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The World March for Peace and Nonviolence

Oct 2, 2009 Wellington, New Zealand to Jan 2, 2010 Punta de Vacas, Argentina
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New Zealand Coordinator of World March for Peace and Nonviolence Wins “Alternative Nobel Peace Prize”



Alyn Ware, recipient of the "Alternative Nobel Peace" prize and New Zealand Coordinator of World March for Peace and Nonviolence

NEW YORK, October 19, 2009—U.S. President Barack Obama isn't the only one who will receive a peace award at the beginning of December in a Scandinavian country. On October 13th, it was announced that New Zealand peace activist Alyn Ware was a recipient of the Right Livelihood Award, known as the “Alternative Nobel Peace Prize,” to be presented in the Swedish Parliament at the beginning of December. The award was established in 1980 to honor those offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today. (www.rightlivelihood.org).

Ware was honored for his numerous contributions to peace education and nuclear disarmament. Considered to be one of the world's most effective peace workers, he helped draft the model treaty for the United Nations on the abolition of nuclear weapons which is being promoted by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. He is hopeful that his Nobel Peace prize winning counterpart, President Barack Obama, “will use his influence to make the treaty a reality.”

“Obama has given hope for a nuclear free world,” according to Ware. “It is possible ... quicker than we imagined. In New Zealand, we never thought we would become nuclear-free so quickly. We now have momentum and political will to do this.”

As the New Zealand Coordinator of the World March for Peace and Nonviolence, Ware was instrumental in organizing the launch of the historic 93-day march, which began on October 2, 2009 in Wellington and will end on January 2, 2010 in the

Andes Mountains in Argentina. Ware’s involvement in the World March, which proposes nuclear disarmament at a global level and the renunciation of war as a means to resolve conflict, was motivated by his 25-year quest to bring about nuclear abolition.

On the day he received the award, an international team of marchers for the World March was meeting at the border of Pakistan and India. “It gives me great hope to know that today, even as I am being honored for my work to rid the world of nuclear weapons, citizens of Pakistan and India have gathered together to express their desire to live in peace, in a world that is free of nuclear weaponry.” Ware said, “The World March for Peace and Nonviolence has given a voice to the millions of people throughout the world who want to live in peace and who believe that nonviolence is the only way to achieve it.” Preparations are underway in the U.S for the arrival of the marchers on November 30, who will visit New York, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Juan, Puerto Rico. Meanwhile, in numerous cities and towns across the U.S events have been planned in conjunction with the World March. (www.worldmarchusa.net)

Other recipients of this year's award were Catherine Hamlin, an Australian-born doctor who founded a hospital in Ethiopia for women injured in childbirth, and environmentalists Rene Ngongo and David Suzuki (Honorary Award). Recipients receive cash rewards of 50,000 euros each. The Right Livelihood Award was established in 1980 by Swedish-German philanthropist Jakob von Uexkull to honor and support those offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today. The awards will be presented in a ceremony at the Swedish Parliament on December 4, six days before the Nobel Prizes are handed out.

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ABOUT THE WORLD MARCH

The World March is both a symbolic march and a series of events organized in communities, houses of worship, governments, schools, arts organizations and sports stadiums all over the world for the purpose of abolishing nuclear weapons, wars and violence of all kinds. It is being endorsed by some of the world's most prominent leaders, newsmakers and entertainers: the Dalai Lama, Desmond Tutu, Jimmy Carter and other Nobel Peace Prize winners, Noam Chomsky, as well as eight presidents, hundreds of world leaders, religious figures and actors Penelope Cruz, Cate Blanchett, Viggo Mortensen, Martin Sheen, Ed Asner, Edward James Olmos, Jane Fonda, among many others (there is a complete list on the web site www.theworldmarch.org).

The march kicked off on Oct. 2 in Wellington New Zealand with a core team of 25 international marchers. In the ensuing 93 days, they will crisscross the globe carrying the Hiroshima Flame, rallying with supporters (estimated up to 1 million) in 100 plus countries and having audiences with the Pope and Ghandi's grand daughter, being welcomed in Berlin by the Nobel Peace Laureates and also visiting the DMZ between North and South Korea, among other highlights. They will arrive in the US from Africa, on November 30 and start their march in the Americas from New York City. After several days in Manhattan, they will depart for Washington, DC, San Francisco and Los Angeles and then to Mexico and continuing south. The march will end on Jan. 2, 2010 in Argentina.

The World March was officially launched at the Symposium of the World Center for Humanist Studies in Punta de Vacas, Argentina, on November 15, 2008. It was initiated by World Without Wars, an affiliated organization of the Humanist Movement that is internationally active in the fields of peace and disarmament. The march has five goals:

- abolition of nuclear weapons worldwide
- immediate withdrawal of invading troops from occupied territories
- progressive and proportional reduction of conventional weapons
- signing of non-aggression treaties between countries
- renunciation by governments of the use of war as a means to resolve conflicts