

The Children's Peace Prize



During their annual World Summit in Rome in November 2005, Nobel Peace Laureates and the Gorbachev Foundation marked the launch of the international Children's Peace Prize. Mikhail Gorbachev, Betty Williams, Mairead Corrigan Maguire, F.W. de Klerk, Lech Walesa, but also pop-stars Sting and Bob Geldof, and Nobel Peace Prize winning organizations, including Unicef and the United Nations, all welcomed this new instrument in the fight for children's rights. The Prize, an initiative of the KidsRights Foundation, was posthumously dedicated to Nkosi Johnson, the South African boy who fought so courageously and effectively for the rights of children with HIV/AIDS.



Pop icon Sting applauded the new symbol of children's strength. His friend and colleague Bob Geldof commended the many brave children around the globe who deserve the Prize. The events in Rome were covered by journalists from all over the world. CNN International, Dutch national TV news as well as the Children's News, and newspapers from several countries, all had long items about the Prize as well as the Child Laureate Nkosi Johnson and his accomplishments.

Representing Nkosi in Rome were his foster mother Gail Johnson, his foster brother Thabo, and a girl from "Nkosi's Haven": the project for children and their mothers with HIV/AIDS that Nkosi started himself, and which was awarded the prize money of 100,000 US Dollars.



The Children's Peace Prize is awarded yearly to a child who has bravely devoted him- or herself to children's rights. KidsRights believes in making children's voices heard throughout the world. As Nobel peace Laureate Desmond Tutu put it: "*KidsRights seeks to give a Voice to the utterly Voiceless*". The institution of a Peace Prize for a child encourages and supports children in their fights for better lives, and puts the spotlight on the world's most important problems affecting children today. In addition, the prize symbolizes the critical importance of children's rights to peace.