

Article - Sakharov Prize 2020: meet the finalists



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The democratic opposition in Belarus is represented by the Coordination Council, initiative of brave women (main opposition candidate Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, Nobel Laureate Svetlana Alexievich, musician and political activist Maryia Kalesnikava, and political activists Volha Kavalkova and Veranika Tsapkala), as well as political and civil society figures (video blogger and political prisoner Siarhei Tsikhanouski, Ales Bialiatski, founder of the Belarusian human rights organisation Viasna, Siarhei Dyleuski, Stsiapan Putsila, founder of the Telegram channel NEXTA, and Mikola Statkevich, political prisoner and presidential candidate in the 2010 election).

In a resolution adopted in September 2020, the European Parliament condemned the Belarusian authorities for their violent repression of peaceful protests.

Porfirio Sorto Cedillo, José Avelino Cedillo, Orbin Naún Hernández, Kevin Alejandro Romero, Arnold Javier Aleman, Ever Alexander Cedillo, Daniel Marquez and Jeremías Martínez Díaz are members of the Municipal Committee in Defence of Common and Public Goods of Tocoa. They are imprisoned for their participation in a peaceful protest against a mining company, whose activities had led to the contamination of the rivers Guapinol and San Pedro. While other inmates were set free, the Guapinol defenders are still detained and the prosecution has not presented any solid evidence to justify this prolonged detention.

Assassinated in March 2016, Berta Cáceres was an activist from the indigenous Lenka community in Honduras who co-founded the Council of Indigenous People of Honduras (COPINH). Over more than two decades, she fought against land grabbing, illegal logging and mega-projects.

When the self-proclaimed Islamic State arrived in Mosul in August 2014, Monsignor Najeeb Michael, since elected Archbishop of Mosul, ensured the evacuation of Christians, Syrians and Chaldeans to Iraqi Kurdistan and safeguarded more than 800 historic manuscripts dating from the 13th to the 19th century. These manuscripts were later digitised and exhibited in France and Italy.

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