

JODY WILLIAMS

“THIS IS HISTORIC NOT JUST BECAUSE OF THE TREATY. THIS IS HISTORIC BECAUSE, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE LEADERS OF STATES HAVE COME TOGETHER TO ANSWER THE WILL OF CIVIL SOCIETY.”

Jody Williams has dedicated her life to achieving a global ban on antipersonnel landmines, which still claim thousands of innocent lives every year. In 1992, she launched the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), to end the production, trade, use and stockpiling of landmines, a weapon that has been in existence since the U.S. Civil War. Williams organized the ICBL to work with more than 1,000 NGOs in 60 countries. As the ICBL’s chief strategist, Williams has written and spoken widely on global problems involving the use of landmines. In 1996, Williams and the ICBL drafted the Ottawa Treaty with the Canadian government to ban landmines globally. To date, the Ottawa Treaty has been signed by 156 countries. Almost as noteworthy as the international support she created is how she built that support. In the years before the Internet, Williams created a network of hundreds of organizations with a system for accountability using fax machines. Through a simple system of sending out faxes to each constituent organization, Williams simultaneously made each organization feel they were an important part of the network and also created a system for maintaining a permanent record of their interactions.

This pioneering spirit also led to Williams’ key role creating The Nobel Women’s Initiative, an organization of female Nobel Peace Prize winners dedicated to supporting women’s rights around the world. Williams received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 for her work in banning and clearing antipersonnel mines.



Jody Williams ©Architects of Peace Foundation

EXCERPTS FROM JODY WILLIAMS: 1997 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LECTURE

The desire to ban landmines is not new. In the late 1970s, the International Committee of the Red Cross, along with a handful of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), pressed the world to look at weapons that were particularly injurious and/or indiscriminate. One of the weapons of special concern was landmines. People often ask why the focus on this one weapon. How is the landmine different from any other conventional weapon?

Landmines distinguish themselves because once they have been sown, once the soldier walks away from the weapon, the landmine cannot tell the difference between a soldier or a civilian—a woman, a child, a grandmother going out to collect firewood to make the family meal. The crux of the problem is that while the use of the weapon might be militarily justifiable during the day of the battle, or even the two weeks of the battle, or maybe even the two months of the battle, once peace is declared the landmine does not recognize that peace. The landmine is eternally prepared to take victims. In common parlance, it is the perfect soldier, the “eternal sentry.” The war ends, the landmine goes on killing.

Let me take a moment to give a few examples of the degree of the epidemic. Today Cambodia has somewhere between four and six million landmines, which can be found in over 50 percent of its national territory. Afghanistan is littered with perhaps nine million landmines. The U.S. military has said that during the height of the Russian invasion and ensuing war in that country, up to 30 million mines were scattered throughout Afghanistan. In the few years of the fighting in the former Yugoslavia, some six million landmines were sown throughout various sections of the country—Angola nine million, Mozambique a million, Somalia a million—I could go on, but it gets tedious. Not only do we have to worry about the mines already in

the ground, we must be concerned about those that are stockpiled and ready for use. Estimates range between one and two hundred million mines in stockpiles around the world.

When the ICRC pressed in the 1970s for the governments of the world to consider increased restrictions or elimination of particularly injurious or indiscriminate weapons, there was little support for a ban of landmines. The end result of several years of negotiations was the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW). What that treaty did was attempt to regulate the use of landmines. While the Convention tried to tell commanders in the field when it was okay to use the weapon and when it was not okay to use the weapon, it also allowed them to make decisions about the applicability of the law in the midst of battle. Unfortunately, in the heat of battle, the laws of war do not exactly come to mind. When you are trying to save your skin you use anything and everything at your disposal to do so.

Throughout these years the Cold War raged on, and internal conflicts that often were proxy wars of the Super Powers proliferated. Finally, with the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, people began to look at war and peace differently. Without the overarching threat of nuclear holocaust, people started to look at how wars had actually been fought during the Cold War. What they found was that in the internal conflicts fought during that time, the most insidious weapon of all was the antipersonnel landmine—and that it contaminated the globe in epidemic proportion.

It was the NGOs, the non-governmental organizations, who began to seriously think about trying to deal with the root of the problem—to eliminate the problem, it would be necessary to eliminate the weapon. The work of NGOs across the board was affected by the landmines in the developing world. Children's groups, development organizations, refugee organizations, medical and humanitarian relief groups—all had to make huge adjustments in their programs to try to deal with the landmine crisis and its impact on the people they were trying to help. It was also in this period that the first NGO humanitarian demining organizations were born—to try to return contaminated land to rural communities.

It was a handful of NGOs, with their roots in humanitarian and human rights work, which began to come together, in late 1991 and early 1992, in an organized effort to ban antipersonnel landmines. In October of 1992, Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, Medico International, Mines Advisory Group, Physicians for Human Rights and Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation came together to issue a "Joint Call to Ban Antipersonnel Landmines." These organizations, which became the steering committee of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, called for an end to the use, production, trade and stockpiling of antipersonnel landmines. The call also pressed governments to increase resources for humanitarian mine clearance and for victim assistance.

From this inauspicious beginning, the International Campaign has become an unprecedented coalition of 1,000 organizations working together in 60 countries to achieve the common goal of a ban of antipersonnel landmines. And as the Campaign grew, the steering committee was expanded to represent the continuing growth and diversity of those who had come together in this global

movement. We added the Afghan and Cambodian Campaigns and R ddabarnen in 1996, and the South African Campaign and Kenya Coalition early this year as we continued to press toward our goal. And in six years we did it. In September of this year, 89 countries came together—here in Oslo—and finished the negotiations of a ban treaty based on a draft drawn up by Austria only at the beginning of this year. Just last week in Ottawa, Canada, 121 countries came together again to sign that ban treaty. And as a clear indication of the political will to bring this treaty into force as soon as possible, three countries ratified the treaty upon signature—Canada, Mauritius and Ireland.

From the third to the fifth of October we met in Ottawa. It was a very fascinating meeting. There were 50 governments there as full participants and 24 observers. The International Campaign was also participating in the conference. The primary objectives of the conference were to develop an Ottawa Declaration, which states would sign signaling their intention to ban landmines, and an "Agenda for Action," which outlined concrete steps on the road to a ban. We were all prepared for that, but few were prepared for the concluding comments by Lloyd Axworthy, the Foreign Minister of Canada. Foreign Minister Axworthy stood up and congratulated everybody for formulating the Ottawa Declaration and the Agenda for Action, which were clearly seen as giving teeth to the ban movement. But the Foreign Minister did not end with congratulations. He ended with a challenge. The Canadian government challenged the world to return to Canada in a year to sign an international treaty banning antipersonnel landmines.

Members of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines erupted into cheers. The silence of the governments in the room was deafening. Even the truly pro-ban states were horrified by the challenge. Canada had stepped outside of diplomatic process and procedure and put them between a rock and a hard place. They had said they were pro-ban. They had come to Ottawa to develop a road map to create a ban treaty and had signed a Declaration of Intent. What could they do? They had to respond. It was really breath-taking. We stood up and cheered while the governments were moaning. But once they recovered from that initial shock, the governments that really wanted to see a ban treaty as soon as possible rose to the challenge and negotiated a ban treaty in record time.

What has become known as the Ottawa Process began with the Axworthy Challenge. The treaty itself was based upon a ban treaty drafted by Austria and developed in a series of meetings in Vienna, in Bonn, in Brussels, which culminated in the three-week-long treaty negotiating conference held in Oslo in September. The treaty negotiations were historic. They were historic for a number of reasons. For the first time, smaller and middle-sized powers had come together, to work in close cooperation with the non-governmental organizations of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, to negotiate a treaty which would remove from the world's arsenals a weapon in widespread use. For the first time, smaller and middle-sized powers had not yielded ground to intense pressure from a superpower to weaken the treaty to

accommodate the policies of that one country. Perhaps for the first time, negotiations ended with a treaty stronger than the draft on which the negotiations were based! The treaty had not been held hostage to rule by consensus, which would have inevitably resulted in a gutted treaty.

The Oslo negotiations gave the world a treaty banning antipersonnel landmines which is remarkably free of loopholes and exceptions. It is a treaty which bans the use, production, trade and stockpiling of antipersonnel landmines. It is a treaty which requires states to destroy their stockpiles within four years of its entering into force. It is a treaty which requires mine clearance within ten years. It calls upon states to increase assistance for mine clearance and for victim assistance. It is not a perfect treaty—the Campaign has concerns about the provision allowing for antihandling devices on antivehicle mines; we are concerned about mines kept for training purposes; we would like to see the treaty directly apply to nonstate actors and we would like stronger language regarding victim assistance. But, given the close cooperation with governments which resulted in the treaty itself, we are certain that these issues can be addressed through the annual meetings and review conferences provided for in the treaty.

As I have already noted, last week in Ottawa, 121 countries signed the treaty. Three ratified it simultaneously—signaling the political will of the international community to bring this treaty into force as soon as possible. It is remarkable. Landmines have been used since the U.S. Civil War, since the Crimean War, yet we are taking them out of arsenals of the world. It is amazing. It is historic. It proves that civil society and governments do not have to see themselves as adversaries. It demonstrates that small and middle powers can work together with civil society and address humanitarian concerns with breathtaking speed. It shows that such a partnership is a new kind of “superpower” in the post-Cold War world.

It is fair to say that the International Campaign to Ban Landmines made a difference. And the real prize is the treaty. What we are most proud of is the treaty. It would be foolish to say that we are not deeply honored by being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Of course, we are. But the receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize is recognition of the accomplishment of this Campaign. It is recognition of the fact that NGOs have worked in close cooperation with governments for the first time on an arms control issue, with the United Nations, with the International Committee of the Red Cross. Together, we have set a precedent. Together, we have changed history. The closing remarks of the French ambassador in Oslo to me were the best. She said, “This is historic not just because of the treaty. This is historic because, for the first time, the leaders of states have come together to answer the will of civil society.”

For that, the International Campaign thanks them—for together we have given the world the possibility of one day living on a truly mine-free planet.

CIVIL SOCIETY SPEAKS TRUTH TO POWER TO BAN LANDMINES

JODY WILLIAMS

LESSON GRADE LEVEL: 9–12
HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES:
PROTECTION FROM LANDMINES

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS:

Article 5: Freedom from Torture

Article 13: Right to Free Movement in and
out of the Country

Article 21: Right to Participate in Free
Elections

GUIDING QUESTION:

- How can individuals, organizations and governments come together to make positive change for citizens of the world?

TIME REQUIREMENT:

150 Minutes

OBJECTIVES:

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand the impact that landmines have on the global community.
- List specific ways non-governmental organizations (NGOs) work with numerous governments to make global change.
- Identify the accomplishments of Jody Williams and her lasting impact on our world.

COMMON CORE LEARNING

STANDARDS:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

VOCABULARY:

- Nobel Peace Prize
- The International Committee of the Red Cross
- Humanitarian
- Landmines
- Non-governmental Organization (NGO)
- Cold War
- Proxy wars
- Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW)
- United Nations
- Ottawa Process

CONCEPTS:

- Landmines
- Non-governmental organizations
- Security

TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED:

- Laptops
- SmartBoard

MATERIALS:

- Nobel Lecture transcript:
http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1997/williams-lecture.html
- Interactive Landmine Map
http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/tanzania605/landmine_map.html
- Mines Photography by Tim Grant
<http://members.iinet.net.au/~pictim/mines/photos/mines.html>
- Article on Indonesia ratifying treaty
https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/indonesia_37953.html
- Video on landmines in Colombia <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKJblKuj84E>
- Video on What if Landmines Were Here?
<http://www.youtube.com/>
- Student handouts:
www.rfkhumanrights.org / click on Speak Truth to Power / click on “Defenders” tab [watch?v=NRF7dTafPu0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRF7dTafPu0)

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

ANTICIPATORY SET:

- Introduce the lesson by stating that the lesson's purpose is to inform them and challenge each student to consider what she or he would be willing to stand up for.
- Distribute laptops and instruct pairs of students to visit the Nobel Peace Prize website (http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/) and complete the Nobel Peace Prize chart (handout #1).
- At the end of class, review and comment on students' completed charts.

ACTIVITY 1:

- Distribute laptops to pairs of students and give them the first 10 minutes of class to complete map activity.
- Students will view the landmine map found at the PBS website and complete an activity with the interactive map http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/tanzania605/landmine_map.html

ACTIVITY 2:

- As a class, students will complete the origin portion of the chart before reading the first part of Jody Williams' Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech.
- Together, the class will read the speech and complete the primary source document analysis chart.

ACTIVITY 3:

- Working in pairs, students will view the photographic story of landmines told by Tim Grant on his website http://members.iinet.net.au/~pictim/mines/photos/mines_m.html and complete the graphic organizer (handout #3).
- Collect the graphic organizer at the end of the period, grade with comments and distribute to students the next day.

ACTIVITY 4:

- As a class, read the remainder of Jody Williams' speech and complete handout #4.
- Project images on a PowerPoint slide show that accompany various parts of the reading (see PowerPoint with handout).
- Collect charts at the end of the period, grade with and distribute to students the next day.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES:

- Students will research the International Campaign to Ban Landmines' catalog of actions that individuals and groups can take to support the ongoing work of banning landmines, using <http://www.mineaction.org/> as a source to find some of the national and international groups working on this issue. Based on the groups that students uncover in their research, they will invite representatives to speak either at their school or in their communities as a way to raise funds to support the work of the individual or group.

BECOME A DEFENDER

- Students will choose a human rights issue from a list provided by the teacher.
- In pairs, students will research their selected issue and create a multimedia presentation (PowerPoint or Movie Maker) which provides research-based background information about the issue and suggests ways the audience can get involved and help correct the issue.
- Students will create a handout to give audience members, listing specific ways they can help.
- Students will have a human rights fair on report card pick-up day and students, teachers, parents and community members will be invited to walk through the fair.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Nobel Prize:

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1997/williams-cv.html

The Nobel Prize is an award for achievement in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature and for peace. It is administered internationally by the Nobel Foundation in Stockholm, Sweden.

Peace Jam—Jody Williams:

<http://www.peacejam.org/nobels/Jody-Williams/>

Peace Jam is an organization which brings young people together with Nobel Peace laureates to tackle challenging issues facing the planet. Peace Jam addresses a broad range of issues, from basic needs, such as access to water, to basic rights, such as human security.

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines:

<http://www.icbl.org/en-gb/home.aspx>

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) is a global network in more than 90 countries that works to free the world of antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions.

Mine Action:

<http://www.mineaction.org/>

Mine Action works to address problems regarding landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) that pose a threat to civilians in post-conflict zones.

Ban Mines USA:

<http://www.banminesusa.org/>

Ban Mines USA is an organization with a mission to convince the U.S. government to join the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, which prohibits the use, trade, production, and stockpiling of antipersonnel landmines, and which requires its adherents to provide funding for landmine victim assistance and demining.

TED Talk—Jody Williams:

http://www.ted.com/talks/jody_williams_a_realistic_vision_for_world_peace.html

Technology, Entertainment, Design or TED, is a nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas in these respective fields and believes that the power of ideas can change attitudes, lives and the world. In this particular “talk,” Jody Williams discusses the prospects of world peace.