

Brussels, 18 May 1998

EU and US give Democracy and Civil Society Awards

The European Union (EU) and the United States (US) of America announced the winners of the Democracy and Civil Society Awards during the EU-US Summit in London. Fifty awards worth USD 20,000 each were presented for outstanding contributions to democracy and civil society and for furthering the work of the winners in Central and Eastern Europe (including Ex-Yugoslavia), the New Independent States and Mongolia. US President Bill Clinton, Council of Ministers President Tony Blair and European Commission President Jacques Santer handed certificates to a selected group of the winners, while similar ceremonies were taking place across the continent. "I am especially pleased that a substantial proportion of the winners of the EU-US Democracy and Civil Society Awards have been associated with the EU's Democracy Programme in the past" commented President Santer, "It proves the value of these programmes and underlines the EU's commitment to developing stable democracies across Europe". The EU's Democracy Programme was launched in 1992 and has an annual budget of ECU 20-25 million. Most of its grants go to non-governmental organisations that have built partnerships with EU counterparts. A selection of the winning projects can be accessed on the Commission's website under "The EU's Human Rights Policy" (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg1a/index.htm>).

The EU-US Democracy and Civil Society Award was established last year in order to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Marshall Plan, the 40th Anniversary of the Treaty of Rome as well as the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It testifies to both partners' commitment to promote more democratic and free societies and to work jointly in a variety of fields to strengthen the 'people to people' programme.

The representatives of the EU and US have come together over the last few months in the respective countries to identify those they wished to nominate for awards in recognition. Over one hundred nominations were made. Each of the nominees has made a visible contribution to a better society, in some cases through individual effort, in others through the work of a group or association. Nominees received a certificate in recognition of the esteem in which they are held by the leaders of the EU and the USA. The fifty winners each received an award of USD 20,000.

A substantial proportion of the winners of the EU-US Civil Society Awards have been associated with the EU's Phare and Tacis Democracy Programme. This is real evidence that the right organisations have been supported, and that they have been able to use the funds made available to make effective and recognised contributions to democracy. Among the winners of the EU-US Democracy and Civil Society Award were for instance the following four projects:

- Ombudsmen of the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina
- The Moscow Research Center for Human Rights
- The Yerevan Press Club
- The Latvian Center for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies

As part of its world-wide support for human rights and democratisation, the EU launched the Phare and Tacis Democracy Programmes in 1992 to help promote democratic societies in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe including former Yugoslavia, the New Independent States, and Mongolia. With a budget of some ECU 20-25 million per year it has worked, largely through non-governmental organisations. It has sought to enrich the plurality of societies in transition so that for their citizens and for the world as a whole the threat of tyranny may be abated and the freedom of all people to exercise their civic and human rights may be promoted.

The list of winning organisations is attached.

List of Winning Organisations

Central & Eastern Europe

- 1 **Albania**
 - THE FOUNDATION FOR CONFLICT SOLUTION AND RECONCILIATION OF DISPUTES
 - THE INDEPENDENT FORUM FOR ALBANIAN WOMEN
- 2 **Bosnia-Herzegovina**
 - MS. SENKA NOZICA AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS OMBUDSMEN OF THE FEDERATION OF BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA: MS. VERA JOVANOVIC, MR. ESAD MUHIBIC AND MS. BRANKA RAGUZ (A JOINT AWARD)
 - MR. MILE MARCETA
- 3 **Bulgaria**
 - MR. MIKHAIL YANAKIEV AND THE BULGARIAN ASSOCIATION FOR FAIR ELECTIONS AND CIVIL RIGHTS
 - CREATING EFFECTIVE GRASSROOTS ALTERNATIVES
- 4 **Croatia**
 - BE ACTIVE BE EMANCIPATED (B.A.B.E.)
 - FORUM 21
 - SERBIAN DEMOCRATIC FORUM REGIONAL ADVICE CENTERS
- 5 **Czech Republic**
 - THE PEOPLE IN NEED FOUNDATION
- 6 **Estonia**
 - PROFESSOR MARJU LAURISTIN
- 7 **Federal Republic of Yugoslavia**
 - MS. NATASA KANDIC
 - MR. GAZMEND PULA
 - MR. SEFKO ALOMEROVIC
- 8 **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**
 - MCIC
- 9 **Hungary**
 - THE MAYOR AND CITIZENS OF USZKA
- 10 **Latvia**
 - THE LATVIAN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND ETHNIC STUDIES
- 11 **Lithuania**
 - THE LITHUANIAN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
- 12 **Poland**
 - THE FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY
 - TYGODNIK POWSZECHNY
- 13 **Romania**
 - CRISS - THE ROMANI CENTER FOR SOCIAL INTERVENTION AND STUDIES
 - ANA - THE ROMANIAN SOCIETY FOR FEMINIST ANALYSES
- 14 **Slovakia**
 - PEOPLE AND WATER
 - THE THIRD SECTOR GREMIUM
 - THE JEKCHATANE ASSOCIATION AND INFOROMA (A JOINT AWARD)
- 15 **Slovenia**
 - VITRA

Newly Independent States

- 16 **Armenia**
 - THE HELSINKI ASSOCIATION
 - THE YEREVAN PRESS CLUB
- 17 **Azerbaijan**
 - THE AZERBAIJAN CHAPTER OF THE HELSINKI CITIZENS ASSEMBLY
 - THE AZERBAIJAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS SOCIETY
- 18 **Belarus**
 - CHARTER 97
 - MR. MIKHAIL PASTUKHOV
 - THE BELARUSIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE
- 19 **Georgia**
 - THE VARKETILI SOCIETY
 - MS. ELENE TEVDORADZE, MP
- 20 **Kazakhstan**
 - MR. YEVGENIY ZHOVTIS, DIRECTOR OF THE KAZAKHSTAN INTERNATIONAL BUREAU FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW
 - THE CENTER FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
- 21 **Kyrgyzstan**
 - VECHERNY BISHKEK
- 22 **Moldova**
 - SIEDO – THE INDEPENDENT SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS
- 23 **Mongolia**
 - THE PRESS INSTITUTE OF MONGOLIA
 - WOMEN FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS
- 24 **Russia**
 - THE MOSCOW RESEARCH CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
 - NO TO ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ADDICTION
 - THE URALS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
 - THE TAKE CARE SOCIETY
- 25 **Ukraine**
 - MR. SEMYON FISHELEVYCH GLUZMAN
 - THE KHARKIV HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION GROUP
 - THE UKRAINIAN LEGAL FOUNDATION
- 26 **Uzbekistan**
 - SABR - THE SAMARKAND CRISIS AND COUNSELING CENTER
 - THE ILKHOM CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF JOURNALISTIC PROBLEMS