

Nobel Peace Prize 1999

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 1999 to Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières), in recognition of the organization's pioneering humanitarian work on several continents.

Since its foundation in the early 1970s, Doctors Without Borders has adhered to the fundamental principle that all disaster victims, whether the disaster is natural or human in origin, have a right to professional assistance, given as quickly and efficiently as possible. National boundaries and political circumstances or sympathies must have no influence on who is to receive humanitarian help. By maintaining a high degree of independence, the organization has succeeded in living up to these ideals.

By intervening so rapidly, Doctors Without Borders calls public attention to humanitarian catastrophes, and by pointing to the causes of such catastrophes, the organization helps to form bodies of public opinion opposed to violations and abuses of power.

In critical situations, marked by violence and brutality, the humanitarian work of Doctors Without Borders enables the organization to create openings for contacts between the opposed parties. At the same time, each fearless and self-sacrificing helper shows each victim a human face, stands for respect for that person's dignity, and is a source of hope for peace and reconciliation.

Oslo, October 15. 1999