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TITLE: The Magnitsky Human Rights Awards 2019 – Jamal Khashoggi

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SPEAKER

AGNÈS CALLAMARD - A

JAMAL KHASHOGGI: H

A: Good evening, everybody. Ladies and gentlemen, friends, colleagues, I think the last prize this evening yes, the price for courage. By courage we are celebrating a virtue, something that is acquired. Courage is a virtue, something that is not innate, it's not inherent, we are not born courageous, we become courageous or some of us do because of circumstances and as a chosen path. Some of us make the choice to be courageous where many others may choose to turn away, turn around, look away, ignore or stay silent. Jamal Khashoggi, the unassuming, polite, kind and curious journalist he chose to be courageous. A well-respected journalist and intellectual in his home country Saudi Arabia, very close at some point to the Saudi administration and to the Saudi court. He was not forced to become courageous, he actively chose to be courageous. In 2013 he watched, followed the Arab Spring, the revolt of Arab populations against autocrat, dictators, corruption and justice. When confronted with another wave of personal attacks, the cancellation of his column in Saudi newspaper, Al Hayat, he was banned from writing, appearing on television and attending conferences.

In 2017 he said that's enough, he chose to leave, not to run because he believed he could no longer be silent as he explained in his first piece for the Washington Post. Some choose to be courageous, to risk dangers and face suffering. Jamal Khashoggi did just that in leaving he lost his wife who was forced to divorce him, he lost access to his children some of whom were subjected to travel ban, many of his family and friendship network turned their back on him. He lost status, he lost income; he lost security. In exile he experienced deep, deep loneliness and sadness and still he turned down many invitations to return to Saudi Arabia. He refused the money that was offered to him, the job offers, the promises of high status. Instead he chose to speak and write and demand and stand. He chose to be courageous where many others are chosen to turn away, turn around, look away, stay silent. Jamal Khashoggi dared dreaming the dream of dignity for his people, for his country, for his region. He dreamed a platform for Arab voices, the creation of an independent international forum, isolated from the influence of the nationalist government spreading hate through propaganda.

With his newly found friend he planned new project to encounter that propaganda online and offline. He managed means to expand democracy in the Middle-East. Few of us tell us that through courage is put to the service of others without selfish interest, that true courage is guided by justice, to be courageous truly is to do what is right. Jamal, the unassuming, polite, kind journalist chose to be courageous, he chose justice over his personal interest; he chose democracy and freedom for the people of the Middle-East over his status and security and for that he became one of those whom the Saudi regime sought to silence. On October 2nd he was murdered. He was lured to Saudi Arabia consulate on false pretence along, on his own with his pen, with his kindness, with his politeness. He was confronted by Saudi men, part of a team of 15, they strangled him, they asphyxiated him, they dismembered him, they disposed of his body. A killing for which the State of Saudi

Arabia is responsible, this is the price for Jamal's courage, understanding what's right and not doing so that easy opposite of courage.

That we have also seen too much of it in the aftermath of Jamal Khashoggi's killing, by celebrating his courage we are also denouncing its very opposite, we reject the complicity, the silence, the apologies, the eagerness to move on that too many powerful actors have exhibited after his killing. We reject the despicable self-interest that is driving too many to trample on values, valour and justice. By celebrating Jamal's courage we demand and we denounce not only the actors of his murder, but we denounce as well the coward that failed to act in the aftermath of his killing and we stand with Jamal against them as we stand with the people of Lebanon and Iraq, Bahrain and Egypt who dare dream and who dare act on their dreams and who dare act and face killings. We demand an end to injustice, to hatred, to propaganda, to corruption and we demand justice.

In honouring Jamal's courage we also celebrate Hatiche's courage. Jamal dreamed a new life with his [unclear], his soulmate, his companion, his soon to be wife, together they were dreaming of a life together. Tonight we also celebrate Hatiche, the courage of all those that are left behind and who continue the fight for justice on behalf of those that have been silenced forever. We celebrate the courage of those whose voice and act ensure we do not forget, ensure that we remember and that we continue to fight, to fight for what is right. Thank you very much.

H: Oh, what I need to say I think Agnès said everything, but I really thank you, Agnès. I don't know what I will say today, but okay. The person who should have been today is Jamal. He really was a true warrior in the freedom of media. You are all here and his award witnessed the importance of courage that Jamal for struggle, the expression and the struggle of democratic and a free society. I thank you all for your support for the gift of freedom of journalism, I feel that Sergei Magnitsky and Jamal souls are with us right now and they are smiling with us and as much as they taken Jamal's room on the world we will continue to fight and keep his values alive. Those who wanted him gone wanted him to forget as soon as possible, but that will never happen. I hope we keep the memory of Jamal as beautiful of a man as he was not only because no one was yet punished for a horrible crime of killing him, but also as a warning to any government, to our regime who will think that it's possible to just kill a man and walk away without any consequences. I am proud of all of you on behalf of Jamal. Thank you.

END OF TRANSCRIPT