

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 1 June 2011

'In a time of violence and abuses of human rights, a brilliant, inspiring choice.'

Noam Chomsky to receive the 2011 Sydney Peace Prize

7pm on June 1, at the Sydney Town Hall, the Governor of New South Wales, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, will announce distinguished American linguist, social scientist and human rights campaigner **Professor Noam Chomsky** as the 2011 recipient of the Sydney Peace Prize.

The Sydney jury's citation for this award reads:

'For inspiring the convictions of millions about a common humanity and for unflinching moral courage. For critical analysis of democracy and power, for challenging secrecy, censorship and violence and for creating hope through scholarship and activism to promote the attainment of universal human rights.'

Speaking from his home in Boston, Professor Chomsky says, **'I am honoured to receive this prestigious award. I very much look forward to coming to Sydney. I am also grateful to the Sydney Peace Foundation in their pursuit of justice, as in their recent award to Julian Assange for his courageous exercise of his responsibilities as a citizen of free societies''.**

Director of the Sydney Peace Foundation, Professor Stuart Rees, says, 'Professor Chomsky is one of the West's most influential intellectuals in the cause of peace, the most significant challenger of unjust power.

'This inspiring choice comes at a time of violence and protest around the world. Across the Middle East brave people challenge authoritarian rule, yearn for freedom and for a state of their own. Yet, in Australia, leading politicians are still to find the courage to craft policies, such as those affecting refugees and asylum seekers, which reflect the hopes and standards set by Chomsky's life and work.

'Come November 2011, I suspect thousands of people will not only take the opportunity to hear Professor Chomsky speak, but will also want to express their gratitude to him.'

Previous recipients of the Sydney Peace Prize have included the Nobel Laureates Professor Muhammad Yunus and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Indigenous leader Patrick Dodson, former Governor General Sir William Deane, diplomat and nuclear disarmament advocate Dr. Hans Blix, human rights campaigners such as the Palestinian educator Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, the Indian novelist Arundhati Roy and the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson.

Professor Chomsky will give the City of Sydney Peace Prize Lecture in the Sydney Town Hall on Wednesday 2 November, and will receive the \$50,000 prize plus a hand-made glass trophy crafted by the Australian artist Brian Hirst, at a gala dinner held at the University of Sydney on Thursday 3 November.

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