Press release | 26.10.2012

Sakharov prize

Award to Iranian activists ups pressure on regime to end their detention and wider repression

Two Iranian rights activists, Nasrin Sotoudeh and Jafar Panahi, were today announced as the winners of the 2012 Sakharov Prize for freedom of thought, following a decision by the European Parliament's conference of presidents. The Greens/EFA group, which nominated the two activists for this year's prize, welcomed the decision, with the group's co-presidents **Dany Cohn-Bendit** and **Rebecca Harms** stating:

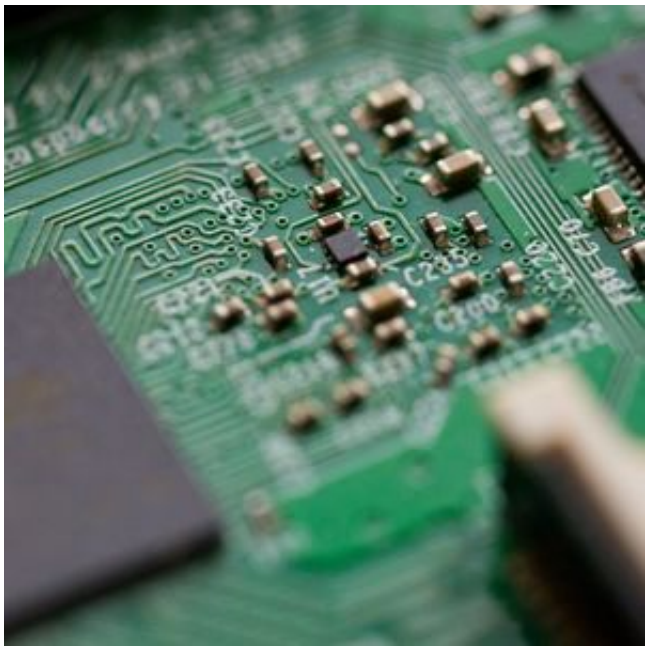
“The award of this year's Sakharov Prize to Nasrin Sotoudeh and Jafar Panahi not only recognises their tireless work to advance rights and freedoms in Iran, it also sends a strong political message to the regime in Tehran. The widespread persecution and repression of rights activists and political opponents in Iran is a tragedy for the country and its society, which we call on the Ahmadinejad regime to end. In particular, we are concerned about the conditions of Nasrin Soutoudeh's imprisonment and her ongoing hunger strike, and we urge the authorities to end her arbitrary detention. She and all political prisoners should be freed without delay."

The prize is due to be awarded at the December plenary session of the European Parliament. For more information about Nasrin Sotoudeh and Jafar Panahi, as well as the other shortlisted candidates, see:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/content/20120921STO51984/html/2012-Sakharov-Prize-find-out-who-has-been-nominated

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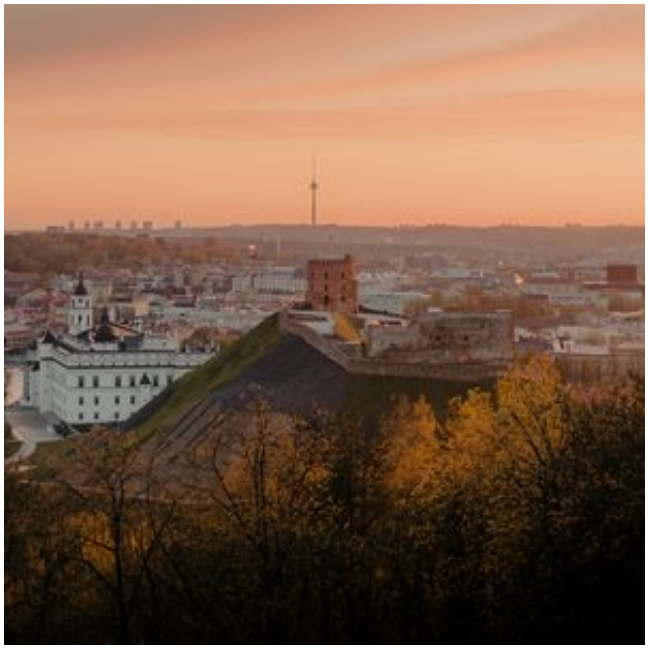
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Rebecca Harms

Member

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