



Johann-Philipp-Palm-Award for Freedom of Speech and the Press 2018

The international Johann-Philipp-Palm-Award for Freedom of Speech and the Press 2018 will be awarded to human rights activist **Štefica Galić** from Bosnia and radio journalist **Josephine Achiro Fortelo** from South Sudan. The prize is worth a total of € 20,000 and is under the patronage of the Prime Minister of Baden-Wuerttemberg, Mr Winfried Kretschmann. The award recognises women, men and institutions who have committed themselves to stand up for freedom of speech and press in an outstanding manner.

Štefica Galić is a Bosnian Croatian who is opposed to the resurging radical nationalism of the former Yugoslavia and is seeking to overcome the boundaries imposed by this nationalism. During the Bosnian-Croatian war in 1993, she and her now deceased husband, Neđo Galić, helped hundreds of Bosniaks who had been deported from their hometowns, to escape from prison camps by means of false identity papers. Today, Štefica Galić raises awareness about the crimes committed by the Bosnian-Croatian HVO army during the Yugoslav wars. She believes a shared future for all the people in Bosnia is only possible if the horrors of the past are reprocessed and the victims are asked for forgiveness. In newspaper articles, on her Internet portal "tacno.net" and in talks, she names perpetrators and describes crime scenes where ethnic cleansing occurred. Štefica Galić is therefore regarded as someone who justifiably denigrates her own country and is openly subjected to threats, harassment and even assaults by reactionary nationalists. She receives neither protection nor assistance from any state institution. Nevertheless, she remains steadfast and continues to work unflinchingly to reconcile all sections of the population in her country, thereby setting an extraordinary example in terms of the price she is paying for her noble actions.

Josephine Achiro Fortelo is a radio journalist who has campaigned for many years in various capacities for freedom of speech and press in her native South Sudan. As the director of Radio "[Bakhita](#)", which is part of a Catholic radio network, she was responsible for the content of the broadcasts and has since been deemed as the "voice for human rights" in her country. She currently holds executive positions in various projects to empower and strengthen local radio stations, and promote peace. She is also the Managing Director of the UNESCO-supported Citizens Radio Network "ComNet South Sudan" and Coordinator of the bi-national journalists network "[Cross-Border Network](#)" by Deutsche Welle Akademie. Since a large part of the population in her country is unable to read, thus relying on radio as an information medium, the significance of this work for democracy and the peace process in South Sudan can hardly be overestimated. As a result of her journalistic work, Josephine Achiro Fortelo has repeatedly been exposed to serious threats. She does not, however, let this intimidate her. People of different ethnic groups and varying political convictions have their say on her programs. She discusses taboo topics such as flight and displacement and she vociferously calls for human rights. Josephine Achiro Fortelo is an exceptional role model for the struggle for freedom of speech and press, as an indispensable prerequisite for democracy.

The Foundation's Board of Trustees, which selects the winners, already made its decision in mid-May. It was able to rely on proposals from collaboration partners of Foundations such as Amnesty International, Journalists help Journalists, and Reporters without Borders. The award is named after Johann Philipp Palm (1766-1806), an historically well-known book-seller, who was born in Schorndorf. As a result of publishing and selling a pamphlet criticising Napoleon, Palm was sentenced to death at a sham trial and executed by firing squad.

The award winners will personally accept the award in a ceremony on Sunday, 2 December, at the **Barbara-Künkelin-Halle in Schorndorf**. The event is open to the public and starts at 11:00 am. The ceremonial address will be given by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Heiner Bielefeldt from the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen/Nuremberg, former Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief of the UN Human Rights Council.

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Learn more about the award and the foundation on our homepage <http://www.palm-stiftung.de/> .
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Further information

Štefica Galić – Journalist from Bosnia-Herzegovina

- Bosnia-Herzegovina ranks 62 out of 180 in the Press Freedom Index of Reporters Without Borders: <https://www.reporter-ohne-grenzen.de/bosnien-herzegowina/>
- Proposal from our collaboration partner Journalisten helfen Journalisten e.V., Munich <http://journalistenhelfen.org/>
- English-language page of the news magazine of Štefica Galić <http://www.tacno.net/kategorija/english/>

Josephine Achiro Fortelo – Radio journalist from South Sudan

- South Sudan ranks 144 out of 180 in the Press Freedom Index of Reporters without Borders: <https://www.reporter-ohne-grenzen.de/suedsudan/>
- Proposal by the Neue Deutsche Medienmacher [*New German Media Makers*] <https://www.neuemedienmacher.de/ueber-uns/> - submitted by Anne Chebu, our member of the Board of Trustees, Frankfurt/Main.
- Radio station Bakhita on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/RadioBakhita>

Press release issued by the Board of Trustees of the Palm Foundation e.V.

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