



LEYMAH ROBERTA GBOWEE



“for demonstrating the healing power of women empowered with belief and conviction, courageous leadership in the face of violent and seemingly insurmountable odds and for committing to a vision of peace for a country torn by war.”

## “THE DISRUPTOR”

2011 Nobel Peace Laureate Leymah Gbowee is a Liberian peace activist, trained social worker and women's rights advocate. She is Founder and current President of the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa. She also founded the Liberia Reconciliation Initiative and Co-Founder and former Executive Director of Women Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN-A). She is also a founding member and former Liberia Coordinator of Women in Peacebuilding Network/West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WIPNET/WANEP). Leymah currently serves as a member of the High-Level Task Force for the International Conference on Population and Development. She is a board member of the Federation of Liberian Youth.

Leymah's leadership of the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace – which brought together Christian and Muslim women in a nonviolent movement that played a pivotal role in ending Liberia's civil war in 2003 – is chronicled in her memoir: 'Mighty Be Our Powers' and in the documentary: 'Pray the Devil Back to Hell'. In addition, Gbowee is the Newsweek Daily Beast's Africa columnist.

She serves on the Board of Directors of the Gbowee Peace Foundation and the PeaceJam Foundation, and she is a member of the African Women Leaders Network for Reproductive Health and Family Planning. Leymah has been an Oxfam Global Ambassador since 2013. She is also a member of the International Honorary Committee of the Global Biosphere Institute and the Aurora Prize Selection Committee. She holds an M.A. in Conflict Transformation from Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, VA), and a Doctor of Laws (LLD) honoris causa from Rhodes University in South Africa and University of Alberta in Canada.

Leymah was honored as a flag-bearer for the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympic Games in London. After receiving the Barnard College Medal of Distinction, she



was named as a Distinguished Fellow in Social Justice and a Visiting Transnational Fellow at the Center for Research on Women, and Fellow in Residence at the Athena Center for Leadership Studies at Barnard College for the 2013/2014 academic year. Leymah was also the recipient of the Lifetime Africa Achievement Prize (LAAP) for Peace in Africa by the Millennium Excellence Foundation. She is currently a distinguished residence scholar at the Union Seminary in New York, a Member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Advocacy Group and a proud mother of seven children.

Leymah played a crucial and central role in peace talks in Liberia, finally resulting in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement later signed in Ghana. Leymah has become one of the leading thinkers on post-conflict resolution and a global advocate for a more central role for women in leadership and peace building.

The fiery spirit, the indomitable will and a spine of steel – she takes pride in calling herself a “disruptor”, a “problem maker” for the patriarchal stereotype. Leymah has been successful in emboldening and rekindling self-confidence in millions of women across the globe in their crusade for justice against the power-mongers. She ceases to become an individual anymore but a living metaphor of strength, power, vigor and virtue.