



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

Media Release

--For immediate release--

Nobel Peace Laureate Refused Entry Into Israel: Mairead Maguire

(Tel Aviv), September 28, 2010—Israeli authorities today refused to allow Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire into Israel. As Maguire is appealing the denial of entry, she is now being held until her appeal can be heard by the court.

The Irish peace activist—who won her Nobel Peace Prize in 1976 for her work bringing peace to Northern Ireland—arrived at the Tel Aviv airport this morning from Frankfurt. Airport authorities allowed Maguire’s travel companion and colleague, Ann Patterson, into the country. Both women were coming to Israel as part of a women’s peace delegation organized by the Nobel Women’s Initiative, a global organization co-founded by Maguire and five sister Nobel Peace Laureates.

“We are very concerned that a committed fellow activist is being refused into the country,” said Jody Williams, a Nobel Peace Prize winner from the US who is due to arrive later today to Israel as part of the same delegation. Speaking from the Frankfurt airport Williams said, “Mairead’s dedication to peace should not be considered a threat to national security.”

Last June, Maguire was detained after Israeli naval commandos intercepted and illegally boarded the Irish cargo ship MV Rachel Corrie, in international waters. The ship’s passengers included Maguire, former UN assistant secretary-general Denis Halliday and other Irish and Malaysian activists.

The MV Rachel Corrie—named for a young American peace activist who was bulldozed to death by the Israeli military—was the last remaining vessel of the Gaza Freedom flotilla, a 40-nation effort to break through Israel’s illegal blockade. Nine people were killed the previous week when Israeli forces boarded the *Mavi Marmara*, one of the vessels taking part in the flotilla.

Israeli officials sent Maguire back to Ireland after holding her several days in a detention center outside of Tel Aviv. Maguire says that at the time she was sent back to Ireland, officials told her she was being 'repatriated' and that there is no official deportation order against her.

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