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# Martin Ennals Award 10 February 2022

## The 2022 Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders

Since 1994, the Martin Ennals Award (MEA) honours Human Rights Defenders from around the world who show exceptional commitment to promoting fundamental rights, often at the risk of their own lives. For the 2022 edition, the Jury selected three activists who, through their courage, unfailing hope and strategic approaches, inspired others to take up human rights. Their identities will be revealed on January 19, 2022 at 11h CET during an online press conference. The Martin Ennals Award Laureates 2022 will be honoured during a hybrid Ceremony co-hosted by the City of Geneva and the Martin Ennals Foundation next February 10th, 2022 at 18h CET.

### Three Laureates

The Martin Ennals Award will undergo a change starting with the 2022 edition: all three Human Rights Defenders will be honoured as Laureates. This change reflects the Board and Jury's desire to equally reward Human Rights Defenders in terms of the recognition the Award brings and the financial prize it carries. *"Over the years, the Jury has witnessed the incredibly complex life and work situations faced by the activists nominated to the Martin Ennals Award. All of them show incredible courage and determination and face high risks. Identifying a more "deserving" or more at-risk defender amongst groups of exceptional persons was an impossible mission. Hence, our decision to honour all the winners in an identical manner, as Laureates",* says **Hans Thoolen**, Chair of the Jury.

### Inspiration as a connecting theme

The 2022 Laureates, whose identities shall be revealed on January 19<sup>th</sup> during an online press conference, represent very different profiles, cultures, and human rights causes, but the three 2022 defenders are leading architects of the human rights movement in their countries. *"Their courage inspired other activists to join the cause. They stood-up and spoke out for what they believe, and thus they inspire us to hope and fight for brighter futures,"* says **Isabel de Sola**, Director of the Martin Ennals Foundation.

## **A hybrid Ceremony for 2022**

The annual Martin Ennals Award ceremony, co-hosted by the City of Geneva and the Martin Ennals Foundation, will honour the three Laureates on February 10, 2022 in a hybrid format. Held in the heart of Geneva, Switzerland, the event gathers both local and international audiences for a unique celebration of Human Rights Defenders. A valid Covid Certificate will be mandatory for in person attendance.

*“Geneva is the host of numerous prominent international organisations and countless civil society organisations. As a city of human rights, Geneva is committed to supporting international cooperation on critical issues. In this spirit, we are proud to organise another edition of the Martin Ennals Award Ceremony”,*  
Member of the City executive **Alfonso Gomez**.

## **Practical information**

### ***The Laureates announcement***

The identity of the three Martin Ennals Award Laureates will be revealed during an online press conference on **Wednesday 19 January 2022 at 11h CET**, broadcast from the Martin Ennals Foundation website [www.martinennalsaward.org](http://www.martinennalsaward.org)

### ***The Award Ceremony***

The Award Ceremony will take place in a hybrid format on **10 February 2022 at 18h at the Salle Communale de Plainpalais in Geneva**.

Together with our co-hosts, the City of Geneva, we will livestream the Ceremony to worldwide locations. Availability of seats to attend in-person are subject to the evolving pandemic regulations.

## **Contacts**

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## **THE MARTIN ENNALS AWARD - FAQs**

### **What is the Martin Ennals Award?**

The Martin Ennals Award, managed by the Martin Ennals Foundation, recognizes Human Rights Defenders each year from around the world who distinguish themselves through their exceptional commitment to human rights - often at the risk of their own lives. Since its creation in 1992, the Award has honored more than 60 Human Rights Defenders from over 35 countries.

### **Who receives the Award?**

The Martin Ennals Award honors persons or organizations who defend and promote human rights, in their personal capacity or collectively. Past Laureates include lawyers, bloggers, civil society activists and even a Buddhist monk.

### **What is the aim of the Award?**

The Award is given to Human Rights Defenders in urgent need of protection – for example, who are in jail or threatened with imprisonment, who are harassed while doing their job or have gone missing. The Award seeks to protect these defenders by mobilizing international support for them and highlighting their contributions in the media. The presentation of the Award is accompanied by support for advocacy and outreach activities, as well as capacity-building and prize money.

### **What are the criteria on which the Jury bases its decision?**

The Jury considers the contributions made by Human Rights Defenders in their contexts, as well as their courage, determination and commitment despite the threats and harassment they may face. The Jury also considers their commitment to non-violent means.

### **Who are the members of the Jury?**

The Jury is made up of representatives of ten of the world's leading human rights organizations. They are: Amnesty International, Bread for the World, the International Commission of Jurists, the International Federation for Human Rights, Front Line Defenders, Human Rights First, Human Rights Watch, Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems, the World Organization against Torture and the International Service for Human Rights. In order to reflect the cultural and geographic diversity of the human rights movement, a network of regional human rights organizations consults on the selection process.

### **What do the Laureates receive?**

The Laureates receive each between 20,000-30,000 Swiss francs. However, the importance of this Award to Human Rights Defenders is not restricted to its financial aspect. The international recognition and credibility of the Martin Ennals Award contributes to their protection, as does the support of

prominent figures such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jury members, elected officials of the City of Geneva, additional donors, and other partner organizations. The Martin Ennals Foundation offers Laureates a gamut of activities to strengthen their networks, reach new audiences and hone important skills.

### **Who finances the Martin Ennals Award?**

The Award is actively supported by the City of Geneva, who co-hosts the ceremony and allocates funds to the three Laureates. Our donors include the Republic and Canton of Geneva, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Irish Aid, the Norwegian Human Rights Fund, Bread for the World, the Loterie Romande, Protectdefenders.eu, Heinrich Böll Foundation, the Oak Foundation, the Foundation Pluralisme and the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy. In addition, various private and institutional donors contribute to the Martin Ennals Foundation's activities.

### **Who was Martin Ennals?**

Martin Ennals was a British human rights activist and social entrepreneur. He was Secretary General of Amnesty International from 1968 to 1980. During his tenure, the organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, the Erasmus Prize and the United Nations Human Rights Prize. Martin Ennals also contributed to the creation of several other non-governmental organizations: ARTICLE19, International Alert and HURIDOCS. The Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders was created in 1992. The Award was officially launched in June 1993 at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna.

### **What is the role of the City of Geneva?**

The City of Geneva is a key partner to the Martin Ennals Award since 2005. Through the Délégation Genève Ville Solidaire, the City of Geneva supports activities to advance human rights in Switzerland and throughout the world. The partnership with Martin Ennals Award forms part of the City's policy of fostering International Geneva, bringing the latter closer to local Geneva, and its policy of international solidarity. As co-host to the Award event since 2008, the City of Geneva provides funding to the ceremony and an annual grant to support the work of the three Laureates.