Beat: Politics

Sakharov Prize 2022: European Parliament honours the Ukrainian People

Awarded to the brave People of Ukraine

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USPA NEWS - The brave people of Ukraine, represented by their president, elected leaders and civil society, are the 2022 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought laureate. The finalists for the European Parliament's 2022 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought were WikiLeaks activist Julian Assange, the Ukrainian people and their representatives and the Colombian Truth Commission for the 2022 Sakharov Prize.

The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, named in honour of the Soviet physicist and political dissident Andrei Sakharov, is awarded every year by the European Parliament. The prize was set up in 1988 to honour individuals and organisations defending human rights and fundamental freedoms. Each nominee must have the support of at least 40 MEPs, and each individual Member may support only one nominee.

Signed nominations accompanied by supporting evidence are then assessed in a joint meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), the Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI) and the Committee on Development (DEVE). A shortlist of three candidates is drawn up through a vote by AFET and DEVE committees, and then submitted to the Conference of Presidents for a final vote. The winner is always announced in October, and the award ceremony takes place in December during plenary in Strasbourg. In 2021, the prize went to the Russian opposition figure Alexei Navalny.

Awarding the prize, President Metsola spoke of the courage and sacrifices of the Ukrainian people: "The message from Europe has been clear: "We stand with Ukraine. We will not look away. The Ukrainian people are not just fighting a war of independence but fighting a war of values. The values which underpin our life in the European Union and that we have long had the luxury of taking for granted each and every day."

After asking for a minute of silence in the name of all the Ukrainian men, women, children, military and civilians who have been killed in the war, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said: "We must act now, not waiting for the war to end, to bring to justice all those who unleashed it and to prevent any repetition of aggression. This will be the most effective protection of freedom, human rights, the rule of law and other common values, which are embodied in particular by this award by the European Parliament."

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