

The Sakharov Prize and the fight for Human Rights:

Aung San Suu Kyi, Nelson Mandela

I have great admiration for this woman, who has admirable dignity and considerable style. Her image, with that elegance that comes, for example, from simply wearing a flower in her hair, has always inspired me with admiration.

I remember that I handed the prize to her husband and son. I believe that she not only sets an example of dignity, but also of knowing how to sacrifice oneself for deep-rooted convictions, and I honestly feel such immense admiration for this woman, this lady.

Mandela was awarded the Sakharov Prize before my election but could not collect it because he was still on the island, in prison. It feels very strange to look back at what the world was like in 1989. Mandela came later, and I gave it to him.

We have always upheld these values and do so systematically; it is not about lecturing others. It is because they are the values that have made it possible for us to live together peacefully and to share a future.