Ms. Aminatou Haidar, known as the “Sahrawi Gandhi”, a leading defender through peaceful means of the human rights of the Sahrawi people of former Spanish Morocco, will receive the Civil Courage Prize Medal for 2009 and $50,000 at a ceremony in New York on October 20 to honor her steadfast resistance to evil at great personal risk. She is being recognized specifically for her courageous campaign for self-determination in Western Sahara that is now occupied by Morocco despite an agreement in 1988 calling for a referendum on the issue in the region and an International Court of Justice ruling that rejected Morocco’s claims of sovereignty.

Morocco’s military rule of the Western Sahara since its invasion in 1975 has been notable, according to Sahrawi leaders, for forced disappearances and abuses of prisoners of conscience in the area. The region has experienced an extended conflict between Moroccan forces and the Sahrawi independence group, the Polisario Front, since the latter proclaimed the Sahrawi Democratic Republic (SADR) as Western Sahara’s legitimate government in exile.

In 1988, Morocco and the Polisario Front agreed to settle the dispute through a UN-administered referendum that would allow the people of Western Sahara to choose between independence or integration into Morocco. The vote has still not been held. A UN-administered cease-fire has been in place since 1991, but talks under UN facilitations begun in 2007 have stalled over
Despite Cruel Harassment Over Decades Haidar Remains Leading Proponent of Sahrawi Self-Rule Who Has Attracted Wide International Support

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disagreements on participation and whether full independence is an option for the Sahrawis.

Ms. Haidar, a mother of two, is part of a younger generation of Sahrawi leaders working through non-violent means to organize peaceful demonstrations in support of the referendum and to denounce the human rights abuses on both sides of the conflict. Her non-violent efforts have been met with increased police aggression and brutality. In 1987, at the age of 21, Ms. Haidar was one of 700 peaceful demonstrators arrested for participating in a rally in support of the referendum. Later she was “disappeared” without charge or trial and held for four years in secret detention centers, where she and 17 other Sahrawi women were tortured. In 2005, when police detained and beat her after another peaceful demonstration she sustained serious head and bodily injuries. She was released after seven months in the “black prison” at Al-Ayoun, thanks to pressure from groups like Amnesty International and the European Parliament.

While she was in jail in 2005, she was nominated for the Andrei Sakarov Human Rights Award by the European Parliament and for the Ginetta Sagan Fund Award by Amnesty International (USA Branch). She also was awarded the 2006 Juan Maria Bandres Human Rights Award (Spain), the Santa Lucia Prize (Italy) and the Silver Rose Award of 2007 (Austria). She also was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Ms. Haidar was born in 1967 in El Ayoun, Western Sahara. She holds a baccalaureate in Modern Literature.

Keynote Speaker John Fund Brings Broad Experience in Political Journalism to His Reporting on Current Affairs

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emerging Third World country rather than the world’s leading democracy.” He is co-author as well of Cleaning House: America’s Campaign for Term Limits.

Mr. Fund worked as a research analyst for the California State Legislature in Sacramento before beginning his journalism career in 1982 as a reporter for the syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak. In 1993, he received the Warren Brookes Award for journalistic excellence from the American Legislative Exchange Council.

In recent reporting for the Wall Street Journal, Mr. Fund notably covered the Oslo Freedom Forum, organized by the Human Rights Foundation of New York in an article that appeared in WSJ.com on June 5, 2009. He reported that Thor Halvorssen, a human rights activist, and the conference’s 33 year-old founder, said, “It’s pretty simple. We all should want freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom from torture, freedom to travel, due process and freedom to keep what belongs to you.” Remarkably, he said, attendees did not attack the US or other Western nations; rather the emphasis was on promoting basic human rights.

The text of his article, entitled Human Rights Beyond Ideology may be found at: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124417342925888153.html.
Past Prize Winners Face Further Severe Hardships

Natasa Kandic, 2000  
Persecuted activist, Belgrade

Ms. Kandic remains deeply committed to her work with the Humanitarian Law Centre (HLC), compiling and distributing well-regarded investigative reports on the violent abuses perpetrated by all sides of the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia.

In 2009 she joined with several hundred non-governmental organizations in the region to form a Regional Commission for Establishing the Facts about War Crimes (REKOM). While political elites in the region have failed to address the issue of war crimes effectively, Kandic sees REKOM as an opportunity to successfully look at war crimes from a regional, as opposed to national perspective. While war crime trials are important, Kandic believes that they are not enough for the victims to receive sufficient satisfaction, nor were trials enough to prevent attempts at historical revisionism.

In June of 2009 Ms. Kandic withdrew from the trial of the alleged killers of three Albanian-American brothers who were murdered execution-style in Serbia in 1999. Ms. Kandic was representing the families of the victims. In an open letter to the presiding Justice, Ms. Kandic and the families of the three victims wrote that they decided to stop participating in the trial because they believe that it is “not intended to bring justice to the victims but to protect those who ordered the cold-blooded murder.” They called the trial a “simulation of justice. The family and I refuse to give legitimacy to the trial which has not provided a single truthful word about what happened.”

For more information on Ms. Kandic, visit HLC’s website at www.hlc-rdc.org

Emadeddin Baghi, 2004  
Imprisoned for exposing assassinations of Iranian intellectuals

On May 20, 2009 Mr. Baghi was honored with the prestigious Martin Ennals Award, a unique collaboration among ten of the world’s leading human rights organizations to give protection to human rights defenders worldwide. The jury is composed of the following NGOs: Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Human Rights First, International Federation for Human Rights, World Organization Against Torture, Front Line, International Commission of Jurists, German Diakonie, International Service for Human Rights and HURIDOCS.

Mr. Baghi has spent four years in prison over the past decade for his campaigning against the death penalty and other rights activities. Currently out of jail, he still faces charges relating to his work for the defense of prisoners rights. Though he suffers from serious heart and kidney ailments, he has continued to advocate for prisoners’ rights, to report on child executions, and to publish independent newspapers. Mr. Baghi’s ability to be to be seen and heard in Iran is becoming more and more limited. This is regretted by many as his clinical and thorough assessment of Islamic precepts and how they can be used against the use of the death penalty are innovative and would greatly assist the human rights debate in the Muslim world.

For more information on Mr. Baghi, please visit www.emadbaghi.com/en

Min Ko Naing, 2005  
Campaigner for democracy in Burma

The 2007 protests and crackdown in Burma received worldwide attention. Min Ko Naing, the prime leader of the “88 Students Generation” and a force behind the latest pro-democracy demonstrations, was arrested and imprisoned August 21, 2007. In November 2008 Min Ko Naing and eight other student activists were sentenced to 65 years in prison, part of the ongoing crackdown on opposition to the ruling junta. All nine charged had openly condemned the lack of justice in Myanmar’s military-appointed judiciary. He has been transferred to the remote Kengtung prison in Shan state. Like many political prisoners in Burma, he suffers extremely from poor health, and has a serious eye infection. Min Ko Naing has already spent 15 years in jail for his role in the 1988 uprising. Burma currently holds upwards of 2,100 political prisoners, including journalists, activists, politicians and lawyers.

In May of 2009 he was awarded South Korea’s Gwangju Prize for Human Rights, which honors individuals and groups that have contributed to promoting and advancing human rights, democracy, and peace in their work.

For more news on Min Ko Naing and the situation in Burma, visit www.uscampaignforburma.org.
### Past Honorees

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
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| 2008 | Ali Salem  
*Egyptian author and journalist. Voice for peace and reason in the Middle East* |
| 2007 | Phillip Buck  
*Imprisoned in China for guiding North Korean refugees in their escape to freedom* |
| 2006 | Rafael Marques de Morais  
*Journalist who exposed the slaughter of Angolans and the plundering of national assets* |
| 2005 | Min Ko Naing  
*Imprisoned campaigner for democracy in Burma*  
*Anna Politkovskaya  
*Fearless reporter on atrocities in Chechnya, assassinated*  
*Munir Said Thalib†  
*Exposed disappearances and corruption in Indonesia, assassinated* |
| 2004 | Emadeddin Baghi  
*Imprisoned for exposing assassinations of Iranian intellectuals*  
*Lovemore Madhuku  
*Lawyer persecuted for demanding constitutional reform in Zimbabwe*  
*Abdul al-Latif al-Mayahi†  
*Iraqi political scientist and human rights advocate, assassinated* |
| 2003 | Shahnaz Bukhari  
*Battler against the burning and other abuse of Pakistani women* |
| 2002 | Vladimirro Roca Antunez  
*Champion of freedom, Cuba*  
*Gustavo Arcos Bergnes  
*(Honorable Mention)*  
*Early democracy activist, Cuba* |
| 2001 | Paul Kamara  
*Editor and journalist fighting tyranny in Sierra Leone* |
| 2000 | Natasa Kandic  
*Persecuted journalist and activist, Belgrade*  
*Sergei Khodorovich  
*(Honorable Mention)*  
*Solzhenitsyn collaborator exiled to hard labor in Siberia*  
*Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer†  
*Anti-Nazi martyr*  
*Judge Giovanni Falcone†  
*Assassinated while prosecuting the Sicilian Mafia* |
| 2003 | Shahnaz Bukhari  
*Battler against the burning and other abuse of Pakistani women* |

**The Civil Courage Prize** honors civil courage—steadfast resistance to evil at great personal risk—rather than military valor. The acts so recognized should have taken place deliberately over time.  
Nominations for the Prize are solicited primarily from non-profit, non-governmental organizations worldwide. Further information may be obtained from our website: www.civilcourageprize.org.

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*The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.*  
—Edmund Burke

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Journal of the Civil Courage Prize

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—Edmund Burke

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