



Václav Havel Human Rights Prize

The Václav Havel Human Rights Prize is awarded each year by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in partnership with the Václav Havel Library and the Charta 77 Foundation to reward outstanding civil society action in the defence of human rights in Europe and beyond.

The Prize is awarded in memory of Václav Havel, playwright, opponent of totalitarianism, architect of the velvet revolution of 1989, President of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic and an enduring symbol of opposition to despotism. Nominations of any individual, non-governmental organisation or institution working to defend human rights are taken into consideration. The Prize consists of a sum of € 60 000, a trophy and a diploma.

*'Without dreaming
of a better Europe
we shall never
build a better
Europe'*

Václav Havel
Strasbourg, May 1990

The selection panel is made up of the President of PACE and six independent figures known for their high moral standing and expertise in the field of human rights.

The selection panel initially shortlists three candidates from among the nominees at a first meeting in Prague. The prizewinner is selected at a second meeting held in Strasbourg on the day before the autumn plenary session of the PACE.

The Prize is awarded at a ceremony on the Monday of the autumn plenary session of PACE. The Václav Havel Library then organises an international conference in Prague in honour of the prizewinner's contribution to promoting human rights.

The Václav Havel Human Rights Prize replaces the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Human Rights Prize, which was created in 2007 and awarded every two years, first in 2009 to "British Irish Human Rights Watch" and then, in 2011, to the Russian NGO "Committee against Torture".