

2010 Right Livelihood Award

Claire Schaeffer-Duffy | Dec. 2, 2010 NCR Today

Dr. Ruchama Marton, an Israeli psychiatrist, and Bishop Erwin Krautler of Xingu, Brazil, are among four honorees to receive the 2010 Right Livelihood Award Dec. 6 in Stockholm, Sweden.

The Right Livelihood Award, popularly known as the Alternative Nobel Prize, annually honors those who offer "practical and exemplary answers" to urgent challenges of the day, the award's Web site says.

Krautler, 71, was honored for "a lifetime of work for the human and environmental rights of indigenous peoples and for his tireless efforts to save the Amazon forest from destruction," said organizers of the Swedish award ceremony.

Marton and the organization she founded, Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, were honored for "their indomitable spirit in working for the right to health for all people in Israel and Palestine," organizers said.

Established in 1988, Physicians for Human Rights-Israel provides medical care to disadvantaged populations in Israel and Palestine, and campaigns against the policies and repression that create those disadvantages. The organization's numerous projects include operating mobile medical clinics in the occupied Palestinian Territories and advocating for the health rights of migrants, the undocumented, Bedouins, prisoners and detainees within Israel.

In the late '90s, Marton campaigned to end torture of Palestinian prisoners.

"Physicians for Human Rights-Israel's main concern is to struggle against wrongs that stem from human conduct rather than the illnesses caused by viruses or microbes," she said.

The Austrian-born Krautler traveled to Brazil as a missionary priest in the mid-'60s, later becoming bishop of Xingu, the country's largest diocese and home to many indigenous peoples. From 1983 to 1991 and since 2006, he has served as president of the Indigenous Missionary Council of the Catholic church in Brazil, making the organization one of the most important defenders of indigenous rights.

He has been under round-the-clock police protection since calling for an investigation into the 2005 murder of U.S.-born environmental activist Notre Dame de Namur Sr. Dorothy Stang, with whom he was closely allied.

This year's other laureates are Nigerian environmentalist Nnimmo Bassey and Nepalese Shrikrishna Upadhyay and his community development organization SAPPROS, or Support Activities for Poor Producers.

The four honorees will split \$260,000 in prize money to support their ongoing work. Prize money is not for personal use, according to the prize organizers.

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