

# THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FOR 2021**

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2021 to Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov for their efforts to safeguard freedom of expression, which is a precondition for democracy and lasting peace. Ms Ressa and Mr Muratov are receiving the Peace Prize for their courageous fight for freedom of expression in the Philippines and Russia. At the same time, they are representatives of all journalists who stand up for this ideal in a world in which democracy and freedom of the press face increasingly adverse conditions.

Maria Ressa uses freedom of expression to expose abuse of power, use of violence and growing authoritarianism in her native country, the Philippines. In 2012, she co-founded Rappler, a digital media company for investigative journalism, which she still heads. As a journalist and the Rappler's CEO, Ressa has shown herself to be a fearless defender of freedom of expression. Rappler has focused critical attention on the Duterte regime's controversial, murderous anti-drug campaign. The number of deaths is so high that the campaign resembles a war waged against the country's own population. Ms Ressa and Rappler have also documented how social media is being used to spread fake news, harass opponents and manipulate public discourse.

Dmitry Andreyevich Muratov has for decades defended freedom of speech in Russia under increasingly challenging conditions. In 1993, he was one of the founders of the independent newspaper Novaja Gazeta. Since 1995 he has been the newspaper's editor-in-chief for a total of 24 years. Novaja Gazeta is the most independent newspaper in Russia today, with a fundamentally critical attitude towards power. The newspaper's fact-based journalism and professional

integrity have made it an important source of information on censurable aspects of Russian society rarely mentioned by other media. Since its start-up in 1993, Novaja Gazeta has published critical articles on subjects ranging from corruption, police violence, unlawful arrests, electoral fraud and "troll factories" to the use of Russian military forces both within and outside Russia. Novaja Gazeta's opponents have responded with harassment, threats, violence and murder. Since the newspaper's start, six of its journalists have been killed, including Anna Politkovskaja who wrote revealing articles on the war in Chechnya. Despite the killings and threats, editor-in-chief Muratov has refused to abandon the newspaper's independent policy. He has consistently defended the right of journalists to write anything they want about whatever they want, as long as they comply with the professional and ethical standards of journalism. Free, independent and fact-based journalism serves to protect against abuse of power, lies and war propaganda. The Norwegian Nobel Committee is convinced that freedom of expression and freedom of information help to ensure an informed public. These rights are crucial prerequisites for democracy and protect against war and conflict. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov is intended to underscore the importance of protecting and defending these fundamental rights. Without freedom of expression and freedom of the press, it will be difficult to successfully promote fraternity between nations, disarmament and a better world order to succeed in our time. This year's award of the Nobel Peace Prize is therefore firmly anchored in the provisions of Alfred Nobel's will.

Oslo, 8 October 2021