



WORLD'S CHILDREN'S PRIZE FOUNDATION

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South African Prize Laureate! Desmond Tutu new patron of **Millions of children's prize for child rights Child rights heroes honoured**

On Wednesday, 50 children from 15 countries paid tribute to the heroes of millions of children in an award ceremony at Gripsholm Castle in Mariefred, Sweden. Anna Mollel, Tanzania, Sakena Yacoobi, Afghanistan and Ann Skelton, South Africa received their awards from the children and H.M. Queen Silvia of Sweden. Anna Mollel was selected by 2,5 million children in a Global Vote.

“To be honoured, supported and loved by children, it makes me feel something that I cannot even express. The prize program is restoring the souls of children and gives strength to those who have struggled.” says Anna Mollel. She received the most prestigious award for contributions to the rights of the child, the World's Children's Prize, for her more than 20-year struggle for Maasai children with disabilities.

The patrons of the World's Children's Prize include **Nelson Mandela**, **Aung San Suu Kyi** and **Sweden's Queen Silvia**. At this year's award ceremony, **Desmond Tutu**, the defiant archbishop who fought the apartheid regime and has been a human rights champion for many years, joined the patrons.

At the ceremony, tribute was also paid to **Sakena Yacoobi** from Afghanistan, for her long and often life-threatening fight for girls' right to education. She received the World's Children's Honorary Award along with **Ann Skelton** from South Africa. Ann Skelton was recognised for her 25-year battle for the rights of children affected by the justice system.

“This prize breaks the isolation of the children of Afghanistan and connects them to other children in the world. Many people only know that Afghanistan has war, not that there are children living their lives and getting education for making a change.” says Sakena Yacoobi.

“It is very special that children vote. I feel honoured by the fact that it is children who brought us here. I am also honoured that this prize is the fruit of an education for democracy. That this gives children possibility to practice in a democratic process.” says Ann Skelton.

Patrons of the World's Children's Prize include Queen Silvia of Sweden and Nelson Mandela. Previous prize laureates include the children's Decade Child Rights Heroes Graça Machel and Nelson Mandela, Hector Pieterse and Nkosi Johnson (both posthumously).

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The prize laureates are introduced in more detail below, as well as at www.worldschildrensprize.org.

The World's Children's Prize

The World's Children's Prize is a unique educational program for children, working to promote a more humane world. 58,000 schools with 27 million students in 107 countries support the World's Children's Prize as Global Friend schools. Every year, millions of children learn through the program about the rights of the child, democracy and global friendship. Many of the participating children have themselves had their rights violated and many learn that they have rights for the first time through the World's Children's Prize. Through this they gain faith in the future and an opportunity to demand respect for their rights. In their Global Vote, the children decide who should receive their prestigious prize for their contribution to the rights of the child. The candidates for the prize are selected by a child jury who are child rights experts through their own life experiences, as child soldiers, debt slaves, homeless children and child rights advocates. The candidates become role models for millions of children. The prize money – this year 100,000 USD – is used to help some of the world's most vulnerable children towards a better life.

Mandela patron

The global patrons of the World's Children's Prize include Nelson Mandela, Graça Machel, Desmond Tutu, Aung San Suu Kyi, Xanana Gusmão and Queen Silvia of Sweden. Ahmed Kathrada and South African business leader and philanthropist Iqbal Survé are also patrons. Iqbal Survé's wife Nadia Kamies is Goodwill Ambassador of the World's Children's Prize in South Africa.

The World's Children's Prize program, which was founded in Sweden in 2000, is carried out annually in cooperation with tens of thousands of teachers and hundreds of organisations all over the world, and with support from sources including SIDA (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), the Swedish Postcode Lottery, Save the Children Sweden, ECPAT Sweden, the Survé Family Foundation, Hugo Stenbecks Stiftelse, and eWork.

More information is available at worldschildrensprize.org, along with high-res images, including pictures from the award ceremony.

A link to free video clips in broadcast standard is available from the World's Children's Prize.

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ANNA MOLLEL, TANZANIA

Anna Mollel is commended for her over 20-year struggle for children with disabilities in poor rural areas in northern Tanzania. Thanks to Anna and her organisation, Huduma ya Walemavu, thousands of children with disabilities have a chance to live a life in dignity. They get medical care, operations, physiotherapy, therapy, wheelchairs and other aids, the chance to go to school, safety, and love. Anna is constantly speaking out on behalf of the children through talking about their rights with politicians, organisations, and more than anything, with people living in remote rural

villages. Since 1990, 12,500 children, mostly Maasais, have had a better life thanks to Anna and Huduma ya Walemavu. These are children who would have been neglected, abandoned and could even have died if it hadn't been for Anna's struggle for their rights.

SAKENA YACOBI, AFGHANISTAN

Sakena Yacoobi is commended for her long and dangerous struggle to fulfil Afghan children and women's right to education, healthcare and to learn about their rights. Sakena founded her organisation, Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL) in 1995, during times of oppression and intense conflict. The Taliban regime had banned girls from going to school. But Sakena opened 80 secret schools, trained teachers, and created secret mobile school libraries. Today, Sakena and AIL run hundreds of schools, health clinics and hospitals in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and have trained 19,000 teachers. The teachers learn new methodologies and have helped 4.6 million children learn critical thinking skills. Every year they give 125,000 children education and healthcare. Through Sakena's work more than 5.5 million Afghan children have gained new opportunities and faith in the future, despite extreme poverty and 30 years of war in Afghanistan.

ANN SKELTON, SOUTH AFRICA

Ann Skelton is commended for her more than 20 year long successful fight for the rights of children affected by the justice system. Ann has done groundbreaking work for South Africa's children both in the court rooms and by changing laws affecting children. When Nelson Mandela became president Ann was asked to chair the writing of the new law protecting children in trouble with the law. By assisting for example a child in a divorce case, a child mistreated at a children's home, an unaccompanied refugee child, children being ill-treated in prison, children in 'mud house schools' in bad conditions, and reaching a court decision in favour of the children, Ann has helped and protected all South Africa's children in similar situations. Ann is the Director of the Centre for Child Law at the University of Pretoria and is assisted by two young women attorneys.