

Luxembourg Celebrates the 9th Annual Luxembourg Peace Prize May 28, 2021

On Friday, 28 May 2021, peace activists from around the world will gather for the 9th Annual Luxembourg Peace Prize ceremony. The 2020/2021 Luxembourg Peace Prize ceremony will take place as part of the 5th Annual Transatlantic Dialogue conference at the University of Luxembourg. In keeping with the measures being taken around the world to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, the Luxembourg Peace Prize 2020 has been postponed to 2021.

The distinguished peacemakers represent a diverse mix of Activists, Educators, Leaders, and Artists from all corners of the globe in ten categories.

Luxembourg Peace Prize Laureates of 2020

OUTSTANDING PEACE ACTIVISTS

Dr Scilla Elworthy

Turns vision into action: Today her full attention is on developing Business Plan for Peace www.thebusinessplanforpeace.org resulting from her 2017 book *The Business Plan for Peace: Building a World Without War*. Her TED talk on non violence has been viewed by over 1,400,000 people on TED and YouTube. *Peace Direct* goes from strength to strength under brilliant young leadership, founded by Scilla in 2002 to fund, promote and learn from local peace-builders in conflict areas. Scilla was adviser to Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Sir Richard Branson in setting up 'The Elders', and was Awarded the Niwano Peace Prize in 2003. She has been nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize for developing effective dialogue between nuclear weapons policy-makers worldwide and their critics, with the *Oxford Research Group* founded in 1982.

Dr William Vendley

Is the Secretary General Emeritus of Religions for Peace International, the world's largest and most representative multi-religious coalition advancing common action for peace by working to advance multi-religious consensus on positive aspects of peace as well as concrete actions to stop war, help eliminate extreme poverty and protect the earth. He is a pioneer in advancing multi-religious cooperation to help resolve conflict and advance development and has

facilitated the establishment of multi-religious councils around the world. He has advanced multi-religious efforts to prevent conflicts, mediate among warring parties and heal societies in the aftermath of violence in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Liberia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Iraq and many other countries. He is convinced that multi-religious efforts for peacemaking provide unique strengths that complement those marshaled by governments and bodies like the United Nations.

OUTSTANDING PEACE EDUCATION

Transatlantic Dialogue

The Transatlantic Dialogue conference series on global citizens, held in Luxembourg since 2008 as a collaborative effort between Luxembourg University and Miami University in Ohio, explores the significance of culture and liberal education for fostering global citizenship from both the United States and European perspectives.

- **articulating** why intercultural competence and dialogue matters in their own institutional and societal context
- **considering** a philosophy of practice that incorporates arts-based approaches for developing students' and peers' capacity for cultural diplomacy, peace and global citizenship
- **advocating** for the principles of cultural diplomacy as a critical component of a university education - in the co-curriculum as well as in the formal curriculum.

The challenges our world presents today can seem unprecedented. Profound differences over the complex issues confronting us, manifest themselves in loud and often discouraging public debates over everything from how we best foster human prosperity to how we address each other on an equal foot in its many forms, protect our fundamental freedoms, and care for the most vulnerable and marginalized among us. Bridging differences begins with approaching others with the will to acknowledge and understand their and our own identity and cultural 'otherness.' "The more astute awareness we achieve concerning our own and other's cultures, the more sophisticated we can be as thinkers and actors on a world stage. Therefore, our engagement with diverse forms of cultural expression may enable us to relate to different codes of humanity with confidence, sympathy and growing curiosity towards each other." Universities have a key role to play in this regard and this interdisciplinary forum explores multiple perspectives on how this can be achieved.

OUTSTANDING YOUTH PEACEMAKER

Boniface Mwangi

Is one of the most vocal and courageous Kenyans of our generation. Recognized globally for his passion and excellence in photography, this photographer-cum-activist could not resist the call to activism after witnessing, first-hand, the brutality that disadvantaged Kenyans experienced in the wake of the Post- Election Violence of 2008. He then established *Picha Mtaani*, a traveling photography exhibition showcasing images of the violence. The travelling

photo exhibition toured across Kenya and drew more than 2 million visitors. The exhibition tour offered a platform for individual reflection, honest dialogue, interpersonal healing and community reconciliation.

OUTSTANDING PEACE ORGANISATION

Words Heal the World

Is a non-profit organisation that was set up to empower students to challenge online hate speech and tackle different types of extremism. It is worldwide organisation that puts young people as main actors in the development of messages to tackle different types of extremism and also helps increase the visibility of partner organisations that promote peace worldwide. Its work is based on a tripod, contributing to the work developed by universities, high schools, and dozens of organisations committed with peacebuilding, especially using words to tackle extremism.

OUTSTANDING PEACE TECHNOLOGY

Libby Liu

Was at the helm of Radio Free Asia (RFA) for 16 years, a non-profit created to provide accurate, timely news to citizens living in closed societies through Asia. Libby's principles at RFA were enshrined in Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." She is committed to restoring human rights to citizens who have been denied them, Libby led RFA to give voice to the voiceless and enable people the ability to make informed decisions about their lives and own their human dignity. In 2019, after using this approach in innovative internet freedom technology and allowing more than 2 billion people around the world to use the internet more safely despite the declining state of internet freedom globally, the Open Technology Fund (OTF) emerged as its own private non-profit. As the CEO of OTF, Libby is committed to expanding the work and impact of OTF by continuing to build coalitions, public-private partnerships and capacity in the communities most at risk. If citizens of humanity can participate openly as part of the global online community freely and without fear, we can be a world that respects all regardless of where they reside. A world built on human dignity would be one aligned with the vision of internet freedom.

OUTSTANDING PEACE JOURNALISM

Steve Youngblood

Is a Kansas City, USA area professor and Director of the Center for Global Peace Journalism and Associate Professor of Communications at Park University (Parkville, Missouri). He has taught peace journalism to journalists, academics, and students in 27 countries and territories worldwide, including conflict areas like South Sudan, Indian-administered Kashmir, Lebanon,

Cameroon, and Turkey. He is also the editor of the semi-annual Peace Journalist magazine, author of the university textbook *Peace Journalism Principles and Practices*, and writer of the *Peace Journalism Insights* blog.

OUTSTANDING ART FOR PEACE

Pedro Reyes

Is a Mexican artist whose works aim to increase individual or collective agency in social, environmental, political or educational situations. He has won international attention for large-scale projects that address current social and political issues. Through a varied practice utilising sculpture, performance, video, and activism, Reyes explores the power of individual and collective organisation to incite change through communication, creativity, happiness, and humour. A socio-political critique of contemporary gun culture is addressed in *Palas por Pistolas* (2008), in which the artist worked with local authorities in Culiacán, Mexico, to melt down guns into shovels, intended to plant trees in cities elsewhere in the world. Similarly, in *Disarm* (2013) the Mexican government donated over 6,700 confiscated firearms for Reyes to transform into mechanical musical instruments, which are automated to play a delightful, if surreal loop, retaining the raw emotion of their origins.

OUTSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL PEACE

Water Peace Security

Water, Peace and Security (WPS) partnership was founded in 2018 to pioneer the development of innovative tools and services that help identify and address water-related security risks. These tools and services can link hydrological, social, economic and political factors to pinpoint changes in short-term water availability and provisionally assess their potential impacts on society. Based on this information, evidence-based actions can be triggered to prevent or mitigate human security risks. WPS can also facilitate this process by raising awareness, developing capacities and supporting dialogue that together underpin effective coordinated action.

About the Schengen Peace Foundation World Peace Forum and Luxembourg Peace Prize

For the ninth consecutive year, the Schengen Peace Foundation and the World Peace Forum will be awarding the prestigious Luxembourg Peace Prize to outstanding peacemakers and activists in Luxembourg. The award comes in alignment with the efforts of the Schengen Peace Foundation, founded in 2005, and approved in 2007 by His Royal Highness Grand Duke Henri, as a Peace---Think---Tank, supporting peacebuilding.

In the 'Spirit of Schengen,' the Schengen Peace Foundation initiated the World Peace Forum, a global platform for peace activists and peace initiatives. The annual multi-disciplinarian event of the World

Peace Forum connects peace activists from around the world to meet, exchange ideas and together achieve greater impact.

In 2012, the Luxembourg Peace Prize was first introduced as an award to outstanding peacemakers. Laureates first received a bronze medal depicting Nelson Mandela. Since 2017, Laureates received a sculpture of a three legged chair by the Columbian artist Duvan Lopez, for which we are the fourth leg of the chair at the table to build peace. There will be an inauguration of the original statue with Duvan in the library of the University as part of the ceremony on May 28th.

The 2020/2021 Luxembourg Peace Prize ceremony will take place as part of the 5th Annual Transatlantic Dialogue conference at the University of Luxembourg. <https://tad20.uni.lu/> The morning will be comprised of awarding the laureates and in the afternoon we will have workshops and networking with the different peacemakers.

For additional information on the Luxembourg Peace Prize, the World Peace Forum, or the Schengen Peace Foundation please visit www.LuxembourgPeacePrize.org and <http://worldpeaceforum.org>

Note for the media:

For additional information, press credentials/registration, interviews with the laureates and pictures of the Award Ceremony, you can contact:

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