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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE :

SURVIVOR OF CIVIL WAR TO RECEIVE FIRST
YOUTH PEACE LEADERSHIP AWARD – NOVEMBER 10

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One of Africa's most compelling campaigners for peace and children's rights will receive The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's Youth Peace Leadership Award Saturday morning November 10 during the UN Day Program at the Garvin Theater at Santa Barbara City College.

Kimmie Weeks was only 9 years old when civil war in Liberia left him gathering roots and leaves to eat because his family had no food. At one point, he was almost buried alive after his emaciated body had been weakened by disease.

After this nightmarish experience of hunger, suffering and violence, he pledged to spend his life helping children. By the time he was 14, his work had helped to disarm 20,000 child soldiers in his home country. The Liberian government under Charles Taylor threatened to assassinate him. He fled to the United States, but he did not stop working for children.

Now a graduate of Amherst College, Weeks leads Youth Action International, a nonprofit dedicated to rebuilding communities in war-torn Africa – focusing on the construction of schools and playgrounds, and creating business opportunities for women and children. In July, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (elected 2005) bestowed Liberia's highest honor on Weeks, decorating him as Knight Grand Commander in the Humane Order of African Redemption.

On November 10, Santa Barbarans will get a chance to see and hear this young leader who combines passion with compassion. **The event is free.** Those who have heard Kimmie Weeks address a crowd say he is an inspirational speaker.

Weeks will be the keynote speaker on the UN Day program. The event is called: **"Youth in Peril: From Child Soldiers to Street Gangs."**

Organized by the Santa Barbara Coalition for Global Dialogue, the program will run from 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM, with a networking hour from 8:30-9:30 AM.

(Call Cat Weeks, (805) 563-7707 X 209 for more information.)

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The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation -- The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation initiates and supports worldwide efforts to abolish nuclear weapons, to strengthen international law and institutions, and to inspire and empower a new generation of peace leaders. Founded in 1982, the Foundation is comprised of individuals and organizations worldwide who realize the imperative for peace in the Nuclear Age. The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan international education and advocacy organization. It has consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and is recognized by the UN as a Peace Messenger Organization.

For more information about the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, see www.wagingpeace.org/menu/about

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