



GLOBAL
CENTRE FOR
PLURALISM

CENTRE
MONDIAL DU
PLURALISME

GLOBAL
PLURALISM AWARD

2017 LAUREATES

PLURALISM IN ACTION



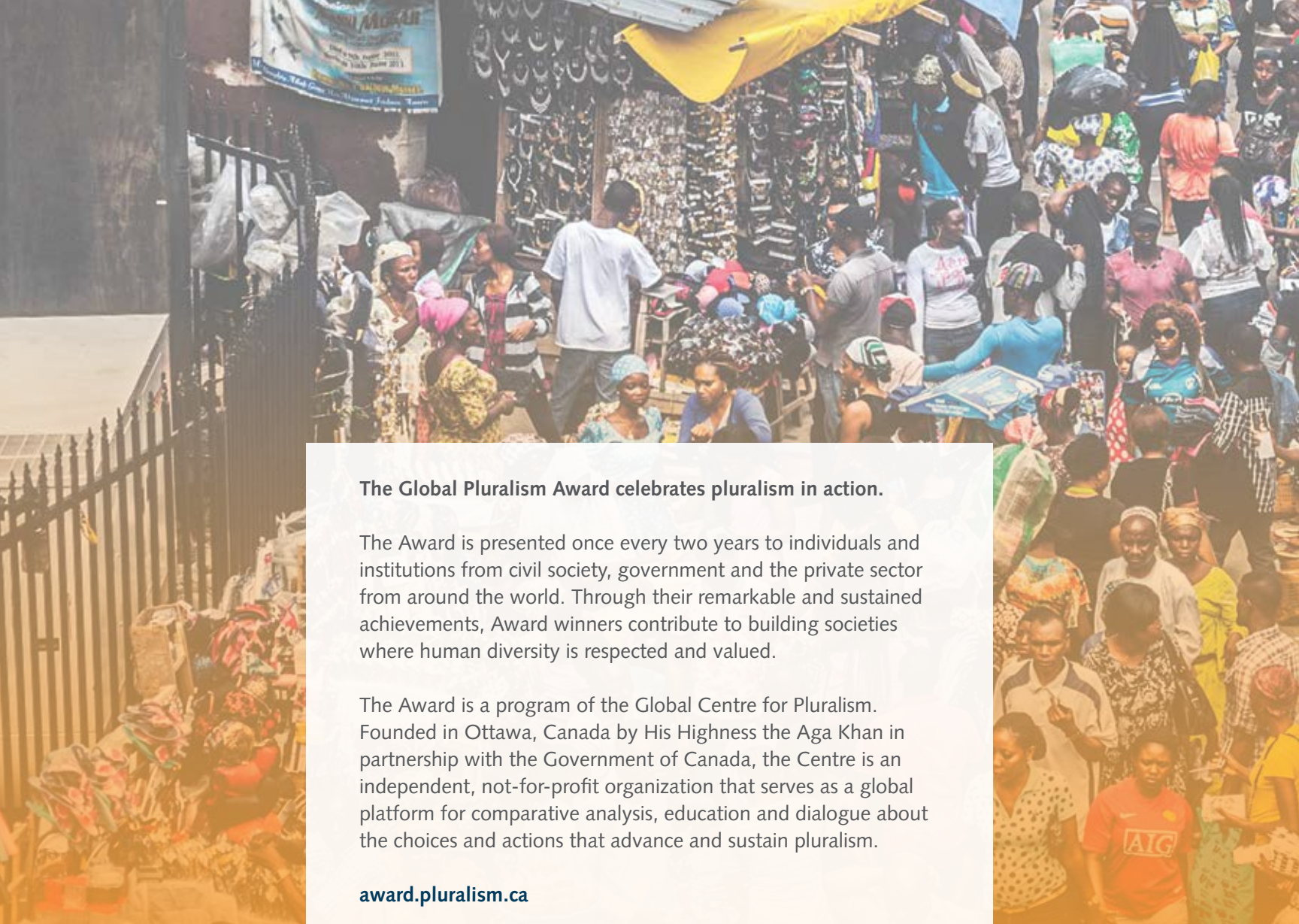
Diversity is not a
burden to be endured,
but an opportunity to
be welcomed.

HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN,
HARVARD UNIVERSITY, NOVEMBER 12, 2015



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The Global Pluralism Award celebrates pluralism in action.

The Award is presented once every two years to individuals and institutions from civil society, government and the private sector from around the world. Through their remarkable and sustained achievements, Award winners contribute to building societies where human diversity is respected and valued.

The Award is a program of the Global Centre for Pluralism. Founded in Ottawa, Canada by His Highness the Aga Khan in partnership with the Government of Canada, the Centre is an independent, not-for-profit organization that serves as a global platform for comparative analysis, education and dialogue about the choices and actions that advance and sustain pluralism.

award.pluralism.ca



MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

In both developed and developing societies around the world, diversity is often perceived as a source of competition and fear. Taken to extremes, escalating exclusion leads to oppression, extremism and violence. But what is promising is the inspiring work to support a different approach to diversity – an approach rooted in respect and inclusion. In short, pluralism offers a different path.

The Global Centre for Pluralism defines pluralism as an ethic of respect for human differences. Pluralism is a positive response to the presence of diversity in society. In pluralist societies, belonging is promoted by both institutions and attitudes.

The Centre was created to advance global understanding of pluralism and positive responses to the challenge

of living peacefully and productively together in diverse societies. The Global Pluralism Award advances the Centre's mission by building understanding and awareness of successful, innovative approaches to pluralism and by celebrating examples of 'pluralism in action.' The stories of the Award winners and honourable mention recipients send a powerful message about the pressing need for pluralism and about the benefits of diversity in society.

To establish the Award as a major global honour to those supporting pluralism, the Centre designed a robust selection process. A distinguished international jury was enlisted, chaired by the Rt. Hon. Joe Clark, P.C., former Prime Minister of Canada. We are honoured by their participation and extremely appreciative of their diligent work.

The success of this inaugural Award is largely due to our committed network of nominators. Friends of the Centre, like-minded organizations and individuals were instrumental in identifying more than 200 outstanding candidates from over 40 countries.

The 2017 Award winners and honourable mentions are outstanding examples of 'pluralism in action.' They are all committed in an exceptional and sustained way to enhancing inclusion in the economy, society, culture, politics and education in their countries. The Centre is extremely proud of the inaugural Global Pluralism Award recipients. Congratulations!

John McNee
Secretary General



MESSAGE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL JURY

The selection process for the Global Pluralism Award has been highly competitive. The jury considered a rigorous set of criteria, including impact, commitment to pluralism and innovation. We carefully reviewed and selected ten candidates whose work embodies the Global Centre for Pluralism's holistic definition of pluralism. Pluralism is the responsibility of society as a whole, not just governments or civil society. Award winners and honourable mentions come from different walks of life and areas of work; they include community organizers, lawyers, mediators, civil society organizations and businesses.

The jury selected three candidates for the 2017 Award for the following reasons:

By selecting **Leyner Palacios Asprilla of Colombia**, the international Jury is recognizing a truly inspiring effort to address the historic marginalization and violence suffered by Colombian afro and indigenous communities. The Colombian peace process is a crucial moment in the country's history, as it moves towards increased pluralism. But to ensure lasting peace and reconciliation in Colombia, the voices of all victims must be heard and their rights respected.

"The peace accords with the armed group FARC put an end to 52 years of civic conflict, the world's oldest domestic conflict. There are real opportunities for peace and reconciliation but challenges remain. Marginalized communities must be fully included in the peace process and their rights guaranteed. The advocacy work of victims like Leyner Palacios reminds us that reconciliation is necessary and possible."

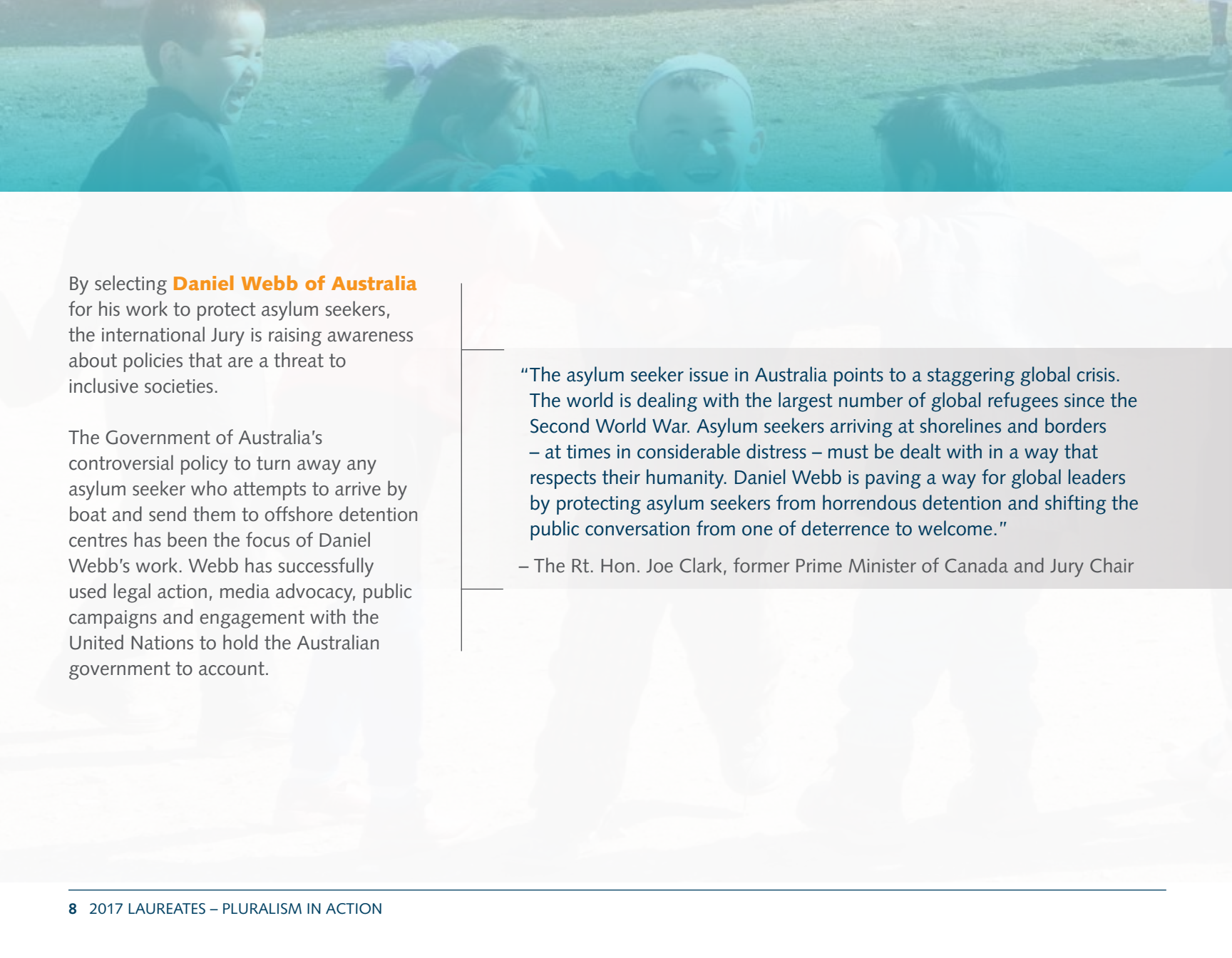
– The Rt. Hon. Joe Clark, former Prime Minister of Canada and Jury Chair



By selecting **Alice Wairimu Nderitu of Kenya**, the jury is highlighting the importance of a more pluralistic approach to peacemaking that respects and values human differences. The fields of peacebuilding and peacemaking have had to adapt to confront new complexities. Most contemporary conflicts now occur within the borders of a state rather than between states. They involve multiple, non-state actors and often stem from the inability of a society to manage its ethnic, cultural and religious diversity. Nderitu's work illustrates the increasing relevance of pluralism to peace processes.

"Throughout her career, Alice Nderitu has worked to promote pluralism at all levels of mediation and conflict prevention in Kenya and Nigeria. Her values-based approach helps parties to envision a viable alternative to conflict. She has led them to appreciate diversity, allowing the interests, values and participation of different groups to be respected. Her example offers a much-needed path forward for the many ongoing conflicts around the world."

– The Rt. Hon. Joe Clark, former Prime Minister of Canada and Jury Chair



By selecting **Daniel Webb of Australia** for his work to protect asylum seekers, the international Jury is raising awareness about policies that are a threat to inclusive societies.

The Government of Australia's controversial policy to turn away any asylum seeker who attempts to arrive by boat and send them to offshore detention centres has been the focus of Daniel Webb's work. Webb has successfully used legal action, media advocacy, public campaigns and engagement with the United Nations to hold the Australian government to account.

"The asylum seeker issue in Australia points to a staggering global crisis. The world is dealing with the largest number of global refugees since the Second World War. Asylum seekers arriving at shorelines and borders – at times in considerable distress – must be dealt with in a way that respects their humanity. Daniel Webb is paving a way for global leaders by protecting asylum seekers from horrendous detention and shifting the public conversation from one of deterrence to welcome."

– The Rt. Hon. Joe Clark, former Prime Minister of Canada and Jury Chair



THE JURY



Rt. Hon. Joe Clark, P.C.,
former Prime Minister
of Canada, Jury Chair



Advocate Bience Gawanas,
Lawyer & Special Advisor
to the Minister of Poverty
Eradication and Social
Welfare, Namibia



Dr. Dante Caputo,
Former Minister
of Foreign Affairs,
Argentina



His Worship Naheed
Nenshi, Mayor of
Calgary, Canada



Ms. Pascale Thumerelle,
Former Vice-president,
Head of Corporate
Social Responsibility,
Vivendi, France



THE AWARD

Award winners will each receive CAD \$50,000 to support their efforts to advance pluralism. The Centre will also work with the winners on engagement and awareness-raising activities in their countries throughout 2018.

Award sculpture

Each winner will receive a commemorative sculpture that has been designed and handcrafted by renowned German artist, Karl Schlamminger.

The Global Pluralism Award sculpture integrates the trefoil motif of the Centre's headquarters at 330 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Canada in a dodecahedron. By extracting 12 units from that tracery and recombining them into a dodecahedron, Schlamminger obtained the form which conveys the idea of a global initiative. The filigree allows the viewer to look through the object having a total view of the outside and inside. When pivoted, a multiple variety of aspects, integrated harmoniously, become apparent. The resulting three-dimensional latticework yields a plurality of intersections, offering ever new vantage points, symbolizing pluralism.

The Award sculpture is made of noble materials: sandblasted stainless steel for the sphere, bog oak for the plinth and anodized aluminum for the name plates.



About the artist

Internationally renowned for his *Erdzeichen*, a sign carved in the field at the Munich airport, which can be seen from the plane, Karl Schlamminger is one of the great contemporary German artists. Mr. Schlamminger was born in Kempten in 1935 and studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, where he graduated in 1964. From 1966 to 1968, he taught at the Istanbul University of Applied Arts and was a professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Tehran from 1968 to 1979. He has been living in Munich since 1980, where he has produced numerous calligraphies for the Museum Five Continents.

Some of his emblematic pieces include the sculpture of Avicenna exhibited at the University of Hamedan, Iran, the timepiece at the Class of 1959 non-denominational Chapel on the campus of Harvard Business School in Boston, Massachusetts and many pieces exposed at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tehran. In 1978, he created the Aga Khan Development Network's logo. In 1980, he designed the layout of the Ismaili Centre in London. Most recently, he created artwork for the Ismaili Centre in Toronto.

AWARD WINNER


LEYNER PALACIOS ASPRILLA

COMITÉ POR LOS DERECHOS DE LAS VÍCTIMAS DE BOJAYÁ, COLOMBIA



Situated in the north-western region of the country, the region of Chocó is inhabited primarily by Afro-Colombians and Emberá Amerindians, some of the most marginalized and poorest communities in Colombia. The region's isolation and lack of government support left it open to decades of violence and exploitation by battling guerrilla and paramilitary forces. The communities in Chocó saw more than 15,000 deaths in Colombia's 52-year internal conflict.

The municipality of Bojayá, in Chocó, suffered constant violence from both sides. In the spring of 2002, Bojayá's citizens again found themselves caught in the middle of a battle between the paramilitary group United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) and the guerilla group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).



Community members, the United Nations and the Ombudsman's Office of Colombia had warned the government of the dangers a battle would inflict on nearby civilians. Fighting broke out on May 1. On the morning of May 2, as community members were taking cover in a church, the AUC sheltered in an adjoining school, using the residents as human shields. What followed was the most brutal attack in Colombia's 52-year conflict. The FARC guerilla forces bombed the church, killing 79 people, including 48 infants and children. One of the people to survive was Leyner Palacios Asprilla. He emerged to find that 32 of his relatives had been killed.

Over a decade later, in 2014, Leyner co-founded the Committee for the Rights of Victims of Bojayá, which represents 11,000 victims of the Colombian conflict. For centuries,

because of their poverty and isolation, the communities in the municipality of Bojayá had no voice. Each community would act independently, representing only itself before the government, the FARC or international organizations. Because the Afro-Colombian and Emberá communities were culturally and linguistically distinct, they were often wary of one another. However, Leyner understood that many voices raised together would be louder and more powerful than each voice struggling to be heard alone. He united all of the communities under the common goal of stopping the violence and fighting for their human rights. He organized assemblies with representatives from every community in Bojayá, even the most remote, and encouraged each community to include a female representative. Today, these remote communities have created a collective

voice that takes their demand for human rights to the highest levels of government, and around the world.

As a result of his fight for social justice, Leyner was asked to represent Bojayá massacre victims during peace negotiations between guerilla forces and the government. For his role in the process, he was nominated for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize. A further result was that the FARC publicly acknowledged their role in the 2002 tragedy and, in a private ceremony in a Bojayá church, requested forgiveness.

By bringing communities together in the fight for social justice, Leyner realized how powerful a chorus of diverse voices can be. Today, he continues to demand that Colombia embrace diversity by respecting the rights of all its citizens, particularly its most marginalized.

AWARD WINNER

ALICE WAIRIMU NDERITU

CENTRE FOR HUMANITARIAN DIALOGUE, KENYA



As a child growing up in rural Kenya, Alice Wairimu Nderitu used to climb into the branches of a large tree to eavesdrop. Below her was a group of elders gathered to deliver justice on matters concerning the community. As Alice watched them come to consensus from her perch, she decided that, one day, she would be one of those elders promoting peace in her community. All of the elders were men, however. She was told that making peace was not women's business.

Decades later, in 2010, as Commissioner of the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, Alice took a seat at the peace table with 100 elders from ten ethnic communities who had never negotiated peace before. Only a year and a half earlier, violence erupted in Kenya's Rift Valley after the results of

a flawed election were announced. The election ignited historic grievances over land and deep-seated ethnic tensions. By the time the post-election violence had abated, more than 1,300 Kenyans were killed and 600,000 displaced. In 2010, with a constitutional referendum on the horizon, tensions soared. Would the country again tear itself apart along ethnic lines? Or would it unite in peace? That was when Alice took her place at the table at the onset of the 16-month peace process. As the only woman, she led the elders in a dialogue that resulted in Kenya's peaceful elections of 2013.

Alice is a tireless peacemaker, conflict mediator and gender equality advocate who believes that differences can be strengths, not weaknesses. She encourages a wide range of people with different identities to participate

and feel valued in the peace-making process. In Jos, Nigeria, for example, Alice led a dialogue between nine ethnic communities and she was the first to bring women into all levels of the peace process. In Southern Kaduna, Nigeria, she mediated an armed conflict between 29 ethnic communities, successfully insisting that women and youth be included in the process. The result was the Kafanchan Peace Declaration, signed by two state governors in 2016. This was the first time in Nigeria that a woman had played this role. In Nigeria's Southern Plateau, she is lead mediator of an inclusive dialogue between 56 ethnic communities, each represented by six people of different backgrounds.

Alice has worked to promote pluralism at all levels of mediation and conflict prevention—not only for the sake

of those who have historically been excluded, but also because she knows that having diverse voices meet in respectful dialogue is the only way to achieve long-lasting peace. To perpetuate respect for diversity, she develops peace education curricula and trains other female mediators.

As a child eavesdropping in a tree, Alice was told that women could not participate in the work of making peace. Today, as a lead mediator brokering peace throughout Africa, she has proven again and again that making peace is very much women's business. In fact, long-lasting peace requires the participation of all members of society.

AWARD WINNER

DANIEL WEBB

HUMAN RIGHTS LAW CENTRE, AUSTRALIA



In March of 2014, Daniel Webb visited Australia's offshore detention centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea. As he walked through overcrowded rooms full of guards, he had the impression he was in a prison. One room held more than 100 bunk beds crammed so close together it was almost impossible to squeeze between them. Only days before, 23-year-old Reza Barati was murdered by detention centre staff during protests.

The people Daniel met on Manus had attempted to travel by boat to Australia and claim asylum. Before they reached land, however, they were intercepted and detained in offshore detention centres established by then-Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. In July 2013, Rudd announced that no person seeking asylum by boat would be resettled in Australia. Instead, they would be indefinitely detained on the islands of

Manus and on Nauru. Observers have denounced the conditions in these detention centres as inhumane, with numerous reports of violence, sexual assault, medical neglect, suicide, self-harm and more.

The people Daniel met on Manus were inspiring. He knew they could make great contributions to Australian society, if only given the chance. One man spoke seven languages, two of which he had taught himself in detention. Another, who did not speak a word of English when he was detained, has now written an autobiography in English that is over 1,000 pages long. Daniel met musicians, soccer players, women's rights advocates and tradespeople, to name a few. But, above all, these were human beings deserving of dignity and respect.

A lawyer by training, Daniel was awarded the Law Institute of Victoria

LIV President's Award in 2010 for his work in human rights and social justice. In 2014, he joined the Human Rights Law Centre (HRLC), an organization that advocates for indigenous rights, LGBTI rights and other causes related to pluralism. When Daniel joined the HRLC, it was not yet tackling the refugee issue, so he lobbied the board to launch a program defending the human rights of refugees and people seeking asylum, a program he now leads.

To tackle the offshore detention issue in Australia, Daniel has developed an innovative approach that combines legal action, media advocacy, public campaigns and engagement with the United Nations. Daniel's work has helped to hold the Australian government to account.

Daniel has used public advocacy to cut through toxic rhetoric about refugees by focusing on their human stories

and shifted public opinion in favour of them staying in Australia. In 2016, he coordinated the #LetThemStay campaign, which engaged the hearts and minds of Australians and mobilized teachers, church leaders, doctors and unions. People protested, wrote letters and participated in online petitions and telephone campaigns. Polls showed a 17 per cent upswing in favour of letting Daniel's clients stay in Australia.

Daniel and the lawyers he works with have prevented the deportation of more than 300 people, including 40 babies and 50 children, to Nauru and Manus, and prompted the release of more than 230 people from detention, including families with children. But many of these people continue to be at risk of deportation and he continues his struggle to protect them.

HONOURABLE MENTION RECIPIENT

ATD QUART MONDE

FRANCE



In 1957, having just arrived in France to serve as chaplain to 250 homeless families, Father Joseph Wresinski walked through Noisy-le-Grand, an emergency housing camp near Paris. The conditions in the camp were appalling: sheet-metal huts in a muddy field, four water pumps for over a thousand people and children dying of cold or of fire when makeshift heating systems malfunctioned.

A child of poverty himself, Father Joseph understood the people in Noisy-le-Grand. One of the first things he did was replace the soup kitchen and used clothing dispensary with a library and kindergarten. This sent a clear message, one that is still at the core of the ATD Quart Monde movement. People living in poverty do not need pity and charity; they need to be involved in the fight against poverty. They need to have their voices heard by decision-makers.

"I will take you up the steps of the Élysée, the United Nations and the Vatican," Father Joseph promised the families in Noisy-le-Grand. At the time of his death in 1987, after 30 years of alliance-building and advocacy work, he had brought them to speak to the highest authorities in France, and with diplomats at the United Nations. The visit to the Vatican was not far behind, occurring two years later.

The community development project that Father Joseph began in Noisy-le-Grand grew to become ATD Quart Monde, an international organization headquartered in Paris dedicated to eradicating poverty and empowering the world's most disadvantaged people. ATD stands for All Together in Dignity and, true to its name, the movement has united thousands of people from all political, religious, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds from 34 countries.

In France, ATD Quart Monde has helped include marginalized groups into society through structural and legal changes, an essential component of pluralism. For instance, it was instrumental in passing a minimum welfare income for the unemployed, universal health coverage and the enforceable right to housing. Half of the social assistance in France today stems from ATD's actions. On the international level, ATD Quart Monde is represented at UNESCO and the United Nations.


From the muddy fields of Noisy-le-Grand, an international movement was born. Today, it unites people from five continents and from all walks of life in the work of building a better, poverty-free world.

HONOURABLE MENTION RECIPIENT

BEANOTHERLAB

SPAIN





We have all heard the old adage: before you judge someone, walk a mile in their shoes. But how, exactly, do you do that?

BeAnotherLab has an answer. A multinational group headquartered in Spain with nodes in ten other countries, BeAnotherLab unites artists, scientists, researchers, anthropologists and practitioners to help reduce implicit bias and promote empathy through virtual reality technology that creates an “embodiment” experience, the illusion of being in another person’s body and seeing the world through their eyes.

Their Machine to Be Another has been applied to art, conflict resolution, scientific research, social issues, healthcare and education in various public spaces in over 20 countries. At the 2015 United Nations General Assembly, delegates could see themselves in the

body of Nicole Goodwin, an American poet and Iraq war veteran, while listening to her talk about the harm the war caused her. With the help of Oculus Rift headsets, first-person cameras and synchronized movements, participants have even swapped genders. Others have experienced reality from the perspective of a person with physical disabilities, or a mother of a young black man murdered by police or a Sudanese refugee at the Holot Detention Center in Israel. Following the experiment, participants meet in person to discuss the experiment and share their stories.

BeAnotherLab’s current focus is the Library of Ourselves, a long-term project that helps participants better understand themselves by understanding others. Working through cultural and educational institutions around the world, BeAnotherLab offers

its methodology and immersive virtual reality technology to create content, what they call “embodied storytelling,” and engage with different audiences in an effort to create transformative encounters between communities in conflict.

In a world that often divides us by our differences, BeAnotherLab wants to highlight our shared human experiences. As BeAnotherLab co-founder Philip Bertrand said “More than individuals, we are part of a broader system called humanity.”

HONOURABLE MENTION RECIPIENT

FUNDACIÓN CONSTRUIR

BOLIVIA



Following President Evo Morales's electoral victory, the Bolivian Constituent Assembly convened on August 6, 2006, with the purpose of drafting a new national constitution. Fundación Construir began as a panel of experts hired to advise the Assembly on how to integrate Western and indigenous legal systems in the new constitution, ensuring an emphasis on the many different national groups that make up Bolivia. By enabling dialogue among politicians, judges and indigenous communities, the panel contributed to three historic articles recognizing traditional indigenous practices of law and conflict resolution.

The panel of experts became Fundación Construir in 2008. Since then, it has continued helping policy-makers, judges and indigenous communities implement the new constitution's inclusive vision of

the law and to build a pluralistic Bolivia. Construir, indeed, means "to build." It is not an easy task. Bolivia has 36 official languages, 50 indigenous nations and more than 2,000 different indigenous legal systems. It is a polarized country where consensus is hard to reach.

Construir works as a think tank and a convener. It produces valuable research, such as a comprehensive mapping of indigenous legal systems, and then acts as a link between the state and indigenous communities, ensuring that best practices are followed when jurisdictions work together. Construir also provides training in indigenous communities to ensure their full integration within the justice system and trains judges and other public servants to help them advance respect for traditional indigenous justice.

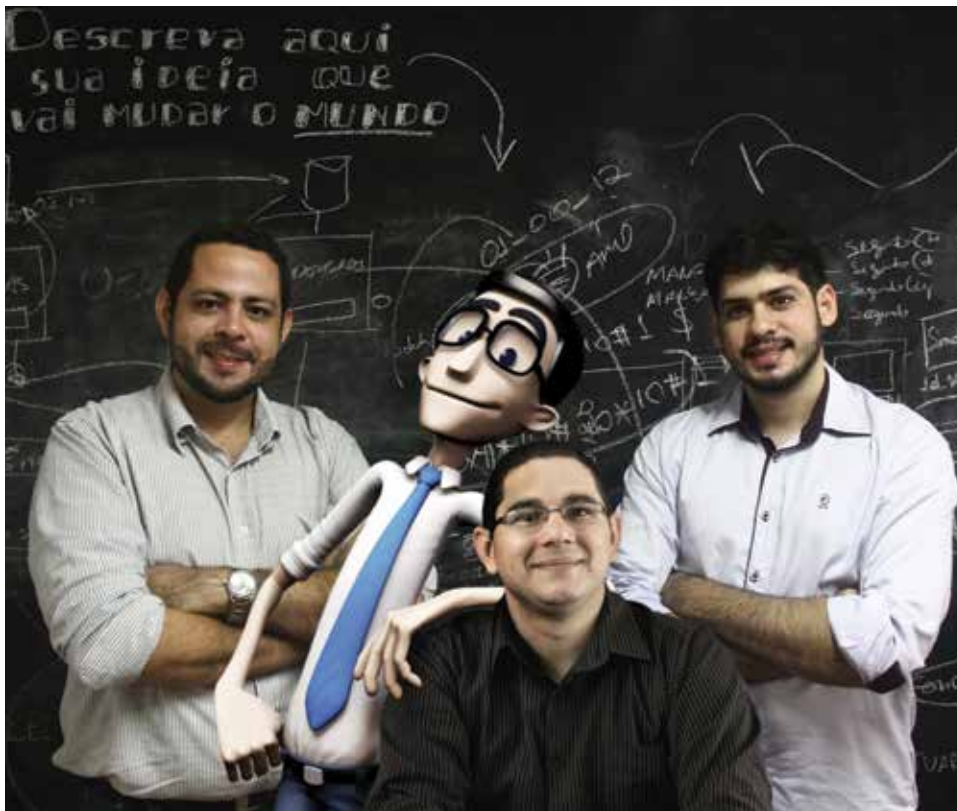
Construir has also helped develop the skills of hundreds of indigenous women, who now act as community leaders linking remote communities with institutions. These women have been granted the legal status of "community advocates" and have been instrumental in the fight against human trafficking and violence against women and children.


In a country with so many disparate groups and challenges, the work of Construir can be a balancing act. It is sustained by a belief in human rights and a pluralist vision of justice, one that represents every single member of Bolivia's diverse population.

HONOURABLE MENTION RECIPIENT

HAND TALK

BRAZIL





In a hospital emergency room in the northern Brazilian province of Alagoas, Dr. Davi Freitas was trying to communicate with an agitated 13-year-old girl. No one, including the girl's mother, could figure out what was wrong because the girl was hearing impaired. Suddenly, Dr. Freitas remembered that he could ask Hugo.

Hugo is the virtual interpreter for Hand Talk, a Brazilian social enterprise that creates technology to offer automatic translation from spoken language into Libras, the Brazilian sign language. With Hugo's help, Dr. Freitas was able to determine that his young patient had a terrible headache, which turned out to be a warning sign of intracranial bleeding, for which she was immediately and successfully treated.

Hugo can be found throughout Brazil, from hospital emergency rooms to classrooms to bars. With purposefully oversized hands and carefully designed, complex facial expressions, Hugo is a sign language interpreter you can take with you anywhere.

There are more than 360 million deaf people in the world and 10 million in Brazil. Often, deaf people encounter difficulties with literacy, since the written language relies on phonetic learning. In Brazil, more than 70 per cent of deaf people have difficulty communicating in their native language. Founded in 2012, Hand Talk helps deaf people break down communication barriers that stand in the way of their education, inclusion and independence.

Hand Talk has been recognized with eight international and regional awards, including being chosen by the United Nations as "the best social app in the world." Already, over 1 million people have downloaded the app and Hugo processes some 6 million translations every month. As Doctor Freitas discovered, the app has the potential to save lives in an emergency situation. More common, however, is its ability to improve lives by helping deaf people become active participants in society.

HONOURABLE MENTION RECIPIENT

SAWA FOR DEVELOPMENT AND AID

LEBANON



In January of 2011, 22-year-old Rouba Mhaissen was visiting her family in Lebanon when she heard about the first 40 Syrian refugees crossing the border into Lebanon. She got into a car and drove to meet the refugees. After asking them what they needed, she sent a text message to everyone she knew, explaining the tragic situation and the families' urgent needs. Her message spread, prompting hundreds of people to contact her with donations or to volunteer.

By the end of 2011, Rouba had created Sawa4Syria, a grassroots youth-led initiative that was one of the first organizations in Lebanon responding to the needs of Syrian refugees. The name Sawa means "together." Soon, the organization expanded to become the non-profit organization Sawa for Development and Aid, which provides

multi-faceted relief for Syrian refugees in Lebanon and, now, in the United Kingdom.

In addition to traditional humanitarian relief, which it provides in 16 tented camps to thousands of refugees, Sawa incorporates education and livelihood programming to help refugees become financially independent. In their free kitchen, run by Syrian and Lebanese volunteers, Sawa feeds more than 4,000 people on a daily basis. Their educational centre prepares Syrian children for entry into Lebanese schools, and their cash-for-work programs employ around 50 refugees at any one time.

With more than 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, tensions have risen between refugees and their host communities, an issue Sawa is addressing through education and

outreach in Lebanon. All of Sawa's programming is conceived, designed and implemented by refugees, which ensures that its work is directed at the issues that matter most to the people it helps.

When Rouba drove to meet the first Syrian refugees in 2011, she did not know that, six years later, she would have started an organization with a wide network of local and international partners that is meeting the needs of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and the United Kingdom. In 2011, she simply asked, "What do you need?" She discovered that, beyond humanitarian relief, they needed to be given a chance to contribute in meaningful ways to their new society. She was also convinced that Lebanon, by embracing diversity, could become a richer, more tolerant place in which to live.

HONOURABLE MENTION RECIPIENT

WAPIKONI MOBILE

CANADA



Quebec filmmaker Manon Barbeau was deeply troubled by the suffering and high rates of suicide she had witnessed among indigenous youth in Quebec. She produced a full-length film featuring the voices of 15 youth and, in the process, formed a particularly strong bond with a young woman named Wapikoni Awashish. When Wapikoni was killed at the age of 20 by a logging truck, Manon felt she had lost a daughter. Two years later, in 2003, she decided to honour the memory of her friend.

Noting the ease and joy that came over indigenous youth as soon as they had a camera in hand, Manon partnered with First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Youth Council and the Atikamekw Nation Council to create Wapikoni Mobile, a non-profit organization that gives voice to indigenous youth through filmmaking.

Wapikoni Mobile is the only mobile studio in Canada that travels to remote indigenous communities to teach youth filmmaking techniques with state-of-the-art technology, which they use to create their own short films and musical works. Wapikoni Mobile then distributes their work, organizing 200 screenings per year at locations ranging from remote high schools to prestigious film festivals. Following the screenings, the young directors are encouraged to speak about their work, which forges new relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous people with a view towards reconciliation.

Wapikoni Mobile has also established the International Network for Aboriginal Audiovisual Creation, which uses cinema to promote respect for indigenous rights and social inclusion throughout the world. Today, Wapikoni Mobile has mentored 4,000 youth from five First

Nations in Canada and 17 communities throughout five countries in Latin America.

Though the organization has won several awards and garnered international acclaim, its success is best measured by the accomplishments of its participants, who are appearing at the Sundance Film Festival and in university classrooms, winning full scholarships at prestigious international film schools, starting the Idle No More movement and speaking at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Through their films, they have contributed to the fight against racism, prejudice and isolation that Canada's First Nations have suffered for generations. Wapikoni Mobile set out to engage indigenous youth living in remote communities; in the process, it has deeply enhanced filmmaking in Canada with new voices and perspectives.

HONOURABLE MENTION RECIPIENT

WELCOMING AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



When David Lubell was five years old, his parents sat him down and said, “Don’t talk to strangers.” It’s a common refrain, but it led David to feel fear for the first time.

Today, decades after David received what he calls “the stranger danger talk,” the United States is experiencing the fastest immigration growth since the early 1900s. Anxiety and mistrust in communities with high rates of immigration are on the rise, as are hate crimes targeting foreign-born residents, anti-immigration policies and alienation between immigrants and long-term residents.

David was living in Tennessee when he realized that despite his state’s 400 per cent increase in immigration in the past decade, there was no widespread coordination of efforts to help immigrants. He also noticed that

there was no effort to prepare host communities for the major demographic changes they were facing. David launched Welcoming Tennessee in 2006 to help immigrants become active members in their new society with the support of their host communities. Now, Nashville, Tennessee has grown to become an economic leader in this region. Civic and business leaders attribute this success to the city’s welcoming climate and successful integration of immigrants.

Welcoming Tennessee soon became Welcoming America, an award-winning non-profit organization that builds bridges between newcomers and long-time residents. The organization has developed a Welcoming Standard, which provides a comprehensive roadmap for immigrant inclusion. It encourages interactions between immigrants and their receiving community to build

trust and help local leaders involve newcomers in the city’s planning. Today, Welcoming America has created more than 570 inclusive policies and programs to improve the lives of immigrants by helping them learn English, succeed at school, build a career, open a business or participate in civic life. Welcoming America has expanded to 380 communities across the United States and has partnerships in Germany and Australia.

At the heart of the organization is the belief that when newcomers feel valued and are encouraged to participate in the social, civic and economic fabric of their adopted hometowns, everyone benefits. Communities become better, more vibrant and more prosperous when they embrace diversity and nurture the potential of their new residents.