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WORLD GAME CHANGERS AWARDED LUX. PEACE PRIZE

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Peace activists from around the world were awarded at the sixth annual [Luxembourg Peace Prize](#) on 30 June Photo: Luxembourg Peace Prize

Peace activists from around the world were awarded at the sixth annual [Luxembourg Peace Prize](#) on 30 June in the historic European Parliament building in Luxembourg.

The Peace Prize was initiated in 2012 to honour laureates in the following categories: Peace Activists, Peace Education, Peace Organization, Public Peace Efforts, Peace Support, Peace Technology, Youth Peacemaker, Peace Process, Environmental Peace and Peace Journalism.

The event is part of the [World Peace Forum](#) and is hosted by the [Schengen Peace Foundation](#). This year's laureates represented a diverse mix of activists, political leaders, business leaders and artists, and, including the attendees, came from 39 different countries.

Young men forgotten by the world

Claire Payne, who accepted the award on behalf of [The Peace Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania \(Patrîr\)](#), talked about her time at the Souda refugee camp on the island of Chios in

Greece. She worked primarily with “young men who are completely forgotten by the world,” and explained the typical living conditions she witnessed, involving rats running across the refugees' faces at night and food infested with insects.

Payne told a few specific stories about some of the men she encountered. One was a first-year law student from Damascus who came home one day to find his parents, siblings and fiancé were all dead. He'd been living in the refugee camp for over a year and, at age 24, still hadn't been granted asylum. She told another story about two teenage brothers from Mosul, Iraq who were approached by the Daesch and told to fight each other. When they refused, one of the brothers was caught and hanged in front of the other.

“This boy is now in one of our European camps, cutting himself at night with shards of glass and completely failed by our system,” Payne said.

With the population in Europe of around 740 million, and the number of registered Syrian refugees at just over 5 million, Payne says that we can't just call this a refugee crisis. “What we can call this is a crisis of our own morality,” she said.

Patrir works primarily on peace-building programming and training. They strive to put people as their central focus, a value, Payne said, which is shared by many of the other laureates and audience members.

New awards for 2017

[Jake Lynch](#) and [Annabel McGoldrick](#) were the first recipients of the new award for Outstanding Peace Journalism. In the past, both Lynch and McGoldrick worked as mainstream journalists in the UK before pioneering and developing the concept of peace journalism. Together, the pair produced the largest research study in the field entitled “A Global Standard for Reporting Conflict”, which involved over 500 participants from four countries.

Another new award was given this year for Outstanding Environmental Peace to [Steven Druker](#), a public interest attorney who founded the Alliance for Bio-Integrity. As its executive director, he initiated a lawsuit which resulted in the US Food and Drug Administration releasing its files on genetically engineered foods.

Daudi Were accepted the award for Outstanding Peace Technology on behalf of [Ushahidi](#), a technology company founded in Nairobi, Kenya, which builds and uses technology to help people raise their voice and to help those who serve them listen and respond better. Depending on the context, Ushahidi means both witness and testimony in Swahili. The programme is used in more than 160 countries in 45 local languages and reaches around 22 million people. Were joked that “if it works in Africa, it'll work anywhere in the world.”

[Lakshitha Saji Prelis](#) was given the Outstanding Peace Support award for his twenty-plus years of experience working with youth, youth movements and youth-focused organisations in conflict

environments throughout West and East Africa as well as in Central, South and Southeast Asia. As the director for the Children & Youth Programs at Search for Common Ground, he is a pioneer in collaborative peacebuilding efforts and an expert in addressing violent extremism globally.

[United World Colleges](#), represented by Jill Longson Habgood, was given the award for Outstanding Peace Education for UWC's educational movement with the mission "to make education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future."

Outstanding Peace Activist

The Outstanding Peace Activist award was given to Esther Guluma on behalf of [Women Wage Peace, Israel](#). In the two years since its inception, the nonpartisan, grassroots movement has helped join together thousands of women from all walks of life who often hold vastly different political positions.

Members of [The Club of Budapest](#) accepted the award for Outstanding Peace Activist. The International Organization was founded in 1993 by Ervin Laszlo and stands for planetary consciousness with the mission to be a catalyst for the transformation to a sustainable world.

Bashar al-Kiki accepted the 2016 award for Outstanding Public Peace Efforts for his outstanding leadership as president of the Nineveh Provincial Council. He has brought together tribes, religious leaders, youth and women to promote peace in Nineveh.

The awards for Outstanding Peace Process and Youth Peace Maker are expected to be given to Colombia Negotiators and Civil Society Actos and Franck Katshunga, respectively, in Amman, Jordan, in September 2017 at the next World Peace Forum.