

Annual Report 11



Advocating for peace, justice & equality



Supporting our work for *peace*

The Nobel Women's Initiative would like to thank the following organizations and individuals whose generous support allowed us to be a voice for women, *peace* and security around the world in 2011:

Lauren Embrey
Nancy and Emily Word
Kay Wilemon
Trea Yip
Cynda Collins Arsenault
Gloria Joseph
Sara Vetter
Jeddah Mali
Pete Bissonette

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Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Cornell Douglas Foundation
Humanity United
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
University of Houston, Graduate College of Social Work
UN Women Latin America and Caribbean Region

All of the Nobel Peace Laureates of the Nobel Women's Initiative in 2011:

Shirin Ebadi
Wangari Maathai
Mairead Maguire
Rigoberta Menchú Tum
Jody Williams

And many more generous individuals.





“ If you are alone, you may do one thing. But when you are doing it together, the voice is amplified, and you hope that more people hear. ”

- Wangari Maathai
1945-2011



Message *from the* Nobel Women

Around the world, women's human rights defenders face an increasingly hostile climate, exacerbated by growing conservatism, a poor global economy, and an increase in militarization and conflict. Women in countries such as Iran face imprisonment for speaking out about human rights; in Mexico, they watch as sexual offenders walk the streets freely; and in conflict zones around the globe, women routinely endure rape, torture, and slavery as a tactic of war.

Yet, despite this brutality, discrimination, and injustice, our spirits are lifted by the voices of women around the world, voices that are growing louder and louder through the strength of collective effort and deep commitment.

This past year, we had the great privilege of hosting an international gathering of such voices. Women came from as far away as Burma, India, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Colombia. We met in a rural community in Quebec, Canada to make a joint commitment to end sexual violence in war.

Many shared horrific stories of rape, damaged lives, and broken communities. But we also shared the strategies we use to obtain *justice*, heal survivors, rebuild communities, and prevent violence.

We talked about how we can better support each other, coordinate our actions, and work together to not only make people aware of sexual violence but also to build communities that will condemn it.

We forged new relationships, partnerships, and coalitions for action. And we felt a renewed sense of commitment to advocating our vision of *peace, justice, and equality*.

“ We are the new generation struggling for our freedom. We know that this is a new world and the future is ours. And as women, they built walls around us because they are afraid of us. ”

Tawakkol Karman

“You can tell people of the need to struggle, but when the powerless start to see that they really can make a difference, nothing can quench the fire.”

Leymah Gbowee

Much like the indomitable spirit of our sister Laureate, Wangari Maathai, who moved countless people to take action to improve their communities, the spirit of women to join and collaborate for change cannot be suppressed.

Although Wangari left us far too early, every small action we take toward a better world will keep her vision alive. She was a true inspiration and powerful example to women everywhere. We will carry on her belief that all of us have a role to play in creating sustainable *peace*, whether it is planting a tree, listening to a woman in a refugee camp, or making sure leaders and decision makers hear the voices of the disempowered.

This year, we welcomed three new women to our family of Nobel Peace Laureates. The Nobel Peace Prize was presented to Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberian activist Leymah Gbowee, and Yemini opposition leader Tawakkol Karman for their “nonviolent struggle for the safety of women and for women’s rights to full participation in peacebuilding work.” There are now nine living women Nobel Peace Prize recipients. We are thrilled that Tawakkol and Leymah have since accepted the invitation to join the Nobel Women’s Initiative. There are now nine living women Nobel Peace Prize recipients.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our partners and fellow activists from around the world—from Burma, Iran, Israel-Palestine to DR Congo, Central America and Mexico—who continue to inspire us with their courage and tireless efforts for *peace, justice, and equality*. We stand beside you in solidarity and will continue to support you as we work towards ending the culture of impunity around sexual violence and providing a just and safe world, free from human rights abuses, for our children.

Shirin Ebrahimi Rignobert Thachet Jody Mairéad Maguire





Message *from the* Executive Director

Advocating for peace, justice and equality

As I reflect on the past year, I have mixed emotions. The increasingly brutal violations of women's human rights are extremely disturbing; and the scant lip service being paid to crucial issues such as sexual violence even more so. Nevertheless, I am struck by the undaunting passion and strength of our fellow activists, and there are many proud moments of a job well done.

“ We have to be a loud and clear voice for those whose voices cannot be heard. ”

Shirin Ebadi

One of the year's most significant events was our international conference on sexual violence in Montebello, Quebec where we forged new partnerships, gained allies from non-traditional sectors, such as business and military, and initiated the idea for an international grass-roots campaign to stop rape in war. In the days following our conference, we received news that Bosnian Serb war criminal Ratko Mladic had been arrested for crimes against humanity, including sexual violence. In Canada, the issue of sexual violence was raised in the House of Commons and by the official opposition (the National Democratic Party) at its annual convention.

In January, we received extensive Mexican and international media coverage, when the Nobel Women signed a powerful statement condemning the ongoing violence against women in Mexico and calling for an end to impunity. The Mexican government responded in writing, promising to do more to tackle violence against women, particularly in Ciudad Juarez.

In March, we worked hard to support Shirin Ebadi in the wake of increased executions, stoning, and the illegal detention of human rights defenders in Iran. Through media outreach, actions on our website, Facebook and other social media, we promoted Shirin's advocacy efforts and her appeal to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to intervene. Our efforts paid off when the UN created the post of Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran.

Progress was made in the struggle for climate justice and sustainable energy sources. The controversial Keystone XL pipeline was delayed indefinitely following this year's letter from the Nobel Peace Laureates and widespread protests. In addition, in the aftermath of Japan's nuclear disaster and our international writing campaign, several countries announced their decision to phase out nuclear energy.

Six years since our creation, there have been many highlights, but we must continue to be diligent. We must continue to pressure the international community to put their words into action and allocate the necessary resources that would enable women to carry out their nonviolent work, free from fear.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the staff and interns of the Nobel Women's Initiative. I am honoured to work with such a dynamic and knowledgeable group of women. Their hard work and dedication to bring to reality the vision of our Nobel Peace Laureates is very much appreciated.

I also thank the women we have had the privilege of meeting and working with, those who struggle on the frontlines every day to ensure a peaceful, just, and equal world. In the pages that follow, you will witness their important work. May they continue to influence change and inspire others to do the same!



Liz Bernstein



Who we are

The Nobel Women's Initiative uses the prestige of the Nobel Peace Prize and courageous women Peace Laureates to increase the power and visibility of women's groups working globally for *peace, justice and equality*.

How We Work

Our advocacy is organized around three main pillars:

■ Women forging *peace*

The inclusion of women in peace making and support for nonviolence and other alternatives to war and militarism.

■ Women achieving *justice*

Accountability for crimes committed against women and an end to widespread impunity.

■ Women advancing *equality and human rights*

Support for human rights defenders, those working for women's *equality* and those on the frontlines of civil society—including those addressing climate change.

We use three main strategies in our advocacy:

■ Convening:

We bring together key decision makers with women's rights activists. We promote collaboration between diverse women's groups, academics, policy makers and the media. We empower women leaders, and expand global movements for *peace, justice and equality*.

■ Shaping the conversation:

We articulate a broadly accessible analysis of the impact of conflict, violence and inequity on women. We emphasize solutions proposed by women's movements. We share a vision of what a nonviolent, just and equal world looks like.

■ Spotlighting and promoting:

We create media and public awareness of the powerful work being done by women's activists and movements—and help bring women's messages to the world.

“ We recognize that by virtue of [receiving] the Nobel Prize, we have influence and access that others don't. And if we put all of that behind the work of other women, where it makes a difference, we can help them advance their work. ”

Jody Williams

Committed Staff

Based in Ottawa, the Nobel Women's Initiative has a small but dedicated team of women with broad international experience in women's rights and advocacy who carry out an ambitious work plan in support of the Nobel Women's vision.

Mentoring a New Generation

The Nobel Women's Initiative creates remarkable internship opportunities for young women

in university or who have recently completed their university studies. These interns give us a new generation's perspective on women's rights and advocacy and we, in turn, provide them with practical work experience and skills, and an opportunity to make a difference in our complex, globalized world. In 2011, 16 interns took part in the Ottawa internship program. An additional 16 volunteers helped the Nobel Women prepare for the *Women Forging a New Security conference*.



Meet the Laureates, 2011

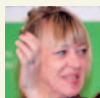
"Using our influence for change"



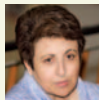
Mairead Maguire
(Northern Ireland,
1976) for her work to
help end the conflict in
Northern Ireland



*Rigoberta Menchú
Tum* (Guatemala,
1992) for her promotion
of the respect of
indigenous peoples'
rights in Guatemala



Jody Williams
(US, 1997) for her
work to ban landmines
through the Interna-
tional Campaign to
Ban Landmines



Shirin Ebadi (Iran,
2003) for her efforts to
promote human rights,
in particular, the rights
of women, children,
and political prisoners
in Iran



Wangari Maathai
(Kenya, 2004) for
her work to promote
sustainable develop-
ment, democracy
and peace

Honorary Member



Aung San Suu Kyi
(Burma, 1991)
for her work in the
nonviolent struggle for
democracy and human
rights in Burma

Highlights *of the* Year

Women forging peace

We advocate building long-term *peace*, supporting women who are engaged in non-violence and other alternatives to ending war and militarism, and support the inclusion of women in *peace* negotiations and other peacebuilding efforts.

Ending Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War

Rape and other forms of sexual violence are being used against women as a weapon of war across the globe. The Nobel Women work with partner organizations to prevent and eliminate sexual violence as a tactic of war and to ensure the international community addresses sexual violence as a peace and security concern.

In May 2011, in Montebello, Canada, Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Jody Williams,

Shirin Ebadi, and Mairead Maguire hosted a gathering of over 120 women from 30 different countries to tackle the increasing use of sexual violence in war.

The conference, **Women Forging a New Security: Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict**, was a great success with those gathered finding a safe place to share experiences, build new relationships, and develop strategies for both individual and collective action to end rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war.

2011 *at a Glance*

14 January

- Nobel Women called on the Mexican government to investigate the murders of Marisela Escobedo Ortiz and her daughter Rubi Marisol Frayre in Ciudad Juarez, where more than 7,000 people have been killed in the past three years.

27 January

- The government of Mexico responded, saying it would do more about violence against women, while citing "multiple challenges in the matter."

17 January

- Wangari Maathai denounced the impunity enjoyed by Kenyan leaders involved in the violence following Kenya's 2007 elections.

“It is part of a war strategy...soldiers are being ordered to rape. And in a traditional society, if you rape a woman, she is divorced by her husband. You rape enough women in enough villages... you can literally destroy the fabric of the community.”

Jody Williams on CTV's Power Play

A diverse range of participants, including survivors, donors, government officials, military personnel and business representatives spoke openly of their experiences and the challenges they face on the issue of sexual violence in conflict. Nobel Laureates Wangari Maathai and Aung San Suu Kyi, US State Department Ambassador for Women's Issues, Melanne Verveer, and Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Margot Wallström, participated by sending video messages. Not only did participants hear powerful first-hand testimonies

about rape and what survivors face in their communities, but they also gained insight into what some militaries and governments are doing to change their operations, attitudes and priorities.

People were able to follow and share conference content and experiences through live blogs, Facebook, and Twitter. The conference was widely reported in national media, including Canada's *Globe and Mail*, with coverage in international news agencies, such as the *BBC Outlook*, as well as prominent online magazines such as *The Atlantic* and *Huffington Post*.

24 January

- Wangari Maathai urged the international community to turn its attention towards oppressed women in North Sudan, on eve of referendum for an independent South Sudan.

February

- Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi, and human rights groups called on the Iranian government to stop a wave of executions, stoning and other brutal violence that saw 86 people executed since January 2011.

3 March

- Shirin Ebadi called for peaceful public rallies on women's day in Iran to bring equal rights for women to the forefront. She urged Iran to change its discriminatory laws and reform its constitution.



“It was powerful to get a sense of the vast and deeply disturbing ways in which women are experiencing sexual violence in conflict. It turned this into a much more personal experience and energized me to pay more attention and get more involved.”

Participant, Women Forging a New Security Conference, 2011

OpenDemocracy covered the conference with daily articles and analytical pieces on sexual violence.

Canada's role in addressing sexual violence in conflict was raised in the House of Commons and at the annual convention of the official opposition (the National Democratic Party), following conference coverage

and key meetings with Canadian officials. The Nobel Women called on the Canadian government to support investigations and assist in the prosecution of crimes of sexual violence. They also met with Canada's Minister of International Cooperation, who consequently released a statement underscoring her ministry's support for ending sexual violence in conflict.

“Don't count the military forces out! Security sector reform is a “window of opportunity” for collaboration with women's organizations to shape views of local security forces on gender.”

Charlotte Isaksson, Gender Advisor to Swedish Armed Forces

2011 at a Glance

◀ 8 March

- On Women's Day, Shirin Ebadi called for a UN Mandate for Iran to honour and support women human rights defenders, such as Nasrin Sotoudeh, a lawyer and mother of two, who has been detained in Iran since September 2010.

9 March

- *This is My Witness*, a film about two women who testify about the brutality of Burma's military regime at the International Tribunal on Crimes against Women of Burma, and produced by the Nobel Women's Initiative, premiered in Canada and parts of the US.

24 March

- The UN Human Rights Council established a Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran.

NEXT STEPS

Participants emphasized the need to pressure governments to take action to implement international human rights laws. They expressed their desire to play a part in a global survivor-centred campaign, whether through raising funds and awareness, building coalitions, or engaging new allies, such as the military and corporate sectors.

Coming out of the conference, the Nobel Women decided to take the lead in an international campaign that would bring together the myriad groups working on this issue to pressure governments and international institutions to enforce the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and take meaningful leadership to stop rape and gender violence in conflict.

Taking action against rape in war: public day of action

Our Day of Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict on May 26 helped spread the conference's message to a broader audience. People from around the world heard of the horrific reality of sexual violence and were inspired to take action. More than 1500 people clicked on our "Take Action" link and over 2500 tweets were made using the hashtag #endrapeinwar.

The Nobel Women hosted a panel discussion with Canadian politicians, policymakers, academics, and activists and released *War on Women: Time for Action to End Sexual Violence in Conflict*, a global overview of the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and what can be done to stop it.

25 March

- Jody Williams debated women's equality on television's *Colbert Report*.

13 April

- Shirin Ebadi condemned Iran for the murder of 12 Sunni protesters in the province of Khuzestn and called on the government to quash its bill to stifle civil society.

21 April

- Nobel Laureates urged world leaders to phase out their use of nuclear power and commit to renewable energy sources.



“ The more organizations and individuals working in tandem for change, the faster we can make that change happen. ”

International Campaign to Stop Rape & Gender Violence in Conflict

We continue to receive calls, emails, and tweets from policymakers, leaders of humanitarian organizations and individuals, offering their support to work with us on this issue.

International Campaign to Stop Rape & Gender Violence in Conflict

Led by the Nobel Women in the wake of our conference, this global grassroots campaign coordinates international efforts to press for specific prevention, protection, and prosecution measures and advocate for an increase in resources to support survivors and achieve *justice*.

Strengthening the capacity of civil society in Israel-Palestine

In March, we supported our partners in protesting an anti-boycott law prohibiting groups and individuals from organizing or promoting boycotts of Israel. This law is part of a wave of anti-democratic legislation to delegitimize and intimidate *peace* and human rights organizations. More than 50 civil society organizations signed a petition against the law.

In a June 16 letter, Mairead Maguire, Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi, and Rigoberta Menchú Tum urged UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to publicly support

2011 *at a Glance*

◀ 9 May

- Jody Williams called for a UN Commission of Inquiry for women as part of Burma's roadmap to democracy.

22-24 May

- The Nobel Women held conference to determine strategies for ending rape as a weapon in war with a wide range of stakeholders, including victims of rape, military personnel, security sector, businesses, and civil society.

26 May

- Nobel Women held public day of action to raise awareness in Canada of rape as a weapon of war, urged Canadian leaders to protect women in armed conflict, and published *War on Women: Time for Action to End Sexual Violence in Conflict*.

the safe passage of the second Freedom Flotilla carrying humanitarian supplies to Gaza. The flotilla failed to reach Gaza due to interference by Greek authorities.

In mid-September, five Nobel Peace Laureates wrote a letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to express their concern over the UN's Palmer report. In May 2010, seven vessels to Gaza carrying nearly 700 passengers from 36 different countries were attacked by Israeli security, who killed nine passengers, injured over 50, and imprisoned all aboard. Most of the humanitarian aid was confiscated and was not delivered. The Palmer report condemned the attacks, but the Laureates objected to the

report's implied justification of the blockade on Gaza.

In October, the Nobel Women released a statement calling for international support of Palestinians' right to self-determination, including their bid for statehood and women's rights.

In November, Mairead Maguire served as a jurist at an international people's tribunal to investigate whether Israel's practices in Palestine constitute apartheid under international law. The Russell Tribunal on Palestine announced its findings in an international press conference in Cape Town, South Africa following two days of testimony from expert witnesses. The tribunal

“As we learned in Northern Ireland, outside pressure can help tremendously in bringing political change.”

Mairead Maguire

June

- Nobel Women sent letter urging safe passage of the second Freedom Flotilla to bring humanitarian supplies to Gaza.
- Wangari Maathai called on African leaders to address climate crisis at AU Summit.

July

- Aung San Suu Kyi spoke about freedom and democracy during BBC Reith lecture series.
- Nobel Women sent condolences to people of Norway after bomb blast in central Oslo government offices and a shooting at a youth retreat.

August

- Aung San Suu Kyi called for ceasefire in Burma's ethnic clashes. She made her first political trip outside Rangoon.



unanimously ruled that Israeli violations are defined under international law as apartheid, stating, "Israel subjects the Palestinians to an institutionalized regime of domination, mounting to apartheid."

Women achieving justice

We support work to achieve justice for women, including accountability for crimes committed against women and an end to widespread impunity.

Ending impunity for violence against women in Mexico

The Nobel Women joined activists from around the world in calling

on the Mexican government to address violence against women in Mexico. In a January 17 statement, they asked the government to investigate the murders of activist Marisela Escobedo Ortiz and her daughter Rubi Marisol Frayre. A few days later, the government of Mexico responded, stating that they would do more about violence against women while citing the "multiple challenges in the matter."

Bringing attention to violence against women in the Americas

Jody Williams and Rigoberta Menchú Tum made plans to lead a delegation to Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico in 2012 to meet with and support women human

“ We know that this is not an isolated case, and that the violence against the human rights defenders who bravely fight against femicide in Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua is a constant issue in Mexico. ”

Nobel Women statement

2011 at a Glance

◀ 12 August

- Wangari Maathai called on AU to remain vigilant in Sudan as border violence continued in the wake of South Sudan's independence. She also spoke out about the causes of drought, including environmental degradation, in the Horn of Africa.

26 August

- Shirin Ebadi submitted a report on the human rights situation in Iran to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, who was refused entry to the country.

7 September

- Nobel Women urged Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to support a Commission of Inquiry on war crimes in Burma.

rights defenders on the ground, bring attention to violence against women, pressure governments to end impunity, and address the role of mining companies in perpetrating human rights abuses.

Calling for a Commission of Inquiry in Burma

We stand in solidarity with Aung San Suu Kyi and other women activists of Burma, who are at the forefront of a thriving non-violent movement for democracy and change in Burma. We work towards the freedom of political prisoners, accountability for crimes against humanity, and women's full participation in decision-making processes.

In early September, the Nobel Women sent letters to Foreign

Ministers and wrote an open letter to US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, expressing concern against the continued use of rape as a weapon of war in Burma. We called for the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry in Burma to hold the military accountable for its routine use of torture, rape, slavery, and mass murder, particularly against ethnic women in Burma's northern states, and also to provide access to *justice* for women who have been raped by members of Burma's military.

Since her release from house arrest in November 2010, Aung San Suu Kyi has travelled outside Burma, has met with world leaders, and was featured in the BBC's

“ We want to end the vicious cycle of people trying to change the political scene through the power of the gun. ”

Aung San Suu Kyi

7 September

- Nobel Laureates urged President Obama to reject the Keystone XL Pipeline. Their letter later appeared as a full page in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*.

14 September

- Rigoberta Menchú Tum ran for President in Guatemala. Military General Otto Perez was elected with just 36% support.

22 September

- Nobel Women criticized UN's inquiry into Flotilla incident that seemingly validated Israel's blockade.



Reith Lecture series where she discussed the notion of freedom and dissent in the context of the fight for democracy in Burma. She has also met with Burmese officials and offered to assist in mediation between the government and ethnic groups as clashes continue in northern provinces.

Women advancing equality and human rights

We support human rights defenders, including those working for women's equality and climate justice.

Supporting Iranian women's rights activists and the call for a UN human rights mechanism for Iran

The situation in Iran was a priority for us over the past year, as Iranian women's rights activists continued to be harassed and arrested at an unprecedented rate.

Nargess Mohammadi, a human rights activist and journalist, was sentenced to 11 years, and **Nasrin Sotoudeh**, a human rights lawyer, is serving 6 years and has been denied visitation from her family. Women's rights defender **Maryam Bahrman** is also being illegally held in prison in Iran since May 2011 – the main allegation against her is “action against national security”, for her participation in the 55th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2011.

Using media outreach and calls to action on our website, Facebook, and other social media, we supported Shirin Ebadi's appeal to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to take whatever action is necessary to obtain freedom for Nasrin and other human rights defenders unjustly detained in Iran.

2011 at a Glance

◀ 25 September

- Wangari Maathai died at age 71 after a battle with ovarian cancer. Memorial ceremonies were held around the world - including in Kenya, New York, San Francisco, London, and Ottawa.

28 September

- Eight Nobel Laureates wrote to Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper calling on him to halt the expansion of the tar sands and move towards clean energy.

October

- Nobel Women called for support of Palestinian women's bid for UN statehood.

“While much of the attention on Iran has been focused on the nuclear threat they pose, the people of Iran are facing a human rights crisis of unprecedented scale...human rights violations are occurring at a massive scale with daily occurrences of torture, arbitrary arrest, and illegal detention of pro-democracy activists. Over 500 prisoners of conscience are currently serving prison sentences ranging from one to twenty years. Executions skyrocketed in 2010, with 542 known cases that year alone including juveniles.”

Nobel Peace Laureates letter

“This is a strong message of support to the Iranian people from the international community that they are not forgotten, and gross violations of their rights will not be tolerated.”

Shirin Ebadi

For International Women's Day, we published an opinion editorial in *The Guardian* and the *Ottawa Citizen* to raise awareness of the situation of women human rights defenders in Iran. Also in March, we joined a worldwide campaign, writing letters to 32 member countries of the UN Human Rights Council, urging them to support a special rapporteur on Iran. A majority of 22 votes was

needed to pass the resolution and at the time of the letter writing, fewer than 20 countries had expressed their support.

On 24 March 2011, the Human Rights Council decided to establish a UN special mechanism on human rights in Iran. The resolution received an absolute majority of 22 votes in favour, versus 7 against and 14 abstentions.

October

- Rigoberta Menchú Tum called for an end to impunity for crimes against women in Guatemala, where there are increasing incidents of femicide.

4 November

- Nobel Women joined the 10,000 Keystone XL protestors at the White House. Obama decided to reject the pipeline on 11 November.

8 November

- Memorial service held for Wangari Maathai in Minto Park, Ottawa, where a tree was planted in her honour.



Lobbying for women's rights in Sudan

In January, South Sudanese people voted in a historic referendum with over 99% support for dividing Africa's largest country in two. The vote was relatively peaceful, but since South Sudan's official independence on July 9th there has been increased violence in South Kordofan and Blue Nile State. The security situation in Darfur remains volatile with little progress in the *peace* negotiations. Ongoing sexual violence and killings of women activists in Sudan is a source of deep concern.

In op-eds published in *The East African* and *The Mail and Guardian*, Wangari Maathai called for increased international attention for the citizens of Sudan, especially women. She wrote of

the need to break the vicious circle of violence by ensuring a peaceful resolution to the conflict. She calls for women, who bear the heaviest burden of the ongoing violence and insecurity, to be included in the *peace* process.

The Nobel Women supported Sudanese women's rights activists to go to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the 16th African Union (AU) Summit in January. Coordinated by Oxfam, activists lobbied African leaders to support the results of the Sudan referendum, prioritize women's rights, and ensure Darfur remains on the agenda.

Supporting women's political participation in Guatemala

In September 2011, an unprecedented number of women ran in Guatemala's presidential elections, including Rigoberta Menchú Tum. Menchú

2011 at a Glance

◀ 10 November

- Israel found guilty of apartheid by jury members, including Mairead Maguire, of the Russell Tribunal on Palestine held in Cape Town, South Africa.

25 November

- 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence paid tribute to courageous women activists around the world.

10 December

- Three women jointly awarded Nobel Peace Prize: Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberian activist Leymah Gbowee, and Yemini opposition leader Tawakkol Karman.

“Achieving lasting *peace* and security in Sudan is not possible without women’s full inclusion.”

Wangari Maathai

represented the *Winaq* party (meaning *people* in the indigenous language of K’iche’ean), whose roots are in Guatemala’s disenfranchised indigenous communities. Although former general Otto Pérez Molina received the majority of votes, the increased presence of indigenous women in politics was an important step in a political system traditionally dominated by people of European descent.

Encouraging the use of renewable energy over nuclear energy

In the aftermath of the nuclear disaster in Japan, the Nobel Women stressed the dangers of nuclear energy and called for greater investment in safe and renewable energy sources. On the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster on April 26, along with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, and José Ramos-Horta, we sent a letter to leaders of countries heavily invested in nuclear power production or considering nuclear power urging them to invest in renewable energy. We argued that cheaper and more sustainable energy sources are available and capable of providing the 7% energy supply currently

produced by nuclear power plants. The letter highlighted the serious long-term impacts of nuclear power production, including the challenges of finding safe and secure storage for nuclear waste, the risks of radiation and nuclear weapon building, as well as the expenses associated with the industry.

We received responses from the UK, Canada, Slovakia, Armenia and Taiwan, outlining their commitment and investment in renewable energy and assuring the Nobel Women that they are aiming to systematically reduce nuclear energy. An editorial in *The Financial Times* as well as other Canadian, American and international media outlets and blogs, mentioned the letter. As well, our Facebook supporters were substantially more active that week. Germany, Italy, and Japan have since declared their intent to close power plants and phase out nuclear energy.

Urging President Obama to reject the Keystone Pipeline

In September, nine Nobel Peace Laureates – the six women Laureates of the Nobel Women’s

“There is no such thing as ethical fossil fuel, regardless of geographical origin. The ethical choice is to move as quickly as possible away from fossil fuels, period.”

The Devil in the Tar sands, op-ed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Jody Williams, Project Syndicate, November 7, 2011

Initiative, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel of Argentina, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa sent a letter to US President Barack Obama calling on the President to reject the Keystone XL Pipeline from Alberta's tar sands to oil refineries in Texas. Subsequently, the letter ran as a full-page ad—paid for by supporters of the National Resource Defense Council—in both *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.

Then, on November 6, Jody Williams joined around 12,000 protesters in Washington, DC calling on Obama to reject the pipeline and promote a cleaner, green economy. She and Desmond Tutu also published an op-ed warning Obama that moving forward with the pipeline would be “one of the single most disastrous decisions” of his presidency, and asking him to fulfill his promise to support investment in clean, renewable energy.

Eight Nobel Peace Laureates also sent a letter to Canadian Prime

Minister Stephen Harper, urging him to say “no” to tar sands oil development in Alberta. In their letter, the Laureates called on Harper to move Canada closer to a clean energy future. The letter garnered extensive Canadian media coverage, including articles in *The Globe and Mail*, *The Chronicle Herald*, *CBC News* and *The Huffington Post*.

The US State Department subsequently announced an environmental review of Trans-Canada's proposed Keystone XL pipeline, delaying the final decision on this controversial project.

Calling attention to climate change

In June, Wangari Maathai issued a press release calling on African heads of state to make the climate crisis a priority at the African Union Summit Meetings, held in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea in June. She stressed the importance of African heads of state addressing climate change before the COP 17 UN Climate Conference being held in Durban, South Africa in December.





Wangari Muta Maathai

1940 - 2011

“Those of us who witness the degraded state of the environment and the suffering that comes with it cannot afford to be complacent. We continue to be restless. If we really carry the burden, we are driven to action. We cannot tire or give up. We owe it to the present and future generations of all species to rise up and walk!”

Wangari Maathai

With great sadness, we said goodbye this past year to our dear colleague and friend, Nobel Peace Laureate Wangari Maathai. She was a true visionary whose commitment, courage, creativity, passion, and strength inspired—and will continue to inspire—people around the world to make positive change. She showed us that ending poverty, empowering women, and ensuring a sustainable future for our planet are all essential building blocks of a more just and peaceful world.

Wangari was the founder of the Green Belt Movement, which not only works to protect the environment but also provides women with a source of employment in rural areas. Wangari's life was a series of firsts: she was the first woman to gain a Ph.D. in East and Central Africa; the first female chair of a department at the University of Nairobi; and the first African woman and the first environmentalist to receive the Nobel Peace Prize (2004).

Elected to Kenya's parliament in 2002 with an overwhelming 98% of the vote, she served until 2007, representing the Tetu constituency of the Nyeri district in central Kenya (her birthplace and home). She also served as Assistant Minister for Environment and Natural Resources in Kenya's ninth parliament.

Honoured throughout the world for her work for *peace*, democracy and the environment, she often addressed the United Nations and spoke on behalf of women at special sessions of the General Assembly. She was named to the Millennium Development Goals Advocacy Group: a panel of political leaders, business people, and activists established to galvanize worldwide support for

“We will miss her great shining smile and her indomitable spirit but all those she has inspired will keep her vision alive through each small action we take toward a better world.”

*Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi,
Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Mairead Maguire,
September 26, 2011.*

the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). She launched and co-chaired the Jubilee 2000 Africa Campaign, which advocates for canceling the debts of poor African countries. In March 2005, she was elected as the first president of the African Union's Economic, Social and Cultural Council. She was named a UN Messenger of Peace in December 2009 in recognition of her deep commitment to the environment. Her recent campaign against land grabbing (illegal appropriation of public lands by developers) and the rapacious re-allocation of forest land has received much attention in Kenya and the region.

She wrote four books including her autobiography, *Unbowed*; an explanation of her organizational method, *The Green Belt Movement: Sharing the Approach and the Experience*; *The Challenge for Africa*; and *Replenishing the Earth*. She and the Green Belt Movement were the subject of a documentary film, *Taking Root: the Vision of Wangari Maathai* (Marlboro Productions, 2008).

Wangari died on 25 September 2011 at the age of 71 after a battle with cancer. Memorial ceremonies were held in Kenya, New York, San Francisco, and London.

Wangari Maathai *at a Glance*

1971

- Received Ph.D. from University of Nairobi, where she taught veterinary anatomy. First woman in East and Central Africa to earn doctorate.

1976

- Served on National Council of Women of Kenya; chaired from 1981-1987. Introduced idea of women planting trees to reduce poverty and conserve the environment.

1977

- Founded Green Belt Movement, which empowers communities—especially women and girls—to promote environmental conservation, climate resilience, sustainable livelihoods, and democratic space. GBM has planted over 47 million trees in Kenya.

Heartfelt tributes were received from world leaders and friends

- One can but marvel at her foresight and the scope of her success. She was a true African heroine.
— Desmond Tutu,
Nobel Peace Laureate
- The work of the Green Belt Movement stands as a testament to the power of grassroots organizing, proof that one person's simple idea—that a community should come together to plant trees—can make a difference, first in one village, then in one nation, and now across Africa.
— Barack Obama, US President
- She understood the deep connection between local and global problems, and she helped give ordinary citizens a voice. Her death has left a gaping hole among the ranks of women leaders, but she leaves behind a solid foundation for others to build upon.
— Hillary Clinton,
US Secretary of State
- A globally recognized champion for human rights and women's empowerment, Professor Maathai was a pioneer in articulating the links between human rights, poverty, environmental protection, and security.
— Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General
- We all knew her as a voice of reason, a lady who stood above our artificial divisions of race, tribe and region and championed the cause of humanity.
— Raila Odinga,
Prime Minister of Kenya
- What we leave behind us is our spirit, which can be shared by anyone with the courage and love to do so. Wangari Maathai's spirit is a feast of love and joy, honour and determination, incredible will.
— Alice Walker, poet/novelist

2004

- Received Nobel Peace Prize.

2005

- Named Goodwill Ambassador and Co-chair of Congo Basin Forest Ecosystem, which helps ensure Congo's forests are worth more as a living resource, than cut down.

2006

- Founded Nobel Women's Initiative with sister Laureates Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi, Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Betty Williams, and Mairead Maguire.

2010

- Founded Wangari Maathai Institute for Peace and Environmental Studies (WMI) for research in land use, forestry, agriculture, resource-based conflicts, and *peace* studies.

Women *in* action

We have the privilege of working with some very courageous women around the world—women who often struggle in the shadows, at risk to their personal safety, to make a difference in the lives of others.

Each year since 1991, the 16 Days of Activism (beginning on November 25, International Day against Violence Against Women, and ending on December 10, International Human Rights Day), pays tribute to the women who work tirelessly and at great personal risk to promote *peace, justice, and equality* in their communities and society.

This year we marked the occasion with a daily blog filled with inspiring stories, photos, and videos spotlighting the extraordinary work of 16 women activists who have dedicated their lives to help end sexual violence.

Chantal Bilulu Myanga

Fighting sexual violence in Democratic Republic of Congo



"If you have been raped, to keep silent is to kill yourself slowly from the inside."

Living along the shores of Lake Kivu in eastern Congo, Chantal helps women survivors of extreme sexual violence. She works with **Héritiers de la Justice (HJ)** to pass laws against sexual violence and to ensure women's participation in government.

Chantal helps women to open up about their experiences, documenting it for the courts and breaking the shame and silence. Between January and November 2011, HJ documented more than 406 cases of rape perpetrated by armed Rwandan and Congolese groups and authorities. The survivors ranged in age from 4 to 85 years. Armed groups use sexual violence as a weapon to seize control of the lucrative mineral trade in eastern Congo, where there are many multinational mining companies doing business.

“Nothing is going to change unless we change ourselves.”

Rigoberta Menchú Tum

Nasrin Sotoudeh

**Defending women imprisoned
for demanding justice in Iran**



“My daughter, I hope you never think that I was not thinking of you or that it was my actions that deserved such punishment. Everything I have done is legal and within the framework of the law.”

Nasrin is a respected legal advocate who takes on tough cases that other lawyers would avoid, such as defending Iranian activists arrested in the crack-down following the June 2009 presidential elections. She also bravely takes on cases involving child executions.

In January 2011, the Iranian Revolutionary Court sentenced her to 11 years in prison and barred her from practicing law or leaving the country for 20 years on charges of “spreading lies against the state, cooperating with the **Center of Human Rights Defenders**, and conspiracy to disturb order.” Nasrin is being held in Ward 209 of Tehran’s notorious Evin Prison, where she has spent much of her time in solitary confinement.

Haneen Zoabi

**Advocating equal rights for
Palestinian citizens of Israel**



“I am not an immigrant. This is my homeland. We are the indigenous people. I have a vision of our rights as indigenous people. We didn’t migrate to Israel; it is Israel that migrated to us.”

Haneen, a member of the Israeli Knesset, is the first woman elected on an Arab party list. Her experience as an Arab woman living inside of Israel drove her to join the Balad Party, which maintains a one-third quota for women candidates and advocates for the rights of Palestinians and for an end to Israel’s occupation of Palestine.

Once a majority, Palestinian citizens of Israel now comprise just 18% of the population. Their political power is not proportionate to their population, with only 2% of elected officials in Israel. There are 30 laws in Israel that legally discriminate against Palestinians. Haneen urges feminists in Israel to support the unique struggle of Palestinian women.

Sahar Vardi

Protesting Israel's treatment of the Palestinian people



"The bloody cycle in which I live...is a vicious circle that is sustained by the choice of both sides to engage in violence. I refuse to take part in this choice."

In the villages where as a young girl she would go plant trees with her father, Sahar recalls the shock of watching the Palestinians' "ordinary day to day situation of going through checkpoints, fearing the demolition of their homes and knowing that every 18-year old soldier has the power to control their life."

At age 14, Sahar began to go to demonstrations against the Israeli separation wall in the West Bank. She handed out brochures to her high school classmates with information on how to become a *sarvanim* (conscientious objector). Sahar served three prison sentences for refusing to be conscripted into Israel's military service. She now actively protests the eviction of Arab Israeli families from their homes to make way for Jewish settlements. She works with the **Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions** and the **Sheikh Jarrah Solidarity** movement.

Andréa Medina Rosas

Defending murdered and disappeared women in Mexico's Ciudad Juárez



"Women from different cultures must come together to talk about gender violence. Through this process, women realize the ways in which all of our societies contribute to gender in *justice*, and then work together on solutions."

A human rights lawyer, Andréa courageously defends murdered and disappeared women from Ciudad Juárez (nicknamed the "capital of murdered women"), where 400 women have been killed, although local activists would put the death toll at 5,000.

One of Andréa's biggest challenges was the Campo Algodonero case, which held Mexico responsible for the disappearance and murders of Claudia Ivette González, Esmeralda Herrera Monreal and Laura Berenice Ramos Monárrez, whose bodies were discovered in an abandoned cotton field known as Campo Algodonero. She works to ensure Mexico complies with the broad set of remedial measures and family reparations, as ordered by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Yanar Mohammed

Providing safehouses for women in Iraq



“Whenever we [bring] an important fact to the foreground, like the number of women trafficked and sold, the government is looking at us like an enemy.”

Yanar is the co-founder and President of the **Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq**, which campaigns for women's political, civic and human rights in Iraq. One of its activities is the operation of secret women's shelters in Baghdad. These safehouses provide accommodation and support to women who are forced to flee dangerous living situations, including domestic abuse and honour killings.

Yanar is one of the foremost activists for women's rights in Iraq. Her work, like many other human rights activists in the country, has been undertaken at great personal risk. Yanar's courageous efforts merited the Gruber Foundation's Women's Rights Prize in 2008. She is also the editor of the newspaper *Al-Mousawat*.

Zeinab Blandia

Empowering women to participate in Sudan's peace process



“We do not have an alternative but to continue fighting for *peace*. This is the only way forward.”

Zeinab is a peacemaker and community leader from the Nuba Mountains in Sudan. With a group of female university graduates, she founded the **Ru'ya**, or “**Vision**,” association to help train “Women Peace Ambassadors” to lead in building *peace* and trust in their communities.

In the historic May 2011 elections in Sudan, Ru'ya played a key role in bringing out the women's vote by promoting civic and voter education as well as training women in outreach and mobilizing other voters. The resurgence of the conflict has interrupted Ru'ya's work plans for the post-election period. While Zeinab and staff remain dedicated to their work, they are dealing with multiple threats to their security.



Connected *to our* community

The Nobel Women's Initiative believes profoundly in the sharing of information and ideas. By networking and working together rather than in competition, we enhance the work of all.

We continued to connect to our community of women's rights activists around the world, sharing stories of courageous women who work on the frontline and providing opportunities for taking individual and collective action.



We launched a new website that is at the heart of our efforts to connect with our community. The tagline of our organization—Advocating for *peace, justice,* and *equality*—drives and describes the way we all work together, and the way we engage with the world.

With over 50,000 visitors in 2011, our website is a hub where we can connect, inform, and shape conversations with our supporters, fellow activists, policy-makers and the media. It allows us to link people with concrete actions that they can take to make a difference in the world. It serves as an advocacy tool and a meeting place.

Throughout the year, using video clips and photos, Facebook updates and tweets, we provided our fellow activists with access to diverse places and voices, enabling more ways for our community to connect and interact, and inspiring people to act.

Our Facebook community doubled this year to 5100 activists, and on Twitter we connected with over 5000 followers, who shared our messages with tens of thousands more.

Our 16 Days of Activism blog introduced our followers to courageous women from many different countries who struggle tirelessly often at great personal risk to end violence against

women and promote a world of *peace, justice, and equality.*

New media and outreach also formed an essential component of our international conference on sexual violence in conflict, with the goal of reaching a much wider audience.

People were able to follow and share the content of the conference through blogs, Facebook and Twitter.

All three of the main panels were live-blogged and live-tweeted so that supporters could follow online. More than 2500 Twitter posts were made using the #endrapeinwar hashtag. This hashtag continues to be used on Twitter well beyond our sphere of influence.

Interest in the conference was so great that we had over



6,000 website visits during the event. Our conference blog, which enabled participants to get to know one another, access relevant resources and share thoughts on conference issues, was viewed 3068 times. More than 45 entries were posted on the conference blog during the four days of the event including videos, photos, reflection pieces, and articles by staff and conference participants.

Approximately 40 participant video interviews were conducted. Our YouTube page was viewed over 2300 times in May and our links were clicked more than 4300 times in the two-week reporting period, including a video of Aung San Suu Kyi's message to conference participants.

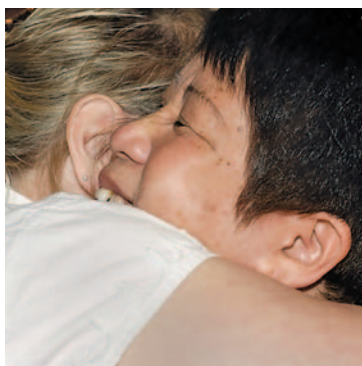
We prepared a comprehensive media strategy for the conference, identifying key media people, providing journalists with briefing materials, story and





interview pitches as well as suggestions for op-eds. The conference was widely reported in Canadian print, television, radio and online outlets as well as by international news agencies, such as the BBC Outlook. *OpenDemocracy* covered the conference through daily articles by journalists and analytical pieces on sexual violence submitted by conference participants. A national Canadian news chain (PostMedia) published several features on sexual violence in conflict on the eve of our conference; the same media chain also published an op-ed later in the week endorsing the Nobel Women's work on sexual violence in conflict and calling for the

Canadian government to focus more energy on this issue. *The Globe and Mail* published a two-page spread on sexual violence in conflict on the second day of our conference, featuring two of the conference participants (one from Kenya, the other from Bosnia) and the Nobel Women.



PLACING WOMEN'S VOICES FRONT AND CENTRE

Making women's voices heard to as wide an audience as possible strengthens our impact and influences key decision-makers around the world. In 2011, we continued to nurture our relationships with the media (both traditional and online), providing them with resources and expertise on a wide range of issues and keeping them abreast of the work of women's rights activists and our Laureates through informative and timely news releases, statements and editorials.

Jody Williams and K'nyaw Paw of the Women's League of Burma appeared on CTV's *Powerplay* to talk about the issue of sexual violence in conflict. The pair also did an interview with Evan Solomon for CBC's *Power & Politics*.

The Washington Post published the Nobel Peace Laureates' open letter to President Barack Obama urging him to reject the Keystone XL pipeline and increase investments in renewable energy that sustains the lives and livelihoods of future generations.

The East African and the *Mail and Guardian* published Wangari Maathai's op-eds on women's inclusion in Sudan's *peace* negotiations.

The *Ottawa Citizen* published Shirin Ebadi's op-ed on Tunisia's transition to democracy as a model for others.

In a statement to the Mexican government, six Nobel Women condemned the assassination of a women's human rights defender in Ciudad Juarez. Their statement is mentioned in the *Latin American Herald Tribune*.

The *Ottawa Citizen* and *The Guardian* published Shirin Ebadi's op-eds calling for a special UN human rights mechanism on Iran.

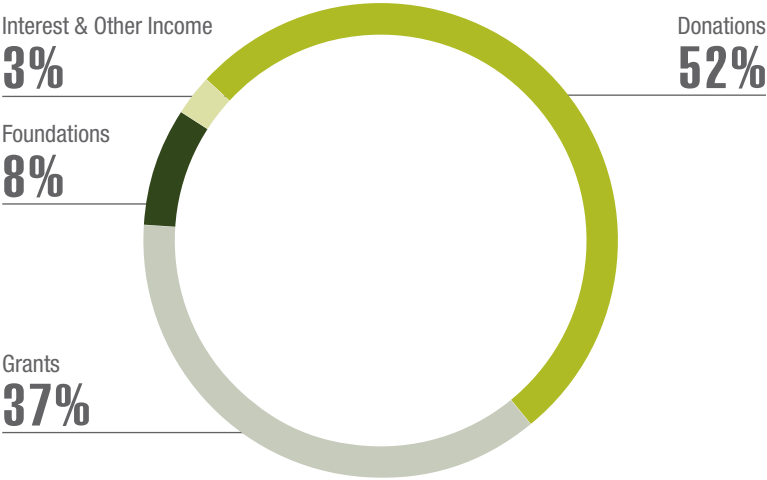
The Nobel Women's letter supporting the Gaza Freedom Flotilla II was reported in *Al Jazeera*, *Counter Currents*, *The Journal*, *The Mark*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Media with Conscience News*, *Pacific Free Press*, and *Envolverde*.

Financial Summary

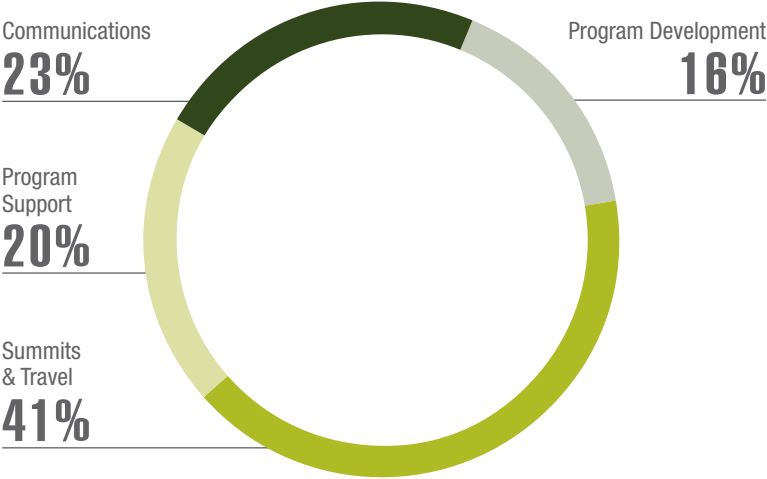
Ray Folkins, CA completed the 2011 Nobel Women's Initiative independent audit taken from his report. The following excerpts are taken from their report. A complete copy of the audited financial statements is available from the office upon request.

	2011	2010
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 38,731	\$ 175,471
Amounts Receivable	61,008	3,250
Prepaid Expenses & Deposits	96,242	21,135
	\$ 195,981	\$ 199,856
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	\$ 107,192	\$ 43,306
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS	87,986	136,131
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS BEGINNING	20,419	32,349
Excess of Revenues over Expenditures	(19,616)	(11,930)
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS ENDING	803	20,419
	\$ 195,981	\$ 199,856
REVENUE		
Donations	\$ 691,067	\$ 502,767
Foundations	108,139	101,979
Grants	500,852	723,019
University of Houston	0	63,310
Interest & Other Income	40,477	804
	\$ 1,340,535	\$ 1,391,879
EXPENDITURES		
Program Support	\$ 272,237	\$ 191,451
Communications	310,091	327,377
Program Development	222,373	577,613
Summits & Travel	555,449	307,368
	\$ 1,360,151	\$ 1,403,809
NET REVENUE (EXPENDITURES)	\$ (19,616)	\$ (11,930)

NWI 2011 REVENUES



NWI 2011 EXPENDITURES



Acknowledgements

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Photo credit page 7 (Tawakkol Karman): Ammar Abd Rammo (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/byammar/>)
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- Find us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube,
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- Visit our website at <http://nobelwomensinitiative.org>
- Nobel Women's Initiative is registered in Canada as a
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May 23-25, 2011 • Montreal, Canada

Early '80s '80s
Mid '80s '80s
to '90s '90s
Midwest Region

Laureate Panel: Hopes and Expectations



Advocates for peace, justice & equality



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