



**For immediate release**

**SURF FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, MARY KAYITESI BLEWITT, NAMED  
AMONGST THE 1000 WOMEN FOR THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE 2005**

**(Thursday 30th June 2005 - London, UK)** The 1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005 project has named SURF Founder and Director, Mary Kayitesi Blewitt, amongst the nominees for its submission to the Nobel Prize Committee for consideration for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize. The project aims to “recognise, make visible and celebrate the impressive and valuable, yet often invisible peace work of thousands of women around the world.”

Mary Kayitesi Blewitt, a British Citizen of Rwandan origin, founded SURF at the behest of survivors after losing 50 family members during the genocide in 1994. Her support for survivors started back in 1995 after returning to the UK from eight months working for the Ministry of Rehabilitation in Rwanda and in 1997 Mary formally established SURF to continue to aid, assist and support survivors in the UK and Rwanda too. She was honoured with a Woman of the Year Award by WOYLA last year. For a profile see:  
<http://www.theforgivenessproject.com/stories/?id=33>

On her nomination, Mary said: “By including my name as one of this incredible group of 1000 women, the 1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005 project recognise the importance of the work of the Survivors Fund to ensure the survivors, and victims, of the Rwandan genocide are never forgotten. But I feel that this nomination is not for me. It is for the women of Rwanda who have shown such strength in the face of adversity, who have survived against the odds. And it is for the thousands of widows, sisters, mothers and daughters who entrusted me with the only hope they have left: a better future.”

The 1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005 project is supported by the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNIFEM, UNDP and UNESCO Switzerland. The official nomination was handed to the Nobel Peace Prize Committee in Oslo in January 2005. The Committee will announce the Prize Winner in October.

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**For further information on Survivors Fund, or to interview Mary Kayitesi Blewitt  
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**Notes to editors:**

**What is the Survivors Fund?**

SURF works to improve the lives of the Rwandan Survivors of Genocide. While the genocide destroyed victims by inflicting excruciating physical pain and terrifying mental abuse, the goal of SURF is to rebuild a sense of self and trust in humanity.