



41, rue de Zurich
1201 Geneva
Switzerland
+41 (0) 22 731 64 29
mailbox@ipb.org
www.ipb.org

Hiroshima/Geneva, 6 August 2014

PRESS RELEASE

IPB to award MacBride Peace Prize to the people and government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for their courageous initiative to rid the world of nuclear arms.

The International Peace Bureau announced today that it will award its annual [Sean MacBride Peace Prize](#) for 2014 to the people and government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, RMI, for courageously taking the nine nuclear weapons-possessing countries to the International Court of Justice to enforce compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and international customary law. The tiny Pacific nation has launched a parallel court case against the USA at the Federal District Court. RMI argues that the nuclear weapons-possessing countries have breached their obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by continuing to modernize their arsenals and by failing to pursue negotiations in good faith on nuclear disarmament.

The Marshall Islands were used by the USA as testing ground for nearly 70 nuclear tests from 1946 to 1958. These tests gave rise to lasting health and environmental problems for the Marshall Islanders. Their first-hand experience of nuclear devastation and personal suffering gives legitimacy to their action and makes it especially difficult to dismiss.

The Marshall Islands are presently working hard on both court cases, whose final hearings are expected in 2016. Peace and anti-nuclear activists, lawyers, politicians and all people seeking a world without nuclear weapons are called upon to bring their knowledge, energy and political skills to build a powerful constituency to support this court case and related actions to ensure a successful outcome.

It is certainly not the case that the RMI, with its some 53,000 inhabitants, a large proportion of whom are young people, have no need of compensation or assistance. Nowhere are the costs of a militarized Pacific better illustrated than there. The country is burdened with some of the highest cancer rates in the region following the 12 years of US nuclear tests. Yet it is admirable that the Marshall Islanders in fact seek no compensation for themselves, but rather are determined to end the nuclear weapons threat for all humanity.

The world still has some 17,000 nuclear weapons, the majority in the USA and Russia, many of them on high alert. The knowhow to build atomic bombs is spreading, largely

due to the continued promotion of nuclear power technology. Presently there are 9 nuclear weapon states, and 28 nuclear alliance states; and on the other hand 115 nuclear weapons-free zone states plus 40 non-nuclear weapons states. Only 37 states (out of 192) are still committed to nuclear weapons, clinging to outdated, questionable and extremely dangerous 'deterrence' policies.

IPB has a long history of campaigning for disarmament and for the banning of nuclear weapons (<http://www.ipb.org>). The organisation was, for instance, actively involved in bringing the nuclear issue before the International Court of Justice in 1996. The International Peace Bureau hopes to help draw attention to the aim of the various court cases on this issue by awarding the Sean MacBride Peace Prize to the people and government of the Marshall Islands. IPB sincerely hopes that the Marshall Islands initiative will be a significant and decisive step in ending the nuclear arms race and in achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

The prize ceremony will take place in Vienna in early December at the time of the international conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, and in the presence of the RMI's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Tony de Brum and other dignitaries. Since its inception in 1992, many eminent peace promoters have received the Sean MacBride Prize, although it is not accompanied by any financial remuneration.

To learn more about the lawsuits and the campaign go to www.nuclearzero.org

IPB contact persons for interview or additional information:

Colin Archer, Secretary-General: secgen@ipb.org
Reiner Braun, Co-President: hr.braun@gmx.net
Ingeborg Breines, Co-President: i.breines@gmail.com

*The International Peace Bureau is dedicated to the vision of a World Without War. We are a Nobel Peace Laureate (1910), and over the years 13 of our officers have also been recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. Our 300 member organisations in 70 countries, and individual members, form a global network bringing together expertise and campaigning experience in a common cause. IPB has UN Consultative Status since 1977 and is the Secretariat for the NGO Committee for Disarmament (Geneva). Our main programme centres on **Disarmament for Sustainable Development**, of which the **Global Day of Action on Military Spending** is a key part.*

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/ipb1910>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/IntlPeaceBureau>

- **Global Day of Action on Military Spending:** <http://gdams.org>
- **Making Peace photo-exhibition** curated by Ashley Woods of REAL Exhibition Development: already shown in [Geneva](#), [Utrecht](#), [Stockholm](#) (Nobel Museum), [Strasbourg](#), [Sarajevo](#). Many other locations being planned. <http://www.makingpeace.org>