

Nobel Peace Prize for Muhammad Yunus

Pride is swelling at the Holcim Foundation: Professor Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh, founding member of the Advisory Board, along with his Grameen Bank wins the Nobel Peace Prize 2006.

Foundations: What has been the impact of the Nobel Peace Prize win?

Muhammad Yunus: The Nobel Peace Prize is a huge endorsement to our work – and clearly says that anyone working towards eliminating poverty is working toward peace.

What was the reaction in Bangladesh to the announcement?

The news was met with tremendous enthusiasm in Bangladesh. People started flooding my house and office, everywhere – hundreds and thousands of people kept coming, photographers and television crews from around the world. Everyone was so excited and it was an amazing experience.

What do you consider the most important element of sustainable construction?

Sustainable societies are more important than sustainable construction. Sustainable humans can stand on their own two feet, and provide for themselves. The “Grameen House” low-cost housing initiative is one program that is making important steps – which of course considers elements of sustainable construction such as affordability, durability and ecological impact.

Where do you see a role for the Holcim Foundation?

I think the importance of the Holcim Foundation is that it introduces a broader scope of issues for the development of the built environment. By promoting buildings and structures that consider the long-term sustainability of their construction methods, life-cycle and the lives of the people who use them, the Holcim Foundation makes a valuable contribution to the debate.

Full report on our website

More about Muhammad Yunus, Grameen Bank, and microcredit is available at:

www.holcimfoundation.org. The article “The power of small changes” can be downloaded as a PDF. Based on the keynote speech by Professor Yunus at the Holcim Forum 2004, it was originally published in the book *First forum*.

Peace through development

Muhammad Yunus has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize several times. The prize has been awarded since 1901, and has gone to such important people as Red Cross founder Henry Dunant, Albert Schweitzer, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Teresa, Mikhail Gorbachev and Nelson Mandela. This year, among a field of 190 nominees, Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank received the award, which carries prize money of 1.4 million dollars. This decision by the Norwegian Nobel Committee underscores the connection between economic development and peace: “Lasting peace cannot be achieved unless large population groups find ways in which to break out of poverty,” stressed the committee in its laudation. The Holcim Foundation is elated that the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to Muhammad Yunus and congratulates him on receiving this well-earned acknowledgment.



