



# The Human Rights Tulip award

## Timeline Posters



The Human Rights Tulip is an annual award of the Dutch government to support human rights defenders in their work advancing and protecting human rights around the world, while highlighting related issues. Each year since 2008 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has awarded the Human Rights Tulip to an outstanding human rights defender.

Human rights defenders stand up for vulnerable groups, expose human rights violations and demand justice. Human rights defenders often work under difficult circumstances, receive death threats and are jailed, tortured and sometimes even killed. The Netherlands supports human rights defenders so that they can work effectively and safely.

### Instructions

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The game includes 15 posters. Each poster contains

- year of award
- name, country of origin and picture of the award winner
- information about Human rights defender award winner's work

This activity could be carried out in pairs or as a group . First print out the posters. You can arrange them on the floor in chronological order or hang them on the wall in your classroom.

## 2008

The 2008 prize winner was **Justine Masika Bihamba** from **Goma** in North Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Her organisation, Women's Synergy for the Victims of Sexual Violence (Synergie des femmes pour les Victimes des violences Sexuelles – SFVS) has since 2002 been fighting the massive use of sexual violence in the armed conflict in the east of the DRC.

Justine Masika Bihamba is a **Congolese activist**. As coordinator of Synergy of **Women for Victims of Sexual Violence**, she works to improve the lives of rural women, defend human rights and assist victims of war, especially women survivors of acts of sexual violence. This work is focused in the province of North Kivu, and she has also campaigned for justice more widely in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). She has won considerable international recognition for her achievements. She has on several occasions been subject to threats of arrest or death.



## 2009

The 2009 prize winner was Shadi Sadr from Tehran, Iran, a women's rights activist and campaigner against stoning as an execution method.

Shadi Sadr is an Iranian lawyer, human rights advocate, essayist and journalist. She co-founded Justice for Iran (JFI) in 2010 and is the Executive Director of the NGO. She has published and lectured worldwide.

She worked actively as a human rights lawyer in Iran until 2009, as well as finding and directing Raahi, a legal advice centre for vulnerable women. In a surge of repression against civil society in 2007, the Iranian authorities closed down Raahi. Sadr also established Women In Iran in 2002, a website dedicated to women's rights activists. She was also a founding member of the feminist group, Women's Field (Meydaan-e-Zanan) which initiated several campaigns including a campaign to remove the ban on women to enter the stadiums. While in Iran, she represented several women sentenced to death by stoning and hanging and as a result of her extensive activities, was imprisoned on various occasions prior to her exile to Europe in 2009 where she co-founded the human rights organisation, Justice for Iran.



## 2010

The 2010 prize winner was Bertha Oliva from Honduras, for her long struggle for the rights of relatives of people who were disappeared in Honduras between 1979 and 1989.

Bertha Oliva Nativí is a Honduran human rights campaigner. She is the founder and coordinator of the Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH, by its Spanish initials), a non-governmental organization promoting the rights of relatives of the victims of forced disappearances between 1979 and 1989.

Oliva founded the organization after her husband, Prof. Tomás Nativí, founder of the People's Revolutionary Union (URP), was taken from his home by State forces in June 1981. She was three months pregnant at the time. Her husband has never been seen since.



# 2011

The 2011 prize winner was Ni Yulan, a human rights lawyer from China.

Ni Yulan is a civil rights lawyer in the People's Republic of China. She has established herself in defending human rights in China by providing legal aid to persecuted groups such as Falun Gong practitioners and victims of forced eviction.

Ni has gone through multiple arrests, three prison sentences, and torture following her human rights cases against the Chinese government. Her license to practice law was later revoked by Chinese authorities.



## 2012

The 2012 prize winner was Marimuthu Bharathan, a Dalit human rights defender from India, although he could not receive the award in person due to his being denied a passport by the Government of India.

Dalits ("untouchables"), who fall outside the Hindu caste system, are widely regarded in India as of inferior social status, and find their human rights often denied. In total there are about 260 million Dalits, mostly living in India.

Marimuthu Bharathan has spoken to the Dutch press about his experiences as a Dalit. "I have experienced the pain of untouchability from my youth. As a student I was beaten up because I was wearing shoes when walking through a higher-caste neighbourhood. In 2009, enraged caste Hindus wanted to kill me".

Bharathan describes the Dalits of India as slaves, lacking land, money and rights, and seeing little benefit from the economic growth of India. "Only a very small number of educated dalits manage to find a position in modern Indian society", he has said.



# 2013

The 2013 prize winner was Aahung, a human rights organization from Pakistan working to further sexual and reproductive health and rights.

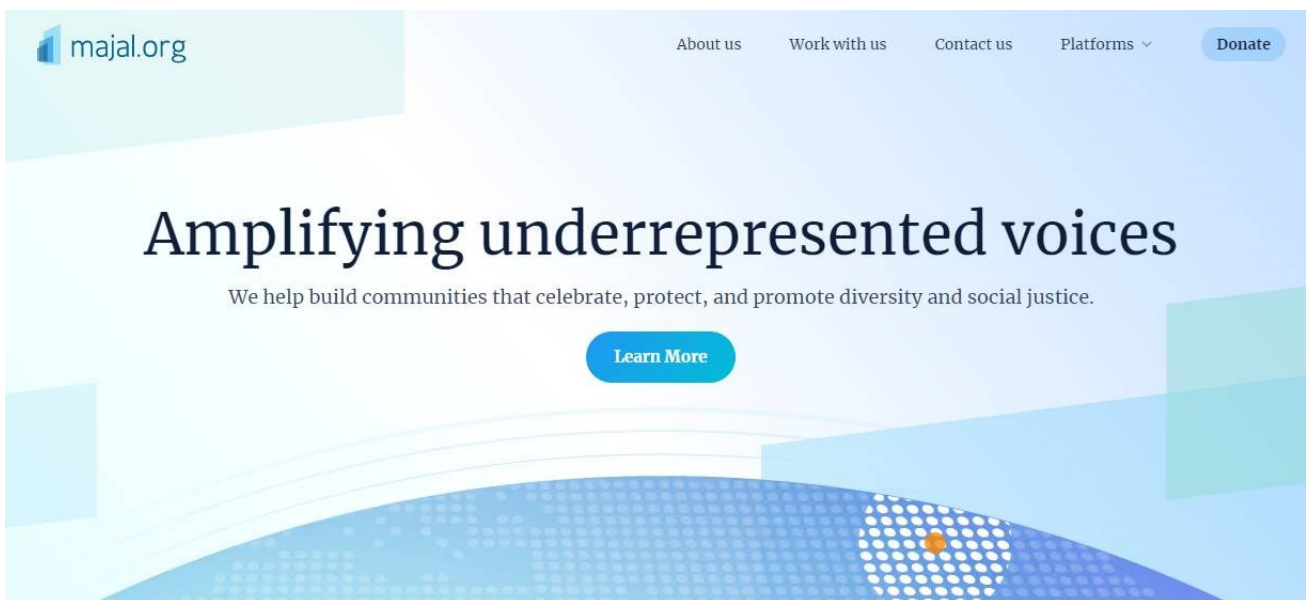
Aahung is a Karachi-based non-governmental organisation which aims to improve the sexual and reproductive health of men, women, and adolescents across Pakistan. On its website it states its role as “enhancing the scope and improving the quality of services that uphold sexual health and rights, while advocating for an enabling environment where every individual’s sexual health and rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled as an inalienable human right.”



# 2014

The 2014 prize winner was **Mideast Youth**, which creates online platforms for discussion of human rights issues in parts of the **Middle East**. The award was presented to Esra'a Al Shafei, the organisation's founder and director.

Majal is a regional not-for-profit organization focused on "amplifying voices of dissent" throughout the Middle East and North Africa via digital media. Founded in Bahrain, the organization "creates platforms and web applications that promote freedom of expression and social justice.





## 2015

The 2015 prize went to [IRA-Mauritania](#), an organisation challenging slavery in [Mauritania](#).

The [Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement](#) (IRA or IRA-Mauritania) is an anti-slavery group in Mauritania headed by Biram Dah Abeid. Mauritania is estimated to have between 140,000 and 600,000 slaves. The group has a "network of nine thousand activists" according to journalist Alexis Okeowo.

The group was founded in 2008 and is described by Abeid as "an organization of popular struggle". The group has been involved in sit-ins in front of the justice ministry, hunger strikes, and marches through cities and towns around Mauritania.[1] The group fights against the religious justification of slavery.



## 2016

The 2016 prize went to **Nighat Dad**, a **Pakistani** activist who supports the right of women to access the internet and use it free of harassment.

Dad is a lawyer by profession and practice criminal and family law. In 2012, she set up the Digital Rights Foundation where she was executive director, educate Pakistani internet users, particularly women to protect themselves from online harassment. Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest-ever Nobel Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai has also attended workshops of Dad, before being shot by the Taliban in October 2012.

Dad led campaigns to protect online freedom of speech in Pakistan as well campaigns against legislation that gives the government broad powers of surveillance online, most notable one is the controversial Prevention of Electronic Crimes Bill 2015.



# 2017

The 2017 prize went to **Graciela Pérez Rodríguez**, a **Mexican human rights activist**, who defends the rights of family members of disappeared persons in Mexico.

Disappearances are a daily occurrence in Mexico. Since the “war on drugs” was declared by the government in 2006, violence has scourged the country, hitting a record 25,339 homicide cases in 2017.

Graciela’s daughter, brother and three nephews were abducted by members of an organized crime group in the border region of Tamaulipas. They were never heard from again. Although Graciela received some support from the military, they ended the search quickly. So she decided to take matters into her own hands.

Graciela and her family traveled through Tamaulipas, gathering information from locals and posting pictures of their five missing family members. Along the way, they were surprised to meet more and more families in the same situation. So they combined their search efforts, and before long an organic movement had formed. It started to grow fast.

“We were all in the same pain and felt that working together was the only option to find our loved ones,” said Graciela. “After a few months we realized we would be taken more seriously by the authorities if we organized ourselves as an official entity. That’s how our collective was born”.



# 2018

The 2018 prize went to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein](#).

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein was Jordan's Ambassador to the United States between 2007-2010 and represented Jordan before the International Court of Justice in 2004 and 2009, as well as on the issue of nuclear security.

Zeid played a key role in the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), chairing the negotiations over the elements of individual offences amounting to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.



## 2020

The 2020 prize went to the Armenian transgender activist and founder of Right Side NGO, [Lilit Martirosyan](#).

After facing intense bullying and family conflicts as a child, she moved out of her parents' home to live on her own at the age of 13. Despite working both as a waitress and a cook, she was eventually forced to do sex work to earn enough money to survive and to be able to afford hormone therapy.

In 2015, she became the first trans woman in Armenian history to legally change her name in her passport.



## 2021

The 2021 prize went to the Ugandan human rights lawyer Nicholas Opiyo for his work against the anti-gay law in his country and the criminalising of torture.

Opiyo grew up in Gulu northern Uganda at the height of the conflict between the government of Uganda and the Lord's resistance army of Joseph Kony. Many of his friends and family members including his sister were abducted by the rebels to serve as slaves, soldiers and labourers. His sister spent 8 years in the hands of the rebels before she escaped.

Opiyo focuses his work on political and civil rights especially; electoral law, restrictions of freedom of assembly, clampdown on freedom of speech and freedom of press.

He is also known for representing and availing legal aid to LGBT people in Uganda.

In 2013, Opiyo founded Chapter four Uganda to offer legal aid and advance civil rights in Uganda.

Opiyo was a member of the team of experts to the United Nations special rapporteur on the rights to peaceful assembly and Association until 2017.

He is also the board chairman of action aid Uganda, a member of the human rights advisory board benetech, a silicon valley human rights and tech company based in palo Alto in California and African middle eastern leadership project (AMEL), a Washington DC based think and action group.



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## 2022

The Human Rights Tulip for 2022 is awarded to the [Viasna Human Rights Center](#) in [Belarus](#). Minister of Foreign Affairs Wopke Hoekstra presented the prize at a ceremony in the Peace Palace.

The Viasna Human Rights Center is a Belarusian human rights organisation that does valuable work documenting cases of political prisoners. It was established in 1996 during mass protests by the democratic opposition in Belarus. Viasna's main objective is building a just and free society. In practice this means giving Belarusians advice on legal matters, exposing and documenting abuses, and providing relief to victims of political repression.

In 2003 the organisation was outlawed by the Belarusian authorities. In 2021 Viasna was raided and prominent members were arrested. Many of them are still imprisoned today. Others have fled the country.





This game was inspired by a project session that took place in the municipality of The Hague, where participants learned about Shelter City is a global movement that offers safe and inspiring spaces to human rights defenders at risk where they can re-energize, receive tailor made support and engage with allies in order to reinforce their local actions for change.

The Hague was the first city ever to participate in Shelter City, founded in 2012 by Justice & Peace with support of the municipality of The Hague, as a concrete and accessible way to support human rights defenders at risk. The Hague's multicultural community and diverse network of organizations, policy makers, students and justice workers made The Hague an inspiring space for human rights defenders. Participants were inspired from the stories discussed and the manner in which the city is promoting Human Rights. That stimulated them to create a Timeline for the Toolkit, referring to The Hague as a Shelter City for Human Rights defenders.