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IPB's MacBride Peace Prize 2006 Awarded to Mayors for Peace Campaign

Helsinki, September 1, 2006. The International Peace Bureau announced today the winners of its 2006 MacBride Peace Prize. It will be awarded to the Mayors for Peace organisation, founded and led by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The ceremony will take place **in Helsinki at 15.45 on Friday Sept 8th**, within the framework of the IPB's Triennial Conference (Sept 7-10, see programme at www.ipb.org). The venue is the **Old Student House, Mannerheimintie 3***. Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba of Hiroshima will receive the medal on behalf of Mayors for Peace. At a second ceremony, Mayor Iccho Itoh of Nagasaki will receive the MacBride Prize in Nagasaki in October 2006.

Also invited to join the ceremony on Sept 8th are official representatives of Varkaus City and Mariehamn (Finland), whose communities are members of the Mayors for Peace network.

The Mayors for Peace Campaign is an innovative initiative uniting leaders of over 1400 local governments in 119 countries in a common quest to liberate the world from nuclear weapons.

IPB President Cora Weiss said: "IPB makes this award because the Mayors who have joined, and will join, this Campaign, have recognized that foreign policy cannot be left to heads of state. Mayors are closer than national governments to the billions of people who would be the targets of any nuclear attack. The award is therefore a token, not only of our respect and admiration, but also of our wish that many more Mayors will join the Campaign and that it will continue until our cities are safe from any conventional or nuclear bombing."

The Sean MacBride Peace Prize is given annually to organizations or individuals who exemplify the values and vision of the great Irish statesman, Sean MacBride, who was the President of the International Peace Bureau from 1974 to 1985. He was also a Nobel Peace laureate and a great citizen diplomat promoting human rights, disarmament and peace.

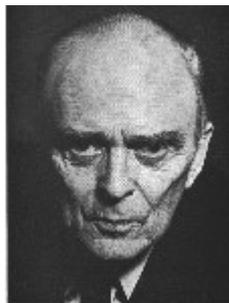
IPB is holding its Triennial gathering in Helsinki from 7-10 Sept at Paasitorni Centre and other venues. The main conference, on Sept 7, will be addressed by Finland's Foreign Minister, Erkki Tuomioja.

** The ceremony is open to the press and the public. It will take place in English with Finnish translation available. Individual interviews with Mayor Akiba and Cora Weiss of IPB can be arranged by contacting Laura Lodenius, see above.*

More information at:
www.ipb.org
and
www.mayorsforpeace.org

ABOUT THE MACBRIDE PEACE PRIZE

The MacBride Peace Prize was established in 1992 in honor of Sean MacBride, a former IPB President and a Nobel laureate (as is the IPB itself). Every year the IPB awards a special prize to a person or organisation that has done outstanding work for peace, disarmament and/or human rights. These were the principal concerns of Sean MacBride, the distinguished Irish statesman who was Chairman of IPB from 1968-74 and President from 1974-1985. He was also one of the co-founders of Amnesty International and held positions such as Secretary-General of the International Commission of Jurists and UN Commissioner for Namibia. While at IPB he launched the *MacBride Appeal against Nuclear Weapons*, which gathered the names of over 11,000 international lawyers. MacBride died in 1988 and the Prize was set up in 1992, IPB's centenary year.



Previous MacBride Prize winners 1992-2005

2005: Prize not awarded.

2004: **The Geneva Initiative on the Middle East**, which brought together key political leaders from Israel and Palestine to draft a comprehensive agreement to resolve the conflict. Also awarded was Prof. Alexis Keller of Geneva University, who was the initiator and motor of the project.

2003: **Nihon Hidankyo**, the organisation representing survivors of the atomic bombings

of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Their members (now elderly and suffering serious medical effects) have given their lives to the cause of the abolition of nuclear weapons.

2002: For her demonstration of commitment to peace and non-violent resolution, US Congresswoman **Barbara Lee** was awarded last year's prize. She was the only congressperson to vote against the US bombing of Afghanistan following the September 11th attacks.

2001: Rosalie Bertell, President and founder of the International Institute of Public Health Institute of Concern for Public Health, awarded for her work with indigenous and developing-country peoples to preserve their human right to health and life in the face of industrial, technological, and military pollution.

2000: Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, Indian journalists who have been at the forefront of the international campaign against the nuclearisation of South Asia. The IPB salutes their persistence, commitment and scholarly attention to detail, all of which have earned their work worldwide acclaim.

1999: Barbara Gladysch, of Mothers for Peace, Germany, as a tribute to her outstanding and long-lasting commitment to both disarmament and practical solidarity with victims of war and disaster.

1998: John Hume, member of the European Parliament, for consistently advocating non-violent solutions in Northern Ireland. Mr Hume was subsequently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

1997: The Seeds of Hope group, UK, for disarming a Hawk aircraft bound for Indonesia.

1996: Selim Beslagic, Mayor of Tuzla, Bosnia, a key proponent of a multi-ethnic solution to the Bosnian crisis.

1995: The Committee of Soldiers' Mothers of Russia, the foremost among Russian citizens' groups opposing the war in Chechnya.

1994: Mordechai Vanunu, Israel, a former nuclear technician, sentenced to 18 years solitary confinement for revealing details of Israel's nuclear arsenal.

1993: Hilda Lini, Vanuatu, a former health minister who played a key role in the World Health Organisation's decision to approve a request to the World Court on the legal status of nuclear weapons.

1992: Michael D Higgins, Ireland, a human rights lawyer, now Minister for the Arts in the Irish Government.
