

Kailash Satyarthi Nobel Peace Laureate 2014

Excerpt from his acceptance speech: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNZNbcf5Hd8>

I am representing here the sound of silence, the cry of innocence and the face of invisibility. I represent millions of those children who are left behind, and that's why have kept an empty chair as a reminder. I have come here only to share the voices and dreams of our children - because they are all our children. I have looked into their frightened and exhausted eyes. I've held their injured bodies and I've felt their broken spirits.

Twenty years ago, in the foothills of the Himalayas, I met a small, skinny child labourer. He asked me, 'Is the world so poor that it cannot give me a toy and a book, instead of forcing me to take a gun or a tool?'

I met a Sudanese child-soldier - he was kidnapped by an extremist militia. As his first lesson, he was forced to kill his friends and family. He asked me, 'What is my fault?'

Twelve years ago, a child-mother from the streets of Colombia - trafficked, enslaved, raped - asked me this, 'I've never had a dream. Can my child have one?'

Friends, all the great religions teach us to care for children. Jesus said: '*Let the children come to me. Do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to them.*'

The Holy Quran says: '*Kill not your children because of poverty.*'

Friends, there is no greater violence than to deny the dreams of our children.

Therefore, I refuse to accept that all the temples and mosques and churches and prayer houses have no place for the dreams of our children.

I refuse to accept that the world is so poor, when just one week of military expenditure can bring all the children to classrooms.

I refuse to accept that all the laws and constitutions, and police and judges are unable to protect our children.

I refuse to accept that the shackles of slavery can ever be stronger than the quest for freedom.

I refuse to accept here.

The only aim of my life is that every child is free to be a child,

free to grow and develop,

free to eat, sleep, and see daylight,

free to laugh and cry,

free to play and learn,

free to go to school, and above all,

free to dream.

Now watch the film **Price of Free** (no cost to watch) about the Nobel Peace Laureate, Kailash Satyarthi and his work against child labour and exploitation.

<https://priceoffree.com/>