The Chinese citizen journalist Zhang Zhan has won the International Forum 2000 Award for Courage and Responsibility. She has been unfairly imprisoned for her reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic

In a time, when the Chinese government was trying to suppress information about the situation in the city Wu-Chan, former lawyer Zhang Zhan, together with other citizen journalists, reported truthfully on the developments of the COVID-19 pandemic despite the risks posed by the regime. She was subsequently convicted and imprisoned for her reporting. In recognition of her advocacy for the truth, she has been awarded the International Forum 2000 award for Courage and Responsibility during this year's Forum 2000 conference.

In the year 1986, Václav Havel wrote „We may all realize, that he or she- regardless of how insignificant or powerless they may feel – is in a position to change the world". With these words in mind, on the occasion of last year's 25th Annual Conference, Forum 2000 decided to establish the Forum 2000 International Award for Courage and Responsibility. This year, the organizers have decided to award this prize to the Chinese citizen journalist for her work in the defense of democracy and freedom of speech.

"The award is intended to recognize the citizens, groups of citizens or institutions, that demonstrate extraordinary civic courage or engage in actions, which place responsibility on the greater community defending democracy, promotion of human rights and freedom above all," says **Jakub Klepal, director of the Forum 2000 foundation**.

The ceremony was attended by **Miloš Vystrčil**, President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, **Iveta Radičová**, sociologist and former Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic, and **Xiao Qiang**, Editor-in-Chief of China Digital Times and Research Fellow at the School of Information. Qiang Xiao received the award on her behalf.

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