

Background information laureates

International Four Freedoms Award: United Nations

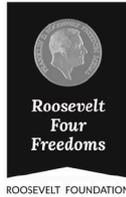
Since its creation in 1945, the United Nations has maintained its commitment to international peace and security, achieving international co-operation, and promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. This year marks 75 years since the founding of the United Nations and the creation and history of the United Nations are closely intertwined with the lives of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor. President Roosevelt is considered to be the United Nation's principal architect and Eleanor Roosevelt served as the first chair of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and oversaw the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The board of the Roosevelt Foundation is deeply honored that on behalf of the United Nations, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will accept the International Four Freedoms Award, as a sign of the foundation's recognition of the United Nation's dedication to protect and promote the respect for the four freedoms for everyone, everywhere in the world.

Freedom of Speech and Expression: Maria Ressa

The award for Ms. Ressa is motivated by her continuing dedication to tell people what is happening in the world and her commitment to address human rights abuses, no matter how tough circumstances are or how much opposition she meets. Ms. Ressa fights for freedom of the press, at first as an investigative reporter on terrorism for CNN in Southeast Asia and now as the executive editor of online news outlet Rappler. She started Rappler in 2012 as a social news network to inspire social engagement and



change through digital means. At the same time, Rappler is a critical news organization with a wide range of messages, from politics to entertainment. Rappler is now one of the few media organizations in the Republic of the Philippines that is openly critical on the "war on drugs". Its persistence in documenting the deadly reality of this "war" has attracted the wrath of the authorities. This, however, has not diminished Ms. Ressa's drive as a journalist to seek the truth and to call authorities to account. Although she was personally attacked and received death threats, she has stated that she will always remain "the canary in the coalmine" and she will keep speaking out for the next generation. Ms. Ressa is a true advocate of the freedom of speech and expression and an example and inspiration to us all.



Freedom of Worship: Religions for Peace International

The award for the Freedom of Worship goes to Religions for Peace International for the alliance's determined commitment to promote peace and to speak up for those most in need. Religions for Peace is devoted to build bridges between religious communities in order to increase mutual trust and reduce hostility in areas of conflict and to offer a platform for common action. The alliance respects and honors religious differences and works to advance interreligious dialogue and consensus.

Religions for Peace has proven to be a peacemaker for almost 50 years and the world's religious communities effectively cooperate for peace through its global network. The alliance resists and opposes the misuse and misperception of our faiths that fuel violence and hate. Their continued efforts to counter those misperceptions, prejudices and distrust between peoples are an example to us all. Prof. dr. Azza Karam, Secretary General, will receive the award on behalf of Religions for Peace. Azza Karam is a Professor of Religion and Development at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam and has, amongst others, served in different positions in the United Nations.

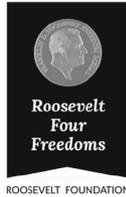


Freedom from Fear: Leoluca Orlando

The award for Mr. Orlando is motivated by his unremitting dedication to defend human rights in general and the humane treatment of refugees in particular. During his career he has successfully and with great resolve and determination acted against the mafia, corruption and the death penalty. For many years now he is the most prominent advocate of a hospitable and human approach of the issue of immigration in Italy and Europe. Under his leadership as mayor, he has tackled the corruption in the city administration of Palermo and the city was transformed into a vibrant and culturally interesting place to live and work and an attractive destination to visit. As a politician, an administrator and a human being Mr. Orlando considers it his responsibility to welcome refugees on the quays of Palermo and treat them in a humanitarian way. Under his guidance the city council amongst others stimulates integration projects like Multi Volti, a cooperation of startups annex restaurant.



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Freedom from Want: Sander de Kramer

The award for Freedom from Want goes to Mr. de Kramer for his innovative way of providing help and assistance and his dedicated commitment to the less fortunate, both at home and abroad. In 2007 he travelled as a journalist to Sierra Leone, which the United Nations at that time proclaimed "the worst place on earth." He was deeply touched by the suffering and together with Hugo Borst, he founded the Sunday Foundation. His foundation offers help in so-called "forgotten places" on earth and sets up projects to alleviate the worst needs: projects of hope. In Sierra Leone he saved child slaves from the mines and now they go to school. Local contractors have now built more than twenty schools for boys and girls. Former street prostitutes now make school uniforms and war widows receive microcredit so that they can provide for themselves. Mr. De Kramer has also set up a workshop and training centre for the disabled, giving them a more humane place in society. His help was not always without risk and sometimes even life-threatening. However, this has never stopped him. His positive attitude and humanity are an example for many of us in a world where individualism seems to flourish.

