

## [Martin Ennals Award | Three outstanding women nominated for the 2020 Martin Ennals Award](#)

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### **Three women nominated: a first**

Each year, the Martin Ennals Award rewards human rights defenders from around the world who distinguish themselves by their strong commitment to promoting human rights - often at the risk of their own lives. In 2020, for the first time, the Jury nominated three women who defend the fundamental rights of their communities in sensitive contexts. In Yemen, Huda Al-Sarari has exposed and challenged the existence of secret prisons and many cases of torture. In Mexico, Norma Ledezma is fighting against femicides and disappearances. In South Africa, Sizani Ngubane is fighting for access for women to education and to land.

'The Martin Ennals Foundation is proud to recognise the courageous work of three women. For the 2020 edition, our Jury's choice reflects the ever-greater global impetus of individuals - whatever their gender - who are committed to respect for human rights and women's rights in particular', says Isabel de Sola, Director of the Martin Ennals Foundation.

### **The 2020 Finalists**

'The finalists for the 2020 Martin Ennals Award work on different continents, but all three have in common their resilience, determination, a tremendous rigour and, finally, the positive and concrete impact of their work,' explains Hans Thoolen, Chairman of the Jury.

### **Huda Al-Sarari**



In Yemen, where the conflict has been ongoing since 2005, **Huda Al-Sarari**, a Yemeni lawyer, unveiled the existence of several secret detention centres where the worst violations of human rights were committed: torture, disappearances or even extrajudicial executions.

## **Sizani Ngubane**



In South Africa, women face discrimination, the worst expression of which is widespread gender violence. In rural communities, they frequently have their land expropriated and are deprived of access to education and justice. Sizani Ngubane founded an organisation of more than 50,000 women from rural areas in her country and has fought successfully for over 40 years for the recognition of their rights.

## **Norma Ledezma**



In Mexico, the civil population is paying a high price for the weakness of the rule of law which underpins widespread violence and impunity. Women are the primary victims, with more than 3,500 femicides committed each year. Norma Ledezma, who is the mother of one of the victims, puts all her energy into supporting families seeking access to justice in the state of Chihuahua.

## **Awards Evening 19 February 2020**

The 2020 Martin Ennals Award will be given to one of the three finalists on 19 February 2020 at a live-streamed public ceremony. The event is hosted by the City of Geneva which, as part of its commitment to human rights, is a longstanding supporter of the Award.

*Photos: Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders*