

## WINNERS OF 2023 UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS PRIZE ANNOUNCED

(20 July 2023) The President of the General Assembly, Csaba Kőrösi, today announced the winners of the prestigious United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights for 2023:

- Human Rights Center “Viasna”, Belarus
- Ms. Julienne Lusenge, Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, Jordan
- Mr. Julio Pereyra, Uruguay
- Global Coalition of civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples, social movements and local communities for “the universal recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment”

“The winners’ dedication speaks to the universal nature of human rights at a critical time,” said Csaba Kőrösi, the President of the 77<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly.

“The Prize sends a clear message to human rights defenders all over the world that the international community is grateful for, and supports, their efforts to promote all human rights for all.”

Established by the General Assembly in 1966 ([A/RES/21/2217](#)), the Prize was awarded for the first time in 1968 on what is now known as Human Rights Day, 10 December. It is awarded every five years for “outstanding achievements in the field of human rights.” Previous recipients have included Jimmy Carter, Nelson Mandela, Dr. Denis Mukwege, Eleanor Roosevelt, Malala Yousafzai, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The recipients of the Prize were chosen by a Special Committee from more than 400 nominations received from Member States, the UN system, and civil society. The Committee is chaired by the President of the General Assembly, and its members include the President of the Economic and Social Council, the President of the Human Rights Council, the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Chair of the Advisory Committee of the Human Rights Council. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) provided support to the special committee.

The award ceremony for the 2023 Prize will take place at UN Headquarters in New York in December 2023, as part of activities to commemorate Human Rights Day. The exact date of the ceremony will be announced in due course.

Further details on the 2023 Human Rights Prize Winners:

- **Human Rights Center “Viasna”, Belarus**  
Human Rights Center “Viasna” was created in 1996 during mass protest actions of the democratic opposition in Belarus to contribute to development of the civic society in the country based on respect for human rights. Its objectives are practical assistance to civic initiatives in the sphere of legal defense of citizens; research into the state of the civic

society and legal defense in Belarus; civic and human rights education; promotion of democracy and human rights and support of civic initiatives in the sphere of human rights.

- **Ms. Julienne Lusenge, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Ms. Julienne Lusenge is a leader, peacebuilder, human rights activist, and vocal advocate who has been contributing consistently and uncompromisingly to women's human rights advancement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for over 40 years. From preventing and reducing sexual and gender-based violence to strengthening women's participation and leadership in peacebuilding, political engagement, and civil society, Julienne empowers women to take control of their lives and influence their own communities.

- **The Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS), Jordan**

ACHRS is an independent, regional, scientific, advocacy center for studies, research and training on issues of human rights and democracy. Its activities contribute to the dissemination of a culture of human rights. It covers five priorities covering key issues in human rights: Right to Life, Right to Think, Right to Speak, Right to Participate, and Human Rights of Women.

- **Mr. Julio Pereyra, Uruguay**

Julio Pereyra is a community educator and activist working with most marginalized communities. Focusing on re-institutionalization of children to the educational system, he provides therapeutic-pedagogical assistance to children with disabilities and access to orthotics, prosthetics and medications. His focus is also eradication of infant mortality and eugenics, school dropout, malnutrition and adolescent pregnancy. Further, he leads projects on child labor and malnutrition, as well as primary health care in villages, rural areas and in marginalized neighborhoods and high drug-trafficking areas.

- **Global Coalition of civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples, social movements and local communities for “the universal recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment”, Global**

The Coalition, comprising of over 1,350 organizations and other entities from 75 countries, has played a crucial role in achieving the historic recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The Human Rights Council recognized this right on 8 October 2021 through resolution 48/13, followed by the General Assembly resolution 76/300 adopted on 28 July 2022. This major step forward for human rights is a direct result of the persistent efforts of the Coalition.

The Members of the Special Committee convey their deep admiration for all civil society actors who with their tireless work contribute to the promotion, protection and advancement of human rights. The Members of the Special Committee acknowledge the important role human rights defenders and activists play and wish to convey their admiration for their courage and dedication while strongly condemning any attempts to silence and intimidate them. They express, in particular, their deep solidarity to those who are detained in retaliation to their work in defending human rights and pursuing the implementation of all the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose 75th anniversary we mark this year. The Special Committee calls on Member States to release all human rights defenders held in detention.

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