Beat: Politics

Maria Corina Machado and Edmundo Gonzalez, Sakharov Prize for Freedom

European Parliament announces the award

Strasbourg (France), 24.10.2024, 17:30 Time

USPA NEWS - The leader of Venezuela's democratic forces and the opposition candidate in the July presidential elections will receive the 2024 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. Parliament's President Roberta Metsola announced the winners of the 2024 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in the chamber on Thursday, following the meeting of the Conference of Presidents, which took the decision.

President Metsola said: "The 2024 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought is awarded to Maria Corina Machado and President-elect Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia for their brave fight to restore freedom and democracy in Venezuela. In their quest for a fair, free and peaceful transition of power, they have fearlessly upheld values that millions of Venezuelans and the European Parliament hold so dear: justice, democracy and the rule of law. The European Parliament stands with the people of Venezuela and with Maria Corina Machado and President-elect Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia in their struggle for the democratic future of their country. This award is for them."

Maria Corina Machado was elected as the Venezuelan opposition's presidential candidate on behalf of the 'Unity Democratic Platform' in 2023 but was later disqualified by the regime-controlled National Electoral Council. Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia, a diplomat and politician who succeeded her as the 'Unity Democratic Platform' candidate, denounced the Venezuelan government's failure to publish the official results of the presidential elections and contested Nicolas Maduro's declared victory. Gonzalez Urrutia left the country in September after a warrant was issued to arrest him.

In a resolution adopted on September 19, 2024, MEPs stressed that international election observation missions made it clear that the Venezuelan presidential election did not comply with international standards of electoral integrity. They recognized Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia as the legitimate and democratically-elected president of the country, and Maria Corina Machado as the leader of the democratic forces. Parliament condemned "the electoral fraud" and the serious and systematic human rights violations perpetrated against the democratic opposition, the Venezuelan people, and civil society.

According to the Venezuelan government, 2.400 people were arrested during demonstrations that followed the election and non-governmental organizations have reported the deaths of 24 people. Maria Corina Machado remains in hiding, while Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia fled to Spain, which granted him political asylum on September 7.

In its September 2024 resolution, Parliament called on the EU to extend sanctions against the Venezuelan regime and to apply targeted sanctions through the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime against Nicolas Maduro and his inner circle. Before the elections, the European Parliament urged member states to maintain the sanctions imposed on the Maduro regime and criticized the unconstitutional decision to prevent prominent political opposition figures such as Maria Corina Machado from running in the 2024 elections.

The award ceremony for the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought will take place on December 18 in Strasbourg, during Parliament's plenary session. Named after Soviet physicist and political dissident Andrei Sakharov, the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought is the EU's highest human rights award. Created in 1988, it is awarded every year by Parliament to individuals or organizations, in recognition of their work in one of the following areas: the defense of human rights and fundamental rights, in particular freedom of expression, the safeguarding of minority rights, respect for international law, the development of democracy and the defense of the rule of law.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-24985/maria-corina-machado-and-edmundo-gonzalez-sakharov-prize-for-freedom.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Jose A. Martin

Exemption from liability:
The publisher shall assume no liability for the accuracy or completeness of the published report and is merely providing space for the submission of and access to third-party content. Liability for the content of a report lies solely with the author of such report. Jose A. Martin

Editorial program service of General News Agency:
UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619