

A Message from Narges Mohammadi on Receiving the Olof Palme Foundation Prize

I am proud to have received the prestigious Olof Palme award of Sweden. This award is named after a man whose whole life is an image of humanism, pacifism, and development. I am receiving this award in a time when the people of my country have been out on the streets, protesting against the Islamic State and are asking for transition from the Islamic regime. The oppressive machine of this autocratic government have been busy in the past 44 years in widespread suppression of all opposition and protests, all independent civic institutions of the people, freedom of speech, freedom of press, and conducting fake elections to render meaningless votes in all past electoral campaigns, thus obstructing any and all political and social movements, and diverting effective strategies of the people's movements and actions, since the government does not feel accountable for whatever they do. Also, the ideological machine of the regime uses its extensive, big-budget propaganda system, misusing its judiciary power, to spread ethnic, religious, and gender discrimination and inequality, disqualifying all independent trade unions, turning all these legitimate concepts into their own quasi-holy system of thought.

On the regional and international stage, the Islamic Republic and some other countries have taken part in local wars by employing local forces, suppressing democratic movements of the people in a given region who wanted to get rid of autocratic governments, aiding and supporting non-democratic, despotic regimes, promoting warmongering, violence, hate speech and division. All governments similar to Iran's existing regime are endangering and jeopardizing peace, security and development, not only in Iran, but in in the entire region.

It is obvious that with widening and intensifying the people's protests, the government's violence and suppression will be accordingly intensified. In these circumstances, there is no doubt that we need effective support from international institutions and world-wide solidarity, which we hope to see as soon as possible.

At the end, as an Iranian woman who has been active in civic movements for the past 30 years, I would like to stress on the fact that as a female pacifist and defender of human rights, I believe this phase of transferring from the Islamic Regime to a democratic government with guarantees of human rights, is by no means less important than a change of regime for me, creating conditions where we can help international peace and development, mutual understanding with all nations all over the world. With a heart full of love and hope and exuberance, I hereby pledge my support of world peace and human rights, and realizing the dream of freedom and equality in Iran and the rest of the world.

Long live Freedom, Civic Equality and Democracy.

Narges Mohammadi

Evin Prison