

## Education for Right Livelihood: Connecting Activism and Academia

Conference and Public Forum

Friday, 21 February 2020

### Right Livelihood Award Laureates' Profiles

**BASSEY, Nnimmo (Nigeria):** Environment/oil, received the Right Livelihood Award in 2010.



Nnimmo Bassey is a Nigerian architect, environmental activist, author and poet. Bassey started his work on human rights issues in the 1980s as a member of the Board of Directors of Nigeria's Civil Liberties Organisation.

In 1993, he co-founded Environmental Rights Action (ERA), also known as Friends of the Earth Nigeria, an advocacy NGO that deals with environmental human rights issues in the country. Bassey was ERA's Executive Director for two decades and is still the chair of its Management Board.

Bassey's primary campaigning focuses on oil and the enormous damage inflicted on Nigerian communities and neighbouring countries where oil is extracted (such as Angola, Cameroon, Chad, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Sudan). He works on supporting a broad movement across sub-Saharan African countries where new finds of oil are being made.

Bassey is also central to the Right Livelihood College campus at The University of Port Harcourt in Nigeria.

**FERNANDO, Basil; Asian Human Rights Commission (Hong Kong): Human rights, social action, received the Right Livelihood Award in 2014.**



Basil Fernando is an activist, author and poet. He has been active in human rights and social action issues ever since his youth. He practised law from 1980 to 1989 at the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka, with an emphasis on criminal law, employment law and human rights law.

Fernando has held many positions linked to human rights, for example, as an Appeals Counsellor for Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong as part of a project sponsored by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and as a Senior United Nations Human Rights Officer in Charge of the Investigation Unit in Cambodia under the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). He has initiated programmes for creating a popular culture of human rights through monuments and creative works in Sri Lanka. Fernando has conducted nearly 100 workshops and consultations on reconciliation issues, as well as on diverse aspects of human rights and legal reform. He initiated the Judicial Assistance programme for Cambodia, and the Religion and Human Rights Programme of the Asian Human Rights Commission. In 2012, he co-founded the Asian Alliance Against Torture and Ill-Treatment.

**GONSALVES, Colin (India): Human rights/law, received the Right Livelihood Award in 2017.**



Colin Gonsalves was born in 1952 and graduated in 1975 with a degree in engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology in Mumbai. However, he quickly switched to practising law to fight human rights abuses.

Noticing a complete lack of legal aid for India's poor, Gonsalves and his colleagues began to visit other states, participating in meetings and taking the first steps to form a network of young lawyers and social activists. In 1989, the Peoples' Law Centre he had founded was renamed as Human Rights Law Network (HRLN).

Gonsalves and HRLN slowly but surely expanded their work to represent Adivasis, Dalits, slum dwellers, unorganised workers, women and children, and advocate for the advancement of disability rights, LGBT rights and environmental law. Throughout its history, HRLN has focused on using the legal system to produce practical results for the poor and marginalised sections of society, winning over 1,000 cases.

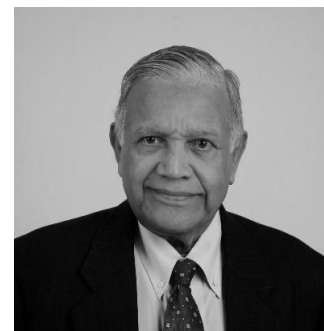
GUNASEKERA, Neshan (Sri Lanka): Environmental protection/law, legacy holder of Judge Christopher Weeramantry, who received the Right Livelihood Award in 2007.



Neshan Gunasekera is an educator, coach, facilitator and lawyer from Sri Lanka. He is committed to bringing communities together for environmental protection, healing and conservation through the use of intergenerational, holistic and experiential learning. Gunasekera was the former Director (2007-2012) of the Weeramantry International Centre for Peace Education and Research set up by the late Judge Christopher G. Weeramantry, a founding member

of the World Future Council.

Judge Weeramantry (1926-2017) was a world-renowned legal scholar and a former Vice-President of the International Court of Justice, who played a crucial role in strengthening and expanding the rule of international law. His work demonstrates how international law can be used to address current global challenges such as the continued threat of nuclear weapons, the protection of human rights and the protection of the environment.



LENZEN ABOULEISH, Mona, representative of SEKEM (Egypt): Sustainable development. SEKEM received the Right Livelihood Award 2003.



SEKEM was founded with the idea of ensuring sustainable development and giving back to the community. This vision, which led Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish to dig the first well in a vast desert land, still resounds in SEKEM's approach of conducting business. Like a compass, their vision, mission and values guide them in the everyday work in all SEKEM companies.

This vision includes sustainable development towards a future where every human being can fulfill their individual potential, where mankind lives together in social forms reflecting human dignity, and where all economic activity is conducted in accordance with ecological and ethical principles.



Mona Lenzen Abouleish is a board member of the Heliopolis University SEKEM, working in the field of quality development and teaching in the CORE program for students and lectures. Lenzen Abouleish is a freelance trainer for eurythmists and lectures on further education in the fields of "eurythm in working life", eurythm in companies and social

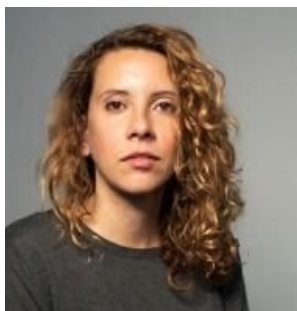
institutions. She works with the development and implementation of prevention courses on burnout.

**LONGO, Fiore, representative of Survival International (France): Rights of tribal people Survival International received the Right Livelihood Award in 1989.**



to change the world in favour of those tribes.

Over the past 50 years, Survival International has worked with over 100 tribes to amplify their voices on the global stage and ensure their rights to survival and self-determination. Survival International has educated the public about the threats tribal people face and has worked



Fiore Longo is a Research and Advocacy Officer at Survival International, as well as Coordinator of Survival France. She works on Survival's conservation campaign and has visited many communities threatened with eviction from conservation zones in India and the Republic of the Congo - in the latter, she is currently leading Survival's campaign against the creation of the Messok Dja National Park.

**MONTENEGRO, Raúl (Argentina): Natural resources and indigenous people, received the Right Livelihood Award in 2004.**



Raúl Montenegro has been working on bridging the gaps between the environment, development, universities, citizens and NGOs. In 1982, he was the principal founder of FUNAM (Fundacion para la Defensa del Ambiente) and has been its President since 1995. At present, he is FUNAM's representative at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations.

In addition to his activism to protect natural resources, Montenegro has been a Professor of Evolutionary Biology at the National University of Cordoba since 1985. In that role, he has come up with theoretical concepts to increase the knowledge and understanding of balanced ecosystems, on which topic he has also organised numerous conferences. Montenegro also serves as the leader of the Right Livelihood College campus in Cordoba.



FERNANDES, Rosana, representative of the Landless Workers' Movement, MST (Brazil): Land reform. MST received the Right Livelihood Award in 1991.

MST works in defence of Brazilian landless families. Brazil has the most inequitable distribution of land ownership in the world, with a high infant mortality rate, millions of street children and situations akin to slavery in the countryside. MST members work under the slogan 'Occupy, Resist, Produce.' Under the movement, landless farmers occupy certain lands and start negotiations with the state or federal authorities to be able to formally take ownership of those areas. MST then supports the farmers in forming agricultural cooperatives to ensure effective production that can compete with big estates. Support is essential since such small producers often put themselves at great personal risk, as torture, assassinations, threats and intimidation are commonplace.



Rosana Fernandes is a long-time member of MST's Political Education Sector and presently also works as the General Coordinator of the Florestan Fernandes National School (ENFF). The school was founded by MST to educate and train its members and working class youths and adults around the world.

PERLAS, Nicanor (the Philippines): Environmental protection, nuclear power, spirituality, received the Right Livelihood Award in 2003.



Nicanor Perlas is an adviser, global activist, writer and speaker on artificial intelligence, globalisation, social threefolding and Sustainable Integrated Area Development (SIAD).

He has advised global civil society networks, social enterprises, UN and Philippine government agencies, including the Office of the President. Perlas headed global and national civil society networks that were responsible for stopping the development of 12 nuclear power plants; banning 32 pesticide formulations; and mainstreaming sustainable development, including organic farming in the Philippines, thereby educating citizens worldwide on their inherent power to create a better world.

Perlas has written over 500 articles, monographs and books, including 'Shaping Globalization: Civil Society, Cultural Power and Threefolding,' an international bestseller, which has been translated into nine languages. He is a member of the Philippine Senate Technical Working Group on Artificial Intelligence. Perlas also

assists the mayors of seven cities and towns practice participatory governance and direct democracy by empowering altogether more than 300,000 citizens to collectively embark on ensuring sustainable development. For the global impact of his work, he has been given, among others, the Outstanding Filipino Award (TOFIL) and UNEP'S Global 500 Award.

**SHIVA, Vandana (India): Ecology, women's rights, grassroots movements, received the Right Livelihood Award in 1993.**



Vandana Shiva founded an independent institute – the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology in Dehra Dun – dedicated to high quality and independent research to address the most significant ecological and social issues of our times, working in close partnership with local communities and social movements. In 1991, she founded Navdanya, a national movement in India to protect the diversity and integrity of living resources – especially native seed – and to promote organic farming and fair trade practices. For the last two decades, Navdanya has worked with local communities and organisations, serving more than 500,000 farmers.

Shiva has contributed in fundamental ways to changing the practice and paradigms of agriculture and food, including through her many books.

Her contributions to gender issues are also nationally and internationally recognised.

**SUCIWATI, representative of Munir (Indonesia): Human rights. Her husband, Munir Said Thalib, received the Right Livelihood Award in 2000.**



Suciwati is an Indonesian human rights activist who continues to fight for justice for her late husband, Munir Said Thalib, who received the Right Livelihood Award in 2000. Munir was tragically murdered in 2004 on board a flight to the Netherlands, where he was set to undertake studies in International Law. Suciwati is the founder of the Indonesian museum Omah Munir, opened in 2013, and the campaign titled "Menolak Lupa" or "Refuse to Forget", to make sure that people remember what her husband, Munir, has done for Indonesia.

### Munir

Munir Said Thalib first came to public prominence at the end of the Suharto period through his role in the campaign in late 1997 and early 1998 to raise attention to the abduction of two



dozen pro-democracy activists under suspicious circumstances. At the height of this campaign, Munir founded the human rights organisation Kontras (Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence) with the backing of 12 pro-democracy NGOs.

Kontras focuses on fighting political violence, encouraging respect for due process, ensuring victims' physical and psychological recovery, and promoting reconciliation and peace.

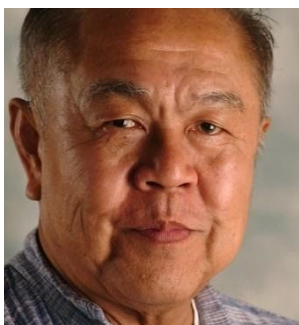
OIKAWA, Ryoko; YOSHINO, Yuriko; KINOSHITA, Miyuki; and FUKUZUMI, Hiromi from the Seikatsu Club Consumers' Co-operative (Japan): Healthy, local food production and distribution, received the Right Livelihood Award in 1989.



The Seikatsu Club Consumers' Co-operative (SCCC) was founded in 1968 with the vision of creating a community- and people-centred economy that provides a radical alternative to both socialist and capitalist industrialisation. Under the motto "autonomous control of our lives," the Seikatsu Club works to promote change in several areas including production, distribution, consumption, disposal, the environment, social services and politics.

The Club promotes self-sufficiency in food production and aims to ensure the sustainability of local agriculture, even though these goals run counter to pressures of international trade, which threaten to destroy family farming. The Seikatsu Club also aims to diversify working opportunities for women and has committed itself to exploring the scope for a people-oriented welfare system. Members of the Club have also started various cooperatives running restaurants, bakeries, used goods stores, soap factories, child care centres and programmes caring for elderly people. In 2018, such collectives had about 17,000 workers.

SIVARAKSA, Sulak (Thailand): Democracy, justice, cultural integrity, received the Right Livelihood Award in 1995.



Sulak Sivaraksa returned to Thailand after receiving an education in Great Britain and has since then played a leading role in the mobilisation of Thai civil society, which has repeatedly brought him into conflict with local authorities. Some examples of his lifelong activism include the creation of a string of social welfare and development organisations; the proposal of alternatives to consumerism; and the promotion

of democracy, human rights and government accountability. He has also played a leading role in supporting Burmese refugees in Thailand – for example, through the famous Jungle University for fleeing Burmese students. Sivaraksa’s work has inspired people beyond Thailand, and his concept of development has been of great influence worldwide.

“Ajarn” (Thai for Doctor) Sulak has also created several social innovation and development organisations, such as the Spirit in Education Movement (SEM), the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), the Institute for transformative learning (with INEB), and the early “Alternatives to Consumerism” network. He also founded the Sathirakoses Nagapradipa Foundation and recent activities such as the Awakening Leadership Training programme, and the School for Wellbeing Studies and Research, which also serves as the Right Livelihood College Campus in South East Asia.

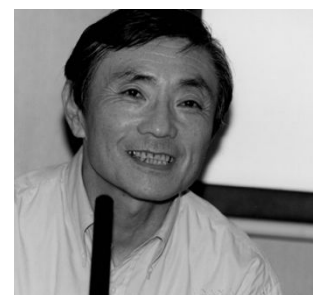
**STRONELL, Caitlin, representative of Citizens’ Nuclear Information Center (CNIC): Nuclear power. CNIC was founded by Jinzaburo Takagi (Japan), who received the Right Livelihood Award in 1997.**



Caitlin Stronell is an internationally-trained nuclear scientist who is presently working as a researcher with the Japan-based Citizens’ Nuclear Information Center (CNIC). Stronell’s works aim to shed light on the difficulties faced by survivors of Japan’s Fukushima nuclear disaster, who had to evacuate their homes when the nuclear power plant was damaged in an earthquake and related tsunami in 2011. The site is still contaminated.

### Jinzaburo Takagi

After working for the nuclear industry, Jinzaburo Takagi (1938-2000) put his energy and knowledge at the service of environmental protection, with special emphasis on the fight against nuclear threat, a topic that he extensively wrote about. His advocacy activity contributed to the scaling down of Japan’s plutonium programme. Takagi also helped other NGOs throughout Asia to get correct scientific information about the risks and environmental implications of nuclear energy.





## Experts

### CHRISTOFORATOU, Ellen, University of Kassel (Germany): Education



Right Livelihood College partner Dr. Ellen Christoforidou from the University of Kassel works on teacher training with a focus on education on sustainable development and global citizenship.

Dr. Christoforidou is the author of the book “Education in a Globalized World: Teaching Right Livelihood” exploring how to implement the innovative ideas presented by Right Livelihood Award Laureates in the education of teachers and teaching methods for a future-oriented teacher training.