

Citation by Peter Slager of Bløf for Malala Yousafzai

Dear Miss Yousafzai, dear Malala,

As you may probably know already, we are a musical group. A band, from time to time even a rock band. We usually do not speak in public in this manner, especially not in the presence of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty Queen Máxima, the Dutch prime minister and many other dignitaries, but when we were asked to present to you The Freedom From Fear Award 2014 we felt we had to try and make an exception.

Because in our long musical career we've travelled the world, and met all sorts of musicians, artists, athletes and politicians, but never did we meet someone like you. Someone so young and determined to make this world a better place, especially for women and girls all over the globe. And even though (or maybe because) people made an attempt on your life, you decided not to back off, but to continue to send us your message. An important message, that every child deserves an education, and that nobody should have to live in fear. That is not only very brave, it is also very very necessary. It has been necessary in the past, it is necessary today and it will be necessary in the future.

I could go on for hours about the importance of your message, but after all, we are not speakers, we are musicians, we have other means to communicate, more suitable to us. So the best way we can think of to express our appreciation for you, for your life and your work, is to play a song for you.

It's a song that is called, when translated, "A way to come home". We will sing it in Dutch, as we always do, so you probably won't understand the words, but I hope it will speak to you nonetheless.

And although it's just a song, we feel that every time we play it, it changes the world a little bit, because it just might change the people who listen to it.

And to me, you yourself are like a beautiful song. Dear Malala, please continue to change the world.