

# **2026 Nobel Peace Prize Nomination: IPRA and Matt Meyer**

## **Introductory Summary**

*Since its foundation in 1964, the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) has arranged peace and peace research congresses annually: a single, biennial global gathering and five regionally conferences biannually in alternating years. In between these conferences, IPRA has been working continuously to create the theoretical basis for sustainable peace, promoting peace proposals for ongoing conflicts, and developing practical policies for sustainable peace based on democracy, Indigenous peoples' and minorities' rights, gender equality, participatory peacebuilding, journalism and freedom of the press, and social justice. During the last eight years, under the leadership of Professor Matt Meyer, IPRA has developed a truly global peace studies and peace research movement, based on inter-cultural cooperation and equality between continents and civilizations worldwide.*

*IPRA and Matt Meyer qualify especially well for the Nobel Peace Prize according to Nobel's will, and according to recent developments in the Nobel Committee's interpretation of Nobel's will, as these have been developed during the last 20-25 years. Below, we present documentation and detailed underpinning of these arguments.*

## **Nomination**

In the 1895 will of Alfred Nobel, the Peace Prize was famously established for the individual or organization who has “done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses.”<sup>1</sup> This 2026 nomination harkens back to the original literal framing of the Prize while also recognizing the vital aspects of human rights, environmentalism, and democracy inherent in contemporary efforts for lasting peace.

We nominate the **International Peace Research Association (IPRA)** and its **Secretary-General Emeritus Professor Matt Meyer** for the Nobel Peace Prize, for their extraordinary and exemplary organizational and individual work in building historic, global peace congresses, and for promoting policies aimed at the abolition of all armed conflict through the scientific implementation of perpetual peace practices and transdisciplinary educational practices.

## **The International Peace Research Association (IPRA)**

IPRA's founding in 1964 as a consortium primarily made up of academics and students in dialogue with community-based peace practitioners grew out of the anti-war and social change movements of that era, initiated by an interdisciplinary group of scholars predominantly from Scandinavia, Western Europe, and the USA. With early co-founders from the fields of history, sociology, economics, politics, international relations, and law—including such notables as

Asbjørn Eide, Elise Boulding, Kenneth Boulding, Johan Galtung, and John Wear Burton—the burgeoning cross-disciplinary field quickly included academics from Japan, Brazil, and the Global South.<sup>2</sup> The dynamic exchanges between university and college-based researchers and grassroots activists gave birth to significant "sub-fields" of study, including conflict resolution analysis, peace education, and nonviolence/civil resistance studies. They helped form hundreds of institutions, thousands of organizations, and sizable numbers of diverse adherents from every corner of the globe. With close associations to UNESCO, the International Science Council, and as a United Nations NGO with Special ECOSOC Consultative Status, IPRA is one of the few organizations to be specifically noted for its contributions by a UN Secretary-General,<sup>3</sup> and in 2012 became the first international non-governmental peace organization to elect an African leader as its CEO, Ibrahim Seaga Shaw (now Right to Access Information Commissioner and Chair, Sierra Leone).<sup>4</sup> In 1989, IPRA was awarded the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education.<sup>5</sup>

Operationally, IPRA has long relied on decentralized approaches to peacebuilding, with its five autonomous, affiliated regional associations carrying out most of its ongoing studies and research applications. Its global Council is made up of four representatives from each region (Africa, Asia/Pacific, Latin America, North America, and Europe); gender-parity guidelines ensure that IPRA maintains a Global South majority on Council, including broad leadership from women practitioners. The strengthening of these structures over the past several years has meant significant resurgence and growth of the field, even as nations seem as war oriented as ever before. The Latin American Council for Peace Research has increased its membership by a factor of 10, beginning with a COVID-19-era continental campaign, suggesting that a post-COVID return to a business-as-usual military approach was less than ideal. Their "new normalcy" tri-lingual materials, website, and subsequent award-winning book also helped establish the new **Latin American Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies**, edited by Esteban A. Ramos Muslera, which now reaches many thousands of subscribers.<sup>6</sup>

The Africa Peace Research and Education Association (AFPREA) has served as a "network of networks" for Pan-African human rights and democratization groups across all regions of the continent, including the African Diaspora. Holding successful conferences in Abuja, Cape Town, Freetown, Juba, and Arusha, the special nature of a global conference in the world's youngest nation-state provided the opportunity for detailed deliberations on building peaceful societies during the 2022 Congress held in South Sudan. Under the theme "From Conflict to Beloved Communities," AFPREA began ten days of intensive programming in conjunction with the International Peace Bureau, the Social Science Research Council's Africa Peacebuilding Network, and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (the world's oldest interfaith peace and nonviolence association).<sup>7</sup> In the Asia/Pacific region, Nanjing University UNESCO Chair Liu Cheng founded the **China Journal for Peace Studies** in this same period.<sup>8</sup>

IPRA's North American regional affiliate, the Peace and Justice Studies Association (PJSA) is itself the product of creative bridge-building within and among two competing professional associations. Throughout much of the 1980s and 90s, two North American organizations - the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPRED) and the Peace Studies Association (PSA) - vied for support of the limited resources in development of the broader field.

Under the leadership of **Matt Meyer** (then Chair of COPRED), a two-year process of negotiations, membership polls, and a referendum in both organizations led to a popular decision to set aside both groups and merge them into PJSA, which Meyer served as Founding Co-Chair. Since 2001, PJSA has alternated holding annual conferences throughout the USA and Canada (as our Mexican colleagues relate directly to CLAIP).

The past half-decade has seen a shift in the leadership of the European Peace Research Association to a new generation of young scholars throughout that continent, with new projects committed to strengthening and expanding the European network, in part through a European Union/COST Peace Action partnership that focuses on Peace and Climate; Feminist Peace; Peace and Emerging Technologies; Local Peace; and A New Peace and Security Architecture in Europe. IPRA's Asia/Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA), building on the "decolonizing peace studies and our world" themes present at the IPRA Biennial conferences in Kenya in 2021 and in Trinidad & Tobago in 2023, hosted the global Biennial conference in 2025 on Māori land in Aotearoa/New Zealand, co-coordinated by Meyer and Kelli Te Maihāroa, the Māori scholar/activist who leads APPRA and whose grandfather was one of the historic Māori nonviolent Peace leaders. The 2025 gathering, bringing together 200 participants from every corner of the globe, was the first international peace studies and action convening ever to be held entirely on Indigenous land.<sup>9</sup>

"Peace, Resistance, Reconciliation/Te Rongo i Tau, Te Riri i Tu, Te Ringa i Kotuia" served as the theme of the 2025 IPRA conference, with an Opening Plenary at Owae Marae in Taranaki, near the Parihaka center of historic Māori cross-tribal unity and nonviolent commitment. Founders and leaders of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons led one plenary, and Japanese disarmament activists from Nihon Hidankyo delivered a strong support message at another. Another feature of the conference was a group of communities still facing direct colonialism, coming together under the umbrella **Occupied People's Forum (OPF)**. As part of IPRA's overall and ongoing decolonizing work, the OPF unites civil society leaders from Ambazonia, Tibet, Kashmir, Kurdistan, Palestine, Puerto Rico, West Papua, and Western Sahara, calling for democratic and unarmed solutions to the conflicts in these non-self-governing territories.

IPRA carries on this work, and other initiatives between conferences, through dissemination of its member's research and practitioner's educational work in a variety of affiliated academic journals and publications. ***Peace & Change***, the fields' preeminent, juried scholarly publication co-published by IPRA and the Peace History Society, has been consistently providing data and critical reflection for 52 years, with a significant increase in readership and use over the last decade. Other vehicles of ongoing work include the ***Journal of Peace Education*** (founded and published by IPRA's Peace Education Commission), the Journal of Peace Research (founded by IPRA's Scandinavian co-founders), the Journal of Resistance Studies, the IPRA Newsletter, plus an independent video channel, an ongoing podcast, and various book series from the world's most prestigious publishers, including Springer, Palgrave, Wiley/Blackwell, Routledge, Sage, and countless others.

## **Matt Meyer**

Even before his election as IPRA Secretary-General in Ahmedabad, India in 2018, **Professor Matt Meyer** was well-known internationally as a leading educator, author, public speaker and organizer. Born in 1962 in Brooklyn, New York, his activism began as a teenage conscientious objector and draft registration resister, eventually becoming the youngest National Chairperson in the history of the secular nonviolent War Resisters League. Decades later, when elected National Council Chair of the Fellowship of Reconciliation USA, Meyer became second only to Rev. A.J. Muste ("Dean of the 20th century US peace movement") in serving at the helm of both major pacifist organizations.<sup>10</sup>

Meyer's academic pursuits led him to undergraduate and advanced degrees in history, education, and psychology from New York University and Columbia University, with widespread recognition for his first book, ***Guns and Gandhi in Africa: Pan-African Insights on Nonviolence, Armed Struggle, and Liberation*** (co-authored with elder Bill Sutherland, Africa World Press, 2000). In Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Introduction to the book, one of three book introductions that Archbishop Tutu provided for Meyer's works, the 1984 Nobel Peace laureate wrote that "Sutherland and Meyer have looked beyond the short-term strategies and tactics which too often divide progressive peoples... They have begun to develop a language which looks at the roots of our humanness." Tutu and Meyer enjoyed a long history of collaboration, including work in support of political prisoners and prison reform, as well as convening a major global peace conference in 2014 at Cape Town's City Hall, under the auspices of the War Resisters' International. Meyer is widely considered an early scholar central to the development and advancement of African and Global South Peace Studies.

Meyer's hundreds of published articles and book chapters, and over one dozen authored or edited books, cover topics centered on peace-building strategies, philosophies, and movements - including Pan-African peace initiatives, decolonization, combating white supremacy, educating for peace, and unity-building. In the Foreword to Meyer's ***Let Freedom Ring*** (PM Press, 2008), Argentine Nobel Peace laureate Adolfo Perez Esquivel called Meyer "a natural coalition builder who provides tools for today's activists." Distinguished US essayist Maya Angelou, writing about Meyer's compendium ***We Have Not Been Moved*** (PM Press, 2012) on 21st Century approaches to working against Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's "three pillars of racism, materialism, and militarism," noted that the book's "investigation of the moral issues of our time is so needed." Forewords and endorsements of Meyer's other books include praise from Chancellor Ela Gandhi, Zambia's Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, UN University of Peace Rector Francisco Rojas Aravena, and South African Ambassador Thandi Luthuli, daughter of Chief Albert Luthuli.

Meyer's latest book, ***Perpetual Peace Science: Spheral AI Superiority from Spheral Thinking*** (2025)<sup>11</sup>, is a bold co-authored effort designed to formulate a new, research-driven innovative framework for lasting peace. Based on objective and verified scientific laws of the Earth's three natural spheres - physical, organic, and social - the Perpetual Peace Primer is co-authored by twenty leading scholars, following the initial work and guidance of Russian social scientist Leo Semashko, Director of the Gandhian Global Harmony Association. Scores of Russian scientists worked with Semashko in well over a decade's worth of tests, reviewed and extended by a team

from the US, UK, France, Greece, Austria, India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Rwanda, including input from researchers from more than fifty countries, five Nobel Laureates, Indian President Abdul Kalam, and others. A Special Resolution passed by IPRA following the 2025 conference called for the creation of national “Departments of Perpetual Peace” based on Perpetual Peace Science and cross-national “Academies of Perpetual Peace,” independent macro-sociological social science bodies committed to procuring greater work for peace, justice, and democracy.<sup>12</sup> The Resolution called on the USA and Russian governments, “which are most responsible for a peaceful resolution of the Ukrainian conflict as the most dangerous 'trigger' of global nuclear war today, to create joint institutions for ongoing dialogue. Though people-to-people perpetual peace dialogues already exist, we recognize the urgency of resolving this and other global conflicts through intergovernmental peaceful means.”<sup>13</sup>

It is also worth noting that IPRA has always and continues to strive for a structural analysis that goes beyond state actors, integrating macro and micro approaches including development and advocacy of transdisciplinary peace education and action across formal, non-formal, and informal methodologies of teaching, learning, and change.<sup>14</sup> This includes ongoing work with European colleagues in and around the Donbas, linking state actors, regional mechanisms, and public involvement in “conditional recognition on condition of referendum” constructs designed to provide lasting peace based on policies of “forceful” neutrality.

Meyer's commitment to grassroots people's diplomacy has taken him to 135 nation-states and territories, setting up meetings, organizing educational events, and speaking about peacebuilding to diverse peoples across ideological, racial/ethnic, class, gendered, generational, and geographic lines. He has presented at Oxford University St. John's College, at the Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti in New Delhi, at the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja, the UNESCO International Olympic Education, Sport, and Peace Conference at the 7th Arrondissement Town Hall in Paris, at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, and at universities, schools, union halls, places of worship, and meetings in over forty-five US states. He is an active core of the “movements of movements” analysts that was created out of the World Social Forum networks working for the development of south-north progressive social models, including the Global Tapestry of Alternatives and other decentralized projects.<sup>15</sup>

Meyer's work as a solidarity ally for the Occupied People's Forum has brought him to unrecognized and disputed lands, including participation in the Sahara Rise! conference in the refugee camps of Western Sahara<sup>16</sup>, the Kurdish PKK disarmament and weapon-burning ceremony in Iraq<sup>17</sup>, and leading a high-level IPRA delegation to visit His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile and civil society leaders in Dharamshala.<sup>18</sup> Following the IPRA Biennial conference and OPF meetings in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Meyer met with 1996 Nobel Peace Laureate President Jose Ramos-Horta of East Timor about 21<sup>st</sup> Century prospects for decolonization and demilitarization.

Elise Boulding passionately declared that peacemaking academics and activists needed to “stop teaching *about* Africa and start learning *from* it,” a principle Meyer committed to early in his career and has followed ever since. Boulding's own global research cited our world of 10,000 ethnicities, each with their own distinctive governance, structures for securing rights, and

peacemaking practices. For all the peace researchers and developers of the field of peaceful studies, for IPRA and its consistent and growing work in every region of the world, and for Matt Meyer's deepening, decolonizing extension of these practices into a participatory praxis reaching closer to these different but interconnected thousands and thousands, we call on the Norwegian Nobel Committee to award the 2026 Peace Prize to the **International Peace Research Association and Matt Meyer.**

*Signed, 19 January 2026, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2026 Federal Holiday USA*

**Mairéad Corrigan Maguire (Northern Ireland; 1976 Nobel Peace Laureate)**

**Adolfo Pérez Esquivel (Argentina; 1980 Nobel Peace Laureate)**

**Joyce Ajlouny (Palestine/USA; General-Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee, 1947 Nobel Peace Laureate)**

**Thandeka Tutu-Gxashe (South Africa; eldest daughter of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, 1984 Nobel Peace Laureate; CEO of the Desmond Tutu Tutu-Desk Campaign Centre; Board member of and activist with the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation and the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation)**

**Sean Conner (USA; Executive Director of the International Peace Bureau, 1910 Nobel Peace Laureate)**

**Coln Archer (United Kingdom; Secretary General of the International Peace Bureau 1990-2016, 1910 Nobel Peace Laureate)**

**Binalakshmi Nepram (Manipur/India/USA; founder of the Global Alliance of Indigenous Peoples, Gender Justice, and Peace; Vice-President of the International Peace Bureau 1990-2016, 1910 Nobel Peace Laureate)**

**President Tarja Halonen (Finland, former President 2000-2012; member of the Council of Women World Leaders; member of the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights Board of Trustees)**

**Vappu Tuulikki Taipale (Finland; former Minister of Health and Social Affairs; Co-President of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, 1985 Nobel Peace Laureate)**

**Ilkka Taipale (Finland; former Member of Parliament; long-time consultant and former Executive member of the International Peace Bureau, 1910 Nobel Peace Laureate)**

**Ayo Ayoola-Amale (Ghana; Co-convener, International Advisory Board, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom)**

**Randi Rønning Balsvik, Professor Emerita of History, Arctic University of Norway**

**Rune Ottoson, Professor Emeritus of Journalism, Oslo Metropolitan University (Norway)**

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<sup>1</sup> Ingvill Bryn Rambøl, Nobel Peace Center, November 27, 2020

<https://www.nobelpeacecenter.org/en/news/nobel-s-last-will-125-years>

<sup>2</sup> Hans Gunter Brauch. 2024. "John W. Burton and his role in the Establishment of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA)," in *John W. Burton: A Pioneer in Conflict Analysis and Resolution*. Springer Nature. p. 427-445, <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:b443cf53-aa1e-42ee-9fd8-253242066875>

<sup>3</sup> UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in his August 2016 report on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education, specifically noted IPRA's Main UN Representative Emily Welty, IPRA UN team members, and affiliated Pace University Peace Studies professors for their contributions. <https://disarmament.blogs.pace.edu/2017/10/08/the-role-of-the-pace-community-in-the-nobel-peace-prize-winning-campaign-to-ban-the-bomb/#:~:text=Pace%20University%20was%20featured%20in,on%20the%20Arms%20Trade%20Treaty>.

<sup>4</sup> For more information, see: <https://raic.gov.sl/index.php/all-categories-list/raic/dr-ibrahim-seaga-shaw-chairman-and-information-commissioner-raic>

<sup>5</sup> Federico Mayor, UNESCO Director-General, Presentation of the 1989 UNESCO Prize for Peace Education, 20 September 1989, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000084004?posInSet=4&queryId=N-EXPLORE-c71be02a-c64a-4e30-9095-8a3e28433e0c>

<sup>6</sup> For more information, see: <https://claip.org/>.

<sup>7</sup> International Peace Bureau, Conference review: From conflict to Beloved Communities-a series of international gatherings on peace, justice, and nonviolence, <https://ipb.org/conference-review-from-conflict-to-beloved-communities-a-series-of-international-gatherings-on-peace-justice-and-nonviolence-in-juba-south-sudan/>

<sup>8</sup> Nanjing University, Highlight: Renewal of the UNESCO Chair on Peace Studies at NJU, < <https://ossc.nju.edu.cn/NEWS/20230303/i239641.html#:~:text=The%20Chair%20on%20Peace%20Studies,130%E2%80%93138.>>

<sup>9</sup> For more information, see: <https://www.iprapeace.com/ipra2025>.

<sup>10</sup> For more information, see: <https://ajmuste.org/board-and-staff#:~:text=Matt%20is%20Secretary%2DGeneral%20of,both%20historic%20US%20peace%20organizations>.

<sup>11</sup> For more information, see <https://www.blurb.com/b/12585898-perpetual-peace-science-spherical-ai-sai-superiorit>. See also: <https://www.blurb.com/user/MattMeyer25?srsId=AfmBOoKsDVitOXVurlwi4uZaos-5Hid8M29wZBCKRs0XrEkCeJz1rZh>.

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that the newly re-named Donald J. Trump Institute for Peace has its roots in the 1979 US Presidential Commission on Proposals for the National Academy of Peace and Conflict Resolution, convened by Jimmy Carter with Elise Boulding as a leading member. The report and recommendation of that Commission led directly to the 1984 statutory establishment of the US Institute for Peace in Washington DC, presided over by Ronald Reagan. *United States Institute of Peace Act (22 USC Ch 56, sect. 4601-4611)*. U.S. House of Representatives. *Archived* from the original on January 18, 2017. Retrieved January 18, 2017. See also *PDF Archived* 2013-04-05 at the *Wayback Machine* on USIP website.

<sup>13</sup> For more information, see: <https://www.iprapeace.com/ipra2025>, "resolutions" section.

<sup>14</sup> See especially the work of IPRA's PEC co-founder Magnus Haavelsrud, "Three Roots of Transdisciplinary Analysis in Peace Education," Recibido: 26 de enero de 2015 Aprobado: 10 de abril de 2015, <file:///C:/Users/mmmsr/Downloads/Dialnet-TresRaicesDelAnálisisTransdisciplinarioEnEducación-5876986.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.movementsofmovements.org/>

<sup>16</sup> Matt Meyer, "Western Sahara Calls for Independence in historic symbolic referendum," Waging Nonviolence, 2028, <https://wagingnonviolence.org/2018/03/western-sahara-independence-referendum/>

<sup>17</sup> Matt Meyer, "Lessons from a historic act of disarmament in Kurdistan," Waging Nonviolence, 2025, <https://wagingnonviolence.org/2025/07/lessons-from-a-historic-act-of-disarmament-in-kurdistan/>

<sup>18</sup> Tibetan Parliament in Exile, Delegation of IPRA visits Tibetan Parliament in Exile, 2023, <https://tibetanparliament.org/delegation-of-international-peace-research-association-visits-tibetan-parliament-in-exile/>