



PRESS RELEASE

Kehkashan Basu from the United Arab Emirates wins International Children's Peace Prize 2016



[Photos above: Kehkashan receiving the prize from Nobel Peace Laureate Muhammad Yunus and Kehkashan celebrating, use this [WeTransfer-link](#) for HR images]

**The Hague, New York, 2 December 2016 – Sixteen-year-old Kehkashan Basu from the United Arab Emirates is the 2016 winner of the International Children’s Peace Prize. Today, she was presented with the prestigious award for her fight for climate justice and against environmental degradation. Kehkashan received the prize from Nobel Peace Laureate Muhammad Yunus in the presence of the world press and many prominent guests. The International Children’s Peace Prize is an initiative of KidsRights, the foundation committed to defending children’s rights worldwide.**

Professor Yunus, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for his efforts for economic and social development, today underlined the urgency and importance of Kehkashan’s work, as more than three million children under the age of five die every year from environment-related diseases and many more suffer deeply from environmental issues. Mr Yunus said: *“It is a great achievement for such a young person to already have such reach and impact with her important message. A healthy environment is essential for the survival, wellbeing and development of children, and therefore it is a precondition for the realization of the rights of the child. Kehkashan teaches us that we all have a responsibility to work towards a sustainable future.”*

When Kehkashan was eight, she started educating neighbours on the importance of saving the environment. She planted her first tree and brought together children to collect and recycle waste. She founded her organization Green Hope at the age of twelve, through which she has initiated countless cleanup operations and awareness campaigns. Kehkashan then became the youngest ever Global Coordinator for the Major Group for Children and Youth of the United Nations Environmental Programme. Green Hope has become an international organization with activities in more than ten countries and over a thousand young volunteers.

*[A video about Kehkashan's life story - English and Dutch versions]*



Life story Kehkashan Basu.pdf

*[Read Kehkashan's life story]*

KidsRights' founder Mr. Marc Dullaert today said Kehkashan was chosen as winner by the Expert Committee because she proves that one child can start a movement with enormous reach and impact: *“Kehkashan has managed to mobilize thousands of children to save the environment. Children are the most vulnerable group and are without exception hit the hardest during environmental crises. They are, for example, the most vulnerable to water and air pollution. Children’s rights and environmental development are inextricably linked. To realise both, environmental rights for children should be embedded in international policy. KidsRights therefore calls upon the UN to supplement the Convention on the Rights of the Child to specifically include these environmental rights.”*

Upon receiving the prize today, Kehkashan confirmed that her work will continue: *“I will keep encouraging children and adults to create a more sustainable future. I call upon everyone to think of ways to contribute to the preservation of the environment. Take that extra step; walk that extra mile to get the future we want. Time is not on our side – we have to act now, or we will have polar bears under palm trees.”*



Speech Kehkashan FINAL.pdf

*[Download Kehkashan's full speech here]*

## **Additional information for media (not for publication)**

### **HD footage**

Within an hour of the end of the ceremony, broadcast media can access an ftp server containing a film with highlights of the ceremony in HD and the winner’s speech. Please use an ftp application (e.g. [FileZilla](#)) to access the FTP server. In case of technical issues, please contact Kidsrights’ PR officer Susanne Peters (contact information listed below) so we can share a WeTransfer download URL.

**Host:** ftppost.united4all.nl

**User:** KidsRights

**Password:** ICPP2016!

### **Media inquiries**

Media are invited to interview Kehkashan Basu, Marc Dullaert or other keynote speakers, e.g. Nobel Peace Laureate Muhammad Yunus, Ahmad Alhendawi, the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, and Abraham M. Keita, who won the International Children's Peace Prize in 2015. Please address interview requests or other inquiries to KidsRights' media relations officers:



**Susanne Peters (the Netherlands and international inquiries)**

[susanne@issuemakers.nl](mailto:susanne@issuemakers.nl)

T: +31 (0) 20 7150663

M: +31 (0)6 47572101



**Jordi Bouman (the Netherlands)**

[jordi@issuemakers.nl](mailto:jordi@issuemakers.nl)

T: +31 (0)20 656 0221

M: +31 (0)6 26 419 768



**Victoria Chartier (UK and Cameroon)**

[vchartier@apcoworldwide.com](mailto:vchartier@apcoworldwide.com)

T: +44 2075263686

M: +44 7711767137



**Christy Abraham (UAE)**

[cabraham@apcoworldwide.com](mailto:cabraham@apcoworldwide.com)

T: +971 4 375 5433

M: +971 55 134 2859



Speakers' biographies.pdf

*[Speakers' biographies]*

**About the International Children's Peace Prize**

The International Children's Peace Prize is awarded annually to a child who fights courageously for children's rights. Every year, the message of the new young winner has enormous impact and demonstrates to millions of people globally that change is possible. In 2016 the prize will be awarded for the 12th consecutive year. Previous winners include Nkosi Johnson, who fought for the rights of children with hiv/aids, and Malala Yousafzai, who won the International Children's Peace Prize in 2013. Last year's winner was Abraham M. Keita from Liberia. By winning the award he has gained an international platform which enabled him to spread his powerful message of justice for children who are victims of violence among an audience of hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

The International Children's Peace Prize was founded by Mr. Marc Dullaert, founder and chair of the KidsRights Foundation. It was launched in 2005 during the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates in Rome, chaired by Mikhail Gorbachev. During the nomination process the Expert Committee of the prize receives nominations from countries all over the world. Very remarkable, but often unknown, brave children have been discovered through the annual nomination process.

Each year the International Children's Peace Prize is presented by a Nobel Peace Laureate. The winner receives the statuette 'Nkosi', which portrays a child setting the world in motion, as well as a study grant and a worldwide platform to promote his or her ideals and causes for the benefit of children's rights. Furthermore, KidsRights invests the sum of €100,000 in projects in the winner's home country that are closely connected to his or her area of work. Please visit the website for more information about the International Children's Peace

Prize: <http://www.childrenspeaceprize.org>.



Programme\_ICPP\_2016\_spread\_lr.pdf

*[Programme booklet]*

**About KidsRights Report 2016 – *Cleaning up the Mess: Children's Rights and Environmental Protection***

In honour of the International Children's Peace Prize 2016, KidsRights together with Leiden University's Faculty of Law has written the report ***Cleaning up the Mess: Children's Rights and Environmental Protection***. It comprises findings from global research into the relation between environmental degradation and the rights of the child. More than three million children under the age of five die every year from environment-related diseases and many more suffer deeply from environmental issues. In the report, KidsRights offers urgent recommendations on how to integrate environmental protection with the rights of the child. Children have a major role to play in this and must be taken seriously. Please visit [www.kidsrights.org](http://www.kidsrights.org) to download the report, or use the links below:

*[full report and fact sheet]*

### **About KidsRights Foundation**

KidsRights is an international non-governmental organization that promotes the wellbeing of very vulnerable children across the world and advocates the realization of their rights.

KidsRights strives for a world where all children have access to their rights and are enabled to realize the great potential they carry within them. KidsRights sees children as changemakers with the power to move the world, and facilitates in voicing their opinions and taking action in order to bring about change.

KidsRights supports children by commanding global attention for the realization of children's rights and acting as a catalyst to ignite change, together with children and youths. We support this with research and action. In order to gain insight into the status of children's rights, KidsRights frequently conducts research. The foundation also finances local projects aimed at directly improving the rights of vulnerable children and stimulating child participation and change-making by youths. Please visit our website to find out more about KidsRights: [www.kidsrights.org](http://www.kidsrights.org).

### **About ABN AMRO**

ABN AMRO is a socially responsible company that invests in the future. Our sponsorship and Foundation activities focus on talent under the motto 'Partner of the Future'. We are committed to discovering, developing and celebrating talent. We support people and organisations aspiring to achieve a goal, sometimes by offering a financial contribution and often by using our expertise and networks. ABN AMRO has been a partner of the Dutch children's rights organization KidsRights since 2006, working together to enable the International Children's Peace Prize. Children set the world in motion; the International Children's Peace Prize provides them with a platform to make the world a better place. More information: [www.abnamro.com/partnervandetoekomst](http://www.abnamro.com/partnervandetoekomst).

*[Dutch and French versions of the press release]*

---



KidsRights Foundationnewsroom