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Spanish and Ukrainian journalists share Journalism and Democracy Prize

During the Expanded Bureau Meeting held in Copenhagen from 19-20 April 2001, it was decided that the 2001 OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy should be awarded to Spanish journalist José Luis LÓPEZ DE LACALLE and Ukrainian journalist Georgiy GONGADZE. The Prize, consisting of \$20,000, is awarded annually by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to journalists who through their work have promoted OSCE principles on human rights, democracy and unimpeded flow of information.

Mr. López de Lacalle was killed in May 2000 by Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) in Northern Spain for his writings against the use of violence for political ends. Mr. Gongadze disappeared on 16 September 2000 after a long distinguished career in investigative journalism, uncovering corruption in a secretive political environment.

In recommending the two journalists for the award, the Chairman of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, Mr. Gert Weisskirchen, MP (Germany) stated: *"These were outstanding journalists who tried to further the values of the OSCE by intervening in conflicts and secretive political environments through their writing. By awarding this prize we will be sending a signal against the unfortunate growing international trend of censorship by threats and killings."*

The prize will be presented on the opening day of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 10th Annual Session in Paris, 6-10 July 2001.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly established the Prize for Journalism and Democracy in 1996, at the initiative of Mr. Freimut Duve, former member of

the German Bundestag and now OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. The purpose of the Prize is to promote the principles of free journalism as laid down in the OSCE Budapest Declaration in 1994.

The Prize has previously been awarded to Mr. Adam Michnik in 1996, "Reporters sans frontières" in 1997, Mr. Timothy Garton Ash in 1998, Ms. Christiane Amanpour in 1999 and Mr. Andrei Babitsky in 2000.

The Annual Prize for Journalism and Democracy has been made possible by the support and generous assistance of the following donors: Bertelsmann AG, Germany; Bonnier Group, Sweden; Den Berlingske Fond, Denmark; the George and Thelma Paraskevaides Foundation, Cyprus; Southam Inc., Canada and Shipsted ASA, Norway.

Stability Pact Troika

During a meeting in Strasbourg on 3 April 2001, the Parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and the Council of Europe as well as the European Parliament agreed, in principle, to establish a tri-parliamentary troika to promote the aims and principles of the Stability Pact. The three parliamentary Presidents, or their representatives, will meet shortly with Mr. Bodo Hombach, Special Co-ordinator for the Stability Pact to discuss the parliamentary contribution in more detail. It was further agreed that the three parliamentary institutions will keep each other informed about their activities concerning the Stability Pact. The meeting was attended by OSCE PA Deputy Secretary General Pentti Väänänen, European Parliament Principal Administrator, Ms. Maria-José Sousa Fialho, Council of Europe PA Head of the Office of the President, Mr. Erik Lejon and International Institute for Democracy Executive Secretary, Ms. Enie Weddeldijk.

OSCE PA President Adrian Severin Visits Albania

At the invitation of the President of the Albanian Parliament, Mr. Skender Gjinushi, President Severin paid a two-day working visit to Albania from 29-31 March 2001. During the visit Mr. Severin held meetings with the President of Albania Rexhep Meidani, the President of the Albanian Parliament, Mr. Skender Gjinushi as well as with several political party leaders.

In his meetings Mr. Severin put special focus on the current situation in the country in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections later this year.

"The local elections in October 2000 were assessed as having been an important step forward for Albania. However, it is now extremely important to ensure that further progress is made in preparing for and running free and fair elections in June 2001." said Mr. Severin.



President Severin and Albanian President Meidani

The general situation in South East Europe and the efforts to restore peace and security in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, was also discussed.

"...the Albanian Government, as well as the main political forces of the country, have strongly been in favour of political dialogue in Macedonia and condemn any use of violence."

A peaceful future can only be achieved if the different peoples of the Balkans learn to live together with mutual respect for one another." Mr. Severin said in his statement.

President Severin's visit will be followed up by similar efforts by the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and the European Parliament.