



Three candidates shortlisted for the 2018 Václav Havel Prize

Strasbourg/Prague 28. 08. 2018 – The selection panel of the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize, comprising independent figures from the world of human rights and chaired by the President of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) Liliane Maury Pasquier, drew up the shortlist of candidatures in Prague today.

The shortlisted nominees, in alphabetical order, are:

- **Rosa Maria Paya (Cuba)**

The nominee is a young Cuban democracy and human rights activist. Rosa Maria Paya took up the work of her late father, Oswaldo Paya, who sought to gather support for democratic transition in Cuba. She launched a citizens' initiative called Cuba Decide (Cuba Decides) and is the President of the Latin American Youth Network for Democracy.

- **Nabeel Rajab (Bahrain)**

The nominee, in detention since 2016, is a very prominent democracy and human rights defender in Bahrain. He is the co-founder and President of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) and has given proof of a life-time engagement for human rights at risk of his own life.

- **Oyub Titiev (Russian Federation)**

The nominee, in detention since January 2018, is a prominent human rights defender and head of the Grozny representative office of Memorial Human Rights Center in Chechnya. As head of the Memorial Human Rights Centre in Chechnya, Mr Titiev succeeded Natalia Estemirova, murdered in 2009, and has made a widely recognised contribution to the defence of human rights in the region by reporting on abuses by the local authorities.

The overall winner of the annual prize, which rewards outstanding civil society action in the defence of human rights in Europe and beyond, is due to be announced at the opening of the autumn plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in Strasbourg on 8 October 2018 at 12:30 pm.

“In this year which marks the 50th anniversary of the repression of the Prague Spring, Václav Havel's legacy resonates in a special way. Every day, in Europe and throughout the world, women and men fight tirelessly to defend human rights - the rights of us all. Unfortunately, all too often, these persons are becoming increasingly targets for reprisals: judicial or administrative harassment, defamation campaigns and the opening of judicial investigations on dubious charges, threats, physical attacks or arbitrary detention. In the face of these threats,

their immense courage and unfailing determination deserve our deepest respect. Through the award of the Václav Havel Prize we wish to express our recognition, our support and also our gratitude," said the President, announcing the shortlist.

The Václav Havel Human Rights Prize is awarded each year by PACE, in partnership with the Václav Havel Library and the Charta 77 Foundation, and consists of a sum of 60,000 euros, a trophy and a diploma.

Contacts:

PACE Communication Division: +33 3 88 41 31 93 ; pace.com@coe.int

Václav Havel Library: Radka Prošková: +420 222 220 112

[Václav Havel Human Rights Prize website](#)