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Renowned Pakistani lawyer awarded UN prize for promoting human rights



Asma Jahangir

16 November 2010 – One of Pakistan’s leading human rights defenders, Asma Jahangir, was today [named](#) as this year’s winner of a United Nations award that recognizes outstanding individual contribution to promoting a culture of human rights around the world.

The Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)), Irina Bokova, nominated Ms. Jahangir as laureate of this year’s Bilbao Prize for the Promotion of a Culture of Human Rights in recognition of her work in Pakistan’s Supreme Court where she championed the rights of religious minorities, women and children.

Ms. Jahangir is the president of the Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan, a founding member of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and served as its Secretary-General and chairperson.

Internationally, Ms. Jahangir is known for her roles as the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions.

Announcing Ms. Jahangir as the winner of the prize today as the UN marks the International Day for Tolerance is intended honour her commitment and important contribution to fostering inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue, tolerance, mutual understanding and cooperation for peace, UNESCO said.

The award carries a \$25,000 cash reward, a diploma and a bronze trophy, which will be presented at a ceremony in Bilbao, Spain, on 10 December, which is observed globally as Human Rights Day.

The UNESCO/Bilbao Prize is given out every two years and is funded by a donation from the Spanish city. It succeeded the UNESCO Prize for Human Rights Education that was set up 30 years ago.

The prize was first awarded to Stéphane Hessel, a French human rights advocate, in 2008.

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