



**American Friends
Service Committee**

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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**NONVIOLENT PEACEFORCE NOMINATED FOR 2016 NOBEL
PEACE PRIZE**

Protecting unarmed civilians nonviolently proven effective worldwide

PHILADELPHIA PA (February 24, 2016) – Nonviolent Peaceforce, an unarmed, paid civilian protection force which fosters dialogue among parties in conflict and provides a protective presence for threatened civilians, has been nominated for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize by the [American Friends Service Committee \(AFSC\)](http://www.afsc.org).

“Unarmed civilian protection is a method for direct protection of civilians and violence reduction that has grown in practice and recognition. In the last few years, it has especially proven its effectiveness to protect women and girls,” according to a UN report of October 2015 cited in its nominating letter by AFSC, a Quaker organization working for peace and justice across the U.S. and around the world.

“Awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to Nonviolent Peaceforce would highlight and strengthen their work and the work of other similar organizations, at a time when worldwide tensions seem to be at a boiling point, and their work is vital and relevant,” AFSC wrote.

“We are honored to be nominated. We are especially honored to have this nomination come from the American Friends Services Committee. This is a tribute to our courageous civilian peacekeepers who are at the frontline of violent conflicts around the world,” said Mel Duncan, co-founder, and Doris Mariani, CEO of Nonviolent Peaceforce.

Founded in 2002, [Nonviolent Peaceforce](http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org) (NP) fielded its first intervention team one year later, in Sri Lanka. With headquarters in Brussels and an office in Minneapolis MN, NP field teams are presently deployed in the Philippines, in South Sudan, Myanmar, and the Middle East. Their field staff include veterans of conflict zones, experienced peacekeepers, and those new to the field.

Aware of the danger of neocolonial models of intervention, Nonviolent Peaceforce only serves in areas where they have been invited, and they conduct extensive and thorough interviews and research with all parties to a conflict before they decide whether or not to deploy teams to a conflict area.

NP is also clear that their goal is “to arrive to leave,” not intending to establish long-term presence, but seeking to address the conflict that caused their invitation, see it through to resolution, and then withdraw.

As part of its work, NP has reunited child soldiers with their families and helped create weapons-free zones in conflict areas. NP mitigates gender violence through their Women’s Security Teams, “which have dramatically lessened the number of rapes that South Sudanese women experience while gathering water or firewood for their families. In the past year, (NP) provided over 1,000 accompaniments for vulnerable people, primarily women and children, throughout South Sudan,” the AFSC wrote.

In 1947, AFSC and the British Friends Service Council accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of “Quakers everywhere.” Peace Prize laureates have the privilege to nominate candidates for this honor. The AFSC Nobel Nominating Committee includes a representative of Quaker Peace and Social Witness, the AFSC's counterpart in Great Britain. For more on the nomination criteria, visit <http://quakernobel.org/>

For more on AFSC’s programs for peace, visit www.afsc.org or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

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The American Friends Service Committee is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace and humanitarian service. Its work is based on the belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.