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**TITLE:** The Magnitsky Human Rights Awards 2019 – Gulchehra Hoja

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**SPEAKER**

BILL BROWDER - B

GULCHEHRA HOJA: G

B: One of the things about my campaign is that it started with the campaign for justice for one man, for Sergei Magnitsky, but as I have gone through this journey in this campaign as the Magnitsky Act has started to take hold as it has broadened as it has gone to other countries I get approached by lots of people with lots of different issues. And those of you who were here last year will remember the story about Vitkov's from Guatemala, this was a Russian family that wrote to me after reading my book from a Guatemalan prison that had been put there and sentenced the father to 19 years in jail and the mother and daughter to 14 years in jail effectively by the Russians colluding with the Guatemalan authorities. I was so moved by their story and I got involved and I ended up meeting their family's lawyers and their family's lawyers had done such an amazing job defending them a great persona risk that we honoured them here last year. And it's this year that I have a similar story, I was in Washington DC and again I get approached all the time with all sorts of different stories and I was approached by a young woman, a very humble and sad young woman who had a story to tell me.

That young woman is here tonight, her name is Gulchehra Hoja and Gulchehra comes from the part of China, comes from a place called Xing Xang in china and she's a member of the Uighur community there and she started her career as a television personality. She was doing children's shows and all sorts of interesting stuff and eventually and I probably would imagine... I haven't asked her this, but I probably would imagine that 20 years ago she would never thought of herself as being a human rights activist, but she ended up in Washington and she ended up working for Radio Free Asia in their Uighur language service and in that job she was one of the first people to report the concentration camps that China has set up in order to ethnically cleanse the Uighur people. She reported that and 40 of her family and her extended family members were arrested and put in these concentration camps. She has continued to campaign to speak out to expose this terrible atrocity in spite of these enormous personal costs and when we were trying to decide who to give this award to I couldn't think of a person more deserving than Gulchehra Hoja. Gulchehra, I am very impressed, honoured and proud to know you. Congratulations.

G: I am so honoured and happy to be here. Thank you so much for this award and especially for creating The Magnitsky Act to hold human rights violators accountable, by focussing on the human rights abusers perpetrated by an authoritarian State against one man, Sergei Magnitsky you have made it possible to seek and achieve a measure of justice for so many who suffer violence where there is no rule of law. Bill, by your commitment to telling Sergei's story and your success in getting countries to adopt Magnitsky laws, to protect human rights internationally you have shown the power of an individual against an authoritarian regime. Your example has empowered many others with the hope and the faith necessary to aspire to speak and seek justice by freezing perpetrators, arrests abroad and their freedom to travel you are publicly naming and shaming them showing the world disgust with their action and separating them from the international commerce. That is exactly what is need most right now for the crimes China is committing against millions of Uighur's at the very least the world should separate itself from the perpetrators of today's concentration camps in Uighur region.

Perpetrators should be forced to choose between violating human rights and enjoying the benefits of international trade, the entire Uighur region is a force labour zone that enabled billions of Dollars in trade advantages for China. As a reporter documenting so many human rights abuses occurring in your own homeland it is easy to become a target yourself. When you then become the individual target of an authoritarian regime that will take your whole extended family to the concentration camps to exhort your silence it is an overwhelming grief. It can crush you, but I found that your response to such psychological torture can also change you permanently from one who is susceptible to such extortion to one who improved through the loss of everything to stand up to an authoritarian regime. Disconnecting from China's action against me has been the only way to not only maintain sanity, but also to help others begin to stand up to China's long arms that attempts to stretch across the world with threats to achieve the world's silence about this repression by going public with my own story and testifying Congress to seek out measures of justice I have found renewed meaning in my work.

You must find meaning in life, it is the only natural antidepressant known to humanity. The Chinese Communist Party is taking hostages by the millions not only inflicting pain directly on those it puts into its concentration camps, but even delivering illegal threats to the relatives abroad. The world's silence has only encouraged China to expand its concentration camps to hold millions of people and those outside the camps suffer under the world's worst [unclear 8:29] State. I cannot understand how it is possible for the world not only to turn a blind high to such high violations of rights, but to actively invest in those CCC controlled companies and even in the very companies involved to build out 5G in structure investing, even [unclear 9:06] does not use Magnitsky sanction in a timely manner to better greater human tragedy then I am afraid the world at some point has to start talking about how China's actions meet the definition of genocide. According to experts China's documented mass abusers already made every single example of genocidal act listed in 1948 Genocide Convention. Each of which the world including China has obligated itself to prevent and punish.

I only hope the world remembers its commandment and the loss and the finally voices with the meaningful action the words we each must have, the courage to demand never again. Thank you.

**END OF TRANSCRIPT**