

PACE 151 (2014)

## Three nominees for the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2014

Strasbourg, 26.08.2014 – B'Tselem Israeli Information Center for Human Rights (Israel), the Jesuit Refugee Service (Malta) and Anar Mammadli (Azerbaijan) are the three candidates shortlisted, in alphabetical order, in Prague today for the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2014.

The selection panel, comprising six independent experts and chaired by Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), drew up its shortlist from 56 candidatures who fulfilled the criteria for the Prize.

[B'Tselem](#) is the leading Israeli organisation with both Israeli and Palestinian members promoting human rights in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. It has endeavoured to document and educate the public and policymakers about all human rights violations, irrespective of who has committed them. B'Tselem sends hundreds of cases to the military and civil authorities demanding criminal investigations, monitoring all stages of the investigation and submitting legal appeals where possible. Each year it takes testimonies from victims and eye-witnesses of human rights violations. Recently it has pioneered an innovative video strategy, distributing video cameras in high conflict areas and training volunteers to use them to document incidents of violence.

[The Jesuit Refugee Service Malta](#) is the Maltese branch of the global Jesuit Refugee Service, a non governmental organisation working to protect the human rights of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, through legal advice, psychosocial support and humanitarian assistance and through strategic litigation and advocacy. Much of its work is focused on detention centres, where staff and volunteers identify individual protection needs of detainees, provide them with information about asylum and immigration procedures, assess social, psychosocial and medical needs, and obtain the release of children, pregnant women and vulnerable persons.

[Anar Mammadli](#) is a prominent Azerbaijani human rights defender who has made an extensive contribution towards defending the right to free elections. He is the founder and chairperson of an influential and experienced organisation in Azerbaijan dedicated to observing elections. Since 2001, his Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Centre (EMDS) has been carrying out independent election monitoring in Azerbaijan. Anar Mammadli contributed to programmes and events on monitoring of elections, participation and education of voters, as well as the design of materials and reports during 13 elections in Azerbaijan. He was arrested in December 2013 accused of "abuse of power" and other matters, and sentenced to 5 and a half years in prison in May 2014.

The Prizewinner will be announced by the PACE President in the Assembly Chamber on the first day of the Autumn plenary session, 29 September 2014, at 12.30 pm.

The Václav Havel Human Rights Prize aims to reward outstanding civil society action in the defence of human rights in Europe and beyond. It is awarded each year by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, in partnership with the Václav Havel Library and the Charta 77 Foundation. It consists of a sum of €60 000, a trophy and a diploma.

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PACE contact: Francesc Ferrer, tel. +33 388 413 193

Vaclav Havel Library contact: Marta Smolíková, tel: + 420 603 89 75 82

Charta 77 Foundation contact: Božena Jirků, tel. +420 224 214 452

### [Announcement](#)



The Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.  
President: Anne Brasseur (ALDE) - Secretary General of the Assembly: Wojciech Sawicki.  
Political groups: SOC (Socialist Group); EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party);  
EDG (European Democrat Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe);  
UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).