

# Kailash Satyarthi

Kailash Satyarthi is internationally acclaimed child rights' activist and pioneer in the fight against child slavery. He is renowned for inclusion of child labour to global social and political agenda. In 1980, he gave up a lucrative career as an electrical engineer to initiate a movement to end child labour and exploitation.

Kailash Satyarthi is the architect one of the largest civil society movements Global March Against Child Labor (which is a worldwide coalition of NGOs, Teachers' Union and Trade Unions). He also founded the Global Campaign for Education that works to end the global education crisis. In his country India, Kailash Satyarthi founded the grassroots movement Bachpan Bachao Andolan (Save Childhood Movement) and has steered the rescue of over 80,000 children from the scourge of bondage, trafficking and exploitative labour for over three decades. He successfully spearheaded a countrywide movement to make education a Constitutional Provision which subsequently paved way for the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 in India.

Kailash Satyarthi is credited for the first ever civil society – business coalition by establishing Rugmark (now known as Good Weave) earlier in 1994, which is the first of its kind certification and social labelling mechanism for child labour free carpets in South Asia. Since then he has been involved in promoting CSR initiatives in garment, mica mining, cocoa farming and sporting goods sector.

Kailash Satyarthi has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize many times for his exemplary work in defending child rights. His contribution in the fight against child slavery and bonded labour for over three decades has been acknowledged internationally. Several prestigious awards have been conferred on him, including Defenders of Democracy Award (2009-US); Alfonso Comin International Award (2008-Spain) and Medal of the Italian Senate (2007-Italy), Robert F Kennedy International Human Rights Award (USA), Aachener International Peace Prize (Germany), Fredric Ebert International Human Rights Award (Germany) etc.

Kailash Satyarthi has been a member of a High Level Group formed by UNESCO on Education for All composed of select Presidents, Prime Ministers and UN Agency Heads. He has been on the board of Fast Track Initiative (now known as Global Partnership for Education).

Besides several other engagements, he is a cofounder and member of High Level Panel on Education with Gordon Brown, Graca Michel, Kofi Anan, Queen Rania and other world leaders. Being one of the rare civil society leaders he has addressed the United Nations' General Assembly, International Labour Conference, UN Human Rights Commission, UNESCO and several Parliamentary Hearings and Committees in the US, Germany, UK, Italy and Brazil in the recent past.

