of the organization. Ecology is also emphasized in the work of the Foundation, and all projects bear in mind environmental sustainability aspects and the well-being of future generations.

The work that the Vicente Ferrer Foundation has developed for 50 years in India has certainly contributed to improving the living standards of many people. The Foundation has strongly supported the dignity, equality and the defence of human rights of those who have fewer opportunities to enjoy them.

Vicente Ferrer biographical note

Vicente Ferrer was born in Barcelona (Spain) on April 9, 1920.

He fought for and supported the Republican side during the Spanish civil war, taking part in the Battle of Ebro and in the retreat of the Republican army towards France after the fall of the Catalan front. In 1939 he returned to Spain where the Franco-led authorities sent him to a concentration camp in Betanzos for a year.

In 1944 he abandoned his studies of law to become a Jesuit, with the clear purpose of 'helping others'.

On 13 February 1952, Vicente Ferrer travelled to Mumbai as a Jesuit missionary. Although his assignment was to finish his spiritual training, during his first mission in Manmad he decided to explore and learn about the people and their needs and gain their confidence, trying to give solutions to those suffering. He started a singular system of work among the peasants, which raised awareness

among them and generated a great movement of solidarity. ‘The miracle of giving’ consists in the initiative of giving limited economic aid and the necessary technical advice to the peasants in order to allow them to obtain water for their crops. Once every peasant returned the aid and support received, ‘the miracle’ was spread among other members of the community.

From the start he tried to put in place solutions for the people, such as small cooperatives organized for the excavation of wells, channels for the supply of water, seed banks, small irrigation plots, etc. At the same time, Ferrer was devoted to the construction of community services and, thanks to the transfer of a few lands, he built two schools, a hospital and two student residences, to allocate almost a thousand students at that time.

Some sectors of the governing bodies were concerned about the peasants’ sympathy towards Vicente Ferrer, as they saw him as a threat to their own interests. The publication of an article in the *Illustrated Weekly*, the most widely-distributed magazine in India, entitled ‘The silent revolution’, triggered his deportation order, issued on 27 April, 1968, forcing him to leave the country within 30 days. Opposed to the order, a peasant movement was set up to support Vicente Ferrer, and religious leaders, politicians and intellectuals joined the movement. Madu Metha – one of the most influential and active social leaders of Mumbai – was the coordinator of this supporting committee. Just two days before the deadline, more than 30 000 peasants travelled the 250 km between Manmad and Mumbai, demanding justice from the Government. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, acknowledged during a brief interview with Vicente Ferrer the great value of his work and committed herself to finding the best solution to the situation, sending a clear message: ‘Father Vicente Ferrer will travel abroad for a short period of holidays and he will be welcome back again in India.’

Vicente Ferrer returned to Spain and established the *Acción Fraterna en el Mundo*, with a single aim: to alleviate the situation of the two thirds of the human population suffering from hunger. He also mediated in the case of two *goanos* who were convicted to life sentences in a Lisbon prison, achieving their freedom in two months.

During that time, the American magazine *Life* published a twelve-page article entitled ‘The saint of Manmad’, while in Spain, Italy, Germany, India and North America, a grass roots movement collected 25 000 signatures supporting his nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Three months after leaving India, despite his requests he did not received the permit to return to India. Finally, Indira Gandhi intervened in his case and ordered an immediate visa for him.

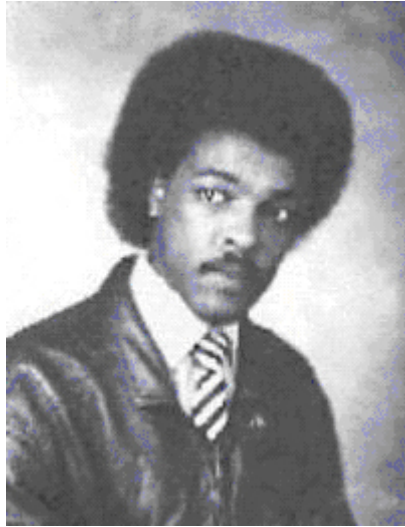
Back in India, only the Andhra Pradesh state region welcome him, and Vicente, together with six volunteers, decided to remain in the poorest part of this region: Anantapur, where lack of water, risk of desertification, and health and education were almost nonexistent. There, the most radical politicians received him with slogans on the walls saying: ‘Ferrer go back’.

In March 1970 he left the Jesuit Fathers, and the same year he married Anne Perry, a British journalist who had stayed with him since the Manmad conflict.

In this context the Vicente Ferrer Foundation was established in India. The organization led by Vicente Ferrer promotes the development of the Anantapur region. However, during the 70s he was still under suspicion, this time from the regional authorities, who were concerned about his work and tried to send him to prison. Vicente took action against them, reporting his case to the court and obtaining a favourable verdict, which set a precedent. In 1996 he set up the Fundación Vicente Ferrer in Spain to ensure the financial viability of the organization’s projects.

The Sakharov Prize will represent not only financial support for the work of the Foundation in favour

of the social integration of the Dalits, but also moral and political crucial support in the quest for minority rights and those discriminated against in India. It will also be consistent with the EP's position supporting the Dalits, stated in several resolutions.



Mr Dawit Isaak

Dawit Isaak is a journalist, writer and playwright. He was born on 27 October 1964. Twenty-nine years later, his country would be declared the state of Eritrea after a long and bloody war for liberation. He came to Sweden as a refugee from the war in 1987. He became a Swedish citizen in 1992.

When Eritrea gained independence, Dawit returned to his native country. He got married and had children. Eventually he became a part-owner of the country's first independent newspaper, *Setit*, where he came to work as a reporter. But the country's independence proved fragile: in 1998, the conflict with Ethiopia unexpectedly flared up again, leading to a devastating border war. Dawit returned to Sweden, preparing to bring his family to safety. His wife and three children followed in April 2000. They settled down in Gothenburg.

One year later, Dawit again travelled to Eritrea. That spring, Asmara was boiling with political activity. The border war had caused an intense political debate. A group of fifteen cabinet members demanded, among other things, democratic reforms and a thorough, objective evaluation of the events leading to the war. In May, when the fifteen dissidents had still not gained a hearing, they put their critique on the internet in an open letter. The letter was published by the free press, along with analyses, comments and interviews with several of the fifteen politicians. Then, when the international community turned its gaze toward the ruins of the World Trade Centre, the government struck back against the reformists. Within a few days, eleven of the fifteen politicians were arrested, as were ten of the leading journalists from the free press, including Dawit Isaak, who was taken into custody early on Sunday morning, 23 September 2001.

As yet, none of them has been either charged formally or given a fair trial. The journalists, as well as the politicians, have been branded as traitors; the journalists have also been accused of receiving financial aid from abroad – a crime according to the Eritrean press laws.

There have been few signs of life from Dawit since his arrest. In November 2001, Sweden's then honorary consul in Asmara, Lis Truelsen, caught a glimpse of him through the bars and had time to

exchange a few words with him. In April 2002 he was taken to hospital – for treatment of torture injuries, according to the American press organization Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). And in the summer of 2004, Eritrea's ambassador in Stockholm, Araya Desta, told the Swedish national radio that Dawit was doing fine. But so far, neither his family nor Swedish authorities nor international human rights organizations have been allowed to visit him. The Eritrean authorities claim that Dawit is an Eritrean citizen only – not a Swedish citizen – and that his case is thus an internal affair.

In January 2009 the European Parliament demanded the immediate release of Dawit Isaak and other imprisoned journalists, in the resolution on the Horn of Africa B6/033 2009. On the 20th of February 2009, the President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering, sent a letter to the President of Eritrea, expressing deep concerns about Dawit Isaak's deteriorating health and repeating the call for the immediate release of Isaak and other journalists. He also called on the Eritrean authorities to agree to a visit to Mr Isaak in detention by an official of the European Commission, accompanied by a medical doctor.



Mrs Mariam Lamizana

Mariam Lamizana is President of the Inter-African Committee against **Female Genital Mutilation** (FGM). In 2006 she was re-appointed Minister for Social Action and National Solidarity in the Burkina Faso Government.

The Committee against Female Genital Mutilation is an international non-governmental organisation, founded in 1984 as a result of a conference held in Dakar (Senegal) which was attended by 20 African States. Today, the organisation is represented in 28 African States, as part of a network including 15 European States, USA, Canada, Japan and New Zealand.

In 2000, Mariam Lamizana founded the association 'Women's Voice in Burkina Faso', together with over 40 individuals active in the field of grassroots activities (information, awareness-raising, education) aiming at letting Burkinabe women take part fully in the social, economic and political life of the country. The association also presents itself as a tool to fight poverty and all forms of violence against women.

Moreover, Mrs Lamizana has been President of the National Committee to Fight Female Genital Mutilation, a body created in 1990 to implement the National Action Plan in the Field of FGM, whose Honorary President is the Burkina Faso's First Lady, Chantal Compaoré.

Thanks to the considerable efforts of the above-mentioned National Committee and to a strong political will to ban the practice of female genital mutilation, Mrs Lamizana obtained very positive results. In fact, Burkina Faso is one of the few African countries where the practice of female genital

cutting has significantly decreased.

Lyudmila Alexeyeva, Sergei Kovalev and Oleg Orlov
on behalf of
MEMORIAL
and all Russian human rights activists

nominated by Rebecca Harms and Daniel Cohn-Bendit
on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group

The Greens/EFA Group supports the candidacy of Lyudmila Mikhailovna Alexeyeva, Oleg Orlov and Sergei Kovalev on behalf of the Russian human rights organisation **MEMORIAL** and all other human rights defenders in Russia for the 2009 Sakharov Prize.

The Sakharov Prize is entering the 21st year of its existence. After two decades it is highly opportune to draw the attention to the many Russian human rights activists who have continued Andrei Sakharov's work. Memorial stands as a collective symbol for the engagement of numerous activists. One of them was Natalia Estemirova, who investigated murders and abductions in Chechnya. She was found murdered in Ingushetia on 15 July 2009. The offices of Memorial have been raided on several occasions, and on 18 July 2009 Memorial suspended its activities in Chechnya, stating: 'We cannot risk the lives of our colleagues even if they are ready to carry on their work'.

The Green Group suggests that the important work of Memorial should be honoured and materially supported with the prize money. We also suggest that the award should be received in person by three people on behalf of Memorial and Russia's numerous human rights defenders, to honour them for their life's work:

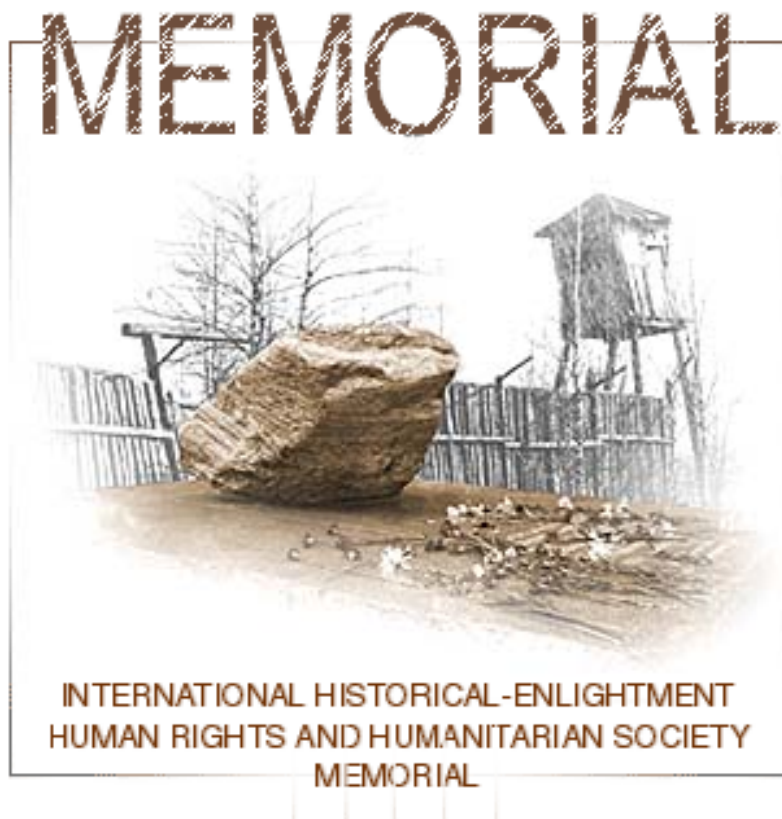
Sergei Kovalev, who founded the first Soviet human rights association in 1969, the Initiative Group for the Defence of Human Rights in the USSR, and became one of the initiators of Memorial. Kovalev has been an outspoken critic of authoritarian tendencies in the administrations of Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. In 1996 he resigned in protest as head of Yeltsin's presidential human rights commission. In 2002 he organized a public commission to investigate the 1999 Moscow apartment bombings, which was effectively paralyzed after the persecution and assassination of its members;

Lyudmila Mikhailovna Alexeyeva, who, together with Andrei Sakharov and others, founded the Moscow Helsinki Group to monitor Soviet compliance with the Helsinki Final Act in 1976. Since the 1960s Alexeyeva had been campaigning for fair trials of the arrested dissidents and their objective coverage in the media. She was excluded from the Communist Party and deprived of her job as editor of a scientific magazine. Alexeyeva co-chaired, with Garry Kasparov and Georgy Satarov, the All-Russian Civic Congress which Alexeyeva and Satarov left due to disagreement with Kasparov in January 2008. She has been critical of the Kremlin's human rights record and has accused the government of encouraging extremists with its nationalistic policies, such as the mass deportations of Georgians in 2006 and police raids against foreigners working in street markets, as well as Russian conduct in Ingushetia.

Oleg Orlov, who is the current chair of Memorial. On 25 September Moscow's Tverskoi Court is due to begin hearings into the lawsuit filed by Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov against Orlov, accusing him of 'libel and insulting his honour and dignity'. Orlov had accused Kadyrov of being behind the murder of Chechen rights activist Natalya Estemirova. On 23 November 2007 Orlov himself was abducted in Ingushetia, together with three journalists, before being beaten, threatened with execution and disposed of.

Memorial was originally founded as an initiative to create a memorial complex to victims of Stalin repressions in the late 1980s: 'to promote mature civil society and democracy based on the rule of law and thus to prevent a return to totalitarianism'. It later expanded into a civil rights defence organization based on the 'values of democracy and rule of law, to get rid of totalitarian patterns, and to establish firmly human rights in practical politics and in public life'.

In 2004 Memorial received the Right Livelihood Award, sometimes called the alternative Nobel Prize, for its work in documenting violations of human rights in Russia and other former states in the USSR. Memorial has organized legal and financial assistance for the victims of the Gulag, but the organisation has also earned great praise for its commitment to support forced migrants and internally displaced people in the Russian Federation, as well as refugees from Africa, Asia and the Middle East. It conducts research into current cases of political repression and publicises the findings by means of books, articles, exhibitions and the websites of its member organizations.



MEMORIAL

Memorial promotes the truth about political repression in the Soviet Union and fights against current human rights abuses in post-Soviet states to ensure their democratic future.

Its first leader was Andrei Sakharov. Since its foundation, the organisation has worked tirelessly to build public archives of historical research into totalitarian repression. Its current work concentrates on combating human rights violations in conflict zones of former Soviet states, actively protecting refugees and victims of discrimination and political repression.

Memorial should be rewarded for its continued essential work in EU neighbouring countries, monitoring the situation in countries of actual or potential conflict and human rights abuse in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Tajikistan, Moldova and Ukraine. Yet the organisation's work is constantly under threat. In July 2009, Memorial was forced to suspend its human rights work in Chechnya after Natalia Estemirova, a human rights activist, was abducted and her body found in Ingushetia.

Memorial's outstanding work has been recognised by other international organisations. In 2004 it was awarded the Right Livelihood Award (also known as the alternative Nobel Prize) and the UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award.



Dr Denis Mukwege

'In the Congo, where tens of thousands of women are brutally raped every year, Dr Denis Mukwege repairs their broken bodies and souls'.

Eve Ensler, author of the *The Vagina Monologues*

Dr. Denis Mukwege is the founder and current Head of Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). He specializes in reconstructive vaginal surgery and has dedicated his life to helping the tens of thousand Congolese women and girls who are victims of gang rape and brutal sexual violence.

Denis Mukwege was born on 1 March 1955. He was the third of nine children in the family of a Pentecostal minister. His reason for studying medicine was that he wanted to cure the sick that his Minister father had prayed for all his life. After graduating from medical university in Burundi he worked at the Christian hospital of Lemera in South-Kivu, DR Congo. There he realized the difficulty of childbirth for the village women, who had no access to specialized healthcare, so he decided to study gynaecology/obstetrics at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire of Angers, France.

In 1989 he returned to the Hospital of Lemera, where he founded a gynaecology/obstetrics service, after training the support staff. This service has become well known both locally and beyond the borders of DRC. Unfortunately, the hospital was completely destroyed in 1996, during the first Congo Civil War.

As a survivor from Lemera, Dr Mukwege has resettled in Bukavu. He noticed the lack of medical facilities to help women during childbirth in the Southern part of the town of Bukavu,. Therefore, he decided to build a maternity ward with an operating room, at Panzi. But as early as the inauguration, the hospital began to receive large numbers of sexual assault victims, some as young as 3 years old and many with extreme injuries and mutilations. Thus the idea was born to create specialized services for victims of sexual violence.

Currently, the 334-bed hospital receives on average 10 women per day and 30% of those undergo major surgery. Many of these patients have been gang raped, and some subjected to assault from the inside out, with bayonets, chunks of wood and even rifles.

Dr. Mukwege often works up to 18 hours at a time. Since the founding of Panzi Hospital in 1999 he has performed reconstructive surgery on over 21 000 women and children, on some of them more than once. The task is becoming increasingly difficult, and Dr Mukwege is working on training the nurses, obstetricians and doctors for this end. The training is conducted in cooperation with international experts in vaginal rebuilding surgery from the Fistula Hospital of Addis Ababa.

In December 2008 and January 2009, Dr Denis Mukwege was honoured with a series of international awards in recognition of his work in treating tens of thousands of victims of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These included the 2008 United Nations Human Rights Prize, the 2008 Olof Palme Prize for outstanding achievement in promoting peace, and selection by the Nigerian newspaper Daily Trust as its 2008 African of the Year. The awards helped to bring global attention to what Mukwege and others had described as an ‘epidemic’ of sexual violence in eastern DRC, where combatants in the war-torn region were using the systematic rape of women and girls as a means of terrorizing and displacing the civilian population.

Among the perpetrators of the violence were Rwandan Hutu rebels based in eastern DRC, Congolese government soldiers and various armed gangs. All of the region’s combatants said Mukwege had ‘*declared women their common enemy*’. He urged greater involvement on the part of the international community, including a stronger UN mandate in DRC, as a means of ending the violence. Mukwege hoped to use the prize money that he had received to establish services aimed at helping survivors of sexual violence rejoin society.

Bibliography:

Encyclopedia Britannica <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1537502/Denis-Mukwege>

The Panzi Hospital of Bukavu (official website): <http://www.panzihospitalbukavu.org/>

The Fistula Foundation (official website): <http://www.fistulafoundation.org/congo/>



Father Thaddeus, Nguyễn Văn Lý

Nguyễn Văn Lý was born on 15 May 1946. He is a Roman Catholic priest and a prominent Vietnamese dissident involved in many pro-democracy movements, for which he was imprisoned for a total of almost 15 years. For his ongoing imprisonment and continuous non-violent protest, Amnesty International adopted Nguyễn Văn Lý in December 1983 as a prisoner of conscience.

Nguyễn Văn Lý began his dissident activities as early as the 1970s. He spent a year in prison from 1977 to 1978, and an additional nine from May 1983 to July 1992 for ‘opposing the revolution and destroying the people’s unity’.

On 17 May 2001 Father Lý was arrested and in October 2001 received another prison sentence of 15 years for activities linked to the defence of free expression. As a result of international pressure, Father Lý was released from prison in early 2004 but remains under house arrest in the Archdiocese of Hue.

On 8 April 2006, Father Lý collaborated with other writers on the *Manifesto on Freedom and Democracy for Vietnam*. Later, the signatories of this Manifesto called themselves Bloc 8406, a reference to the date of the document.

On 15 April 2006, Father Lý and three other priests published the first issue of *Free Speech* (Tự Do Ngôn Luận), an underground online publication.

On 8 September 2006, Father Lý participated in the establishment of the Vietnam Progression Party (Đảng Thăng Tiến Việt Nam).

His support for the Bloc 8406 manifesto led to his being sentenced, on 30 March 2007, to an additional eight years in prison.

The court appearance was televised in Vietnam, with foreign reporters allowed to attend. During the trial, when Father Lý tried to shout an unauthorized, dissident remark – ‘Đả Đảo Cộng Sản’ (‘down with communism’) – he was immediately silenced with a hand over his mouth by the security officer

behind him. The video and image was circulated round the world afterwards and gained his case widespread international attention.



Ms Shadi Sadr

Ms Sadr has **long served as a defender of human rights issues** in Iran and is a member of the Committee of Human Rights Reporters. Shadi Sadr, a lawyer and journalist, was the director of Raahi, a legal advice centre for women until it was closed in March 2007. She set up *Zanan-e Iran* (Women of Iran), the first website dedicated to the work of Iranian women's rights activists, and she has written extensively about Iranian women and their legal rights. She champions women accused of moral crimes, and her avowed goal is to end capital punishment, beginning with the elimination of all executions by stoning.

She has represented activists and journalists and has represented several women sentenced to death, whose convictions were subsequently overturned. She is also involved in the Stop Stoning Forever Campaign. Shadi Sadr was previously detained on 4 March 2007 during a protest against the trial of five women's rights activists in Tehran.

Ms Sadr was violently arrested in Tehran on the morning of 17 July 2009 on her way to prayers. She was walking with a group of women's rights activists along a busy road when unidentified plain-clothes men pulled her into a car. She lost her headscarf and coat in the ensuing struggle but managed briefly to escape. She was quickly recaptured and beaten with batons before being taken away to prison. She was subsequently released in late July.

Justification for Nomination

Ms. Sadr has been championing fundamental human rights for years under a repressive Iranian regime.



*"Ringrazio chi in questi giorni
ha sentito che il mio dolore
era anche il suo dolore"*
ROBERTO SAVIANO

**La sua libertà è
la nostra libertà**

Translation: 'I would like to thank those who, during these last few days, understood that my pain was also theirs'. ROBERTO SAVIANO
His freedom is our freedom

Mr Roberto Saviano

Roberto Saviano (born in Naples on 22 September 1979) is an Italian journalist and writer. He has a degree in philosophy from the University of Naples. In Italy he is a contributor to *L'espresso* and *la Repubblica*; in the US, to the *Washington Post* and *Time*; in Spain to *El pais*; and in Germany to *Die Zeit* and *Der Spiegel*. He uses literature and reportage to analyse reality and his first book, *Gomorra* (Mondadori), published in 2006, soon became a bestseller and sold almost two million copies in Italy, and has been translated in 51 countries. *Gomorra* is also a bestseller in Germany, the UK, Holland, Belgium, Spain, France, Switzerland and Finland.

As a consequence of the book's outstanding success and of its uncompromising attack on organized crime, Roberto Saviano has received a number of serious death threats. These have been confirmed by the collaborators for justice and reports that have revealed attempts on Saviano's life, by the Casalesi clan, that **obliged the Italian authorities to provide him with 24-hour police protection. Since 13 October 2006 he has lived in hiding and has to continuously change his movements for security reasons.** In autumn 2008, the informant Carmine Schiavone, cousin of the imprisoned Casalesi clan boss Francesco Schiavone, revealed to the authorities that the clan had planned to eliminate Saviano and his police escort by Christmas on the motorway between Rome and Naples with a bomb. In the same period, Saviano announced his intention to leave Italy, in order to stop having to live as a convict and to reclaim his life.

On 20 October 2008, six Nobel Prize-winning authors and intellectuals (Orhan Pamuk, Dario Fo, Rita Levi Montalcini, Desmond Tutu, Günter Grass and Mikhail Gorbachev) published an article in which they stated that they sided with Saviano against Camorra, and that they considered Camorra to be not just a problem of security and public order, but also a democratic one. They also said that the Italian government must protect his life and help Saviano to lead a normal life. Signatures have been collected on the site of the Italian newspaper La Repubblica.

The aim of the Sakharov Prize is the defence of the freedom of thought. Unfortunately, this liberty is also undermined in Europe. So the nomination of Roberto Saviano would be a strong signal to the criminal organizations.