



# Civil Courage News

Journal of the Civil Courage Prize

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For Steadfast Resistance to Evil at Great Personal Risk

## Fund Excoriates Stifling Impact of Dictatorial Regimes

In his keynote address at the Civil Courage Prize award ceremony, *Wall Street Journal* columnist John Fund spoke of the particularly harsh repression of women historically seen in tyrannical societies. He also examined the adverse impact of repression on the realization of personal and national potential. Awards like the Civil Courage Prize, he said, cannot change the world, but they can help make it a better place.

By recognizing heroism, we can encourage change, he stated, but the challenge for all of us is to stand up: action must involve each of us.

Noting the anniversary of the toppling of the Berlin Wall, he recalled his meeting in East Berlin with students who struck up a conversation with him. *continued on page 2*



## Prize-Winner Haidar Banished by Morocco from Sahara Home, Threatens Hunger Strike to Death



In a stunning development, Aminatou Haidar, the 2009 Civil Courage Prize-winner, was arrested by Moroccan authorities on her return to Western Sahara on November 14, after the October 20 Prize ceremony in New York. Her passport was confiscated and she was forced aboard a Spanish airliner and taken to the Canary Islands. Thereafter she began a hunger strike at Lanzarote airport to protest her illegal eviction from Western Sahara, calling on international organizations, rights activists and governments of the Free World to support her protest action by all means. A storm of world media reports ensued. But, despite the Spanish government's strong efforts, Morocco refused to agree to Haidar's return unless she agreed to accept Moroccan citizenship. Persisting in

her hunger strike even though her health was failing, as of this writing she said she was not prepared to agree to Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara in the absence of a referendum.

Passionate in her pursuit of peaceful means to achieve self-determination for the Sahrawi people of the Western Sahara, Haidar, 42, who lived with her two children in Laayoune the main city of the Western Sahara, had said in her speech at the ceremony, "I have been threatened with arrest on my return."

In her remarks at the ceremony, she recalled that the Moroccan Army forcibly annexed the territory of the Western Sahara, which lies between Mauritania and Morocco, upon the departure of the Spanish colonial government on October 31, 1975, in the wake of *continued on page 2*

## Prize-Winner Haidar Banished by Morocco

Like the Red Cross and *Médecins Sans Frontières*, the Civil Courage Prize stays out of politics. To do otherwise would compromise its impartiality.

The prize is awarded for resistance to evil—to monsters like Stalin or Hitler—rather than for engaging in the quarrels that inevitably arise from shifting political tectonic plates.

If one group wants to split off from another, this should be possible through negotiation and non-violent struggle. In fact, such struggle may well be the obligation of a people properly seeking freedom, as declared and indeed exemplified by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who inspired our prize, and by our own founding fathers.

So we have honored Aminatou Haidar for accepting suffering while peacefully fighting the loss of her people's right to decide their own destiny. This has frequently involved the "great personal risk," mentioned in our definition.

We have no opinion on the best permanent status for Western Sahara—autonomy, independence or other. However, both the U.N. and the U.S. have specified how the solution should be reached: through the freely expressed wishes of the people.

We therefore deplore Morocco's highly improper procedure of taking away Aminatou Haidar's passport for filling out a form in a particular way, and, without due process, expelling her to a country she can't leave, separating her from her family. Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states, "No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country." Morocco subscribes to that Covenant.



John Train

*continued from page 1* efforts by the U.N. to realize the decolonization of the territory since the beginning of the sixties. "This was the start," she said, "of the humanitarian tragedy suffered by the Sahrawi people to this day."



"At the same time," she continued, "Morocco pursued a policy of repression to sow terror in the civil population" forcing thousands of Sahrawis to flee their homes and resettle in refugee camps in Algeria. "Hundreds of Sahrawis were 'disappeared', reappearing only years later." Moroccan police locked others away in a secret center in El Aaiun, the capital of Western Sahara, where she spent four years in jail without judicial process. Moreover, she had no contact with the outside

### Wall Street Journal Reporter Recalls Need for Freedom to Spur Growth

*continued from page 1* Since they did not know East Berlin, Fund offered, he said, to serve as guide. When it was time for the students to return to their hotel, one of them, a girl named Monica, wanted a brief glimpse of the Berlin Wall. Fund obliged and soon they were in sight of the Wall. Afraid to get close to the barrier, Monica stopped, looked at Fund and said, "You can go anywhere. But we live in a zoo. No matter what we do we will be treated like children, suffering

world, was badly fed, deprived of hygienic facilities and suffered psychological torture, including threats of death and rape.

She recalled that, in order to observe the law, but also to urge Sahrawi self-determination, non-violent demonstrations were held in May 2005 in the cities of the Western Sahara and southern Morocco. The ensuing reprisals by the Moroccan authorities resulted in the deaths of three young Sahrawis, and serious injuries to others. Human rights demonstrators have had their homes looted, been subjected to acts of intimidation, been arrested, lost their jobs and been thrown out of university. Haidar herself was not able to work after being beaten in the street in June 2005, and her salary was impounded.

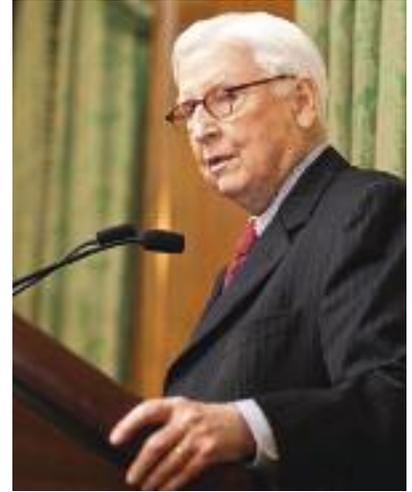
The economic consequences for Western Sahara have also been grave. Fisheries and phosphate mines, she said, have been exploited by Morocco in what amounts to a vast campaign of pillage, despite Resolution 1803 of the U.N. General Assembly relating to the Sahrawi's permanent ownership of their natural resources.

Haidar concluded her remarks by saying, "All we ask is the right which the United Nations, and also the United States, have repeatedly agreed that we are entitled to, namely a free vote on our future political status."

mediocrity and lack of freedom to become what we want." The two then parted, exchanging addresses and promising to write.

After the Wall came down, AT&T set up phones in the streets of West Berlin, where East Berliners could call free anywhere in the world. Monica called Fund and reported that she had been denied admission to university and had become a secretary. "But John," she said, "I have come over the Wall, from kindergarten to high school in one night."

# Haidar Accepts Accolades at Award Ceremony



**Top:** Jennifer Clay; Ariadne Calvo-Platero and Aminatou Haidar; Hon. John Train **Center:** Boi-Tia Stevens and Mr. and Mrs. Russell Reynolds; Civil Courage Prize Medal; Katlyn Thomas **Bottom:** Francie Train; Guests at the ceremony; Virginia Armat Hurt and John Fund

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† = deceased

## Past Honorees

- |             |   |             |  |
|-------------|---|-------------|--|
| <b>2009</b> | Aminatou Haidar<br><i>Champion of the non-violent campaign for self-determination in Western Sabara</i>                   | <b>2002</b> | Vladimiro Roca Antunez<br><i>Champion of freedom, Cuba</i>   |
| <b>2008</b> | Ali Salem<br><i>Egyptian author and journalist. Voice for peace and reason in the Middle East</i>                         |             | Gustavo Arcos Bergnes<br>(Honorable Mention)<br><i>Early democracy activist, Cuba</i>  |
| <b>2007</b> | Phillip Buck<br><i>Imprisoned in China for guiding North Korean refugees in their escape to freedom</i>                   | <b>2001</b> | Paul Kamara<br><i>Editor and journalist fighting tyranny in Sierra Leone</i>   |
| <b>2006</b> | Rafael Marques de Morais<br><i>Journalist who exposed the slaughter of Angolans and the plundering of national assets</i> | <b>2000</b> | Natasa Kandic<br><i>Persecuted journalist and activist, Belgrade</i>   |
| <b>2005</b> | Min Ko Naing<br><i>Imprisoned campaigner for democracy in Burma</i>   |             | Sergei Khodorovich<br>(Honorable Mention)<br><i>Solzhenitsyn collaborator exiled to hard labor in Siberia</i>                          |
|             | Anna Politkovskaya<br><i>Fearless reporter on atrocities in Chechnya, assassinated</i>                                    |             | Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer†<br><i>Anti-Nazi martyr</i>   |
|             | Munir Said Thalib†<br><i>Exposed disappearances and corruption in Indonesia, assassinated</i>                             |             | Judge Giovanni Falcone†<br><i>Assassinated while prosecuting the Sicilian Mafia</i>  |
| <b>2004</b> | Emadeddin Baghi<br><i>Imprisoned for exposing assassinations of Iranian intellectuals</i>                                 |             | Rosemary Nelson†<br><i>Civil rights lawyer, assassinated while defending accused persons in Northern Ireland</i>                       |
|             | Lovemore Madhuku<br><i>Lawyer persecuted for demanding constitutional reform in Zimbabwe</i>                              |             | Neelan Tiruchelvam†<br><i>Lawyer and educator, killed by a suicide bomber while working for solutions to Tamil-Sri Lankan conflict</i> |
|             | Abdul al-Latif al-Mayah†<br><i>Iraqi political scientist and human rights advocate, assassinated</i>                      |             | Raoul Wallenberg†<br><i>Saved thousands of Jews from extermination</i>   |
| <b>2003</b> | Shahnaz Bukhari<br><i>Battler against the burning and other abuse of Pakistani women</i>                                  |             |  |

† = posthumous

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.civildcouragprize.org](http://www.civildcouragprize.org).

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



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