

# [Press Releases: 2018 International Women of Courage Award Recipients Announced](#)

Notice to the Press  
Office of the Spokesperson

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## **Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan to Honor Awardees on March 23; Special Remarks by First Lady of the United States Melania Trump**

Due to inclement weather, the 2018 International Women of Courage Award Ceremony is postponed until Friday, March 23, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.

On Friday, March 23, Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan will host the annual International Women of Courage (IWOC) Awards at the U.S. Department of State to honor 10 extraordinary women from around the world. First Lady of the United States Melania Trump will deliver special remarks at the ceremony. In addition, Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and Department Spokesperson Heather Nauert will deliver opening and closing remarks.

Now in its 12th year, the Secretary of State's IWOC Award recognizes women around the globe who have demonstrated exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for peace, justice, human rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment, often at great personal risk and sacrifice. Since the inception of this award in 2007, the State Department has recognized more than 120 women from more than 65 different countries. U.S. diplomatic missions overseas nominate one woman of courage from their respective host countries. The finalists are selected and approved by senior Department officials.

The bios of the 2018 awardees are located [here](#) and names listed below:

Roya Sadat of Afghanistan

Aura Elena Farfan of Guatemala

Dr. Julissa Villanueva of Honduras

Aliyah Khalaf Saleh of Iraq

Sister Maria Elena Berini of Italy (nominated by the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See)

Aiman Umarova of Kazakhstan

Dr. Feride Rushiti of Kosovo

L'Malouma Said of Mauritania

Godelive Mukasarasi of Rwanda

Sirikan Charoensiri of Thailand

Following the official award ceremony and meetings in Washington, D.C., the IWOC honorees will travel individually to Austin, Cleveland, Dallas, Pensacola, Phoenix, Raleigh, Salt Lake City, or San Antonio on the [International Visitor Leadership Program](#). American organizations and businesses will host the IWOC awardees and collaborate with them on strategies and ideas to empower women both in the United States and abroad. The awardees will reconvene in Los Angeles for a closing ceremony before returning to their home countries.

Use #WomenOfCourage for news and updates on this year's award. For press inquiries, contact [ECA-Press@state.gov](mailto:ECA-Press@state.gov).

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