In the face of historically unparalleled violence during the 20th century, voices of reason unceasingly advocated for peace and disarmament. Alfred Nobel created the Nobel Peace Prize in 1901 to honor such advocacy. In this collection of archival and new spoken word recordings, Nobel laureates and other proponents of peace remind us of their profound efforts on behalf of world peace. Their eloquence both rings out our achievements in disarmament and evokes the growing need for conflict resolution in today’s world. 39 tracks, 67 minutes, 28-page booklet.

Narrator by Michael Douglas, United Nations Messenger of Peace

A collaborative production of the United Nations and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

Created and produced by award-winning documentary producer, David Tarnow (Museum of American Finance’s video exhibit Entrepreneurs; All Available Boats: Harbor Voices from 9/11 at New York’s South Street Seaport Museum; NPR’s Jazz Profiles; Smithsonian Folkways Recordings’ Field to Factory — Voices of the Great Migration).

With support from the Smithsonian’s Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation.

I was born in Warsaw, and somehow, as a young child, I got the feeling: that what I should do with my life is make sure that science should help towards the prevention of this sort of thing which I lived through in my early childhood. In other words, that science should serve mankind and with its enormous capabilities, should be able to ensure that peace for the world so that people would not have to go to war.

The late Professor Sir Joseph Rotblat, Emeritus Professor of Physics at the University of London and Emeritus President of the Pugwash Conferences

I wanted to find a way to be involved in the entire world. And I wish I could say that, ah, land mines came to me in a vision, they didn’t. I was asked by two organizations, one in the United States and one in Germany, if I thought I could bring together non-governmental organizations to deal with the political question of land mines, not putting limbs on the victims or de-mining or all that stuff, which was beginning to happen. But actually to create some sort of political movement that would address the root cause of the problem which was this weapon that we believed was illegal under existing international law.

Jody Williams, Coordinator, International Campaign to Ban Landmines