

Annual Report 10



Advocating for peace, justice & equality



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All of the Nobel Peace Prize Laureates of the Nobel Women's Initiative:

Shirin Ebadi

Mairead Maguire

Wangari Maathai (and the Green Belt Movement)

Rigoberta Menchú Tum (and Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation)

Betty Williams

Jody Williams

Honorary Member Aung San Suu Kyi



“ This world's not going to change unless we are willing to change ourselves. ”

- Rigoberta Menchú Tum

Message *from the* Nobel Women

As Nobel Laureates it is our profound belief that action based on idealism has the power to transform the world. This is a vision we share with women's rights and human rights activists everywhere.

In this incredibly satisfying work, there were many high points this past year.

In Atenco, Mexico, we responded to the call from local activists to get involved in the case of ordinary people who had suffered the abusive power of the state—including dozens of women who were sexually assaulted by police. We brought local activists together with high-level officials—including a Supreme Court justice—so they could press their case, and also met with representatives of all the major political parties. Through the media, we also brought more attention to the plight of these people struggling for *justice*. Less than a year after we got involved, the Supreme Court of Mexico ruled in favor of 12 political prisoners and ordered their immediate release. This is a big victory, but we will not stop until the government delivers justice to the women who were sexually assaulted.

Another key moment for us this past year was realizing the first-ever International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women of Burma, together with our partner, the Women's League of Burma. This event was the result of the Initiative's delegation, at the invitation of the Women's League of Burma, to border areas of Thailand-Burma in 2008.

The Tribunal gave a platform to 12 brave women who described in harrowing detail crimes ranging from forced labour and trafficking to gang rape at the hands of the brutal military regime. The judges—including Laureates Jody Williams and Shirin Ebadi—concluded that the regime had committed extensive war crimes and crimes against humanity. They called upon the United Nations to refer the case of Burma to the International Criminal Court (ICC). In fact, the day after the Tribunal, judges and the women who had testified met with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to discuss the case.

Thousands of people around the world have watched the Tribunal on the internet, and there is evidence that the testimonies at this event strengthened the international case to take Burma to the ICC to bring the perpetrators of violence to justice. Our film, *This is My Witness*, which documents two women who testified at the Tribunal, has been widely used as an advocacy tool in this effort and also to improve public awareness of the situation of women in Burma.

We cannot talk about Burma without noting another of the year's highlights, the release of our sister Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest. Though delighted with this development—and her decision to join us as an honorary member—we are also mindful that over 2200 other political prisoners remain unlawfully behind bars. We will continue to work for their release.

Looking back at the past year's activities, we draw our hope and optimism from the women of Burma, as well as the women of Mexico, Iran, Sudan, Israel, Palestine, Guatemala, Honduras and other places where the struggle for *justice, equality* and *peace* continues. In the face of formidable obstacles, these women are coming together, speaking out and taking action.

Sincerely,

Betty Williams



Mairéad Maguire



Margaret





Message *from the* Executive Director

We have a new tagline for our organization—

Advocating for peace, justice and equality.

I think it captures perfectly who we are and what we do. The tagline also conveys the notion that the Nobel Women's Initiative has reached a new maturity. Yes, we are still *united* for peace, justice and equality. But more than that, we are committed to action and have an established track record of effectively bringing together women who are working every day to make this world more equal, just and peaceful.

We had wonderful cause for celebration in 2010 when sister Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi was finally released from detention. But as she was quick to point out, the struggle does not end with the release of one activist who has been unlawfully detained. Thousands of women remain imprisoned—unlawfully, brutally, in jails in Burma, Iran and many other countries around the globe.

We are part of a global women's movement and human rights movement, working for justice and human rights for all.

Collaborations this year included our work with Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice to organize the *International Gender Justice Dialogue* in Mexico, a precedent-setting global gathering of women determined to map out a new strategy for international justice for women. During a week-long delegation to Israel and Palestine in October, we forged new relationships which sow the seeds for future advocacy to support women's peace activists in this troubled region.

During 2010, Laureates also traveled to Uganda to work with other partners in support of the International Criminal Court and its role in ending impunity in crimes committed against women; we worked with grassroots groups in Mexico to free political prisoners and seek justice for women survivors of police abuse; we organized an unprecedented people's tribunal on crimes committed against the women of Burma; we contributed to powerful global campaigns for human rights in Iran; we supported women in Sudan as they prepared for the historic division of North and South Sudan; and we joined groups around the world pushing for women's inclusion in confronting climate change.

There is so much work ahead, and our commitment is as strong as ever!

I would like to thank our partners for their creativity and dedication to *peace* in the face of conflict and adversity around the world. I want to thank the Laureates for their leadership, energy and unwavering belief that change is possible. Last but not least, I want to thank our dedicated staff and network of interns and volunteers who share the same goals and relish new challenges. It is a pleasure to be working with you!



Liz Bernstein
Executive Director
Nobel Women's Initiative



How we work

The Nobel Women's Initiative uses the prestige of the Nobel Peace Prize and the courageous women Peace Laureates to magnify the power and visibility of women working in countries around the world for peace, justice and equality. Our advocacy is organized around three main pillars:

- Women forging *peace*;
- Women achieving *justice*; and
- Women advancing *equality* and *human rights*.



2010 at a Glance

February 15

- Jody Williams and Mairead Maguire join in a protest and blockade of a nuclear arms manufacturer in the United Kingdom. The action helps call attention to the illegal manufacture of arms by the Aldermaston Weapons Establishment.

March 2

International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women of Burma

- With the Women's League of Burma, the Nobel Women's Initiative organizes and hosts this event in New York City. Hundreds of people in New York and nearly 9000 people around the world listen to the searing testimony of

12 brave women who suffered torture and brutality at the hands of the violent military regime of Burma. A panel of judges, including Shirin Ebadi and Jody Williams, call the acts crimes against humanity and recommend international action against the military regime. ▶

Women Forging Peace

“ We advocate building long-term peace supporting women who are engaged in nonviolence and other alternatives to ending war and militarism, and support the inclusion of women in peace negotiations and other peace building efforts. ”

Learning *from partners for peace in Israel & Palestine*

In the fall of 2010 Jody Williams and Mairead Maguire led a delegation of ten women to Israel and Palestine to learn first-hand about challenges to peace and how women are working to overcome those barriers. Upon arrival in Israel, Mairead was detained by Israeli officials and denied entry to the country due to her involvement with the Free Gaza flotillas. The other delegates included an

American Rabbi, an Arab-American Muslim woman, writers, philanthropists, and *peace* activists. They travelled extensively in the region, making stops in Jerusalem, Haifa, Nazareth, Ramallah, Hebron, Ni'lin and Bil'in.

The group met with hundreds of Palestinian and Israeli women peacebuilders, as well as the Israeli military, members of the Knesset, lawyers, settlers, staff

2010 *at a Glance*

◀ March 1-3

■ Mairead Maguire is a juror at the Russell Tribunal on Palestine, held in Spain. The Tribunal calls attention to human rights violations of Palestinian people by Israel, and the international community's complicity.

March 4

■ Jody Williams and Shirin Ebadi participate in a special *Thank You Tibet!* Program in New York, to mark 50 years in exile for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and to honour His Holiness and the Tibetan people for their commitment to nonviolence.

April 19-22

■ The first-ever *International Gender Justice Dialogue* takes place, convened by the Nobel Women's Initiative with the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice. The event, in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, brings together a veritable "brain trust" of more

PEACEBUILDERS

- International Women's Commission—a group of international, Palestinian and Israeli women who are pressing for the full participation of women in the peace-making process and ultimately a just peace for all sides.
- Isha L'Isha - an organization of Israeli and Palestinian women who are calling for greater participation of women in the peace process. They want 30 percent of direct participation by women in all levels of negotiations and a plan for reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis to be part of a final agreement.
- Al-Tufula Center - women are building grassroots institutions for a democratic civil society. These include community centers, libraries and nurseries in typically under-served Palestinian villages.

from the United Nations and community leaders from both sides of the conflict.

The women of the delegation had the opportunity to talk with creative and committed activists who are working for a sustainable peace using a wide range of nonviolent techniques: legal advocacy, education, bearing witness, dialogue, legislation, and peaceful protest. All were united in their desire to break ethnic and physical barriers

that hinder peaceful solutions. “We learned that there are partners for peace,” said Williams. “Against the backdrop of violence and daily humiliations, there are women working on the ground in both Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories who use nonviolent protest and dialogue as a means to building a more just and equitable situation. For real peace to happen, these women must be part of the official peace process.”

June

than 50 participants from varied backgrounds and disciplines, including rights advocates, gender experts, and legal practitioners. They discuss how to advance gender justice and strengthen accountability for gender-based crimes.

■ Mairead Maguire sails on the Irish cargo ship MV Rachel Corrie, as part of the “freedom flotilla” of Gaza. Mairead and the other activists on board are detained after Israeli naval commandos board the ship. She continues her appeal for the international community to honour international law and end the siege of Gaza.

■ Human rights activist and lawyer, Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi publishes an editorial in The Guardian and the Progressive. She calls attention to the courage and contribution of women in Iran. “Mark my words,” she writes. “It will be women who will bring democracy to Iran.” ▶

“A high point for me was hearing all these Palestinian women saying ‘Don’t be diverted. We can have peace, a strong democracy’”, said Janaan Hashim, a delegation member and lawyer from Chicago. “Women will be a major part in [making peace] happen.”

As a result of the delegation, the Initiative is preparing a new project to support women’s *peace* efforts in the region. Work has started to produce a documentary film and report about “partners for peace” in Israel and Palestine, to use as advocacy tools with media, policy-makers, organizations and the wider public.

Holding *the* international community responsible

In March Mairead Maguire played a critical role in the proceedings of the Russell Tribunal, as a member of a panel of jurists,

activists, politicians, judges and human rights experts from Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. The tribunal examined human rights violations in Palestine and the international community’s complicit involvement in this ongoing conflict.

Over two days in Barcelona, Spain, the jury heard evidence of the connections between the crimes against Palestinians, being perpetrated by Israeli security forces on the ground, and the role of international sponsors, particularly the European Union. The Russell Tribunal found that Israel has not been alone in its

2010 *at a Glance*

- ◀ ■ June 12 marks the one-year anniversary of the election in Iran that returned Ahmadinejad to the presidency. Laureates Shirin Ebadi and others call for an investigation of human rights abuses and the release of journalists and political prisoners.
- Prior to the anniversary, Iranian authorities arrest a prominent human rights defender—Narges Mohammadi. She is vice president of the Defenders of Human Rights Centre, which was founded by Shirin Ebadi. Laureates call for Narges’ release.
- The six Laureates call on the Canadian Prime Minister and the United Nations Security Council to make climate change and climate justice a central focus of G8/G20 talks taking place in Canada. Jody Williams, in an opinion piece in *The Globe and Mail*,

oppression of the Palestinian people. European countries have enabled these actions by giving Israel economic, military and diplomatic support.

Calling for an end to nuclear weapons

In August Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi and Mairead Maguire joined other Peace Laureates in calling for a nuclear-free world, at the three-day Hiroshima World Summit of Peace Laureates in Japan.

The Laureates, including the Dalai Lama and former South African president Frederik Willem de Klerk, released a declaration saying that “the use of nuclear weapons against any people must be regarded as a crime against humanity and should henceforth be prohibited”.

Two Laureates were noticeable by virtue of their absence. The 2010 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo, is serving an 11-year sentence on charges of subversion against the government. The leader of Burma’s pro-democracy movement Aung San Suu Kyi remained under house arrest at the time.

Urging US President Obama to ban landmines

Fifteen Nobel Peace Laureates, including the six members of the Nobel Women’s Initiative and honorary member Aung San Suu Kyi, called on President Obama and the United States to ratify the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

The Laureates appealed to Mr. Obama as a fellow Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, and urged the US to join the 156 other signatories to the Treaty.

urges Canadians to show leadership again, as they did in the past when the Mine Ban Treaty was negotiated. Wangari Maathai also publishes an opinion piece, this one in the *Toronto Star*, calling for Canada to make climate justice front and centre at the global meeting.

■ On June 30, the Mexican Supreme Court hands down a verdict in favour of the activists of Atenco who have been supported by Jody Williams and the other Nobel Peace Laureates. The verdict leads to the release of 12 political prisoners.

August

■ The six Laureates write a letter to Canada’s Prime Minister concerning the behavior of Canadian mining companies that operate in indigenous communities in Central America. They point out the human rights violations (and alleged killings) and environmental damage caused by the Marlin gold mine in Guatemala. ▶

The letter pointed out that the US has been acting in accord with basic principles of the Treaty, and has not used landmines for nearly twenty years. (The last time the US used antipersonnel mines was in the 1990-91 Gulf War.) The US has not produced mines since 1997, and the Americans have destroyed 3 million stockpiled mines. Finally, the Americans have acted generously to underwrite the cost of global mine clearance and victim assistance.

“...We know that you feel deeply the suffering of the innocents affected by war and its aftermath, and should have no trouble recognizing that the devastating impact of landmines is a terror,” the Laureates wrote to the American President in the November letter.

The seventh woman Peace Laureate added her voice to the cause. Shortly after she was released from house arrest in Burma, Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi joined her fellows in calling on President Obama to join the treaty. The issue is of particular importance in Burma, where landmines are a continuing threat to civilians, especially children.



2010 at a Glance

September

- ◀ They call for Canadian companies to respect and uphold indigenous rights.
- At an event on August 6 to mark the 65th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Mairead Maguire calls for global nuclear disarmament and the creation of a nuclear-free Middle East.
- On September 16, the Nobel Women's Initiative and the Paley Center for Media host a panel discussion and film screening in New York City, “Burma and the Media: Amplifying Voices for Democracy.” More than 200 people view the film *This is My Witness*, which documents the journey of two women who testified about the violence of the military regime in Burma. The Initiative produced this film, in collaboration with the Women's League of Burma.
- Shirin Ebadi and Mairead Maguire take part in a panel discussion on September 17 in New York. The International Campaign

Women Achieving Justice

“ We support work to achieve justice for women, including accountability for crimes committed against women and an end to widespread impunity. ”

Women telling their stories *to the world:* International Tribunal *on Crimes Against Women of Burma*

The compelling live evidence of twelve brave women convinced the *International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women of Burma* —held in New York on March 2nd— that the military regime of Burma was guilty of the most egregious human rights crimes. The crimes included rape as a weapon of war, enslavement and forced labour, and intentional attacks on civilian populations.

Laureates Jody Williams and Shirin Ebadi were two members of a four-judge panel that heard testimony from women who had been brutalized by the military. They told their stories to bring attention to the fates of millions of women in Burma whose voices have been silenced, in the hope that this would move the international community to bring the Burmese military leaders to face *justice* in front of the International Criminal Court.

for Human Rights in Iran and Human Rights Watch partner with the Nobel Women's Initiative to organize the event. The objective is to shift the focus of interest in Iran from nuclear arms to the human rights crisis, in advance of Ahmadinejad's visit to New York for the UN General Assembly.

September 28- October 5

■ A peace delegation led by Jody Williams and Mairead Maguire travels to Israel and Palestine. The group meets with hundreds of activists from both sides of the conflict. The delegation shines light on the commitment of Israeli and Palestinian women

working day to day across the divide for peace and reconciliation despite the failing peace process. ▶

The Nobel Women's Initiative planned the event with our partners, the Women's League of Burma. The two groups first worked together during a fact-finding *peace* delegation to Thailand-Burma border areas in 2008. Some of the women leaders we met during that trip asked us to work with them to bring the stories of women who had experienced violence and abuse at the hands of Burmese military to an international audience.

The testimonies of the women were riveting. They spoke bravely and openly about the crimes committed against them and

their families. They described rape and sexual violence, torture and forced labour, terror and intimidation, and murder.

Laureates Shirin Ebadi and Jody Williams heard the case with fellow judges Heisoo Shin, professor and human rights activist from Seoul, Republic of Korea, and Vitit Muntarbhorn, professor of law at the University of Bangkok, Thailand and a former UN Special Rapporteur on Burma. Internationally respected scholar and women's rights advocate Charlotte Bunch from the Center for Women's Global Leadership moderated the event.

“ Women should no longer be invisible when crimes are committed against them with impunity... The history of violence and oppression of women in Burma is long and sordid—and must come to an end. ”

Jody Williams

2010 at a Glance

◀ November

■ On November 13, Aung San Suu Kyi is released from detention. The people of Burma along with the entire world celebrate her release. Still, human rights activists and the Nobel Women's Initiative express their concern about Burma's 2,200 political

prisoners, along with the thousands of other people suffering from rape and other crimes against humanity at the hands of the military regime.

■ Nobel Peace Laureates including Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi and Mairead Maguire end

their participation in the three-day World Summit in Hiroshima by calling for a nuclear-free world. The Laureates release a declaration: “ ...[T]he use of nuclear weapons against any people must be regarded as a crime against humanity and should henceforth be prohibited”.

“ We live in a globalized world, which means that Burma cannot do whatever it wants to its people within its own walls... The international community cannot stand by and let other countries use their sovereignty to commit atrocities against their own people. ”

Shirin Ebadi

The judges found that the undemocratic military junta of Burma was responsible—individually and as a state—for crimes and violations committed against women as part of a larger attack on democracy and human rights, *peace* and security of civilian populations. The judges also found that the regime was guilty for its failure to act to prevent the crimes and to protect the victims, constituting war crimes, crimes against humanity, and violations of human rights.

The day after the Tribunal the Laureates and Thin Thin Aung from the Women’s League of Burma met with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, and key

country delegations at the UN. They brought the judges’ findings and recommendations to the Secretary General and urged him to launch a Commission of Inquiry into War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity in Burma.

The Tribunal received global media coverage in over 30 print articles and numerous radio, video, and blog articles. As of this writing, nearly 9,000 people around the world (including inside Burma) have watched the Tribunal online in English and Burmese via webcast. In the first week alone the webcast received over 500 views in the Burmese language.

December

- Fifteen Nobel Peace Laureates—including Aung San Suu Kyi and the other women of the Nobel Women’s Initiative—send a letter to US President Barack Obama asking him to join the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty. “Most US allies have already banned antipersonnel landmines,” says Williams, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 for her work to bringing about the Mine Ban Treaty. “Obama has the opportunity to do the right thing.”
- Climate Change Negotiations at COP 16 in Cancun, Mexico, result in a consensus on the creation of a centralized global fund for climate change. The Nobel Women’s Initiative and the Green Belt Movement host a side event about women’s leadership on climate justice with former president of Ireland, Mary Robinson. Robinson says, “Any fair and equitable approach to climate change solutions must involve women alongside men in every stage of climate policy-making.”

“My story is so common as to become normal.”

Testifier

Amplifying voices for democracy in Burma

The Nobel Women's Initiative found a larger audience for the messages coming out of the Tribunal by hosting a special event and film premiere with the Paley Center for Media in New York City, September 16. “Burma and the Media: Amplifying Voices for Democracy” was held in advance of the elections scheduled for November 7, 2010, in Burma.

Laureates Shirin Ebadi and Mairead Maguire introduced our short documentary *This is My Witness*. The film—produced by the Nobel Women's Initiative and the Women's League of Burma—tells the stories of two women who testified at the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women of Burma about the abuse they suffered at the hands of the Burmese military regime. The film is a powerful telling of how the experience of bearing witness was meaningful for the two women, and has shaped their own activism on behalf of other women in Burma.

Pat Mitchell, president and CEO of the Paley Center, was moderator for the discussion that followed. The panel included journalists, documentary filmmakers, and Laureate Jody Williams. They discussed how, despite ongoing abuse and violence in Burma, global and social media are strengthening Burma's democracy movement, inside Burma and worldwide. More than 200 people attended the event, and many more watched via a video broadcast.

The documentary film *This is My Witness* is available for other groups who wish to learn more about the brutal treatment of women by the military junta of Burma. (<http://vimeo.com/nobelwomen/timw>)

In the months since the Paley Center event, the film has been an effective advocacy tool and has been shown at outreach events in Bangkok, Toronto, Ottawa and other locations. Copies of the film were sent to United Nations delegations that are considering support for the

UN Commission of Inquiry on Burma. Some have told us that the film helped them decide to join the call for a Commission of Inquiry.

Decrying undemocratic elections *in* Burma

After the November 7 elections in Burma, the Laureates of the Nobel Women's Initiative released a statement, aimed at the United Nations and the international community, calling the process neither free nor fair. The elections were the first to be held in twenty years, yet the regime did not allow the participation of opposition and democracy

parties and continued to hold Aung San Suu Kyi and others in jail or under house arrest.

Urging accountability *for* gender-based crimes: *the* Gender Justice Dialogue

The Nobel Women's Initiative tackled the ongoing challenge of ending impunity for perpetrators of crimes against women in a joint project with the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice. *The International Gender Justice Dialogue* took place in Mexico from April 19 to 21, and represented the first time such a global gathering of women has focused on effective strategies for gender justice.

FROM OUR STATEMENT:

We call on the UN Secretary General and all states to condemn the undemocratic constitution of Burma and the flawed elections. We call on the government of Burma to respect the human rights of the people of Burma, to unconditionally release all political prisoners and to immediately cease hostilities against ethnic nationalities. Furthermore, we urge the government to begin an inclusive dialogue with the full participation of all opposition and ethnic groups towards genuine and lasting national reconciliation. We continue to call on the United Nations to establish a Commission of Inquiry to investigate crimes against humanity and war crimes in Burma. The people of Burma are ready for change—real change. Now is the time for the international community to support them in making that change.

“ It has probably become more dangerous to be a woman than a soldier in armed conflict. ”

Major-General Patrick Cammaert,

former commander of UN peacekeeping forces in the eastern Congo

The event brought together a “brain trust” of more than 50 participants, including rights advocates, gender experts, and legal practitioners, to discuss how to advance gender *justice* and strengthen accountability for gender-based crimes. The discussion at the conference formed the basis of advocacy work during the International Criminal Court Review Conference held in Uganda later in the year.

There was consensus on the need to strengthen accountability through mechanisms such as peace processes, the ICC, courts and other tribunals, and the UN Security Council.

The group came from diverse backgrounds. People with firsthand experience of armed conflicts—in Sudan, Iraq, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Palestine, Israel, Uganda and Central African Republic—attended. Activists from Guatemala, Chile, Honduras, Fiji and Burma also participated.

Jody Williams underscored the challenge of impunity for perpetrators of gender-based crimes in her opening words: “Even if we have laws and proclamations on gender justice and inequality, it is only a beginning. It doesn’t necessarily translate into justice or *equality* for the majority of women.”

Participants drew up a list of concrete ways to overcome the gender bias that is widespread even in justice institutions.

The measures would include: hiring full-time gender advisors, providing reparations for victims, creating a searchable database of jurisprudence on sexual violence and gender-based crimes, and, especially, assuring that there are protocols and requirements for at least 30% female representation in *peace* processes and negotiations.

Supporting *a key mechanism for gender justice: the International Criminal Court*

Nobel Laureates Shirin Ebadi and Wangari Maathai led a powerhouse Nobel Women's Initiative delegation to the first review conference of the International Criminal Court in Kampala, Uganda, from May 31 to June 4. The Laureates, along with other activists including Suzanne Jambo from Sudan, contributed to the examination of the Court's record, and brought high level and public attention to the role that the ICC can play in ending impunity for gender-based crimes.

The Court has made great strides in justice for women, recognizing rapes, forced sterilization and other vicious crimes against women as war crimes, crimes against humanity and even genocide. The Court has been less successful in the area of accountability for perpetrators of the crimes, in the view of many supporters. The Laureates and activists also called upon

countries that have signed the Rome Statute (which established the Court) to provide greater financial and political support to the Court.

On the eve of the conference, Wangari Maathai published an opinion editorial in *The East African* about African leadership and the International Criminal Court. The opinion piece, combined with two press conferences—one in Nairobi and one in Kampala—and a press briefing by the Laureates, resulted in unprecedented media coverage in Africa around issues of gender justice in the lead up to and during the review conference.

At one of these press conferences, Suzanne Jambo stressed the importance of the International Criminal Court as an avenue for justice for women. "You cannot build peace without justice," she said. "The women of Sudan and other conflict situations need strong sexual violence laws ... and they need those laws to be enforced. In the absence of such laws, the ICC is their only recourse.

“ The ICC represents the desires and values of Africans who value the rule of law and an end to impunity ... People want those who commit crimes against humanity to be held accountable ... (and) their leaders to uphold the principle of the responsibility to protect... ”

Wangari Maathai

Women Advancing Equality and Human Rights

“ We support human rights defenders, including those working for women's equality and climate justice. ”

Calling for *justice* in Mexico

This year the Initiative witnessed a major step toward justice in Mexico, in a case in which we had been working with local and international activists to defend the rights of women and civil society.

The case began in May 2006, when Mexican police responded with violence to popular protests in the town of San Salvador Atenco. Of the hundreds whom the police detained, police beat, raped and assaulted at least 47 women.

While most of the protestors were released from custody soon after the events, 12 of the men considered to be leaders of organized resistance to government confiscation of private land were tried and found guilty of offenses related to the protests. They were given shocking prison sentences ranging from 31 to 112 years.

Nobel Peace Laureates demonstrated their support for the people of Atenco throughout 2010. At the invitation of local human rights activists, Jody Williams travelled to the region twice before the case went to the Supreme Court. She met with activists, high-level government officials, legislators, and a Supreme Court judge to advocate for the release of the 12 political prisoners and for justice for the women who were raped by security forces.

In June, one week before the Court's ruling, 11 Nobel Peace Laureates—including Archbishop Desmond Tutu, his Holiness the Dalai Lama, and all six Laureates of the Nobel Women's Initiative—sent an open letter to Mexican President Felipe Calderón. They called for the release of the



12 political prisoners and justice for the women who were raped and tortured during the attack.

Leading up to the verdict Jody Williams released a video message in both English and Spanish, calling for *justice* for the people of Atenco.

On June 30th, the Mexican Supreme Court handed down a verdict in favour of the activists of Atenco. It called for the immediate release of the 12 political prisoners. The Court concluded that false or insufficient evidence was utilized in the case against the protesters. In a victory for civil society, the judge said that the charges appeared to be an effort, by security forces and police, to criminalize social protest. The judge maintained that social protest is not a crime in Mexico.

The Nobel Women's Initiative continues to express its solidarity with the women of Atenco and to work for an end to impunity in the region, including the support of women in northern Mexico where so much violence against women is concentrated. The women of Atenco are still waiting for justice.

Facing *a responsibility for* climate change: G8 *and* G20 Meetings *in* Canada

In June, the six Laureates of the Nobel Women's Initiative called upon Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper and members of the United Nations Security Council to ensure that climate change would be a central focus of the G8 and G20 meetings that were held in Canada.

The Laureates wrote to Canada's Prime Minister Stephen Harper reminding him that "environmental degradation and global warming and their impacts are economic and security issues as well as environmental ones" and must be part of the discussions at the meetings. "Failure to address climate change will put the global economy at further risk, and plunge millions who are already living on the economic margins into deeper poverty," they warned.

In the lead up to the meetings Jody Williams wrote an opinion editorial in *The Globe and Mail*, challenging Canadians to show the same degree of leadership



on climate change that the world saw with the negotiation of the Mine Ban Treaty and other international humanitarian and environmental endeavors. Wangari Maathai, in an opinion editorial in the *Toronto Star*, urged that “world leaders must commit to funding climate action and pledging to reduce their own emissions now. Climate change should not be ‘a side issue’ in the high-level meetings in Canada. It should be central.”

On June 14, Prime Minister Harper announced that climate change would be on the table for both the G8 and G20.

Pressing for human rights in Iran: women at the forefront

Throughout 2010 we continued to urge the international community to focus on the deteriorating human rights situation in Iran. Over the year, the Iranian government intensified its campaign of intimidation against women human rights activists by increasing unlawful arrests, summons, interrogation, harsh sentences, search and confiscation of property, and travel bans.

In June, Shirin Ebadi wrote an open letter to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, decrying illegal detentions of

human rights defenders in Iran. In November she wrote again urging Pillay to step up actions to stop the abuses and executions by the Iranian government.

The Laureates repeatedly pressed for the release of political prisoners such as women’s rights activist Narges Mohammadi, human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, journalist and activist Jila Baniyaghoub, and others through active letter writing campaigns and media outreach, including opinion editorials.

In September Shirin Ebadi and Mairead Maguire participated in a panel discussion in New York City. The Nobel Women’s Initiative and two other groups—the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran and Human Rights Watch—sponsored the panel in advance of the United Nations General Assembly and the expected visit of Iran’s President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The Laureates and others argued that the international community should shift its focus from nuclear arms to the human rights crisis in Iran. If human rights are restored, then the Iranian people will be in a position to mitigate the threat of nuclear arms.



■ ■ ■
WANGARI MAATHAI:

“Because of their role as providers for their families, women [in developing countries] are keenly aware of the food shortages and forest degradation around them... Women are also helping to develop some of the solutions that can save our world from the impacts of global warming... These negotiations in Cancun should be an opportunity to empower women... women need the basic democratic rights to participate as equals.”

■ ■ ■

Supporting women's leadership at climate change negotiations

Women's leadership on climate justice was the focus of a side event we held at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP-16) in Cancun in December. The Initiative partnered with the Mary Robinson Foundation for Climate Justice and the Green Belt Movement to draw attention to the important role women play in advancing sustainable development and to strengthen the international network of women working for action on climate change.

Panelists framed the COP-16 negotiations in terms of real outcomes for women and their communities, and provided first-hand insights into the practical needs of global communities most affected by climate change.

The Nobel Women have been calling on nations to recognize that women suffer the changes

brought by a warming climate. Negotiations at COP 16 resulted in a consensus on the creation of a centralized global fund for climate change, The Green Climate Fund, which contains a specific focus on what climate change means for women, especially poor women in developing nations.

Three months before the conference, in September, Wangari Maathai and former Irish President Mary Robinson published an opinion piece in the Huffington Post. In the piece, the women argue that as a global community, we will only move forward on climate change if women are included in the decisions. Later, on the eve of the conference Wangari Maathai, in an opinion piece in *The Progressive*, called on heads of state to make every effort possible to provide for the training and education needed to adopt sustainable technologies and participate in the green economy.

■ ■ ■ WANGARI MAATHAI AND MARY ROBINSON, OPINION PIECE IN THE HUFFINGTON POST

...The absence of women, particularly those from the global South, from national and international discussions and decision-making on climate change and development must change. The battle to protect the environment is not solely about technological innovation—it is also about empowering women and their communities to hold their governments accountable for results...

Connected *and* Plugged In

We connect with fellow activists and engage our community in conversation through our website, traditional media and social media channels. We provide news about the issues our partners care about, and inspire people to take real action on critical issues.

Connecting Online

This year we brought our supporters with us ‘virtually’ to New York for the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women of Burma, to Mexico for the International Gender Justice Dialogue, to Uganda for the review conference of the International Criminal Court, to the streets of Toronto for the G8 and G20 meetings, and to Israel and Palestine to meet activists who work across divides for a sustainable *peace* on a daily basis.

We were also able to spotlight the extraordinary activists who inspire us every day through our 16 Days of Activism blog, introducing our followers to 16 remarkable women who work around the world for peace with *justice* and equality.

When Aung San Suu Kyi was released we provided a central location, our “Free At Last” blog, for people to hear her speeches and read her words as her voice captured the world once again.

Our community consists of activists and supporters who share the desire to bring about peace, human rights, equality, and justice, and the commitment to redress injustice and violence towards women. This year we kept them informed up-to-the-minute on our travels—through video clips and photos, Facebook and Twitter posts, as well as blog entries. We know how much our community cares and we aim to give them access to places and voices that would be inaccessible to them without immediate and relevant online media.

On Facebook, our community grew to 2,500 activists, and on Twitter we connected with over 1,500 followers, who channeled our messages to tens of thousands more.

We counted thousands of views of the videos we posted to YouTube. These included Wangari Maathai speaking about climate change, Shirin Ebadi discussing human rights abuses in Iran, and Burmese women telling

their stories to the world. In fact, a YouTube video clip from the Burma Tribunal was viewed worldwide more than 2,200 times. Interest in the Tribunal was so great that the webcast of the Tribunal was viewed nearly 9,000 times by people from all over the world.

In the coming year, with the launch of a revamped web site and more social media features, we will build our community of those committed to women's rights around the world, and bring them even more stories of women taking action to bring about change.

Plugged into the Media

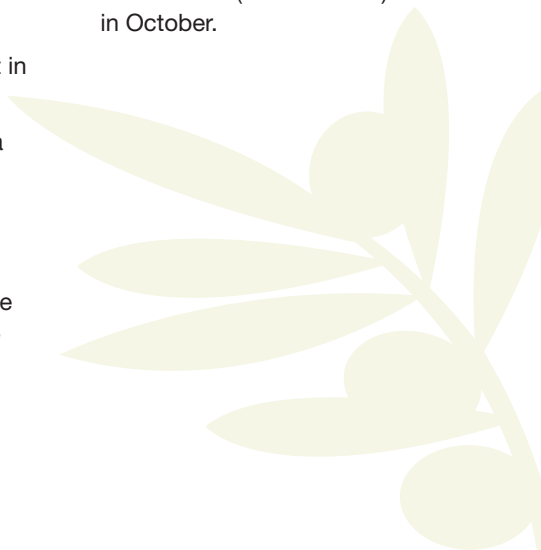
Media engagement forms a central component of our advocacy strategy. Spreading our messages widely strengthens our impact and influences key decision-makers around the world. This year we kept media contacts in the loop and informed them about our advocacy efforts and participation in events related to achieving *peace, justice* and *equality* for women. The hard work paid off—targeted, timely and action-focused messages are getting through to the people who can take action.





Here are some examples of our success in placing women's voices at the front and center:

- An opinion piece by Wangari Maathai was carried in the influential *Christian Science Monitor*, in January. In "African leaders are finally solving African problems," Maathai pointed out the vital role of women in Sudan *peace* talks.
- The *New York Times* published "Nobel winners push for Myanmar regime to face court," in March, an article covering the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women of Burma organized by the Nobel Women's Initiative.
- In May, just prior to our delegation to Uganda, *WMC Africa* ran an opinion editorial by Wangari Maathai called "International Criminal Court belongs to us Africans," in which she called on African leaders to support the Court in bringing an end to impunity.
- The *National Post* in Canada published an article in June called "Nobel laureates urge Harper to put climate on G20 agenda." A few weeks later, Canada did add climate change to the agenda of the G8 and G20.
- Jody Williams and the other Laureates received a great deal of media coverage for their letter calling for the freedom of 12 political prisoners of Atenco, Mexico—both before and after the men were released: "Jody Williams apoya petición de asilo de América del Valle," *La Jornada*, 26 June 2010 and "Mexico court frees jailed Atenco activists," *BBC Latin America*, 30 June 2010.
- Shrin Ebadi wrote a feature piece for *The Progressive* in August. In "Resistance has a women's face," Ebadi brought attention to women human rights activists in Iran.
- During our peace delegation to Israel and Palestine in September/October, delegate Amy Eilberg wrote "Not my usual view of Israel," which the *Star Tribune* (of Minnesota) ran in October.



Sixteen Days *of* Activism

The international event 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence has been going strong for 20 years. Women's rights groups and advocates worldwide join together to honour the women who are courageously working to promote peace, justice and equality in their communities and society.

The 16 Days of Activism begin each year November 25, International Day Against Violence Against Women, and end on December 10, International Human Rights Day. Joining other groups around the world, this year we marked the occasion with a daily blog filled with inspiring stories, photos and videos spotlighting the extraordinary work of 16 women activists.

Meet some of these courageous activists:

*Inés Fernández Ortega and
Valentina Rosendo Cantú*



Inés Fernández Ortega and Valentina Rosendo Cantú, from the state of Guerrero, Mexico, are part of the

Me'phaa nation. They have shown courage and strength in their long struggle for justice after having been brutally raped and tortured by a local militia.

The women were only 25 and 17 at the time of the attack eight years ago. Despite their horrific experience, they have overcome fear and gathered the strength to seek justice. When the

Mexican government was hostile to their efforts, the two women refused to be intimidated. Instead, they took their charges to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Last summer the court decided in their favor. It ruled that the Mexican government had abused the women's rights and denied them access to justice.

Crimes of intimidation against indigenous people in Mexico are not uncommon. The courage of Inés and Valentina inspires other people who have been wronged to demand justice.

Shirin Batshon-Khoury

Shirin Batshon-Khoury, a dynamic young lawyer, has made it her life work to improve the status of Palestinian women in Israel. She works for the Kayan Feminist Organization, a group started in Haifa in 1998.

"Palestinian women in Israel suffer from double discrimination," Shirin says. "First, because they are part of the Palestinian minority, and second, in their own communities because of their gender."

Shirin and her colleagues are encouraging Palestinian women to come together and find solutions to common problems. The approach is achieving results. For instance, women from small towns and villages got together to discuss the inadequate public transportation system and how it affected them. Shirin's group studied the situation and presented a full report to the Minister of Transportation. Consequently, a public bus route was provided, and the bus gives women the freedom to travel, meet, and organize.

This action inspired many more women to work together. They have started projects to improve public sanitation and to build local libraries. Through efforts like these, Shirin and the Kayan Feminist Organization are helping Palestinian women in Israel to find their voice and improve their lives.

Maria Solis Garcia



Guatemala feminist and law professor Maria Solis Garcia is one of the creators of *La Cuerda*,

Guatemala's only publication dedicated to women's issues and human rights. "It is a feminist publication, produced by and for feminists and the entire public," Maria says. The monthly publication has a circulation of more than 25,000 people throughout the country.

Political action is the main focus of *La Cuerda*. Maria and her colleagues are keen observers of Guatemalan politics. They voice their concerns directly to government officials and to members of Guatemala's parliament. The women use every means available, from publishing articles and editorials to participating in panel discussions on radio, to ensure their voices are heard.

Maria's advocacy covers a broad range of issues central to women's lives. *La Cuerda* covers stories about sexual harassment, gender and health, labour laws, and economic and social human rights.

The struggle for human rights in Guatemala links Maria and *La Cuerda* to the global struggle. She has worked with other organizations, including the International Criminal Court, and was Guatemala's only delegate to the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice (now known as Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice).

Ma Pu Sein



It was an act of great personal courage when Ma Pu Sein, originally of Burma, traveled to

New York City to testify before the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women of Burma. She spoke about the horror of forced labor and abuse by the military junta of Burma.

Ma Pu Sein had endured four years of misery when she was forced to work as a labourer on roads. It was strenuous, backbreaking work, but even more terrible, at night the women workers were victims of violence, rape and terror by the military junta. Finally Ma Pu Sein became desperate. She fled and escaped Burma, but paid a terrible price. She left her children, two daughters and a son, behind.

Ma Pu Sein had always felt inferior because of her gender, because she was a woman. In agreeing to testify before the Tribunal, she was determined “to speak on behalf of other people who suffered like me.” She is one of the women featured in the Nobel Women Initiative’s film *This is My Witness*.

Participating in the Tribunal brought this survivor joy and pain. She has become resolved that the work of putting an end to impunity must continue so that one day “we will protect the lives of young women in my country Burma, like we do our children... For our country to have

democracy, women must be involved in some part of the movement...” Since her escape from Burma, Ma Pu Sein has been reunited with her daughters but she is still looking for her son.

Sharon Dolev



The road to peace is filled with determined activists who stay focused on their goals. One of those

activists is Israeli Sharon Dolev. Sharon has worked as an advocate for peace and the environment for many years. She is a campaigner with Greenpeace Mediterranean Disarmament in Israel and head of the Regional Peace Movement, a group that was formed to support the Arab Peace Initiative.

“There is no doubt that nuclear weapons pose the biggest threat to mankind,” Sharon believes.

Yet, of all the threats to our peace and security, Sharon believes nuclear weapons should be the easiest threat to abolish because all that is required is a greater understanding. Her aim is to involve people in the essential discourse about peace and disarmament.

It is challenging, painstaking work. At times you have to engage people, one by one, in discussion about the anti-nuclear movement and why non-proliferation is not a reasonable solution. Yet peace and disarmament will not happen without this universal discourse, Sharon believes.

“There is no place for nuclear weapons in the Middle East, which is prone to conflict to begin with. There is an immediate need for finding a way of regional discussion and agreement between the countries in the Middle East.”

Nayereh Tohidi



For thirty-five years, Nayereh Tohidi has been a dedicated activist and scholar, working to achieve equal human rights for women and a better understanding between cultures.

Growing up female in Iran, Nayereh Tohidi had to fight continually to assert her own personal rights—the right to study at university, the right to make social decisions, and the right to work at a job. Her brothers never had to struggle for such rights, she observed. But the effort strengthened Nayereh’s resolve and made her passionate about achieving justice and equality for women.

Now based in the United States, she is chair of the Department for Gender Studies and Women’s Studies at California State University, where her research and teaching focuses on Islam, the sociology of gender, and ethnicity and democracy in post-Soviet Central Eurasia and the Middle East. She was involved in both the “Stop Stoning Forever Campaign” and the “One Million Signatures Campaign” for women’s rights in Iran.

Nayereh sees herself as a bridge between Iran and the West. “Being in this transnational space ... helps me to educate international public opinion, especially in the United States, about some of the simplistic attitudes that people have about Middle Eastern women and Muslim women in general and Iranian women in particular.”

Dominant media on both sides have been perpetuating simplistic stereotypes, and her task is to challenge those outworn notions. “I feel that it is my responsibility as a scholar and also as an advocate of peace and dialogue ... so you can humanize people—and prevent demonization and militarization.”

The status of women in Iran is paradoxical and contradictory. There is a growing vibrant feminist movement, while at the same time a body of very backward laws restricts women’s rights and freedoms. Women in Iran are working tirelessly to change oppressive laws and norms and defend human rights.



Human Resources: Committed Staff *and* Interns

Our organization has a small permanent staff, with headquarters in Ottawa. This year we also had a staff member based in Nairobi, doing media outreach and other activities in support of the work in Sudan and support for Wangari Maathai.

The staff is a strong team with broad skills and experience in women's rights and advocacy work. They have extensive international professional backgrounds and are fluent in several languages. This dedicated and committed group makes for a flexible, creative and effective work force.

While carrying out an ambitious work programme, we are also determined to help prepare the next generation of women's rights

activists. We do this through the mentoring of interns from several universities in Ottawa, and also work with young women who have recently finished their studies and are looking for 'real life' work experience. All of our interns get the chance to acquire practical skills, learning the ropes of effective advocacy. In return, we get help from young, energetic activists who keep us informed about a new generation's concerns and values.

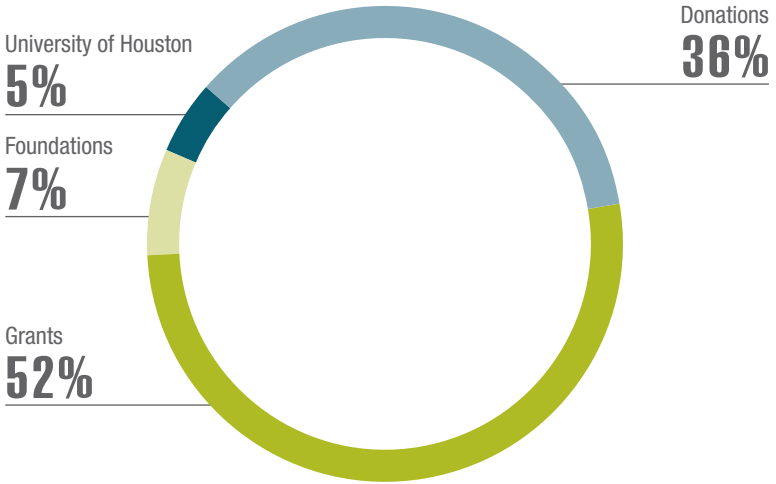


Financial Summary

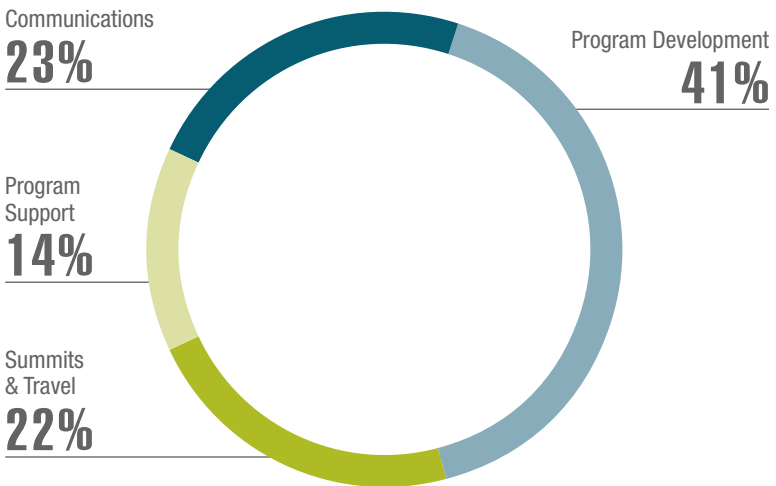
Watson Folkins Corey LLP completed the 2010 Nobel Women's Initiative independent audit. The following excerpts are taken from their report. A complete copy of the audited financial statements is available from the office upon request.

	2010	2009
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 175,471	\$ 247,947
Amounts Receivable	3,250	9,148
Contributions Receivable	0	0
Prepaid Expenses & Deposits	21,135	12,628
	\$ 199,856	\$ 269,723
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	\$ 43,306	\$ 44,687
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS	136,131	192,687
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS BEGINNING	32,349	25,246
Excess of Revenues over Expenditures	(11,930)	7,103
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS ENDING	20,419	32,349
	\$ 199,856	\$ 269,723
REVENUE		
Donations	\$ 502,767	\$ 294,671
Grants	723,019	976,743
Foundations	101,979	0
University of Houston	63,310	149,760
Interest & Other Income	804	3,706
	\$ 1,391,879	\$ 1,424,880
EXPENDITURES		
Program Support	\$ 191,451	\$ 175,122
Communications	327,377	288,572
Program Development	577,613	442,797
Summits & Travel	307,368	511,286
	\$ 1,403,809	\$ 1,417,777
NET REVENUE (EXPENDITURES)	\$ (11,930)	\$ 7,103

NWI 2010 REVENUES



NWI 2010 EXPENDITURES



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The Nobel Women's Initiative would especially like to thank the dedicated individuals who enabled the organization to operate smoothly and creatively in 2010, including fundraiser and strategist Lynne Twist, accountants Roger Coady and Julie Jenkins, designers Jeri McMaster, Erin Thorndycraft, and Sandra Green, writer Martha Plaine, web site advisor Andrew Chisolm, network and server technologist Alastair Warwick, and web gurus Josh Bensimon and Taras Mankovski at Positive Sum.



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Advocating for peace, justice and equality



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