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Giuseppina Nicolini, Mayor of Lampedusa, and SOS Méditerranée to be awarded Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize

Paris, 19 April—The Jury of the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize has decided to award the Prize to Giuseppina Nicolini, Mayor of Lampedusa (Italy) and to the nongovernmental organization SOS Méditerranée (France) for their work to save the lives of refugees and migrants and welcome them with dignity.

“After examining conditions around the world, the Jury of the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize determined that refugees and migrants constitute one of the crucial issues of our day, notably in the Mediterranean where nearly 13,000 men, women and children have perished in shipwrecks since 2013,” declared the acting President of the Jury, Joaquim Chissano, former President of Mozambique.

Since becoming mayor in 2012, Giuseppina Nicolini has been recognized for her boundless humanity and unwavering commitment to refugee crisis management and integration in response to the arrival of thousands of refugees on the shores of Lampedusa and elsewhere in Italy.

[SOS Méditerranée](#) is a civic, European organization for the rescue of people in distress in the Mediterranean. Since launching its rescue operation in February 2016, the organization has saved more than 11,000 lives.

The Jury also appealed to the international community to ensure that the Mediterranean Sea becomes, once again, a place where solidarity and intercultural dialogue hold sway and that it cease to serve as a watery grave.

[The Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize](#) was created in 1989 to honor individuals or public and private bodies or institutions that have made a significant contribution to promoting, seeking, safeguarding or maintaining peace in conformity with the United Nations’ Charter and the Constitution of UNESCO.

[Past laureates](#) of the Prize have included personalities such as French President François Hollande, Nelson Mandela and Frederik W. De Klerk; Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres and Yasser Arafat; King Juan Carlos of Spain and former U.S.A. President, Jimmy Carter.

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