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Sakharov Prize 2012

Greens/EFA support two Iranian candidates - a film maker and a Human Rights advocate

The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought was set up in 1988 and is awarded each year by the European Parliament. The prize is awarded for a particular achievement in one of the following fields:

- defence of human rights and fundamental freedoms, particularly the right to free expression;
- safeguarding the rights of minorities;
- respect for international law;
- development of democracy and implementation of the rule of law

This year, the Greens/EFA together with 2 other political groups decided to support two candidates from Iran.



Nasrin Sotoudeh is an Iranian lawyer and human rights advocate. She has represented Iranian opposition activists and politicians, imprisoned following the disputed June 2009 presidential elections, as well as juvenile offenders facing the death sentence. Nasrin Sotoudeh was arrested in September 2010 on charges of spreading propaganda and conspiring to harm state security and has been imprisoned in solitary confinement in Evin Prison.

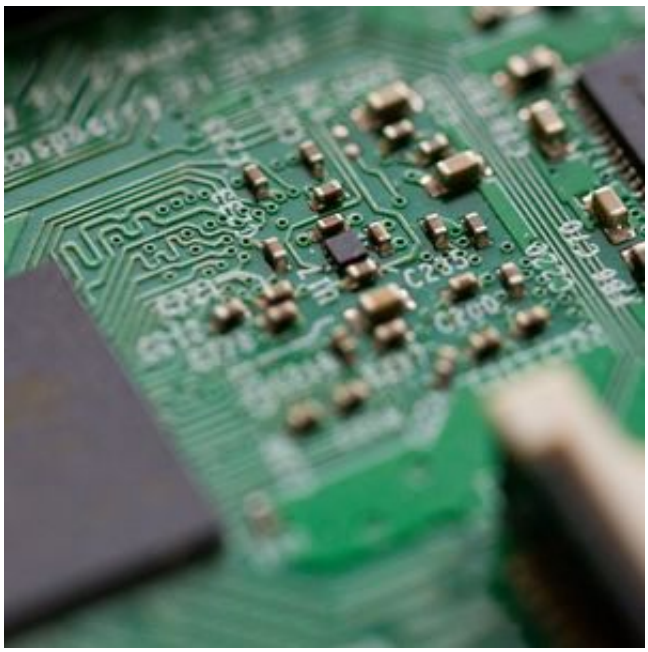


Jafar Panahi is an Iranian film director, screenwriter and film editor. He first achieved international recognition with his feature film debut "The White Balloon" in 1995. The film won the Caméra d'Or at the 1995 Cannes Film Festival, which was the first major award won by an Iranian film at Cannes. His films are known for their humanistic perspective on life in Iran, often focusing on the hardships of children, the impoverished and women. In December 2010, he was sentenced to 6 years in jail and a 20 year ban on making or directing any films and screenplays. In the middle of a court appeal in march 2011, Jafar Panahi broke the ban with "This is not a film". It was later smuggled out of Iran and screened at the Cannes Film Festival.

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