



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)

Moving Beyond Militarism and War: Women-driven Solutions for a Nonviolent World
Final Statement from the Conference

(Belfast, May 30, 2013)

As we bring to a close a three-day conference that brought together women peacemakers from more than 20 countries—including six women Nobel Peace laureates together for the first time—we call on G8 leaders to put human security at the centre of their agenda in their upcoming Summit being held next month in Northern Ireland. The effects of war, conflict and militarism are ravaging our communities, our nations, our environment, and our economies—and the prospect of a healthy, peaceful, and prosperous future under threat.

Human security and sustainable peace require the inclusion of more women in peace processes, and in leadership and decision-making roles, whether in local structures, national assemblies and governments, or multilateral organizations. All United Nations member states are expected to fully implement women's empowerment and participation under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. This includes Northern Ireland, where the peace agreement (The Belfast Agreement 1998) commits all parties to the full and equal political participation of women. Action is needed both on local and global levels.

All too many governments in the world respond to real and perceived threats by increasing military spending, investing in nuclear weapons, acquiring new weapons—with no regard for international law—and pursuing policies that put our populations at risk. The “war on terror” and “war on drugs” are two examples of misguided policies that fail to create true human security and significantly threaten the safety of women and entire communities.

Governments have choices. Diplomacy, compromise and negotiation are all nonviolent tactics that work. Governments can also learn from and support the hundreds other strategies pursued by women and grassroots groups across the globe. Tolerance and compassion can be learned and cultivated, but it will require patience, resources and commitment. It will take all of us working together, at every level of society.

We strongly urge G8 states to decrease military spending. Redirect the investment to education, training and social services that will improve livelihoods and address the root causes of violence. We also call upon governments to prioritize support and protection for grassroots groups that use nonviolent means to end conflict and war, and address the negative impacts of militarization—including sexual violence against women. We also call upon the G8 countries to adhere to international law, and the international human rights framework.

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Advocating for peace, justice and equality