

# THE MARTIN ENNAALS FOUN- DATION

## FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFEN- DERS

His Excellency  
Indra Mani Pandey  
Ambassador Extraordinary and  
Plenipotentiary of India  
to the United Nations in Geneva

30<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Ambassador Pandey,

It is my pleasure to inform you that the Kashmiri activist, Mr. Khurram Parvez, has won the Martin Ennals Award for human rights defenders 2023. An independent Jury composed of 10 global human rights defense organizations unanimously voted to recognize Khurram's tremendous contributions to documenting human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir, to accompanying the victims, and pressing for freedom of association and speech in his region.

The Martin Ennals Award exists since 1994, since when it has recognized more than 60 extraordinary human rights activists in 40 countries worldwide. It is often referred to as "the Noble prize for human rights". A representative of the organization founded by Mr. Parvez – the Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD) – will travel to Geneva in the coming weeks to attend the Martin Ennals Award Ceremony on 16<sup>th</sup> of February at 18:30h, which is co-hosted by the City of Geneva with participation from the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Volker Turk, who will deliver the key-note speech on this occasion. The Ceremony is open to the public and livestreamed from our website to global locations.



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I enclose with this letter our invitation to you and all of the Indian Mission to join us on that occasion. We would be honored to count you amongst our guests during the Ceremony and hope that you will therefore accept our invitation.

We are painfully aware that Mr. Parvez is under arrest through the authority of the UAPA, since November 2021. His detention without bail for more than a year and the postponement of a hearing on his case this past January 28<sup>th</sup>, have heightened the concern and outrage of many civil society organizations and governmental officials. You are aware of the several statements on the matter issued by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as well as by UN special rapporteurs and members of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.

On behalf of the Martin Ennals Foundation and the Award Jury members, I submit to you our request that Mr. Parvez be released by the Indian authorities before the February 16<sup>th</sup> Ceremony, so that he may travel to Geneva to receive this highest honor of the human rights movement. It would be a signal to the world that the Indian legal system will be entrusted to determine Mr. Parvez' guilt or innocence, and that political considerations or fear will not violate his right to defend his innocence and to due process before the law.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration of our request, I avail myself of the opportunity to renew my highest regards for your person and best wishes in the new year.

Isabel de Sola  
Director



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