

2024 Tang Prize

RULE OF LAW



**Mary Robinson**

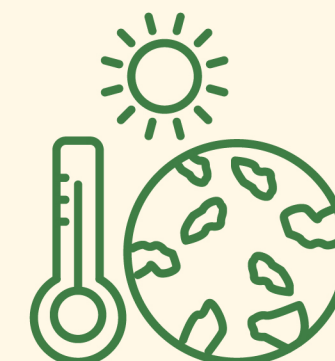
# Why Is She Awarded the Tang Prize?

## A Champion of Human Rights and Justice

Professor Mary Robinson has made significant contributions to the most disadvantaged in different spheres, including gender equality, poverty alleviation, human rights, and climate justice.

## A Global Leader with Legal Acumen

Her passionate endeavors demonstrated an effective combination of legal acumen and practical solutions. From the national to the global stage, legal and political, she innovatively transformed and expanded the various positions in which she served, to strengthen the rule of law.



# A Lawyer Who Defends Human Rights

Professor Robinson has worked as practicing lawyer since 1967. During this period, she advanced gender equality and individual autonomy by providing crucial insights in numerous landmark cases in Ireland and before the European Court of Human Rights, gearing human rights protection in Ireland to regional standards.



## Ireland

- Importation of contraceptives (1973)
- Right of women to sit on juries (1975)
- Taxation of married couples (1981)



## European Court of Human Rights

- State responsibility to provide legal aid in civil cases (1979)
- Decriminalization of homosexuality (1989)



# A Legislator Who Introduces Human Rights Bill

During her term serving as Senator from 1969 to 1989, while facing the conservative Catholic teaching, Professor Robinson actively promoted gender equality and introduced significant human rights bills, all of which stimulated public discussion and shaped the direction of future reformation.



**Reforming  
restrictive  
regulations on  
contraceptives**



**Advancing  
arguments against  
anti-abortion  
constitutional  
amendment**



**Allowing  
subsequently  
married couples to  
adopt their own  
children**



# A President Upholding the Constitution and Human Rights

In 1990, Professor Robinson became Ireland's first female president. She transformed the largely ceremonial presidency through her constitutional practice to speak for and to civil society.



## Raising Global Awareness on International Human Rights Issues

She was the first foreign head of state to visit Somalia following the famine and Rwanda after the genocide.

# The UNHCHR Bringing Human Rights Issues To Global Attention

After her presidency concluded, Professor Robinson was appointed as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. She advocated human rights principles as the foundation of inter-state relations, drew global attention to human rights issues, and travelled tirelessly to defend the rights of the most marginalized affected by famine and wars. She also urged the UN system to take proactive action to enhance the progress of human rights protection at international level.



- Voiced for the rights of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay
- Focused on human rights abuses in Kosovo
- Being the first UNHCHR to visit Tibet
- Established Human Rights Field Office, Rwanda





# A Global Leader for Human Rights and Justice

From national to international level, Professor Robinson, the incumbent Chair of the Elders, has consistently engaged in issues of gender equality and the protection of the most disadvantaged groups. Through her active engagement in intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations and initiatives, she has focused on issues such as human rights responsibilities of private actors, protection on rights of child, poverty alleviation, regional peace and stability, and encouraged public participation by women and disadvantaged groups at local level.



## Gender and Climate Change

She managed to bring gender and justice dimensions into the global agenda on climate change, ensuring that women as well as gender and sexual minorities to have sufficient protection and get the opportunity to engage in the formulation of climate change responses.



# A Dedicated Legal Scholar

Throughout her decades-long journey in promoting the advancement of the rule of law, Professor Robinson has never relinquished to be a legal educator. Since 1969, she has taught constitutional law, criminal law, and European Community law at Trinity College Dublin. She has served as Chancellor of the University of Dublin for 21 years and currently serves as Adjunct Professor of Climate Justice.



In addition to her ongoing academic writing and publications, she travels around the world to teach courses and deliver lectures, passing on her unwavering values through education.

# A Global Pioneer and Practitioner of Human Rights and Justice

Professor Robinson has consistently stood at the forefront of human rights protection and justice. She has astutely transformed and utilized the various positions in which she served, to bring issues of human rights and justice into the global agenda, and promote human rights and justice in practice.

She seamlessly combines a lawyer's meticulous attention to legal detail, a legislator's pursuit of practical

