
Sakharov Prize: Nadia Murad and Lamiya Aji Bashar to receive this year's award

Iraqi Yazidi Islamic State survivors and activists Nadia Murad and Lamiya Aji Bashar receive Parliament's 2016 Sakharov Prize during a ceremony in Strasbourg on Tuesday 13 December. After escaping sexual enslavement by Islamic State they both became spokespeople for women affected by the terrorist group's campaign of sexual violence and for the persecuted Yazidi minority. Find out more about their fight by watching our video and follow the ceremony live online.

About Nadia Murad and Lamiya Aji Bashar

[Nadia Murad Basee Taha and Lamiya Aji Bashar](#) are from Kocho, one of the villages near Sinjar, Iraq. In August 2014, Islamic State militants slaughtered all the males in the village. Young women, including Aji Bashar, Murad and their sisters, were abducted by Islamic State militants and forced into sex slavery.

They eventually managed to escape: Murad in November 2014 and Aji Bashar in April 2016.

Murad, 23 years old, and Aji Bashar, 19 years old, now live in Germany and have become active in raising awareness of the plight of the Yazidi community in Iraq, a religious minority subjected to a genocidal campaign by Islamic State militants and of the situation of women affected by the terrorist group's campaign of sexual violence.

Murad said: "I've seen thousands of refugees go through the same thing as myself and my family. We are scattered all over the place. I also know that Islamic State is still trying to exterminate us. I think about this and this is what gives me the strength, all the strength, to continue."

Aji Bashar added: "I would really like to explain what happened to me there, not only for myself, but so others, the other women, are not treated like this, so that we Yazidis never have to go through anything like this again."

Follow the Sakharov Prize ceremony live

The Sakharov Prize award ceremony takes place on Tuesday 13 December in the European Parliament in Strasbourg at noon CET. Follow it live on [our website](#), on the page of our [Facebook account](#) or on our other social media platforms using the hashtag #SakharovPrize.

After the ceremony President Martin Schulz, Nadia Murad and Lamiya Aji Bashar will give a press conference. The laureates will also meet the members from the foreign affairs, development and human rights committees on Monday 12 December at 19.00 CET.

[Sakharov Prize 2016 finalists](#) Can Dündar and Mustafa Dzhemilev will also attend the ceremony.

More on the Sakharov Prize

The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought was set up in 1998 and is awarded each year by the European Parliament to honour individuals and organisations defending human rights and fundamental freedoms. The prize is accompanied by an award of €50,000.

Last year the prize was awarded to [Raif Badawi](#). The Saudi blogger who has not been able to receive the prize in person is still in prison for hosting online posts that were considered blasphemous by Saudi authorities on his website.

Find out more

[Watch it live: award ceremony on Tuesday 13 December from noon CET](#)

[Watch it live: press conference with Sakharov Prize laureates and Parliament President Martin Schulz on Tuesday 13 December at 12.30 CET](#)

[Watch it live: meeting with parliamentary committees on Monday 12 December from 19.00 CET](#)

[Photos and videos of the ceremony](#)

[Sakharov Prize website](#)

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