The winner of RAW in WAR’s second annual Anna Politkovskaya Award is Malalai Joya

The winner of RAW in WAR’s second annual Anna Politkovskaya Award is Malalai Joya from Afghanistan. Malalai Joya (30) was the youngest elected member of Afghanistan's national parliament in 2005 and past elected delegate for Afghanistan's historic constitutional assembly, the Loya Jirga. At the age of 25, she spoke out against ex-mujahedeen warlords, who dominated Afghanistan's constitutional assembly and now are members of the country's national parliament.

Her life has been in danger ever since she spoke in the Loya Jirga in 2003 and challenged the warlords by demanding that they were brought to justice for the crimes they committed against civilians, in particular women, in Afghanistan. Despite the dangers she faces, Joya continues to fight against the warlords and says that no amount of intimidation will stop her efforts. On 21 May 2007 she was indefinitely suspended after she criticized the parliament for failing to accomplish enough for the Afghan people, saying, "A stable or a zoo is better [than the legislature], at least there you have a donkey that carries a load and a cow that provides milk.

This parliament is worse than a stable or a zoo." Since 2003, when she became a public face in politics, and emerged as a leading fighter for women’s rights, Malalai Joya has received many death threats and survived four assassination attempts. She moves from house to house on a daily basis to avoid attacks. In April 2008, the Ministry of Interior refused to issue Joya passport and added her name to a list of persons banned from leaving Afghanistan.

Today, she works for the Organization for Promoting Afghan Women's Capabilities and raises money for humanitarian projects for Afghan women, including a hospital and a school in her province. A group of more than 100 influential cultural and political leaders joined the Committee of Supporters for the RAW in WAR Anna Politkovskaya Award.

Among them are: President Vaclav Havel, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Harold Pinter, Andre Glucksmann, Mairead Maguire, Betty Williams, Shirin Ebadi, Jody Williams, Wangari Maathai, Elena Bonner, Terry Waite, Vladimir Bukovsky, Sergey Kovalyov, Lyudmila Alekseeva, Lord Frank Judd, Lord Nicolas Rea, Lord Anthony Giddens, Elizabeth Rehn, Sister Helen Prejean, Jane Birkin, Oleg Panfilov, Adam Michnik, Marek Edelman, Baroness Helena Kennedy, Baroness Shirley Williams, Baroness Molly Meacher, Mariane Pearl, Vanessa Redgrave, Gloria Steinem, Ariel Dorfman, Susan Sarandon, Monica Ali, Azar Nafisi, Yakin Erturk, Asma Jahangir, Naomi Klein, Michael Cunningham, Eve Ensler, Naom Chomsky, Gillian Slovo, Eva Hoffman, Anne Nivat, Alexei Simonov and many others.

Source: Telegraph