

**FOUNDERS:**

Betty Williams, Ireland - 1976
Máiread Maguire, Ireland - 1976
Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Guatemala - 1992
Prof. Jody Williams, USA - 1997
Dr. Shirin Ebadi, Iran - 2003
Prof. Wangari Maathai, Kenya - 2004

united for peace with justice and equality

Statement – Freedom Flotilla & the MV Rachel Corrie

On Monday May 31 2010, a convoy of ships carrying human rights activists and humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza was attacked by Israeli military forces. Despite this, two additional aid ships are determined to continue their peaceful mission, insisting their aim is not provocation but delivering aid to Gaza.

Our Sister Laureate, Mairead Maguire, is aboard one of these vessels. She and her fellow passengers on the Irish boat MV Rachel Corrie are members of peace organizations and are carrying a shipment of toys, medical supplies, cement and educational materials to help ease the suffering of the people of Gaza. The ship's cargo has been inspected by the Irish authorities who confirm that there are no weapons or military supplies of any kind onboard. The Irish government has also asked the Israeli government to avoid any action which leads to further bloodshed.

Maguire said "We're not frightened, no, we hope the Israeli government will allow us to go freely in and we know the international community are calling for our safe passage."

We appeal to the Israeli government to allow the safe passage of our sister Laureate Mairead Maguire, all passengers and the vessel's humanitarian aid supplies to Gaza, and urge the international community to join our appeal.

-30-

For media inquiries, please contact:
Rachel Vincent
Manager, Communications & Media
Mobile: + 1 613 276 9030
rvincent@nobelwomensinitiative.org