

## Tostan Media kit

### ***However Long the Night: Molly Melching's Journey to Help Millions of African Women and Girls Triumph***

On April 30th, a new book [\*However Long the Night -- Molly Melching's Journey to Help Millions of African Women and Girls Triumph\*](#) was released by HarperOne and The Skoll Foundation, the first in a publishing partnership highlighting social entrepreneurs.

Endorsed by Hillary Clinton, this compelling book by acclaimed author Aimee Molloy tells the unlikely and inspiring story of Molly Melching, an American woman whose experience as an exchange student in Senegal led her to found the international nonprofit Tostan and dedicate almost four decades of her life to the women and girls of Africa.

This moving biography tells of Melching's beginnings at the University of Dakar and follows her journey of nearly 40 years in Africa, where she became a social entrepreneur and one of humanity's strongest voices for the rights of women and girls.

**More than a biography, *However Long the Night* is a book about social transformation and women's empowerment. It shows how education and knowledge of human rights can create generational change and ignite large-scale social progress.**

View endorsements and reviews here - <http://tostan.org/however-long-night>. A selection of readers' comments (taken from Amazon.com) about *However Long the Night* is below:

*"It has been a long time since I have been so moved by a book. Aimee Molloy's *However Long the Night* is a powerful biography focusing on the tireless efforts of Molly Melching who has worked for decades in Senegal to educate and improve the lives of the women and children of villages across the nation."*

*"By reading it we become hopeful and confident that the courage and hard work of just few key people at the right time could change the world into a better place."*

*"This is an important story because we can all learn from how Molly helped bring about change. This selfless woman dedicated her life to achieve what may have seemed impossible. I was inspired, uplifted and greatly touched by, not just her story, but that of all the African women and men who played a part in shaking their world for the better. A remarkable and unforgettable book--one of the best books I've read this year."*

## Biographies

### Molly Melching

*Founder and Executive Director, Tostan*

Molly Melching has lived and worked in Senegal, West Africa since 1974 and has dedicated her life to the empowerment of communities at grassroots levels. Molly's early experiences working with children in Dakar and living in a rural village enforced her beliefs that many development efforts were not addressing the true needs and realities of African communities. In collaboration with the villagers, Molly began to develop a new type of learning program that actively involved both adults and adolescents by using African languages and traditional methods of learning. Their efforts grew throughout the 1980s, leading Molly to found Tostan in 1991.

Tostan is an organization whose innovative grassroots education model—the Community Empowerment Program (CEP)—engages communities for three years in cross-cutting themes of democracy, human rights, problem-solving, hygiene, health, literacy, project management skills and parental education.

Molly is highly regarded for her expertise in non-formal education, human rights training, and social transformation. Her work with Tostan has brought her international recognition for contributions to results in many areas of development which include, reductions in infant and maternal mortality, widespread school and birth registration, the emergence of female leadership and the abandonment of female genital cutting and child/forced marriage in over 6,500 communities in the eight African countries in which Tostan works.

Tostan has received Sweden's Anna Lindh Human Rights Award (2005), the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize (2007), the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize (2007), the Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship (2010) and the 2012 Cecilia Attias 'Award in Action' for improving health systems and maternal care. Tostan was also featured in 2009's *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, by Pulitzer Prize winners Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, and in 2012 and 2013 was named as one of the Top 100 Best NGOs by The Global Journal.

In 2011, Molly was named one of the "150 Women Who Shake the World" by Newsweek and one of "The Most Powerful Women in Women's Rights" by Forbes magazine. In 2012, FastCompany named Molly in its "League of Extraordinary Women," which is comprised of 60 women who are agents of change in their field. Molly is also the subject of the first book in a publishing partnership between HarperOne and the Skoll Foundation highlighting social entrepreneurs. Her book "However long the night: Molly Melching's Journey to Help Millions of African Women and Girls Triumph" written by acclaimed author Aimee Molloy, was published on April 30, 2013.

## **Aimee Molloy**

*Author, [However Long the Night](#)*

Aimee Molloy is a Brooklyn-based author and journalist. Aimee has collaborated on seven books, including *Then They Came for Me: A Family's Story of Love, Captivity, and Survival* with *Newsweek* journalist Maziar Bahari (to be a film directed by Jon Stewart), and *Jantsen's Gift: A True Story of Grief, Rescue and Grace*, with Pam Cope. She holds a B.A. from Duke University and an M.A. from New York University.

<http://aimeemolloy.com>

## **About Tostan**

Tostan is an international nonprofit headquartered in Dakar, Senegal. We have spent over 20 years developing a way to put communities in charge of their own futures through our grassroots holistic education program. By facilitating the spread of human rights education and practical skills, we provide rural communities with the knowledge and tools they need to determine their own vision and develop sustainably. We currently implement our model in eight African countries.

Since Tostan's founding by Molly Melching in 1991, over 200,000 individuals have participated in our three year program, affecting the lives of over two million people indirectly through our unique community outreach approach called organized diffusion.

Together with significant community-led progress and a foundation for development, Tostan's program has led to key community successes in the areas of large-scale social change including the growing movement to abandon female genital cutting (FGC) in West Africa, the ending of child/forced marriage and domestic violence and the empowerment of women and girls.

Tostan's approach to FGC abandonment has been integrated into national and international strategies including the Donor's Working Group on FGM/C and ten UN agencies. In Senegal, the Government has adopted a National Action Plan that puts Tostan's human rights-based approach at the center of its plans to end FGC in Senegal.

<http://www.tostan.org>

## **Media contact**

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## **Images**

Images can be requested from: [visualmedia@tostan.org](mailto:visualmedia@tostan.org).