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Executive Committee Meeting
17-19 October 2013

Swiss Senator Dick Marty Receives 2013 LI Prize for Freedom

Thursday 12 December 2013 19:12

In the presence of liberal dignitaries in the European Parliament, Liberal International President, **Hans van Baalen MEP**, has presented this year's LI Prize for Freedom award to Swiss Senator **Dick Marty**. Senator Marty received the award for his work on investigating secret prisons used by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Europe.

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Receiving the LI Prize for Freedom, **Senator Marty said**: "For me to receive this award is only possible due to the precious support of liberal colleagues - in that sense this award goes to the entire liberal group in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe." Mr Marty also spoke of the importance of overcoming indifference in tackling human rights abuses "whether this is rendition or the more recent NSA wire-tapping allegations today." Marty is a former state prosecutor and lead investigator for the Council of Europe. In his report, released in 2006, he revealed that 14 European states had assisted in the perpetration of rendition and abuses related to the war on terror.

Speaking after the award ceremony LI President **Hans van Baalen MEP**, said: "Liberal International's Prize for Freedom honours men and women who have made extraordinary contributions to the advancement of human rights on a global scale. Senator Dick Marty's work demonstrates an unyielding dedication to the core tenets of liberalism: human rights, democracy and the rule of law. His leadership and perseverance was fundamental in uncovering a carefully constructed global rendition system used to facilitate the torture of suspects in the so-called war on terror, in violation of international law." The LI President also spoke of the importance of recognizing Mr Marty's contribution and steadfast commitment to human rights in the same week as [International Human Rights Day](#).

The awarding ceremony took place at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, at a special lunch hosted by the LI President. Prominent European liberals included President of **ALDE Party** (LI cooperating organisation), **Sir Graham Watson MEP**; Leader of the **ALDE Group** (LI full member) in the European Parliament, **Guy Verhofstadt MEP**; and the former EU Commissioner and Foreign Minister of Belgium, **Louis Michel MEP**. Mr. Marty was nominated for the LI Prize by **Anne Brasseur MP**, President of the ALDE Group in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The LI Prize for Freedom is presented every year to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the promotion of freedom and human rights. Typically this individual should be someone who has fought for liberal values, promoting freedom of conscience, human rights, democracy and peace, who is a key contributor to significant changes in a country or region and to whom this award might offer protection from extreme forms of political persecution. More information about the LI Prize for Freedom past laureates can be obtained at the link [here](#).

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