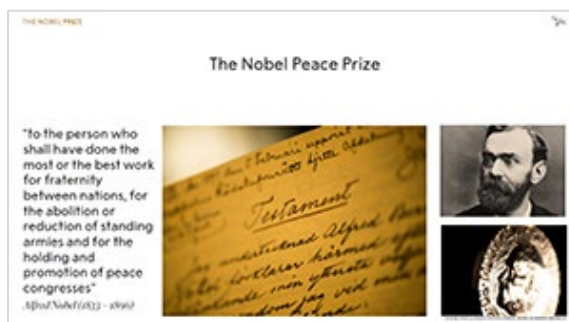


THE NOBEL PRIZE

Speaker's manuscript – Peace prize 2025 Maria Corina Machado

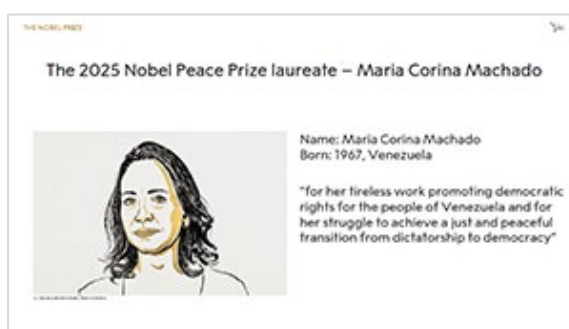
The Nobel Peace Prize

- The Nobel Prize was created by Alfred Nobel. He became very rich due to his invention of dynamite. Before his death in 1896, he wrote in his will that most of his wealth should be used as a prize to “those who, during the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest benefit to humankind”.
- According to the will, this prize is to be awarded in five categories: physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature and peace.
- The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to “the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses.” This particular sentence has been interpreted in several different ways, but the prize is awarded to people or organisations that have done something to promote peace.



The 2025 Nobel Peace Prize laureate – Maria Corina Machado

- The 2025 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Maria Corina Machado for her work to promote democracy in Venezuela.
- Maria Corina Machado is a politician and a unifying force for the political opposition in Venezuela, meaning the parties opposed to President Nicolás Maduro and his government. Maduro has been accused of election rigging and human rights violations.
- Maria Corina Machado has also founded an organisation fighting for democratic rights in Venezuela.



How is democracy a precondition for peace?

- When the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced that the peace prize was awarded to Maria Corina Machado, they highlighted the link between democracy and peace: “Democracy is a precondition for peace”, said the committee’s chair, Jørgen Watne Frydnes.
- Discuss this together for a moment: How is democracy a precondition for peace?



Democracy is retreating across the world

- According to researchers measuring the level of democracy in all countries of the world, democracy is retreating. At the same time, the number of authoritarian regimes is increasing. This refers to countries where power is highly concentrated in the hands of the ruling individual or individuals, and where free media is silenced and critics are imprisoned.
- In 2024, more elections were held in the world than ever before, but fewer and fewer were free and fair.
- Democracy serves as the foundation of peace, both within and between countries. For example, two democracies typically don’t start wars against each other.
- Maria Corina Machado’s work towards democracy is also a work towards peace and security.



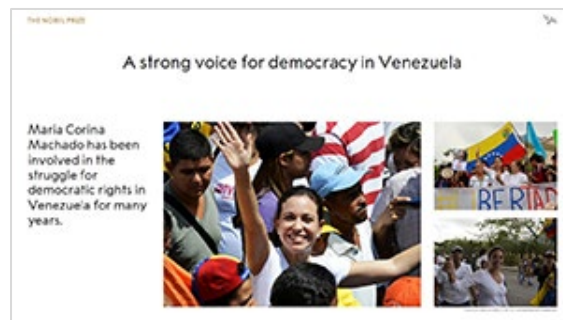
Venezuela and the 2024 presidential election

- Nicolás Maduro has been the president of Venezuela since 2013.
- His authoritarian rule has been accused of election rigging and human rights violations. A large portion of the population lives in poverty, and nearly eight million people have left the country.
- In the 2024 presidential election, Maria Corina Machado was appointed the candidate of the opposition, but the regime prevented her from running. Instead, she backed another candidate.
- Before the election, hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans were trained as election observers to ensure that the election was fair. They monitored and watched over polling stations, despite the risk of being arrested and tortured.
- The opposition’s documentation of the election shows that they won. In spite of this, Maduro declared himself the winner.



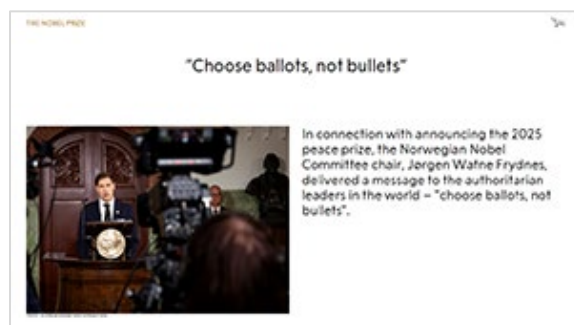
A strong voice for democracy in Venezuela

- Maria Corina Machado has been engaged in the struggle for democracy in Venezuela for a long time.
- In the early 2000s, she co-founded the organisation Súmate, which seeks to strengthen Venezuela's democracy by, for instance, monitoring elections.
- She also started to engage in politics and was elected to the Venezuelan National Assembly in 2010. A few years later, she was removed from her position by the regime.
- Maria Corina Machado has refused to be silenced. Instead, she has become a unifying force for the opposition. She was involved in creating an alliance of Venezuelan parties opposed to the president.
- Maria Corina Machado is currently living in hiding due to the threats she is facing.



"Choose ballots, not bullets"

- The 2025 peace prize recognises Maria Corina Machado's courageous struggle for democracy in Venezuela. At the same time, the prize also highlights the strong link between democracy and peace.
- The Norwegian Nobel Committee notes that when authoritarians seize power, it is crucial to recognize courageous defenders of freedom who rise and resist. Democracy depends on people who refuse to stay silent, despite the risks. They remind us that freedom should not be taken for granted but must always be defended.
- In an interview in connection with the announcement of the prize, the chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee delivered a message to the authoritarian leaders in the world: "Choose ballots, not bullets".



Recognising the struggle of the Venezuelan people

- Maria Corina Machado was informed that she had been awarded the 2025 peace prize only a few minutes before it was announced. She said that she was touched and surprised and that this was a great honour.
- She also said that she is part of a larger movement and that the peace prize is a recognition of the Venezuelan people's struggle for democratic rights.

