



Fondation *Prix de Genève*  
pour les Droits de l'Homme  
en Psychiatrie

## *Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry Foundation*

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### **HUMAN RIGHTS**

#### **Cambodian psychiatrist wins the Geneva Prize 2014**

The 2014 Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry will be awarded to **Professor Ka Sunbaunat**, from Cambodia. **Professor Sunbaunat** founded the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Health Sciences in Phnom Penh in 1992, and directed the Department until 2013. Cambodia owes to him the development of treatment of mental illness, together with the establishment of facilities in hospitals and health centres.

**Ka Sunbaunat** was among the victims of the genocidal policies of the *Khmer Rouge* regime during the years 1975-1979, when his physical health was seriously damaged by the harsh work he was forced to do. Nevertheless, he chose to stay in Cambodia, and was the first physician to specialize in psychiatry. He is now regarded as the father of Cambodian psychiatry and, from his work with the mentally ill, as a "living symbol of resilience."

**Professor Ka Sunbaunat** is convinced that assisting mentally ill patients suffering from trauma and the effects of injustice is a means of fighting against the violation of human rights. He has unceasingly continued to deepen his understanding of the links between mental health and human rights, through his teaching activities, his publications and media coverage, and has effectively helped to diminish the stigma which is often attached to mental illness in Cambodia.

**Professor Ka Sunbaunat** has also distinguished himself by his commitment to the values of Buddhism, the concepts of which in his eyes constitute a central paradigm in the treatment of mental illness.

The Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry Foundation, chaired by **Professor Emeritus François Ferrero** (University of Geneva, Switzerland), established an international Jury for the 2014 Prize under the chairmanship of **Ms. Ruth Dreifuss** (former President of the Swiss Confederation). The other members of the Jury were **Professor Marianne Kastrup** (Copenhagen, Denmark), **Doctor Pierre Vallon** (President of the Swiss Society for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy (SSPP)), **Professor Robert Roth** (Professor of Criminal Law, University of Geneva), **Professor Pedro Ruiz**, USA (President of the World Psychiatric Association) and **Mr. Olivier Vodoz** (Attorney at law and former Geneva State Councillor).

The Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry was established in 1999 in Geneva, Switzerland, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It aims to honour any person, regardless of gender, age, or nationality, or any governmental or non-governmental institution, for exceptional achievement in this area. The work must develop fairness, humanity and excellence in psychiatric care, confront ignorance and discrimination surrounding mental illness, and promote the implementation of human rights and ethics in psychiatry. It can be national or international in scope.

The 2014 Prize of 20,000 Swiss francs is supported by the State of Geneva and the Swiss Medical Federation of Psychiatrists-Psychotherapists (FMPP) and will be presented to **Professor Ka Sunbaunat** in September 2014 at the 16th Congress of the World Psychiatric Association to be held in Madrid, Spain.

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