

Oslo 31.01.16

The Norwegian Nobel Committee,  
Henrik Ibsens gt. 51  
NO-0255 Oslo

I would hereby, as co-president of the International Peace Bureau (IPB), like to nominate the former Director General of UNESCO, Dr. **Federico Mayor and the culture of peace initiative**, for the Nobel Peace Prize 2016.

**Federico Mayor** piloted the project in UNESCO between 1987 and 1999, and continues as Director of the Foundation for a Culture of Peace to work for a transition from a culture of imposition and war to a culture of dialogue and peace. Through his writings, talks, and huge network of distinguished people, he is able to inspire and guide thinkers and political decision-makers alike. Among his many recent writings is also the *Joint declaration on social and ecological emergency*, which is being broadly signed and distributed. At the IPB annual conference in Padova: *Paths to Peace* in November 2015 Federico Mayor strongly underlined that the world urgently need to disarm to free resources for development and for meeting the challenges of climate change and of migration. A publication in his honor was made in UNESCO in 2015: *Federico Mayor Zaragoza and the Relevance of UNESCO*. With the present world situation of polarization and tension, the culture of peace vision and the many guidelines and action plans that have been developed, are more needed than ever.

The vision and the birth of the **culture of peace** program came out of the UNESCO International Congress on Peace in 1989 in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire. The UNESCO culture of peace program involved a huge number of partners such as governments, parliamentarians, intellectuals, educators, artists, civil society groups and lead e.g. to the International Year for a Culture of Peace, the Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World and a Plan of Action to facilitate implementation. Please see the historic background of the culture of peace initiative in link (<http://www.fund-culturadepaz.org/doc/HistoryCultureofPeace.pdf> ).

The 11. September 2001 events and the ensuing war on terror, unfortunately undermined the hoped effects of the initiative, the hope of finally moving from force to words, from confrontation to dialogue. The culture of peace initiative had for some years mostly been honored and cherished by civil society, notably the peace organizations and the women's organizations. But in September 2014, a UN High Level Forum took stock of achievements and stumbling blocks and made plans for future work related to the culture of peace, and in September 2015 the UN Secretary-General presented a report entitled "Promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace". It includes information of activities and initiatives on culture of peace and non-violence that have been carried out recently (A/70/373).

A Nobel Peace Prize for Federico Mayor would be an enormous boost to the culture of peace initiative and the many people, institutions and organizations that over the last 25 years have put so many hopes and dreams into its implementation.

The African continent has with UNESCO taken the lead in revitalizing the culture of peace initiative on a governmental level e.g. by organizing a conference ([Pan-African Forum "Africa: Sources and resources for a culture of peace"](#) in Angola in March 2013 and a meeting entitled *Peace in the mind of men and women*, in Yamoussoukro in September 2014 to mark the 25 years of the concept of a culture of peace and to launch the activities of the network of foundations and research institutions for the promotion of a culture of peace in Africa. [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/TRAINING/pdf/Concept\\_Note\\_Yamoussoukro-FINALIZED\\_01.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/TRAINING/pdf/Concept_Note_Yamoussoukro-FINALIZED_01.pdf)

**UNESCO**, the UN institution to “build peace in the minds of men”, celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary 16<sup>th</sup> November last year. UNESCO, as the intellectual and ethical body of the UN, has deserved to get the Nobel Peace Prize on many occasions: for its work on international understanding, for its facilitation of an extensive cooperation between scientists, teachers, artists, cultural workers and journalists, for its focus on peace education in its broadest sense, for the safeguarding of different forms of our cultural heritage, for inspiring art and creativity, for its normative work in favor of humanistic ideals, and most of all for its extensive initiative for the culture of peace involving millions of people around the world.

To-day, the UN is undermined in its function by lack of resources whilst global military expenditure continues to rise and bodies of the more affluent, such as the G6, G7, G20, the IMF and the World Bank and NATO, dictate much of the world agenda. National security takes the lead over human security, and ideologies of short-term gains undermine the living conditions of both humanity and the planet.

**Federico Mayor** managed in an unprecedented way during his period as Director General of UNESCO to make a platform for the involvement of governments, a large number of professional groups and civil society in the culture of peace program. Since 2000, his devotion to the ideals of a culture of peace and his many initiatives have been expressed through different channels, not least the Foundation for a Culture of Peace based in Madrid.

The governing bodies of UNESCO established a **culture of peace** program, with a large number of partners, and encouraged the UN to make the year 2000 the International Year for a Culture of Peace to be followed by the Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). A Recommendation and a Plan of Action were developed to guide and inspire the work both at a governmental and civil society level. UNESCO developed with some Nobel Peace Prize Laureates a Manifesto for a Culture of Peace that was signed by more than 70 million people and presented to the Secretary General of the UN. The culture of peace vision appealed not least to women and young people who, also through new communication means, contributed strongly to develop the initiative into a broad movement. Many individuals, organizations and institutions find an added value to their own efforts for gender equality, human rights, disarmament or sustainable development in the more comprehensive culture of peace platform.

Federico Mayor was heading the UNESCO secretariat through the whole period when top priority was given to the culture of peace. His tireless work and wisdom, his scientific mind and artistic ways of expressing himself, his enthusiasm and charisma made him an extraordinary “pilot”. For him, and for those of us who had the chance to work with him, the

culture of peace initiative was a revitalization of the normative instruments both of UNESCO as such, and of the UN. He was critical of how the UN became more and more known for peace-keeping whilst he considered that peace building and peace-making was its central task. He was also very critical to high military costs at the expense of social expenditure. He was convinced that most people wherever they are in the world want peace and wanted to encourage people to express themselves more clearly on these issues vis-à-vis their governments. He wanted the culture of peace initiative to help clarify and strengthen the conditions for peace, and actively confront the culture of war and violence and its root-causes: poverty, deprivation, inequality, injustice and ignorance. He was then, and continues to be firmly convinced that quality education, the learning to live together, is an indispensable tool for a culture of peace, fully in line with the preamble to UNESCO's Constitution which reads: "Since war began in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses for peace must be constructed".

There are several reasons for making this suggestion at this stage:

- To give a most overdue credit to an organization whose mandate it is to create peace through international cooperation within the fields of education, culture, science and communication and who was celebrating its 70 years in 2015. After some years with a lower profile on a culture of peace, UNESCO has again reintegrated a culture of peace into its program for 2010-2015 (General Conference October 2009). The organization has in particular been active on this issue in Africa. The first female Director General of UNESCO again underlines the Organization's deep humanistic mandate. Besides, UNESCO has accepted, as the only UN agency, Palestine as a member of the Organization, and has thereby taken a most courageous step towards peace in the Middle East. This decision has, however, created huge financial difficulties for the Organization with the withdrawal of the membership fees both from the United States of America and Israel.
- To give credit to a person who with extraordinary skills worked way beyond the call of duty and helped UNESCO and its many partners realize their potential for peace in an unprecedented manner; and who developed post-UNESCO his own Foundation for a Culture of Peace (2000 -) and who, through a series of engagements, such as the chairpersonship of the Dialogue among Civilizations and Ubuntu, has proven his deep commitment to the culture of peace ideal.
- The 11.09.01 syndrome and the "war on terror" undermined seriously the development and flourishing of the culture of peace initiative on the world agenda. Some countries also obviously felt the culture of peace initiative as a threat to their military-industrial situation of power. Instead of the hoped for "peace-dividend" after the end of "the cold war", military budgets continue to grow out of proportion. Imagine that some 10 percent of the military budgets would be enough to implement the UN Post 2015 Development Agenda. With the present, and dangerous over-arming of the world, people are in need of a new hope that world leaders again may consider a more peaceful and humanistic path.
- The International Decade on a culture of peace and non-violence for the children of the world" (2001 – 2010) ended without the results hoped for. Many organizations and individuals around the world have been reflecting on how to revitalize the culture of peace initiative both inside UNESCO, in the UN and within governments, as well as in institutions and civil society. Federico Mayor and his Foundation for a Culture of Peace have given vital guidance and inspiration to this end.

- These creative and constructive impulses are necessary in order to be able to face and counteract shortsighted political decisions leading humanity from crisis to crisis. The High level meeting in the UN, September 2014 and the report of the UNSG on a culture of peace, September 2015, have given a new impetus to the culture of peace initiative, including in relation to the UN Post 2015 Development Agenda, not least Sustainable Development Goal 16 on *peaceful societies*.

For more information on UNESCO's work, please see [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org) and please find some of Federico Mayor's initiatives and articles at [www.fund-culturadepaz.org](http://www.fund-culturadepaz.org) and on the blog <http://federicomayor-eng.blogspot.com>

I am at your disposal for any further information you may require.

Best regards,



Ingeborg Breines, co-President IPB