

The Delta Prize for Global Understanding

The University of Georgia

Awarded in 2005 to

**Ambassador
Gertrude Ibengwe Mongella**



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Title page: Ambassador Gertrude Mongella accepts the Delta Prize from Michael F. Adams, President of the University of Georgia, and Jerome Miller, Vice President for Global Diversity and Community Affairs, Delta.
(Photo/Robert Newcomb)

Front cover: Ambassador Gertrude Mongella.
(Photo/Robert Newcomb)

Inset: The Delta Prize Sculpture. The Delta Prize sculpture was designed by Barbara Mann and Gary Noffke. The sculpture consists of a sterling silver medallion, approximately 2 1/4 inches in diameter and 1/8 inch thick, held in place by a titanium pin on a bronze triangular base. The medallion portrays the earth with the abstracted continents in low relief. In raised lettering surrounding the earth are, on one side, the words "THE DELTA PRIZE FOR GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING," and, on the other side, the words "THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA." The medallion rotates in place on the stand. The name of the recipient of the Delta Prize is inscribed on the bronze base.
(Photo/Paul Efland)



The Delta Prize for Global Understanding

The Delta Prize for Global Understanding, endowed by the Delta Air Lines Foundation and administered by The University of Georgia, is awarded on an annual basis to individuals who by their own initiative have provided opportunities for greater understanding among cultures and nations. The Delta Prize honors a variety of contributions to peace and cooperation, such as grassroots projects that diminish hostilities in a particular region of the world, international programs that facilitate communication or commerce among different peoples, and the leadership of individuals in the solution of global problems.

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Foreword

The University of Georgia has three missions: “to teach, to serve, and to inquire into the nature of things.” In order to fulfill all these responsibilities well in a global society, we need to find ways for all the world’s people to get along with one another more peacefully, to understand each other better, and to cooperate in making a more just global society.

So we should show gratitude to leaders who have dedicated themselves to finding non-violent solutions to conflicts, to alleviating poverty, to spreading the recognition of universal human rights, and to advancing intercultural understanding. The Delta Prize for Global Understanding does precisely that. The Delta Prize was created jointly by Delta Air Lines and The University of Georgia to bring international attention to good deeds that have far-reaching consequences for our world. The Delta Prize is our way of saying “Thank you” to some of the great individuals of our age.

Ambassador Gertrude Mongella of Tanzania, first President of the Pan-African Parliament, has won admiration for decades for her efforts on behalf of human rights for women and children on the African continent and in the rest of the world. In recognition of her honesty, her passion for social justice, and her extraordinary political skills, her fellow political leaders in the African Union elected her unanimously to guide them in the formation of the new parliament. And for those same qualities, the Delta Prize Board voted to give her the 2005 Delta Prize for Global Understanding.

I am proud that the University of Georgia and Delta Air Lines have bestowed the Delta Prize on Ambassador Mongella. Her nomination was vetted by a University of Georgia Student Selection Committee, which was composed of some of our most outstanding undergraduate students, and then recommended by the Delta Prize Board.

Thank you, Ambassador Mongella, for what you have done for the world.

Michael F. Adams

President of The University of Georgia

Member of the Delta Prize Board

Preface

The Delta Prize for Global Understanding was established to recognize individuals whose extraordinary ability to promote fruitful communication has rendered their region of the world a more peaceful place.

Ambassador Gertrude Mongella of Tanzania, the first President of the Pan-African Parliament, has advanced intercultural and international understanding on the continent of Africa in exercising her responsibilities over many years as a political leader. And she has used her political influence in every position she has held to promote human rights, particularly the rights of women and children in Africa and around the world. She has indeed devoted her life to making the world a more peaceful place.

Gertrude Mongella was elected President of the Pan-African Parliament on March 18, 2004. She had previously served the people of Africa as Member of Parliament in Tanzania, Goodwill Ambassador to the World Health Organization representing Africa, Leader of the OAU Election Observer Team to Zimbabwe for the 2002 presidential election, Member of the Council of "The Future" at UNESCO, President of the NGO Advocacy for Women in Africa, U.N. Assistant Secretary General and Secretary General for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. In all of these positions, and in numerous others, Ambassador Mongella acquired renown for promoting a better understanding of the needs of women and children.

Ambassador Mongella has always been known for her ability to cooperate amicably and effectively with politicians of all ideologies and of both sexes. She won the nickname "Mama Beijing" when she chaired the Beijing conference. And she continues to be known in African circles as "Mama Mongella." In January of this year she won the 2005 Martin Luther King "Drum Major for Justice Award."

The scope of Ambassador Mongella's goals for women's rights is evident in the mission statement of Advocacy for Women in Africa, which she founded in 1996. The organization aims:

- to create a forum for women to raise African women's concerns and influence decisions within major decision-making bodies in Africa;

- to facilitate contacts, provide a link, and bring together people who are committed to speak for and with women in Africa;

- to promote actions for development, peace, and equality with a gender focus; and

- to interpret and analyze social economic and political trends in the continent and their impact on women's advancement and empowerment.

The scope of Ambassador Mongella's goals for a more peaceful Africa is evident in the mission statement of the Pan-African Parliament, which she helped to create and over which she now presides. The Pan-African Parliament, which is an organ of the African Union, aims:

[to provide] a common platform for African peoples and their grassroots organizations to be more involved in discussions and decision-making on the problems and challenges facing the continent.

Officials of the new organization expect that after its first five years, during which time it will be an advisory body, the Pan-African Parliament will gain full legislative powers, with members directly elected from their respective countries. According to the plan, each country that signs and ratifies the protocol gets five parliamentary deputies, one of which must be a woman.

The missions of these two organizations—Advocacy for Women in Africa and the Pan-African Parliament—show their potential for changing the relationship of Africa to the rest of the world. Because of her leadership in their creation, Ambassador Mongella has influenced the direction of world events for the better.

Mama Mongella's strategy for bringing peace to our troubled planet involves women. In 1996, as chair of the Women's Leadership Forum on Peace in Johannesburg, she said,

Since we all recognise that women do not generally support armed hostilities and conflicts, can we ... directly involve women in the peace process so that they can contribute their wisdom and compassion to resolving conflicts before they flare up into brutalities? There are still too many conflict-resolving endeavours in Africa which exclude women. How long will women continue to give life just to see it taken away by force of arms?

For a lifetime devoted to promoting greater communication and more peaceful relationships among people of different interests, ideologies, ethnicities, and genders, Ambassador Mongella well deserves the 2005 Delta Prize for Global Understanding.

Gary K. Bertsch

Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Delta Prize Program

Betty Jean Craige

Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Delta Prize Program



The President of the Pan-African Parliament, Gertrude I. Mongella (L) of Tanzania, and Pan-African Parliament Second Vice President Mohammed Lufti Farahat (R) of Libya listen on March 29, 2005, to the South African National Assembly speaker's speech during the official opening of the third ordinary session of the Pan-African Parliament in Johannesburg.
(Gianluigi Guercia/AFP/Getty Images)

On Behalf of Delta

Delta Air Lines and the University of Georgia have joined together to create an international prize that recognizes efforts to advance understanding and cooperation among cultures and nations. Past recipients of the Delta Prize include former president Jimmy Carter, his wife, Rosalynn, and the Carter Center; Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa; former president of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev; former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata; and former President of the Czech Republic Václav Havel. All of them have made major contributions to global understanding. Ambassador Gertrude Mongella is in first-class company, and she belongs there.

As a global organization, Delta Air Lines recognizes the importance of working together as one team. We are one world, united together though not all alike, and our differences with one another create our success. These Delta Prize recipients all share this view.

Delta's philosophy is that "Good Goes Around." We believe that every positive thing one does has the potential to set into motion a chain of events that impacts everyone. If one person doing one good thing has the power to affect many people, imagine the changes we can all make possible if we work together.

Ambassador Mongella, who is being recognized for her lifelong championship of women's and children's rights and for her present leadership as President of the Pan-African Parliament, is the embodiment of our philosophy that "Good Goes Around."

Jerome Miller

Vice President for Global Diversity and Community Affairs, Delta
President of the Delta Air Lines Foundation



Ambassador Gertrude Mongella with Foundation Fellows. (Photo/Robert Newcomb)

For the Women and Children

(Acceptance Speech)

Your Excellencies, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen: I am greatly honored to receive this year's Delta Prize for Global Understanding. I am grateful to the Delta Prize Selection Committee for recognizing and acknowledging my work on the promotion of human rights, especially those of women and children. And I appreciate Delta Air Lines and the University of Georgia for establishing an award that recognizes people whose initiatives have promoted greater understanding among cultures and nations.

I am challenged and humbled by the exemplary contributions of the previous recipients of this award, President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter and the Carter Center, Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu, President Mikhail S. Gorbachev, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, and President Václav Havel. Whatever my achievements are, they are a result of support and encouragement from my family members, teachers, friends and colleagues in my political and teaching career.

The narrowing distance and the fast-vanishing borders between nations result from globalization, modern transportation, and information technologies. Understanding the implications and impact of these changes on the lives of people, particularly women and children, has become an important undertaking.

Women and children have experienced and are still experiencing injustice, inequality, and violence caused by violation of women's and children's human rights. Discrimination, marginalization, invisibility, low status, and voicelessness characterize the lives of women in many societies. Women and children are the most disadvantaged and vulnerable group of people in society because of their lack of access to social, economic and political power and decision-making.

Women have disproportionately suffered the consequences of violence and displacement brought by conflicts and wars. The spread of global terrorism has increased their fear and insecurity.

During the preparations for the 1995 United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing, a young girl ten years old wrote to me as Secretary-General of the conference. She asked, "Is there a place in the world where women and children live free from violence?" To date the answer to her question has not been obtained.

Over the past decade, international commitments to gender equality, peace development, and women's empowerment have



Fourth World Conference on Women Secretary General Gertrude Mongella (L) and conference President Chen Muhua (R) shake hands during the closing ceremony of the 12-day conference on September 15, 1995. (Emmanuel Dunand/AFP/Getty Images)

been reaffirmed in the different UN Conferences, such as those contained in the Beijing Platforms for Actions (BPFA). The world's leaders have agreed to take these commitments forward in the Millennium Declaration and to set targets for the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Beijing+10 review process this year coincides with the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)+10 and the MDG+5 review, offering an opportunity for greater coherence and focus on gender equality and women's empowerment.

I am committed particularly to advocacy for women and children's rights in Africa, and I am happy to report certain changes that have already taken place on the African continent. They are:

Regional declarations on gender equality and the development of mechanisms to achieve it;

The African Union's commitment to gender equality and equity, including the stipulation of 50/50 gender parity in the AU commission;

The adoption of the protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's rights on the rights of women;

The 2004 African Heads of State's declaration on gender equality in Africa.

Much remains to be done in Africa. In spite of women's mobilization, advocacy, and increased representation in governance at continental, regional, and national institutions, normative gains are not yet reflected in substantial changes in women's lives. African women, especially those living in rural communities and those with disabilities, still face daunting challenges.

African women constitute the majority of both urban and rural poor (over seventy percent in some countries). Women's limited access to productive resources—including land, water, energy, credit, means of communication, education and training, health, and adequately remunerated employment—has contributed to the situation wherein more African women live in absolute and relative poverty today than ten years ago. Unequal power relations between women and men, skewed distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work, unequal inheritance rights in some countries, food insecurity, and inadequate support for women's entrepreneurship are other major causes of women's poverty.



Gertrude Mongella, Secretary General of the fourth U.N. World Conference on Women, center, joins in a song with an African youth group at a Youth Day ceremony during the conference in Beijing on Monday, September 11, 1995. (AP/World Wide Photos)

The cumulative effects of HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria, food insecurity, low economic productivity, low levels of education and the upsurge of sexual violence have left African women and children vulnerable and challenged. Women suffer the greatest exposure to HIV/AIDS infection largely because of extreme poverty combined with responsibility for caring for infected and affected persons.

One out of sixteen women and girls dies from complications of pregnancy. Forty per cent of newborn babies die before they celebrate their first birthday.

Work demand and transportation needs limit many women's ability to reach health services. Cultural beliefs, poverty, and gendered power relations affect women's decisions to seek care and to articulate their needs.

Regardless of the improvements made so far, Africa has still, by far, the lowest number of children in schools. Only fifty-eight percent of children of school age are actually enrolled in schools. With few exceptions, educational statistics show large gender disparities. Female-to-male school enrollment, retention, and completion statistics favor boys in the majority of countries.

In order to improve the situation of women, therefore, we must change the prevailing social, economic, and political conditions in society to recognize both women and men as part of society. It is not a one-day task nor is it an individual's task. But it is a matter of urgency which should be viewed as a top social priority, requiring concrete societal efforts.

It is encouraging to note an increase in the global political good will to address problems facing women and children in the world. Yet it is the African people who have the responsibility of setting the agenda for African development. The question is to what extent the developing countries are willing to do the following:

- Give resources to support development in the less developed areas;
- Address the issues that will help secure peace on the African continent;
- Strengthen the economy and independence of Africa;
- Avoid further exploitation and marginalization of Africa.

In my roles as a member of my national parliament, a member and President of the Pan-African Parliament, an activist for women's development, and a peace promoter through different non-



Senegalese First Lady Viviane Wade and Gertrude Mongella, president of the Pan-African Parliament and of the dialogue with Arab and African Women Forum, chair the African Award conference on May 1, 2005 in Dakar, Senegal. (Djibril Sy/Panapress/Getty Images)

governmental organizations, I hope to help create a developed world where women, children and men are recognized for their work and not for their gender. I will continue to advocate for peace and understanding among people, regardless of gender, culture, and religious and political affiliation. And I will continue to advocate for women's and children's well-being.

In appreciation of the Delta Prize I am receiving today, and in gratefulness to the University of Georgia, I would like to create a collaborative endeavor with your international service program to enable students and faculty to work with me on projects that will benefit both women and children, primarily in Tanzania, with the expectation of eventually expanding our efforts to cover the rest of Africa. I welcome discussion on how we can bring this proposal to fruition.

Thank you for your attention. I cordially accept the Delta Prize for Global Understanding on behalf of women and children and all those people who have made it possible for me to receive this award.

Ambassador Gertrude Mongella

Recipient of the 2005 Delta Prize for Global Understanding

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Recipients of the Delta Prize for Global Understanding

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2000

Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu

2001

President Mikhail S. Gorbachev

2002

Mrs. Sadako Ogata

2004

President Václav Havel

2005

Ambassador Gertrude Ibengwe Mongella

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See also <http://www.uga.edu/news/deltaprize/>

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