

**2007 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize Awarded  
Posthumously to Russian Reporter Anna Politkovskaya**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Office of the Spokesman**

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**MEDIA NOTE**

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The Department of State commends the selection of Anna Politkovskaya, the late Russian journalist, as the winner of the 2007 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize. The prize was announced by the Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura on March 30.

The United States was shocked and profoundly saddened by the brutal murder of Anna Politkovskaya on October 7, 2006, and we renew our call to the Russian government to persevere with an investigation in order to find, prosecute, and bring to justice the perpetrators of this heinous crime.

Politkovskaya is a symbol of courage and freedom, who, in the best tradition of journalism and the free press, investigated the most difficult issues, in particular exposing human rights abuses in Chechnya, and dedicated herself to uncovering the truth behind the story. The U.S. remains gravely concerned about the intimidation and murder of journalists like Politkovskaya. Her murder is an affront to free and independent media and to democratic values.

We are also concerned about increasing limitations on press freedoms around the world. In many countries, governments are tightening libel laws, media ownership is increasingly controlled by governments and pro-government forces, the number of independent press outlets is declining, restrictions on Internet search engines and the rights of citizens to express themselves freely over the Internet are multiplying, and those who try to independently seek, receive or disseminate information and ideas are being persecuted.

The UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize is awarded annually on World Press Freedom Day (May 3). Created in 1997, it honors the work of an individual or an organization defending or promoting freedom of expression anywhere in the world, especially if this action puts the individual's life at risk. Candidates are proposed by UNESCO Member States, and regional or international organizations that defend and promote freedom of expression. This year, the 10th anniversary of the Prize, World Press Freedom Day will be celebrated in Medellin, Colombia, the home city of Guillermo

Cano, the newspaper publisher after whom the Prize is named. This year also marks the 20th anniversary of the assassination of Guillermo Cano for denouncing the activities of powerful drug barons in his country. Since its creation, the US \$25,000 prize, financed by the Cano and Ottoway foundations, has been awarded to the following laureates: May Chidiac (Lebanon, 2006), Cheng Yizhong, (China, 2005), Raúl Rivero (Cuba, 2004), Amira Hass (Israel, 2003), Geoffrey Nyarota (Zimbabwe, 2002), U Win Tin (Myanmar, 2001), Nizar Nayyoub (Syria, 2000), Jesus Blancornelas (Mexico, 1999), Christina Anyanwu (Nigeria, 1998), Gao Yu (China, 1997).

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