

Press release, 15.10.2024

Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya receives Schwarzkopf Europe Award: “Young Europeans” honor Belarusian politician and human rights activist for her ongoing fight for democracy

Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya is being awarded the Schwarzkopf Europe Award for her ongoing commitment to and fight for a democratic basic order in Belarus. Since the election in 2020, Tsikhanouskaya has continued to work towards this goal as Chair of the United Transitional Cabinet in exile. She is honored by a jury of “Young Europeans of the Year”, winners of another award of the Schwarzkopf Foundation. The laudatory speech at the award ceremony tonight in Berlin will be given by Reem Alabali-Radovan, Minister of State at the German Chancellery.

The young jury sees Tsikhanouskaya as an emblematic figure in the struggle for freedom and democracy in Belarus. Expressing their congratulations, jury members state: “Facing immense pressure and personal risk, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya has been at the forefront of efforts to safeguard human rights, promote the rule of law, and a pro-European stance in Belarus. Her courage, resilience and empathy, as well as her ability to unite diverse groups under this goal, have inspired us and millions of people inside and outside the country.”

Tsikhanouskaya comments: “I am deeply honored to receive this award from distinguished young Europeans, who represent the future of our continent. It reminds me that our fight for freedom in Belarus is not isolated—it is part of a broader European struggle for democracy and human dignity. This recognition belongs to every Belarusian who dreams of living in a free and democratic country. It is proof that the world sees our efforts, and that gives us strength to keep going”.

Minister of State Alabali-Radovan points out: “After decades of suppression, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya showed that change in Belarus is possible. To my mind she embodies an ideal for politicians. Not fighting for your own power, not for your own advantage, but for that of the women, men and children who you represent. We have not forgotten Belarus, the upstanding Belarusians, the political prisoners, all those who are fighting for freedom and democracy each and every day.”

The laudatory speech by Alabali-Radovan will be preceded by the jury statement of *Constantin-Alexandru Manda* and *Anahita Neghabat*. Tsikhanouskaya will then accept the trophy and answer questions by *Munira Mohamud*, Young European of 2024, on stage.

Since 2003, the *Schwarzkopf Europa Award* has been awarded annually by a jury of *Young Europeans of the Year* to decision-makers and initiatives from politics or civil society. With the award, the Schwarzkopf Foundation seeks to enable the young generation to honour those ones who, in their view, have made an exceptional contribution to European understanding and European ideals. The award’s trophy is a blue and yellow sculpture symbolizing the European flag and anthem, created by Syrian artist Kenan Melhem.

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About the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe

The non-partisan Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe was founded in 1971 by Pauline Schwarzkopf in Hamburg. The vision of the Schwarzkopf Foundation is a Europe of openness, solidarity and democracy shaped by young people. Through events, workshops, educational programmes and youth-led networks such as the European Youth Parliament (EYP), the Young Islam Conference and Understanding Europe, as well as through awards and fellowships, it offers young Europeans opportunities for encounters and exchange, personal development and active democratic citizenship.

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