



NIWANO
PEACE FOUNDATION

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PRESS RELEASE

February 18, 2019

Dr. John Paul Lederach
to receive the Niwano Peace Prize

The 36th Niwano Peace Prize will be awarded to Dr. John Paul Lederach, Professor Emeritus of International Peacebuilding at the Kroc Institute for Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame and a Distinguished Scholar at Eastern Mennonite University in the United States where he served as the founding director of their Center for Justice and Peacebuilding. Currently he serves as a Senior Fellow at Humanity United, a philanthropic foundation. Dr. Lederach has worked in mediating conflicts, building peace, and fostering international reconciliation for more than thirty years. He has developed training in conflict transformation and provided direct conciliation support services in some of the most violently conflicted regions across five continents.

The presentation ceremony will take place in Tokyo, Japan, on Wednesday, May 8th, at 10:30 a.m. In addition to an award certificate, Dr. Lederach will receive a medal and twenty million yen.

To avoid undue emphasis on any particular religion or region, every year the Peace Foundation solicits nominations from people of recognized intellectual and religious stature around the world. In the nomination process, some 600 people and organizations, representing 125 countries and many religions, are asked to propose candidates. Nominations are rigorously screened by the Niwano Peace Prize International Selection Committee, which was set up in May of 2003 on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Niwano Peace Prize. The Committee presently consists of ten religious leaders from various parts of the world, all of whom are involved in movements for peace and interreligious cooperation.

Here are some comments by members of the Committee on the selection of Dr. Lederach for this year's award:

- Lederach is a scholar and peace campaigner for many decades influenced through his books, lectures, workshops and conversations offers grounded, practical insights into the complex nature and dynamics of conflict and how to transform it. Over almost four decades his work in places like Nepal, Colombia, Northern Ireland, the Philippines and throughout Africa have helped support and encourage evolving peace processes, give voice to those on the margins of

society and empower ordinary citizens to transform ongoing and emerging conflict in a healthy and positive way.

- As with his teaching, his approach is one that encourages people to embody the core principles of the faith tradition that guides them. He does not hide his faith tradition and how it guides his understanding of the world but his style is not a proselytizing one. He does not preach. Quietly but firmly, he lives out his beliefs through his work. (by AHN Jae Woong)

- John Paul Lederach is one of the most influential scholar-practitioners I know. He has done an incredible job contributing to the development of peace theory and strategy while remaining committed and engaged on the ground, around the world, and in very difficult contexts of violent conflict. He brings a great deal of heart, quiet faith, and commitment to his work, and lifts up the dimension of human dignity and redemption that is at the heart of peace. He also advocates for long-term commitment to building peace in any context, beyond superficial, episodic interventions or declarations. His Mennonite faith informs his strategy and his attitude in clear ways. (by Susan Hayward)

- What we hear today is not good news with extremism, organized violence and authoritarian regimes who are not honoring the rule of law. With the ongoing situation, urgent and important work includes, influencing and cultivating a culture of peace among the societies and communities. Dr. John Paul's contribution on conflict transformation through his teaching, training, practicing and his own organizational network has given tremendous inspiration, and courage to peace activists and practitioners around the world. (by Harsha Navaratne)

- What I find compelling about John Paul Lederach is his commitment to inspire a new generation of peace-builders. He is a great teacher who plants seeds of hope wherever he goes. I have no doubt that awarding him this award will yield a multiplicity of rewards for peace practitioners globally. (by Nomfundo Walaza)

The Niwano Peace Prize

The Niwano Peace Foundation established the Niwano Peace Prize to honor and encourage individuals and organizations that have contributed significantly to interreligious cooperation, thereby furthering the cause of world peace, and to make their achievements known as widely as possible. The Foundation hopes in this way both to enhance interreligious understanding and cooperation and to encourage the emergence of still more persons devoted to working for world peace.

The Prize is named in honor of the founder and first president of the lay Buddhist organization Rissho Kosei-kai, Nikkyo Niwano. For Niwano, peace was not merely an absence of conflict among nations, but a dynamic harmony in the inner lives of people as well as in our communities, nations and the world. Seeing peace as the

goal of Buddhism, Niwano devoted much of the latter half of his life to promoting world peace, especially through interreligious discussion and cooperation.

Past Niwano Peace Prize recipients are:

1. Archbishop Hélder P. Câmara (1983)
2. Dr. Homer A. Jack (1984)
3. Mr. Zhao Puchu (1985)
4. Dr. Philip A. Potter (1986)
5. The World Muslim Congress (1987)
6. Rev. Etai Yamada (1989)
7. Mr. Norman Cousins (1990)
8. Dr. Hildegard Goss-Mayr (1991)
9. Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne (1992)
10. Neve Shalom/ Wahat al-Salam (1993)
11. Paulo Evaristo Cardinal Arns (1994)
12. Dr. M. Aram (1995)
13. Ms. Marii K. Hasegawa (1996)
14. The Corrymeela Community (1997)
15. Ven. Maha Ghosananda (1998)
16. The Community of Sant'Egidio (1999)
17. Dr. Kang Won Yong (2000)
18. Rev. Abuna Elias Chacour (2001)
19. Rev. Samuel Ruiz García (2002)
20. Dr. Priscilla Elworthy (2003)
21. The Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (2004)
22. Dr. Hans Küng (2005)
23. Rabbis for Human Rights (2006)
24. Dharma Master Cheng Yen (2007)
25. His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal (2008)
26. Rev. Canon Gideon Baguma Byamugisha (2009)
27. Ms. Ela Ramesh Bhatt (2010)
28. Mr. Sulak Sivaraksa (2011)
29. Ms. Rosalina Tuyuc Velásquez (2012)
30. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Gunnar Stålsett (2013)
31. Ms. Dena Merriam (2014)
32. Pastor Esther Abimiku Ibanga (2015)
33. Centre for Peace Building and Reconciliation (2016)
34. Bishop Dr. Munib A. Younan (2017)
35. Adyan Foundation (2018)

The Niwano Peace Foundation

The Niwano Peace Foundation was chartered in 1978 to contribute to the realization of world peace and the enhancement of a culture of peace. The Foundation promotes research and other activities based on a religious spirit and serves the cause of peace in such fields as education, science, religion and

philosophy. The Foundation's endowment of about 4.0 billion yen makes possible the Niwano Peace Prize and other activities such as grants, research projects, lectures, symposia, and international exchanges. The Niwano Peace Foundation is a government-recognized charitable organization.

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