



Nobel Women's Initiative Update

November 19, 2009

News

Shirin Ebadi Calls for Human Rights - Not Nukes - In Iran

Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi [urged US President Barack Obama](#) to put more focus on human rights in Iran and less on Iran's nuclear program. In a visit to Washington, DC in October, Ebadi told the Washington Post that paying more attention to Iran's nuclear ambitions than to its trampling of democracy and freedom is a both a tactical and a moral mistake.

Read the Washington Post editorial, [How to Engage Iran](#).

Jody Williams Demands Justice for the Women of Atenco

Nobel Laureate Jody Williams joined over a dozen civil society groups from across Central America in September in Atenco, Mexico, to call for justice for who have been women sexually violated and psychologically abused by Mexican police.

Williams also echoed the calls of local activists for the release of political prisoners, and for the adoption of domestic and international human rights organizations' recommendations aimed at protecting human rights defenders.

[Read more.](#)

Wangari Maathai Addresses UN on Climate Change

Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai [urged over 100 world leaders](#) to fight climate change at the UN Special Session on Climate Change in September. Directly addressing the leaders, Maathai reinforced the responsibility and power that world leaders have in slowing the pace of climate change through concrete agreements. She stated that millions of people across the world are calling upon their leaders to act now.

[Read the full address.](#)

[Read Wangari Maathai's Op Ed.](#)

Nobel Laureates Call for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons

A group of 17 Nobel Laureates [issued a call for the abolition of nuclear weapons](#) in August. This in the wake of US President Obama's call at the UN Security Council for greater commitment by nations towards disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The group - which includes Archbishop Desmond Tutu, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, F.W. de Klerk, Shirin Ebadi, Jody Williams, Mairead Maguire, and John Hume- called for a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons.

The call notes that "nuclear weapons are indiscriminate and thus already illegal under international humanitarian law."

[Read the complete statement.](#)

Jody Williams Gets Standing Ovation at UN Conference on Disarmament

Jody Williams brought [an annual gathering of civil society](#), convened by the United Nations, to their feet in Mexico City on September 9th. In her speech to over 500 international policy-makers and non-government representatives, Williams called upon civil society to look beyond their differences and "work together" to bring about the abolition of nuclear arms.

[Read Jody Williams' full address.](#)

End Burma's Impunity: Nobel Laureates to UN Security Council

In August fourteen Nobel Laureates [released an open letter](#) to the members of

the UN Security Council in response to the wrongful conviction and sentencing of Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma's democratically elected leader. Signatories to the open letter included Archbishop Desmond Tutu, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, President Mikhail Gorbachev, and Nobel Women's Initiative Laureates Shirin Ebadi, Wangari Maathai, Mairead Maguire, Rigoberta Menchu Tum, Betty Williams and Jody Williams.

In the open letter the Laureates called on the Council to pass a resolution creating a Commission of Inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma, and to end the impunity of the Burmese military.

[Read the open letter.](#)

Laureates Mark Hiroshima Anniversary in Los Alamos

Nobel Women's Initiative partner Pax Christi New Mexico brought together peace activists from around the US in August, ahead of the 64th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to call for disarmament and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Speaking at a number of Los Alamos events, Nobel Laureates Jody Williams and Mairead Maguire echoed the calls for a nuclear-free world. Both Laureates challenged individuals to take action as part of a global effort for nuclear disarmament.

[Read more.](#)

Congratulations to the Award-Winning One Million Signatures Campaign

The One Million Signatures Campaign for Equality in Iran won the *Reach all Women in WAR's* third annual Anna Politkovskaya Award in September. The grassroots campaign, launched in 2006, aims to collect one million signatures of Iranian nationals to a petition demanding an end to legal discrimination against women in Iran. RAW in WAR (Reach All Women in WAR) annually presents the Anna Politkovskaya Award to a woman human rights defender from a conflict zone in the world who, like Anna, stands up for the victims of conflict, often at great personal risk.

Fellow Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Shirin Ebadi was one of the founders of the campaign. Read [Ebadi's response](#) to the prize in the Guardian , as well as a [letter signed by a number of Nobel Laureates](#) for the occasion.

As well, The One Million Signatures Campaign has just been named Glamour Magazine's Women of the Year. The women of the campaign were recognized for their activism in the face of personal risk. [Read more about this award.](#)

[Visit the One Million Signatures Campaign website.](#)

Take Action

Join Laureates in Sharing Your Message of Support for the Tibetan People

Show your support and appreciation to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people for their culture of wisdom and compassion and their steadfast commitment to nonviolence as the path to peace. The *Thank You Tibet!* Campaign has launched a website where people around the globe can post their messages.

Create a message in any medium -- video, music, visual art, photography, and/or text -- to express the ways that Tibetan culture and spirituality have inspired you and changed your life. Your message will be seen on line by a worldwide community and selections will be presented during a special program at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City in March 2010 and to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

[Share your message, or view others' messages.](#)

Events

Laureates Travel to India to Support Tibetans

Nobel Peace Laureates Mairead Maguire, Jody Williams and Shirin Ebadi traveled to India in October, at the invitation of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Tibetan people in exile. The three Laureates launched the [Thank You Tibet! Campaign](#) during a press conference in Dharamsala, India. As well, they presented the Dalai Lama with a letter of support and appreciation signed by eight Nobel Peace Laureates.

The campaign, organized by The Tibet Fund, will continue for the next six months, offering people worldwide the opportunity to post messages of thanks and support to Tibetans and His Holiness for their contributions to peace and democracy.

[Read the statement launching the Thank You Tibet! Campaign.](#)

[Read our blog](#) about the delegation to Dharamsala, and [view photos](#) of the trip.

Action Must Be Part of Compassion: Vancouver Peace Summit

Nobel Peace Laureates Jody Williams, Mairead Maguire, and Betty Williams [joined the Dalai Lama in September](#) in emphasizing that taking action for change is a critical element of compassion. The women were engaged in discussions with the Dalai Lama and other luminaries over four days at the Dalai Lama Peace Summit in Vancouver. The participants discussed such topics as women and peacebuilding, educating the heart, and global compassion.

Watch the sessions [Connecting for Peace](#); [Laureates in Dialogue](#).

Upcoming: International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women of Burma

The Women's Tribunal on Burma will be held on March 2nd, 2010 in New York City. The Tribunal is timed to coincide with the United Nation's annual meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The objectives of the tribunal are partly to raise international visibility of crimes against women of Burma by creating a forum for women testifiers to tell their stories, which are also the stories of their families and communities, and to produce findings by eminent tribunal judges that directly respond to testifiers and their stories, and assign responsibility for human rights violations and crimes against women of Burma.

Judges for the tribunal will include Nobel Peace Laureates Adolfo Esquivel, Jody Williams, and Shirin Ebadi.

Watch our website for further details as they arise.



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