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NOBEL PEACE PRIZE WINNERS COME TO PUBLIC TELEVISION IN OCTOBER

2011 Laureates Leymah Gbowee and President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf are subjects of "Women and Girls Lead," an initiative presented by ITVS, PBS and CPB

San Francisco, CA—(October, 11, 2011)—The Independent Television Service (ITVS), PBS, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting announced that two of the three women honored with the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize will be featured subjects of in-depth documentaries airing on public television in October as part of "Women and Girls Lead," a public media initiative to focus, educate, and connect audiences worldwide.

"These extraordinary women inspire all of us," says Pat Harrison, CEO and President of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and Chairman of the advisory board of Women and Girls Lead. "We're proud to celebrate their triumph and help bring their stories to the world."

"The stories of these women are the stories of possibility," said Sally Jo Fifer, president and CEO of ITVS. "We are fortunate to have some of the world's best independent filmmakers tell those stories in ways that connect so deeply with audiences and connect us all to the extraordinary progress women and girls worldwide are making against heavy odds."

The October broadcasts focus on Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and peace activist Leymah Gbowee, along with pro-democracy campaigner Tawakul Karman of Yemen. These Nobel committee honorees kick off a three-year campaign that includes 50 documentaries, media tools, and outreach partnerships. Gbowee's journey is captured in the documentary *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, part of the five-part *Women, War and Peace* series co-produced by THIRTEEN and Fork Films that premieres October 11 on PBS, while President Johnson Sirleaf is profiled in the PBS documentary *Iron Ladies of Liberia* to broadcast on WORLD as part of *Global Voices* series on October 23, 2011.

"When you strengthen women, you strengthen the world," said Abigail Disney, executive producer of *Women, War and Peace* along with Gini Reticker and Pamela Hogan. "Ellen, Leymah, and Tawakul showed that to their communities, their countries, and the world, which is why they, everyone who works on women's issues, and now the Nobel committee as well, are heroes to me."

In its award statement, the Nobel committee expressed hope that the prize "will help to bring an end to the oppression of women that still occurs in many countries" while singling out the untapped potential of women in democracy and peace building.

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“This year’s Nobel Peace Prize sends a message,” said Paula Kerger, president and CEO of PBS. “It asks us all to look around to see how women can help end violence — whether it’s at home, down the street, or globally. These three leaders are making a difference. Now what can we do?”

Over the next three years, Women and Girls Lead will bring more than 50 films to public television and other outlets, connecting storytelling to the work of civil society in the U.S. and around the world, supported by a wide range of partners that span media, government, NGOs, and Hollywood.

Other films in Women and Girls Lead include *Half the Sky*, the four-hour television and multimedia event based on the best-selling book by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn; *Shayfeen.com*, a look of Egyptian women journalists whose work echoes that of 2011 Nobel laureate Tawakul Karman; and *Kind Hearted Woman*, a profile of a Native American woman’s campaign against domestic violence.

“This Nobel Prize is another step towards a tipping point for the world’s women,” said Queen Noor, who serves on the advisory board for the public media project along with notables like Geena Davis, America Ferrera, and Eileen Fisher. “I am thrilled for these three extraordinary women who are sources of inspiration, strength, and hope for women and girls throughout the world.”

ABOUT WOMEN AND GIRLS LEAD

Women and Girls Lead is a multiyear public media initiative to focus, educate, and connect citizens worldwide in support of the issues facing women and girls. Combining independent documentary film, television, new media, and global outreach partnerships, Women and Girls Lead amplifies the voices of women and girls, expands understanding of gender equity, and engages an international network of citizens and organizations to act locally and reach out globally. By building a pipeline of some 50 public television documentaries and integrating content from partners across radio, commercial television, and beyond, Women and Girls Lead offers another model for public media to serve its mission in the 21st century. Women and Girls Lead connects key stakeholders to sustain productive dialogue and participation on the most critical issues facing local communities, the nation, and the world. For more information please visit: www.itvs.org/women-and-girls-lead/films

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