



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)

Justice for Survivors in Guatemala

The trial of former dictator Efraín Ríos Montt and his former intelligence chief José Mauricio Rodríguez Sánchez in domestic courts is a critical test of Guatemala's commitment to lasting peace—and represents a historic milestone in the indigenous struggle to achieve justice in Guatemala.

As Nobel Peace laureates, we stand in solidarity with the survivors of the acts of genocide committed against the Mayan people of Guatemala. We honor their courage and conviction in testifying about the horrific crimes they endured at the hands of the Guatemalan military, including murder, sexual violence, torture and forced displacement.

We know that many of those people testifying were young children at the time of these mass atrocities, and we acknowledge the profound pain and loss they have endured for decades. We stand in awe of their courage in coming forward during the trial to make those who committed the crimes accountable for their actions. Such testimony will not only help in the healing process of the survivors, but also plays a critical role in national reconciliation and strengthening the justice system for the benefit of all Guatemalans.

True peace requires the presence of justice, and this trial marks an important step in accountability for crimes of the past and preventing such atrocities in the future. In the words of fellow peace laureate Dr. Rigoberta Menchú Tum, "heroism is about standing firm and speaking out to demand justice—and not seeking vengeance".

We call on all Guatemalans to respect a legitimate, independent and transparent judicial process. Any possibility of corruption in this trial must be investigated, and authorities must act to ensure that the highest standards of integrity are respected. Acting swiftly to guarantee the protection and safety of survivors and those involved in the trial—including the judges and lawyers for the prosecution, members of civil society organizations and members of indigenous communities—is also critically important.

The world is watching as Guatemala takes the bold and necessary step of putting a former head of state on trial. As friends of peace, and allies of justice, this is our opportunity as an international community to take responsibility for our own part in Guatemala's tragic past and right the wrongs for the benefit of future generations of Guatemalans. This can only be achieved if we fully support the Guatemalan people's right to have a fair and complete trial.

Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureate 1977
Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Laureate, 1984
Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Nobel Peace Laureate, 1992
President José Ramos-Horta, Nobel Peace Laureate, 1996
Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Laureate, 1997
Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Laureate, 2003
Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Laureate, 2011

Advocating for peace, justice and equality

