

Blix awarded 2007 Sydney Peace Prize

He stood out as one of the few dissenting voices amidst increasing American and British pressure for action against Iraq.

He refused to give in to calls for more damning language in his report to the UN Security Council to swing the votes against Iraq.

He was among the first few who publicly declared the war on Iraq illegal. Despite the barrage of criticisms and ridicule levelled at him, he stood his ground.

He is Dr Hans Blix, chairman of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission and Sydney Peace Prize recipient for 2007.

The Peace Prize jury's choice was unanimous. Dr Blix was chosen for his "principled and courageous opposition to proponents of war in Iraq, for life long advocacy of humanitarian law and non violence and for leadership of disarmament programs to rid the world of weapons of terror".

Four years on, the Swedish diplomat still pulls no punches about the conduct of the US and British governments over the war in Iraq. He maintains that Washington and Britain had [used political spin to justify the war in Iraq](#). In the run up to the war, Dr Blix had insisted that there was no clear evidence that the Iraqis possessed weapons of mass destruction. That message, however, ran counter to what the US wanted. "They wanted invasion," [he said](#).

The Americans were "witch-hunters", said the Swede. "They wanted to see anything as evidence that the Iraqis had weapons of mass destruction."

"We were simply looking for the truth. We didn't assume that they had them. We didn't assume that they did not have them," he said.

Sydney Peace Foundation



Dr Hans Blix (left); Dr Blix as Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC with IAEA Director General Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei in 2002 (top right); Dr Blix being lampooned in American made animated feature, Team America (bottom right).

Director Professor Stuart Rees said the choice of Dr Blix as this year's recipient "reminds us of the illegality of the Iraq war...He reminds us that a pack of lies were systematically told to justify the armed intervention in Iraq."

The Foundation's Chairman Mr Alan Cameron AM said: "It is highly relevant that in this 10th anniversary year of the Sydney Peace Prize, the jury focussed on universal disarmament as a major peace issue and chose one of the most significant campaigners against the manufacture and possession of arms of all kinds."

Dr Blix has a long career in campaigning against the proliferation of WMD. During his long career in the Swedish foreign ministry, He was a member of the Swedish delegation to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva from 1962 to 1978 until his appointment as the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs.

During his 16-year tenure as Director General of the International

Atomic Energy Agency (1981 to 1997), Dr Blix was in charge of overseeing inspections of Iraq's nuclear programme.

In 2000, Dr Blix was called out of retirement by then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to be Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). He held that position until 2003.

Since then he has been chair of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission (WMDC). The WMDC is an independent body based in Stockholm with the mandate to "seek to identify desirable and achievable directions for international cooperation" on issues related to WMDs.

Dr Blix was in Stockholm when he received the news of his selection as this year's winner. Expressing "surprise, gratitude and pride", the 77-year old is "particularly happy that the jury also referred to my work on principles of humanitarian law."

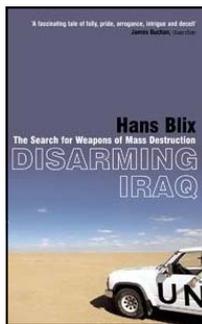
Photo Credits: Dean Calme/IAEA Sep 2002

http://www.munib.org/wp-content/uploads/thumb_box_teamamerica.jpg

Although he was trained as a lawyer and began his working life as a scholar, Dr Blix is often more associated with disarmament than with law. Dr Blix, who holds a doctorate of law from Cambridge University, has written several books on international and constitutional law. Prior to taking up his diplomatic appointments, he was Associate Professor in International Law at the University of Stockholm.

A prolific writer, Dr Blix published extensively on the issue of nuclear proliferation during his time as IAEA chief.

In 2005, he published his account of the diplomatic and inspection efforts leading up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, titled *Disarming Iraq* (below).



Dr Blix in Sydney

Dr Hans Blix will deliver the 2007 City of Sydney Peace Prize Lecture on Wednesday 7 November 2007.

He will receive the award at a gala dinner and award ceremony on Thursday 8 November 2007 at the Great Hall, University of Sydney.

Tickets for both events will be on sale later in the year.

Details to be announced.

Sydney Peace Foundation 2007 Appeal

On the occasion of the Sydney Peace Foundation's 10th anniversary, we would like to thank our friends for their support, without which the Foundation would not have been able to make a significant impact on Australia's social and cultural landscape.

For the past 10 years, the Foundation has celebrated the principle of peace with justice through recognising international leaders who have contributed to the agenda for peace with justice.

Now in its tenth year, the Sydney Peace Prize — Australia's only international award for peace has a significant record of promoting dialogue about peace with justice. Previous recipients includes the inaugural recipient and 2006 Nobel Laureate Professor Muhamad Yunus; Nobel Laureate Archbishop

Emeritus Desmond Tutu; the former Governor General of Australia, Sir William Deane; and celebrated Indian author and human rights campaigner Arundhati Roy.

Beyond its award of the Sydney Peace Prize, the Foundation

- promotes corporate sector, community and media involvement in human rights and non-violence projects ;
- runs the Schools Peace Initiative;
- funds community development projects;
- funds scholarships for students from the world's poorest nations.

We cannot do it without your help.

To support the work of the Foundation, you can send us a tax deductible donation.

**To promote peace
with justice**

we need your help

To send your contribution, please mail the completed form with your donation to:

Sydney Peace Foundation
Box 54 Holme Building
University of Sydney
NSW 2006

For credit card donations, please fax the form with the necessary details to : (02) 9660 0862.

Receipts will be issued.

Yes, I want to contribute to the agenda of 'peace with justice' in Australia. Please accept my tax deductible gift of:

\$100 \$200 \$500 \$1000 \$5000 Other \$ _____

Payment Methods:

I enclose a cheque or money order, made payable to **SYDNEY PEACE FOUNDATION**

Please debit from my credit card (please circle): Amex Visa MasterCard Diner

Name on card _____

Credit Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____

Title _____

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Signature _____

Address _____

Please mail donations, together with completed form to
Sydney Peace Foundation
Box 54 Holme Building
University of Sydney
NSW 2006

Contact _____

Email _____

Fax (02) 9660 0862