



**Laureates:**

Mairead Maguire, Ireland (1976)  
Rigoberta Menchu Tum, Guatemala (1992)  
Jody Williams, USA (1997)  
Shirin Ebadi, Iran (2003)  
Leymah Gbowee, Liberia (2011)  
Tawakkol Karman, Yemen (2011)

**Refer Syria's Use of Chemical Weapons to the ICC: Nobel Peace Laureates**

*(Ottawa) September 4, 2013.*

On the eve of the G20 meeting in Russia, the six Nobel peace laureates of the Nobel Women's Initiative today called upon the US and its allies to use the international legal system in place of military intervention to respond to any use of chemical weapons in Syria. In a statement, the laureates—Jody Williams (US), Shirin Ebadi (Iran), Tawakkol Karman (Yemen), Mairead Maguire (Ireland), Leymah Gbowee (Liberia) and Rigoberta Menchú Tum (Guatemala)—are asking the UN Security Council to refer the case of chemical weapons being used in Syria to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

“We hope that US legislators, like their British counterparts, will recognize that there is no public appetite to resolve this problem through more bombs and more violence,” said Jody Williams, who won her Nobel peace prize in 1997 for her work to end the use of landmines. “Americans know that any intervention—far from being a strategic move—will only lead to more loss of lives and even possibly to retaliation against Americans.”

Last week, UK Prime Minister David Cameron lost the vote in favor of a military intervention in Syria in the British House of Commons. A Reuters/Ipsos poll released yesterday found that Americans opposed, by a four-to-one margin, any strike on Syria.

In their statement, the laureates say that the use of chemical weapons is a “war crime that should be addressed by the international legal system created precisely for such events”. They are urging the international community to convene the Syria Peace Conference, known as Geneva II, as one of the many nonviolent measures available to the international community help resolve Syria's conflict—and to include women in the peace process.

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**Please read the full statement below. Please contact for Arabic translation.**

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*Advocating for peace, justice and equality*

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*The Nobel Women's Initiative was established in 2006, and is led by Nobel Peace laureates Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi, Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Leymah Gbowee, Tawakkol Karman and Mairead Maguire. The Nobel Women's Initiative uses the prestige of the Nobel Peace Prize and of courageous women peace laureates to magnify the power and visibility of women working in countries around the world for peace, justice and equality.*

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### **The Nobel Women's Initiative Calls for**

#### **The Nonviolent Resolution of the Crisis over Chemical Weapons Use in Syria: No Military Intervention**

The use of chemical weapons in Syria is a crime that cannot be ignored but bombing Syria is not the answer. Military intervention in Syria can only lead to more death and destruction, and further fuel the volatile situation in the region.

We applaud the vote of the UK's Parliament against endorsing British involvement in attacks on Syria, and call upon the United States to step back from the brink of attacking yet another country in the Middle East/North Africa region. Such a move can only result in more hatred, more violence and more retaliation.

We call upon the UN Security Council to accept its responsibility to **act** in response to the use of chemical weapons in Syria instead of the ongoing posturing of its members based on their own self-interest instead of concern about the people of Syria.

We urge the Security Council to ensure the nonviolent resolution of this crisis within the ongoing crisis of the civil war in Syria. We call upon the Security Council to refer the matter to the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

We also call on the International Community to urgently convene the Syria Peace Conference, known as Geneva II, and to ensure women meaningfully participate.

The use of chemical weapons is a war crime that should be addressed by the international legal system created precisely for such events. More bombs, more violence, more war will only undercut the ICC and further weaken international humanitarian law.

We call for justice through the Court not through cruise missiles.

Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureate (1976) — Ireland  
Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Nobel Peace Laureate (1992) — Guatemala  
Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Laureate (1997) — USA  
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