



THE  
RIGHT  
LIVELIHOOD  
AWARD

# Contents



## 2017 Laureates



## Right Livelihood Offices

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## Right Livelihood College Campuses



## Press Offices



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# The Right Livelihood Award at a Glance

Presented since

# 1980

in Stockholm

170

Laureates from 69 countries

Around **50%** of these are men,  
**25%** women and **25%** organisations

**One** in **five** is under serious threat  
due to the nature of their work

Total prize money in 2017 was  
**SEK 3 million** shared  
between the Laureates



Honour

*The Foundation's* principal purpose is to bestow the Right Livelihood Award. But the presentation of the award is only the start of a life-long relationship between the Laureates and the Foundation.



Support

*The Foundation* sees its role as being the megaphone and shield for the Laureates, and provides them with long-term support. It seeks to help protect those award recipients whose life and liberty are in danger.



Educate

*The Right Livelihood College* and other educational programmes help make the Laureates' knowledge more accessible and allow the next generation to discuss and engage with their ideas.



Inform

*The Laureates* have solutions to the most urgent challenges, and the Foundation helps them get their messages across through press work and social media. Making the Award and its Laureates known around the globe amplifies the impact of the prize.

## Dear Reader,

2017 was a year of tremendous upheaval, with the entire American political system in turmoil, the rise of 'fake news', populism and xenophobia. This year has highlighted the interconnected nature of global events. The increasingly authoritarian bent of the president of the United States emboldens prospective dictators across the globe, and protectionist sentiments encourage division between people.

In the starkest of contrasts to this approach, Laureates of the Right Livelihood Award are demonstrating again and again that real-world solutions to our complex global problems do exist, that they are practical and viable.

When new and worrying challenges are rising, the importance of honouring and supporting those courageous people and organisations who are leading the change towards a more just, peaceful and sustainable world is increasing.

Against authoritarianism, the Foundation pushes the importance of civil society, and we will always stand by our Laureates. This is exemplified by our visit to Cairo to present Mozn Hassan, 2016 Laureate, with the Award she was unable to accept in person due to a travel ban imposed on her by Egyptian authorities.

Founded in 1980, the Award is now approaching its 40th Anniversary. Its founding idea of "right livelihood", the notion that we all shape the future by our everyday actions, gives us hope and resolve for the battle ahead.

1981 Laureate Mike Cooley expressed it very well in his acceptance speech:

*"The future hasn't got pre-determined shapes and forms. The future has yet got to be built by people like you and I, and we do have real choices. It can be a future in which we are not threatened with mass annihilation through nuclear weapons or ravaged with hunger. It could really be a world in which we treasure all our people equally and get science and technology to serve people rather than the other way around."*

We would like to warmly thank each and every one of our Laureates, partners and supporters. Only by continuing to stand in unity can the fight be won.





## Our Governance

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*The Right Livelihood Award* Foundation's course is decided by its board. Board members usually also serve as members of the international jury. In 2017, the international jury for the Right Livelihood Award consisted of 11 distinguished experts. Jury members come from different continents, professions and backgrounds. They have wide experience in international affairs and, in particular, in global justice and environment issues.



L-R: **Juan Pablo Orrego** (Chile), 1998 Laureate and Jury member, **Sharan Srinivas** (Sweden), Director of Research and Advocacy, **Johannes Mosskin** (Sweden), Director of Communications, **Nnimmo Bassey** (Nigeria), 2010 Laureate & Jury member, **Ole von Uexkull** (Sweden), Executive Director & Jury member, **Anwar Fazal** (Malaysia), 1982 Laureate & Jury member, **Juliane Kronen** (Germany), Social entrepreneur, Board & Jury member, **Monika Griefahn** (Germany), former State Minister and MP, Chair of the Board & Jury member), **Annette Ringier** (Switzerland), President of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation Switzerland, **Amelie von Zweigbergk** (Sweden), former state secretary, Board & Jury member, **Paul Ekins** (United Kingdom), Professor of environmental economics, Board & Jury member, **Maina Kiai** (Kenya), former UN Special Rapporteur & Jury member, **Anne Rüffer**, publisher, Board member of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation Switzerland & Jury member, Agneta Johansson (Sweden), Lawyer, Board & Jury member.



HONOUR

## 2017 Laureates

*The Laureates* of the 2017 Right Livelihood Award were announced on 26 September in Stockholm, Sweden, following the decision by the international jury that considered 102 nominations from 51 countries.







*It is evident that reporting on the truth, protecting our environment and working for human rights and social justice has become a riskier endeavour than ever before. The **2017 Right Livelihood Award Laureates** are on the frontlines of struggling for more democratic, non-corrupt and sustainable societies in spite of these trends.”*

>> Maina Kiai, Jury member and former UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association







## 2017 Award Presentation

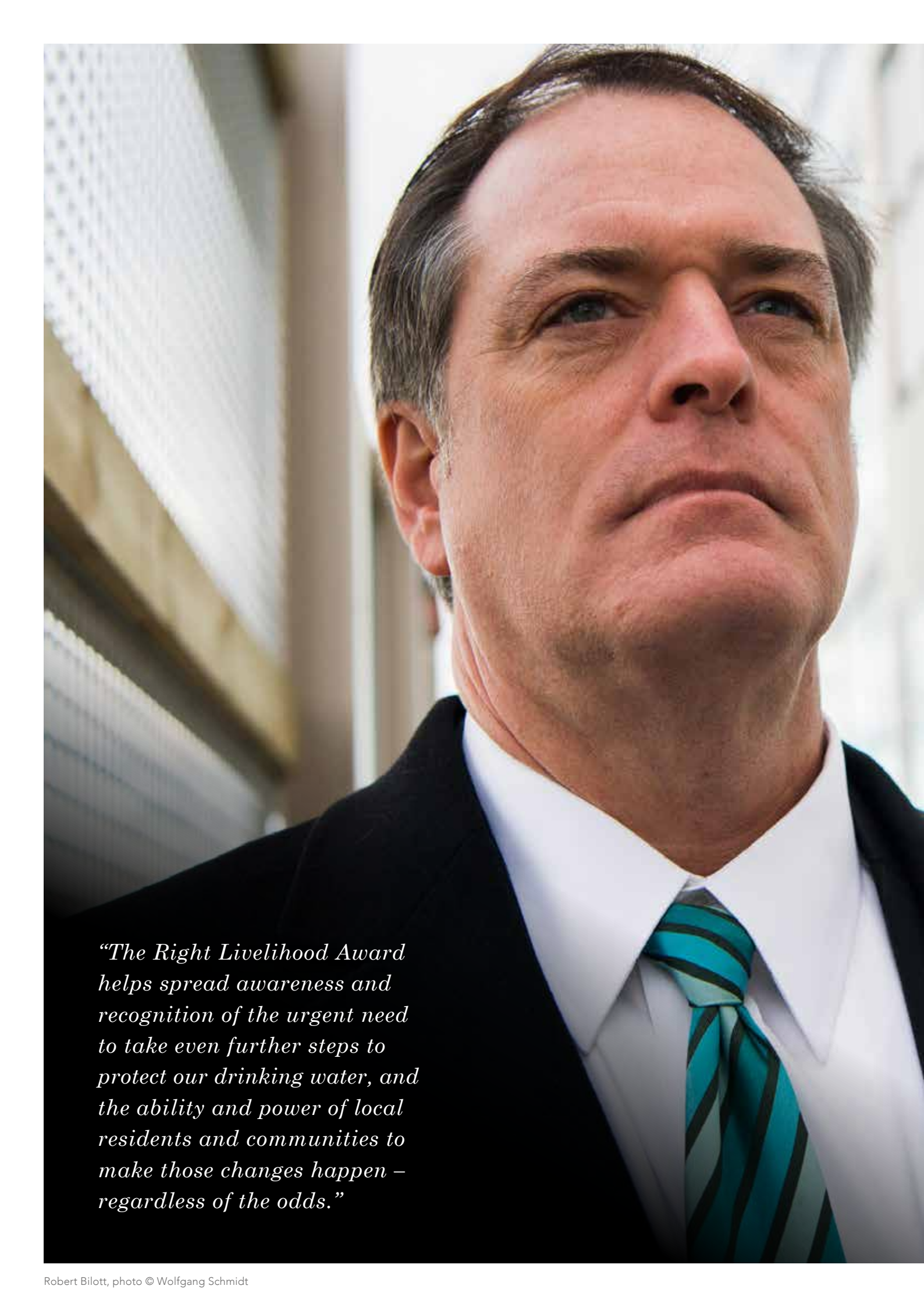
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The 38th Right Livelihood Award Presentation took place on 1 December in the Vasa Museum, home to the world's only preserved 17th century ship and Scandinavia's most visited museum. The evening award presentation for some 225 invited guests was staged next to the historic vessel.

Khadija Ismayilova was unable to attend the Award Presentation in person due to a travel ban imposed by Azeri authorities, but joined over a video link from her home in Baku. Her appearance on screen sparked a prodigious standing ovation.

The Laureates were celebrated during a highly memorable evening with dinner, speeches and a wide range of performances, including exceptional live music by the rising Swedish star Janice as well as Malahat Ismayilova, pianist and composer at the Opera in Ankara and sister of Khadija Ismayilova.





*“The Right Livelihood Award helps spread awareness and recognition of the urgent need to take even further steps to protect our drinking water, and the ability and power of local residents and communities to make those changes happen – regardless of the odds.”*



## ROBERT BILOTT (USA)

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*...for exposing a decades-long history of chemical pollution, winning long-sought justice for the victims, and setting a precedent for effective regulation of hazardous substances.*

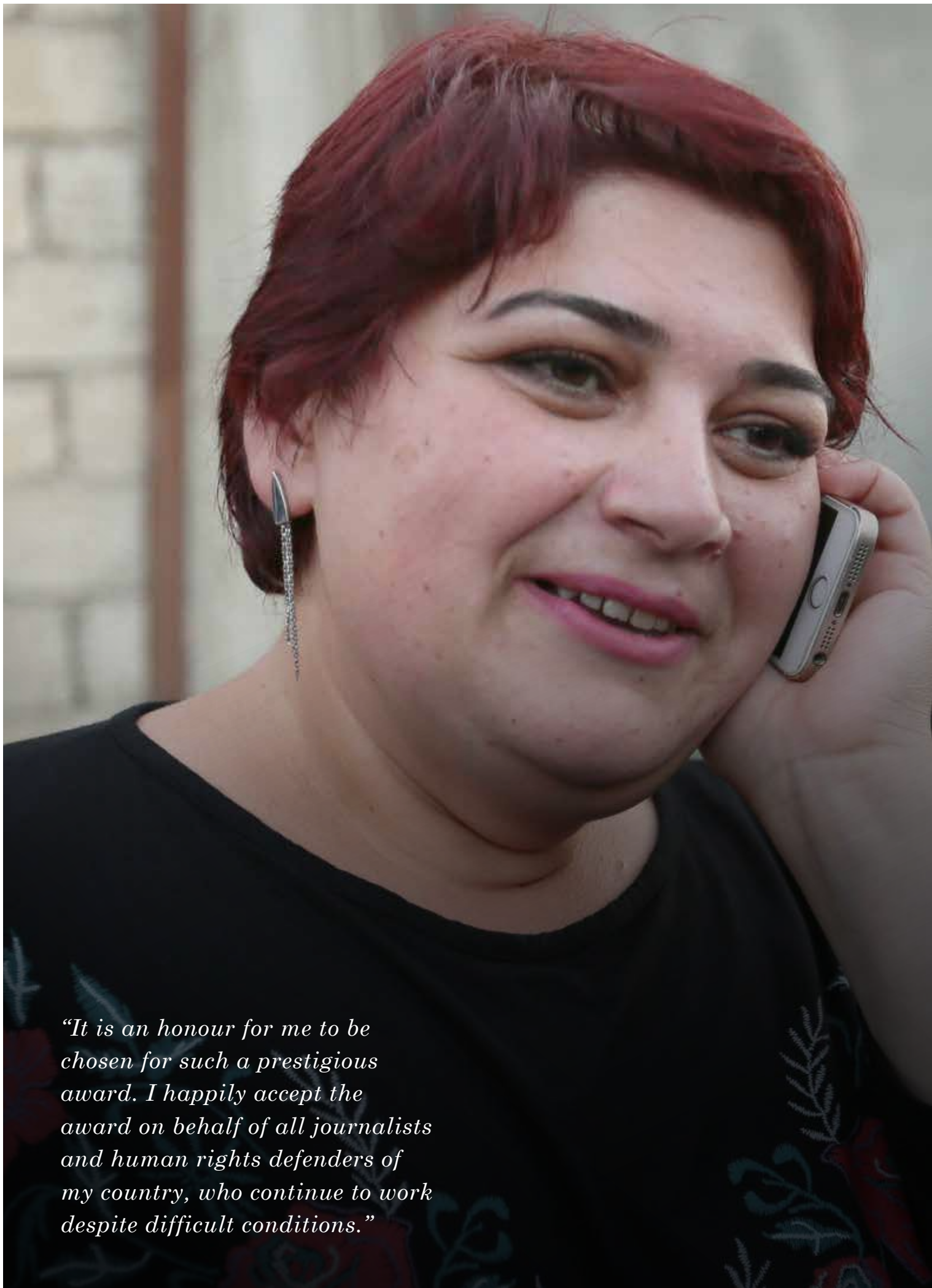
*Robert Bilott* is one of the world's finest environmental lawyers. With a combination of innovative litigation, scientific understanding, and extraordinary perseverance, he has achieved one of the most significant victories for environmental law and corporate accountability of this century.

In a legal battle lasting 19 years, he represented 70,000 citizens whose drinking water had been contaminated with Perfluorooctanic acid (PFOA) by the chemical giant DuPont. Expanding upon the concept of class-action litigation, he set up a 7-year toxicological study of the 70,000 victims, which contributed significantly to the scientific understanding of the global health risks associated with PFAO and similar chemicals. This class of substances, which do not break down in the environment or the human body, are ubiquitous in our societies today.

At a time when environmental regulation is under serious threat of being watered down in the United States and elsewhere, Bilott successfully won compensation for his clients and continues to call for better regulation of toxic substances.

*Robert Bilott received the Right Livelihood Honorary Award, which is given to courageous persons or organisations that have found practical solutions to the root causes of global problems, but who is not primarily in need of monetary support.*





*“It is an honour for me to be chosen for such a prestigious award. I happily accept the award on behalf of all journalists and human rights defenders of my country, who continue to work despite difficult conditions.”*





## KHADIJA ISMAYILOVA (Azerbaijan)

*...for her courage and tenacity in exposing corruption at the highest levels of government through outstanding investigative journalism in the name of transparency and accountability.*

*Khadija Ismayilova* is Azerbaijan's most outstanding contemporary investigative journalist.

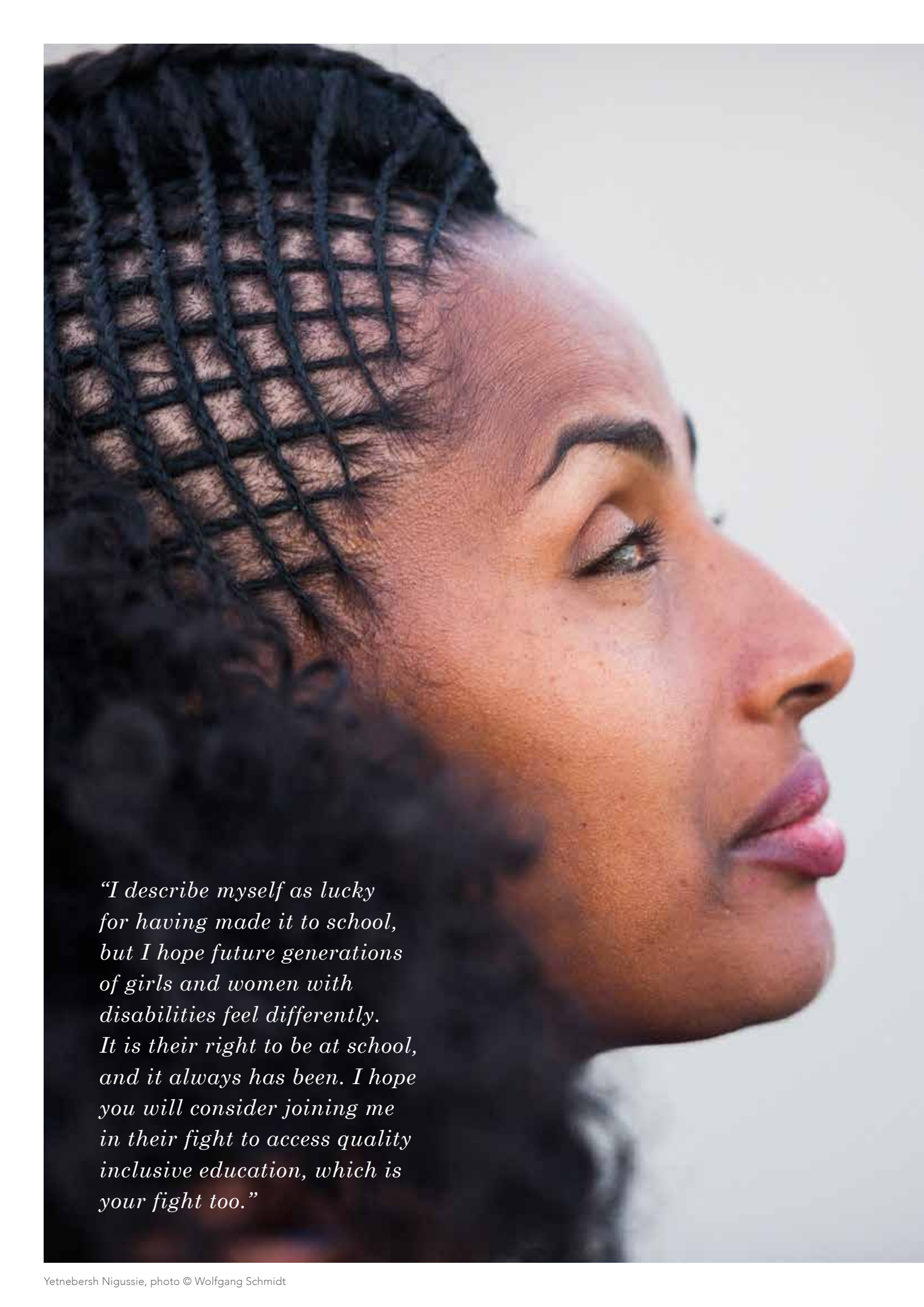
In the past decade, her investigative reporting has revealed a wide range of corrupt and lucrative business deals involving President Aliyev's family members. She has provided irrefutable evidence of corruption at the highest levels of Azerbaijan's government, which also involved multinational companies like TeliaSonera.

Significantly, her articles have uncovered how the wealth of the nation has been plundered, routed abroad and used to influence European politicians. For publishing articles on government corruption, Ismayilova has been subjected to smear campaigns, harassment and fabricated criminal charges.

Despite serving one and a half years in prison, Ismayilova has refused to be silenced, and continues to write. Ismayilova also addresses Azerbaijan's poor human rights record, consistently raising the issue of political prisoners in the country, and provided their families with moral and material support.

As the government continues to intimidate and jail journalists with an alarming frequency, Ismayilova remains resolute in courageously writing and speaking out for greater government accountability and good governance in Azerbaijan.

*Khadija Ismayilova set the award money aside to support investigative journalists in difficult situations. She will do this both through a fund with additional crowdfunding and by supporting projects of partner organisations.*



*"I describe myself as lucky  
for having made it to school,  
but I hope future generations  
of girls and women with  
disabilities feel differently.  
It is their right to be at school,  
and it always has been. I hope  
you will consider joining me  
in their fight to access quality  
inclusive education, which is  
your fight too."*



## YETNEBERSH NIGUSSIE (Ethiopia)

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*...for her inspiring work promoting the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities, allowing them to realise their full potential and changing mindsets in our societies.*

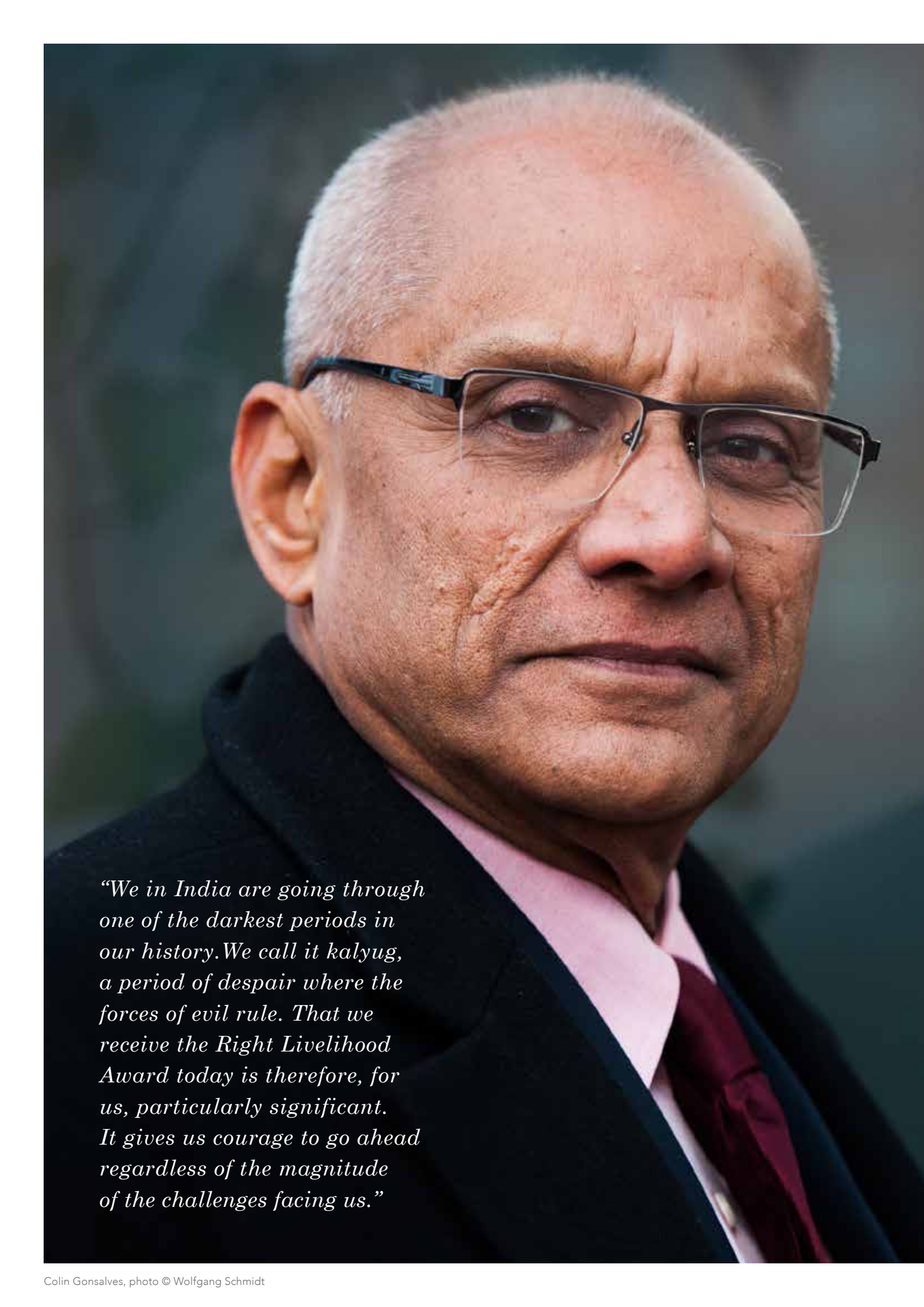
*Yetnebersh Nigussie* is an Ethiopian lawyer working for human rights based on her own experience of being discriminated against coming from a “developing country”, being young, a woman – and blind.

She is fearlessly pushing for women’s and girls’ rights, inclusive education and a vibrant civil society. Nigussie is an outstanding advocate for the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Through her tireless efforts, she has changed perceptions on disability in her own society and internationally with the compelling message: “Focus on the person, not the disability. We have one disability, but 99 abilities to build on!”

Currently a Senior Inclusion Advisor with the international disability and development NGO, Light for the World, Nigussie fights for the inclusion of the 15% – about 1 billion – of the world’s population who have some kind of disability. She strives to create inclusive conditions for future generations by connecting national realities with international frameworks.

*Yetnebersh Nigussie decided to use the prize money to support inclusive education of girls with disabilities in rural Ethiopia. Her life was transformed through education and she believes that the current international call for girls' education is excluding girls with disabilities.*



A close-up portrait of Colin Gonsalves, an older man with short, light-colored hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses, a dark suit jacket, a light pink shirt, and a dark red tie. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right. The background is a blurred, dark greenish-grey.

*“We in India are going through one of the darkest periods in our history. We call it kalyug, a period of despair where the forces of evil rule. That we receive the Right Livelihood Award today is therefore, for us, particularly significant. It gives us courage to go ahead regardless of the magnitude of the challenges facing us.”*





## COLIN GONSALVES (India)

*...for his tireless and innovative use of public interest litigation over three decades to secure fundamental human rights for India's most marginalised and vulnerable citizens.*

*Colin Gonsalves* is amongst the most complete human rights lawyers of his generation. He is a Senior Advocate at the Supreme Court of India and the founder of the Human Rights Law Network (HRLN), an Indian national network of public interest lawyers.

Over three decades, HRLN's lawyers have engaged in public interest litigation to hold the government to account and secure a broad spectrum of human rights. Gonsalves' clients have included India's most vulnerable people such as bonded labourers, ethnic and religious minorities, refugees, slum dwellers, women and the poor. Gonsalves' most significant victories in the courtroom include the 2001 "Right to Food" case, which saw India's Supreme Court issue far reaching orders enforcing a free midday meal for all schoolchildren and subsidised grain for over 400 million Indians living below the poverty line.

In 2016 and 2017, Gonsalves obtained landmark judgements from the Supreme Court that ended the longstanding immunity of the Indian Armed Forces from criminal prosecution. This is already having a significant impact in reducing the number of extrajudicial executions occurring in India's Northeast.

*Colin Gonsalves uses part of the award money to provide free legal aid to people in India. The other part goes to a new project, which aims to train lawyers, judges, social activists and academics on how to use Public Interest Litigation in the courts of Africa, Asia, South America.*



*The 2017 Award programme covered a full week of events and high-level meetings in Sweden, Germany and Switzerland.*

Seven parliamentary groups in the Swedish Riksdag invited the 2017 Laureates to a seminar in the Parliament's prestigious Second Chamber. The visit to Stockholm also included a meeting between the Laureates and the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Margot Wallström.

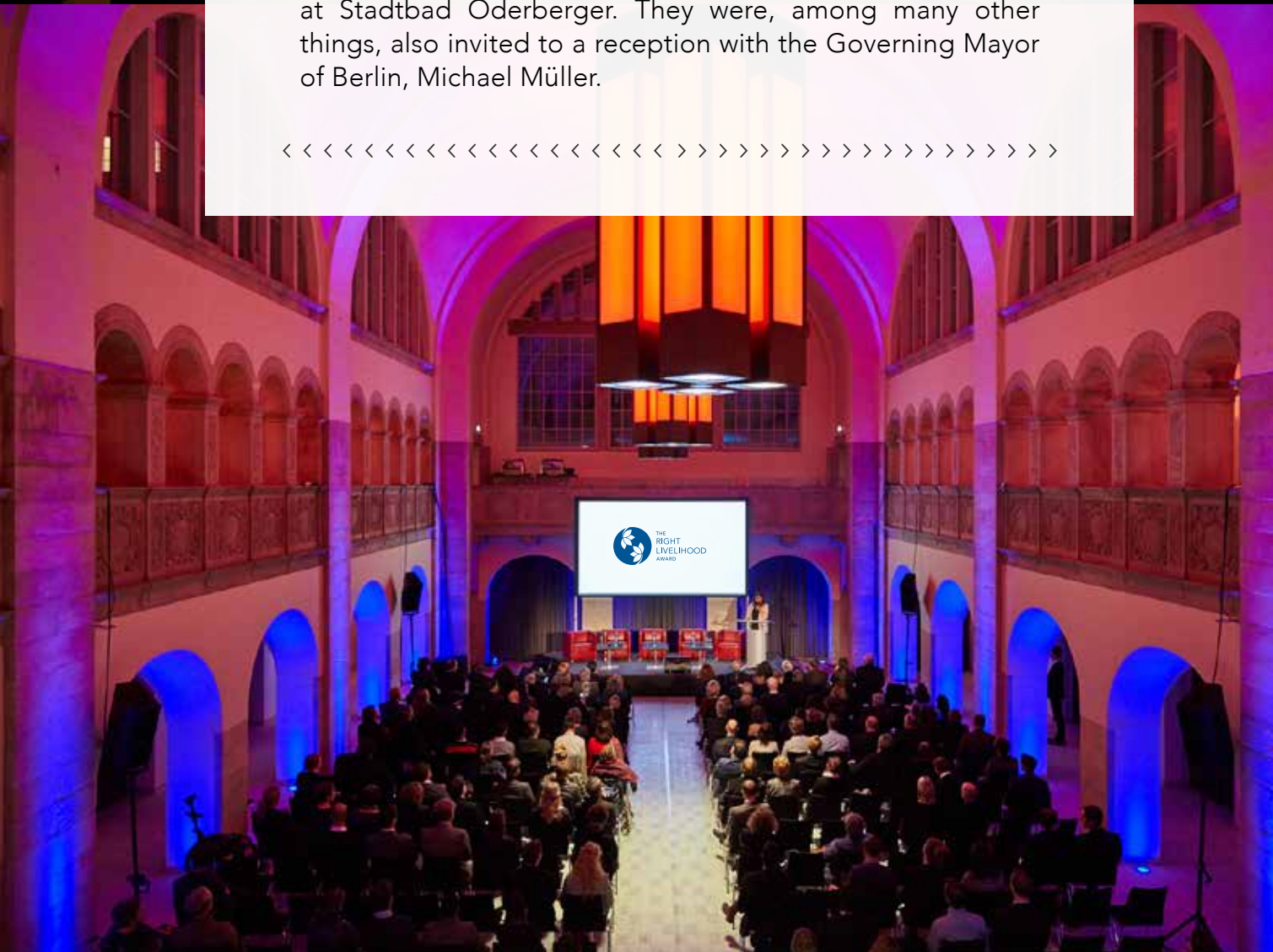
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*The 2017 Laureates are fighting injustice across the world in a very concrete and inspiring way. With their courage and creativity, they overcome obstacles put in place by people in power as they create real change on the ground empowering thousands and even millions of people."*

>> Ole von Uexkull, Executive Director of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation





*Following* the award presentation, the Laureates visited Berlin where they were celebrated during an evening event at Stadtbad Oderberger. They were, among many other things, also invited to a reception with the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Michael Müller.

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Top: Standing ovation for Khadija Ismayilova in the Swedish Riksdag, photo © Wolfgang Schmidt;  
Bottom: Celebration at Stadtbad Oderberger, photo © Janine Escher Photography



## News from previous Laureates

[illegible]

## *Moudeina Vindicated: Life in Prison for Hissène Habré Confirmed*

On 27 April, leading Chadian lawyer Jacqueline Moudeina celebrated the conviction of the country's former dictator Hissène Habré. The Appeals court in Senegal confirmed the life sentence for his war crimes and crimes against humanity. The verdict marks the end of a 17-year battle by victims and rights groups to bring the former strong man to justice.



While driving the case against Habré internationally, Moudeina also represented Habré's victims since 2000. Habré, who was

an ally of the West during the Cold War, was sentenced in 2016 to life in prison for rape and ordering the killing and torture of thousands of political opponents during his eight-year rule.

Jacqueline Moudeina was severely injured in a 2001 assassination attempt but remained undeterred from pursuing charges against the former dictator and his accomplices. She received the Right Livelihood Award in 2011 “for her tireless efforts at great personal risk to win justice for the victims of the former dictatorship in Chad and to increase awareness and observance of human rights in Africa.”

## *Brazil: campaigners welcome court rulings in favor of indigenous land rights*

On 16 August, the Right Livelihood Award Laureate Survival International and indigenous activists celebrated Brazil's Supreme Court ruling unanimously in favour of indigenous land rights and







against the government of Amazonian Mato Grosso state, which was demanding compensation for lands mapped out as indigenous territories decades ago.

Also in August, Survival International led an international outcry against a proposal by President Temer to have a controversial legal opinion on tribal land recognition adopted as policy. The proposal stated that indigenous peoples who were not occupying their ancestral lands on October 5, 1988, when the country's current constitution came into force, would no longer have the right to live there.

Survival International called on supporters around the globe to petition Brazil's leaders

and high court to reject the opinion. Over 4,000 emails were sent directly to senior judicial figures and other key targets.

### ***Victory! Chinese nuclear reactor stopped in Patagonia***

On 1 September, the Parliament of the Rio Negro province in Patagonia, Argentina, approved a law that prohibits the installation of nuclear power plants in the whole province.

The Right Livelihood Award Laureate Raúl Montenegro and the Right Livelihood College Campus in Cordoba played an important role forming public opposition, by making accurate research and facts available to Rio Negro citizens and institutions. Montenegro and the Campus also helped out by sharing methods of non-violent resistance previously used by Right Livelihood Award Laureates.

Massive street demonstrations and educational campaigns exerted a strong pressure on decisionmakers which ultimately led to stopping the nuclear reactor plan.







[illegible]

In April, we brought *Miguel Henrique Stedile*, from the Brazilian Laureate

*Bianca Jagger* (Nicaragua) and *Helen Mack* (Guatemala) were among the four Laureates who participated in the 2017 Poetry Festival in Medellín, Colombia. The Poetry Festival received the Award in 2006 “for showing how creativity, beauty, free expression and community can flourish amongst and overcome even deeply entrenched fear and violence”.





# Protection



Addressing the root causes of global problems has been the defining feature of the Right Livelihood Award from the very beginning. From Brazil to India, the Laureates work in difficult circumstances, opposing powerful political and corporate interests, and often facing repressive governments. Today, one in five Laureates is under serious threat and the Foundation seeks to help protect those whose life and liberty are in danger.

Our protection work is divided into four sections:

## Monitoring Threats

The Foundation regularly monitors and reacts to situations where Laureates are facing threats.

## Emergency Protocols

The protocols are a series of measures, previously identified with Laureates, which the Foundation will take in case of a serious, acute and urgent threat to their life, health or liberty.

## Proactive Measures

Financial support to improve Laureates' security, and solidarity visits to Laureates' home countries, are some of the ways in which the Foundation strengthens the protection of threatened Laureates.

## Advocacy

The Foundation's presence in Geneva allows it to advocate and engage with different UN mechanisms, in order to enhance the protection of Laureates at risk.

The Geneva office is central for our protection work and serves as an Embassy to the UN and other Geneva-based institutions for Right Livelihood Award Laureates around the world. It is located in Maison de la Paix, headquarters of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. The office was opened in 2015, thanks to a grant from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.







Indian activist *Medha Patkar* has for long been protesting the inadequate rehabilitation and compensation of some 40,000 people affected by the construction of the Sardar Sarovar dam. On 7 August, the 12th day of her hunger strike in protest, Patkar was detained when the police charged a camp of peaceful protesters injuring 42 people.

In response, the Foundation filed an urgent appeal with the UN Special Procedures. Laureates from 31 countries signed a petition in support of Medha Patkar, coordinated by the Foundation. The petition was sent to the Indian government and the Indian National Human Rights Commission. On 25th August, Patkar was finally released from prison on bail.

2017 saw five court hearings for the 17 imprisoned journalists and staff of Turkish *Cumhuriyet* newspaper charged with terrorist offences. The Foundation led an observer mission to the second hearing at Silivri Maximum Security Prison in September 2017. The Foundation and other Laureates have been standing in solidarity with 2016 Laureate, *Cumhuriyet* through these proceedings, calling for their release and for the charges to be dropped.

For the second year in a row, the Foundation faced a situation where a new Laureate, *Khadija Ismayilova* (Azerbaijan), was unable to travel to accept the Award. In response, the Foundation advocated for her cause through UN mechanisms, social media, Op Eds, and an open letter supported by 59 fellow Laureates, delivered to the Azeri embassy during the 2017 Award Week in Stockholm.

In September, the Foundation brought Grigory Okhotin, board member of 2004 Laureate *Memorial* (Russia), to Geneva during the 36th Session of the Human Rights Council. The week-long visit included meetings with the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, as well as the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.

In October, *Sulak Sivaraksa* (Thailand) was officially charged under Thailand's Lèse-Majesté law. The 84-year-old faced a 15-year prison sentence for comments referring to a 16th Century battle. The Foundation requested, in an open letter to Thailand's Foreign Minister, that the charges be dropped. The letter was supported by 44 fellow Laureates from 32 countries. The lèse-majesté charge against Sulak Sivaraksa has since been dropped.



“The decision of the Right Livelihood Award to hold this ceremony in Cairo is truly significant as it means that appreciation and solidarity can reach you despite travel bans. Today, we feel that the work of Egyptian feminists, especially after 2011, is seen and valued by different actors around the world.”

>> Mozn Hassan



“Across the world those who feel threatened by strong vocal women often try to dismiss them, to insult them. Feminism can never be defeated; each generation will continue to produce strong brave women until full gender equality is achieved”.

>> Lynn Boylan, Member of the European Parliament





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In a show of solidarity with Mozn Hassan, the Foundation sent a high-level delegation to Cairo to present the Award, including European parliamentarians, fellow Laureates and the Chair of the Foundation's Board, Monika Griefahn. The event, held aboard Le Pacha, was attended by some 150 guests, including leaders of Egyptian civil society, Egyptian parliamentarians, diplomats and other dignitaries.

>> Cecilia Uddén, correspondent for the Swedish Radio



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The exhibition Who Cares! portraying a selection of Laureates (produced in cooperation with Church of Sweden) had its final tour through Sweden and Denmark. It was displayed at schools and universities and reached more than 5,000 students. A number of them also participated in workshops focusing on Laureates and their commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



North America	Latin America	Africa	Asia	Europe
University of California, Santa Cruz	Universidad Nacional de Córdoba  Universidad Austral de Chile	University of Port Harcourt  Addis Ababa University	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai	University of Bonn  Lund University



In October 2017, Right Livelihood Campus Bonn PhD student Lai Wan Teng (Malaysia) successfully defended her doctoral thesis on the topic: "We come. We work. We relate. The migrant labourers in Penang", conducted in cooperation with Tenaganita, a Malaysian human rights organisation founded by Laureate Irene Fernandez in 1991.



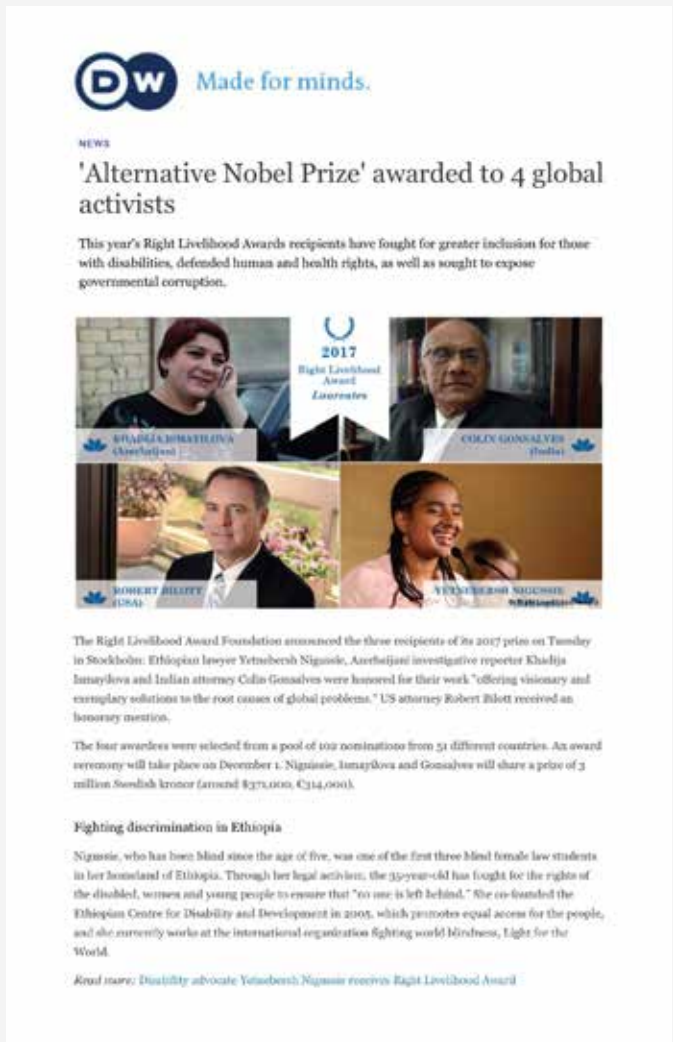
Amit Kumar, Right Livelihood Campus Bonn, is conducting a one year fieldwork in the slums of Mumbai. In collaboration with Right Livelihood Award Laureate Medha Patkar's "Ghar Banao Ghar Bachao Andolan" movement, Amit is investigating the collective resistance against demolitions of slum dwellers in Mumbai.

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## Cooperation with Deutsche Welle

Deutsche Welle (DW) is Germany's international broadcaster. The service is available in 30 languages and reaches over 157 million people weekly worldwide. DW produced, pro bono, short video portraits of the 2017 Laureates and featured the Foundation at the DW Global Media Forum, which brings together some 2,000 participants in Bonn to discuss the role of media in politics and civil society.



## Financial Report

The Right Livelihood Award Foundation is charitable and tax-exempt under the Swedish Income Tax Act. The Foundation is under the supervision of the County Authority of Stockholm and the Swedish Fundraising Control, and is a member of the Swedish Fundraising Council (FRIL). Its auditor is Deloitte.

The Foundation is financed mainly by donations from private individuals. It has a support account within the German charity GLS Treuhand and there is also a support foundation for the Right Livelihood Award in Switzerland. The Foundation owns its office in Stockholm. A large part of the remaining equity is invested by GLS Treuhand according to social and ecological criteria.

The Foundation's reporting currency is Swedish kronor (SEK). For ease of reference, the figures on the adjacent page are also presented in Euro (EUR) and Swiss francs (CHF). As only one currency exchange rate is used per year, there are apparent discrepancies, in EUR and CHF, between the amount of equity at the closing of the year and at the opening of the following year.





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*Since its establishment*, the Right Livelihood Award has mainly been funded through private donations. In 2017, the smallest donation was EUR 30 and the largest was a bequest of CHF 550,000. We treat bequests as capital donations, which means we do not spend them on annual expenses, but invest them to secure the Award's future. In addition to private donations, the Foundation receives support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) for its operations in Geneva.

*Please consider supporting the Right Livelihood Award  
at whatever level you feel is appropriate.*



*Thank you  
for your support.*

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## To make a donation:

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