



International Peace Bureau celebrates a triple Nobel for women peacemakers

Geneva, 7 October, 2011. The IPB is delighted to add its voice to the congratulations pouring in from around the globe for this year's Nobel peace laureates: **Leymah Gbowee, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Tawakkul Karman.**

IPB sees the prize not only as an accolade for these three individuals, but also for the thousands of women who over the years and the decades and in all parts of the world have courageously raised their voices for peace, for human rights and for democratic processes – far too often without being heard by male-dominated powers.

Probably there would not have been a Nobel prize for champions of peace were it not for a woman. Bertha von Suttner convinced Alfred Nobel to establish a prize for disarmament and peace-promotion. She herself was the first woman to receive the prize and she played a vital role in the establishment of the International Peace Bureau. This year's Nobel award is in a special way – and finally – honouring her memory and her legacy for modern times.

The prize this year gives long-overdue recognition to the strength of African women, and encourages the many Arab women who are in pursuit of gender justice as well as democracy. It will hopefully contribute to broadening the influence of individual women and women's networks at different levels of decision-making, not least in relation to issues of peace-building and conflict transformation. The prize will contribute to combating the unacceptable levels of violence in the world, especially during armed conflicts, and notably the different forms of intimidation and maiming of women.

IPB also sees the prize as a boost for the work of the United Nations: for the implementation of the decisions of the UN World Conferences on Women and of the specialized agencies and of numerous recommendations,

including Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, as well as for the new agency, UN Women. It reminds us too that the biggest challenge is to prevent conflicts from turning violent. Peace work needs to be pursued, not only at many levels of society, but also in the pre-conflict and post-conflict phases, as well as in the heat of hostilities.

By this year's prize the Nobel Committee has made itself more relevant to ordinary people: to the very many, both women and men, who are engaged in building a world without war and oppression. The future will show if this year's prize is sufficient to restore the support for the Peace Prize after some very heavily criticised awards in recent years. While this is a much better choice than others the Committee has made, the public debate over the interpretation of Nobel's will, and the composition of the Committee itself, is far from over.

About IPB

*The International Peace Bureau is dedicated to the vision of a World Without War. We are a Nobel Peace Laureate (1910), and over the years 13 of our officers have been recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. Our 320 member organisations in 70 countries, and individual members, form a global network which brings together expertise and campaigning experience in a common cause. IPB has United Nations Consultative Status since 1977 and is the Secretariat for the NGO Committee for Disarmament (Geneva). Our main programme centres on **Sustainable Disarmament for Sustainable Development**. We welcome your participation.*

Annual conference + Council meeting 2011: Potsdam, Germany: Oct. 28-30.
Symposium on the work of Alfred Fried, Nobel peace laureate 1911. See ipb.org

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Making Peace photo-exhibition: <http://www.makingpeace.org>