



Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Geschichte  
Société suisse d'histoire  
Società svizzera di storia  
Societad svizra d'istoria

## SSH-Award for Academic Freedom «lapis animosus» 2025

### Laudatio for Antoon De Baets

The Swiss Society for History awards Antoon De Baets with its prize for academic freedom “lapis animosus” 2025.

In 1995, Antoon De Baets founded the **Network of Concerned Historians (NCH)**, an **international human rights and solidarity network supporting historians under threat**. The NCH quickly became an important observatory that connects endangered historians with human rights organizations. Each year, the NCH publishes a comprehensive **report documenting censorship, research restrictions, threats, repression, and arrests of historians worldwide**. In 2022, the report covered 100 countries across nearly 165 pages, including Switzerland and our last laureate, Jonathan Pärli. This meticulous and rigorous work serves as a unique resource for scholars, institutions, NGOs, and human rights defenders.

Affiliated with several international organizations advocating for human rights and academic freedom, the NCH goes beyond documentation – it also coordinates calls to action and encourages historians and institutions to take public stands.

In the current global context, with increasing political, ideological, and economic pressures on historians, the work of NCH has gained importance. By awarding the NCH, the Swiss Society for History emphasizes an essential message: **academic freedom can never be taken for granted** – it must be defended daily, both through research practices and institutional principles.

Through this award, the SSH aims to **promote global collaboration and support the long-term consolidation of the NCH**.

**Prof. Dr. Sacha Zala**  
President SSH

**Dr. Flavio Eichmann**  
Secretary General SSH