

Leymah Gbowee
Liberian Peace Activist



Fisher Stevens
Producer of "The Cove"



Roger A. Meece
Special Representative for
the Democratic Republic
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Power in Numbers

Leymah Gbowee keeps this African saying close to her heart: "A single straw of a broom can be broken easily, but the straws together are not easily broken."

Gbowee, a Liberian peace activist, took a revolutionary stance to protest the 14-year-long civil war that ravaged her country. She brought together both Muslim and Christian women to peacefully protest the mass killings and rapes (hallmarks of the war) through sit-ins, prayer, and even a sex strike. Calling themselves Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace and wearing white T-shirts, Gbowee and over 200 women sat in a field where they sang and danced and eventually went to Ghana to confront then-President Charles Taylor. The women actually barricaded the men inside the hotel until a peace agreement was reached, signaling the war was over.

Gbowee's work was portrayed in Abigail Disney's 2008 powerful documentary *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*. Now, Gbowee would like to see a new revolution in Liberia: a revolution of women in politics. That is because she has seen how when women are elected they tend to focus on human security—prioritizing education, jobs, and healthcare, which are important in achieving peace and stability.

Now that the civil war in Liberia has ended, Gbowee has set her sights on combating rape in Liberia and beyond. Gbowee realizes she is taking on a tough job, especially given the level of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo and elsewhere.

But she has experience standing up against those hell-bent on destruction, and she knows that when women band together they cannot be easily broken.

—Ruthie Ackerman

Don't Shoot the Producer

Producer Fisher Stevens' Oscar-winning documentary, "The Cove," shows the clandestine mass killing of dolphins in Taiji, Japan. But Japan is the one place the film can't be seen. Protestors screaming slogans outside the Tokyo office of the Japanese distributor, Unplugged, allege that support for the film signals "betrayal of Japanese pride," and theaters scheduled to show the film have abruptly canceled it. Stevens says the producers even received death threats from the yakuza. Stevens describes the film as an "eco-'Ocean's 11,'" graphically detailing the big money dolphins earn a fisherman—up to \$150,000 if sold to a dolphinarium or, at the very least, \$600 for its



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Pewee Flomoku



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Michael Angelo for Wonderland



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Bilaminou Alao / MONUC



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Fisher Stevens

1. Stills from the award-winning documentary *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* by Abigail Disney (Impact Films)
2. Portrait of Leymah Gbowee
3. Roger A. Meece
4. Fisher Stevens, producer, *The Cove*
5. Japanese poster for the film *The Cove*.



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mercury-filled meat that is sold as "whale" meat in Japanese supermarkets.

Stevens, a well-known character actor and indie producer now identifies himself increasingly with an eco-abolitionist agenda. "My advice: don't go to dolphinariums, don't support them," he says. "Stop eating tuna and stop eating swordfish—and any other fish that are about to be extinct (anyway, they're full of mercury). Write the Japanese ambassador to say that you can't believe that this is going on in their country! And if you have any friends in Japan, tell them to go see the movie and support closing down the Cove . . . Oh, yeah, and don't shoot the Producer!"

—Nan Richardson

Experience Counts

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recently announced his choice of Roger A. Meece as the U.N.'s new special envoy to Democratic Republic

of Congo and the new head of United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Throughout his career, Meece has acquired a deep knowledge of African issues and has been involved in many efforts to resolve conflicts and provide electoral support to countries in transition. From 2004-2007, he served as Ambassador from the United States to the DRC. From 1995-1998, he was Deputy Chief of the U.S. mission in Kinshasa. He has also been Ambassador to Malawi and has held various other diplomatic missions in Cameroon, Nigeria, and Republic of the Congo. Meece was Director of Central African Affairs at the State Department in Washington, D.C., from 1998 to 2000, and worked in the Office of the Vice-President from 1986 to 1988. He holds a degree in mathematics from the Michigan State University, and attended the National Defence College of Canada in Kingston and the Foreign Service Institute in Arlington, Virginia.