



CHICAGO 2012

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APPEAL TO THE YOUTH OF THE WORLD

As Nobel Peace Laureates and Laureate organizations we realize that if the commitment to peace and human rights is not passed from one generation to the next our achievements will be short lived. For this reason we applaud the youth the world over who are standing up and speaking out in protest against injustice and inequality and defending the right to peace, social justice and a sustainable future.

We are concerned that old threats to peace are persisting and new ones emerging. We therefore urge young people to organize for peace and learn to prevent and resolve conflicts peacefully. At a time when militarism continues to corrupt the minds of politicians and poison international relations, when a new arms race is unfolding, this must be a key priority. As Nobel Laureate Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “those who love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war.”

Our collective security can no longer focus primarily on the security of states; it must focus on the security of people. Wars and militarism cannot achieve real human security.

Substantial reductions of world military expenditures could eliminate the crushing poverty whereby nearly one third of humanity lives in insufferable conditions. Excessive military expenditures not only represent a theft from those who are hungry but are also an ineffective means of obtaining security.

Equally unacceptable is violence against nature that ruins the environment upon which civilization depends.

All the world’s religions and peoples share similar basic values, such as peace, compassion, love, justice, service toward others, and the alleviation of suffering. Political leaders must recognize our common humanity through deeds rather than mere words.

We urge young people to question leaders about what they are doing to address the main challenges that face the world today:

What are you doing for the abolition of nuclear arms and other indiscriminate weapons and for reduction of military spending?

What are you doing to bridge the divide between wealth and crushing poverty?

What are doing to save our planet from environmental disaster?

What are doing to protect and promote human rights and equality between women and men?

We offer the world’s youth our support and our experience as they pursue a better future. We urge them to achieve change through peaceful and moral means. We need your enthusiasm and we want you to join us in our continued quest for peace and justice.