

## Joaquim Chissano wins the largest prize in the world

Kofi Annan announces the former President of Mozambique as the winner of the Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership

Joaquim Chissano, the former President of Mozambique, has been announced today as the winner of the inaugural Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership. The largest individual award in the world, it comprises:

- US\$5 million over 10 years and US\$200,000 annually for life thereafter
- Up to US\$200,000 a year for 10 years towards the winner's public interest activities and good causes

Announcing the Laureate in front of an audience of London's African diplomatic community, civil society representatives and the media, Kofi Annan, the Chair of the Prize Committee, said that "President Chissano's achievements in bringing peace, reconciliation, stable democracy and economic progress to his country greatly impressed the committee. So, too, did his decision to step down without seeking the third term the constitution allowed."

Praising his Government's economic progress, poverty reduction programmes, infrastructure development and work to tackle HIV/AIDS, Kofi Annan stated that "it is his role in leading Mozambique from conflict to peace and democracy that President Chissano has made his most outstanding contribution." He also commended President Chissano for his "major contribution outside his country's borders" which included providing "a powerful voice for Africa on the international stage".

Kofi Annan stated that "the Prize celebrates more than just good governance. It celebrates leadership. The ability to formulate a vision and to convince others of that vision; and the skill of giving courage to society to accept difficult changes in order to make possible a longer term aspiration for a better, fairer future."

The annual Prize has been established by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, launched in October 2006 as an African initiative to strengthen governance in Africa. The winner was selected by the Prize Committee of six eminent individuals who assessed every sub-Saharan African leader who has left office in the last three full calendar years on their exercise of leadership.

The Committee drew on research from the recently published Ibrahim Index of African Governance, and a range of other sources, to assess the quality of governance in the areas of economic and social development, peace and security, human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The Prize aims to encourage leaders who fully dedicate their tenure of office to surmount the development challenges of their countries, improving the livelihoods and welfare of their people and consolidating the foundation for sustainable development.

On hearing the outcome of the Prize Committee's deliberations, Mo Ibrahim, the founder of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, said: "I am absolutely delighted that Joaquim Chissano has been selected as the first Laureate. As a man who has reconciled a divided nation and built the foundations for a stable, democratic and prosperous future for the country, he is a role-model not just for Africa, but for the rest of the world."

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**Notes for Editors**

- 1) Joaquim Chissano served as Head of State of Mozambique from November 1986 to February 2005. He was elected President in October 1994 and then again in December 1999, announcing that he would step down from office in 2004. A full biography of the winner can be found at [www.moibrahimfoundation.org](http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org)
- 2) Excerpts from the Prize Committee citation include:
  - President Chissano's achievements in bringing peace, reconciliation, stable democracy and economic progress to his country greatly impressed the committee. So, too, did his decision to step down without seeking the third term the constitution allowed.
  - President Chissano took office after winning his country's first multi-party elections in 1994. The historic elections were held just two years after he had helped the country end, through negotiations, the 16-year civil war which had devastated Mozambique, left thousands dead and forced many to flee their homes. He led a country whose infrastructure and economy were ruined, its society deeply divided and which suffered from severe natural disasters.
  - Huge challenges remain but, under his two terms, Mozambique established a stable economy with robust growth and increased foreign direct investment. Its economy has been one of Africa's emerging success stories.
  - Although Mozambique remains one of the poorest countries in the world, poverty levels have fallen. The poverty reduction programmes also saw, from a low base, an increase in the number of children in education and improvements in health care. In addition, women were empowered to participate in the political and economic life of the country.
  - Solid efforts have been made to rebuild hospitals and schools destroyed during the prolonged civil war. The Government showed strong leadership in trying to tackle the HIV / AIDS epidemic.
  - But it is in his role in leading Mozambique from conflict to peace and democracy that President Chissano has made his most outstanding contribution. It is a measure of the remarkable change that has taken place that national and regional elections have been contested in a generally peaceful manner by both sides in the bitter civil war. This remarkable reconciliation between opponents provides a shining example to the rest of the world, and is testament to both his strength of character and his leadership.
  - His decision not to seek a third Presidential term reinforced Mozambique's democratic maturity and demonstrated that institutions and the democratic process were more important than personalities.

The full Prize Committee citation can be found at [www.moibrahimfoundation.org](http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org)

- 3) The Prize Committee is chaired by former United Nations Secretary-General **Kofi Annan** and comprised of **Martti Ahtisaari**, former UN Special Representative for Namibia and former President of Finland; **Aïcha Bah Diallo**, former Minister of Education in Guinea and Special Adviser to the Director-General of UNESCO; **Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**, Managing Director, World Bank (effective: 1 December 2007); **Mary Robinson**, former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (and board member of the Foundation); **Salim Ahmed Salim**, former Prime Minister of Tanzania and former Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity (and board member of the Foundation)
  
- 4) **The Mo Ibrahim Foundation** is the vision of **Dr Mo Ibrahim**, founder of the African telecommunications company Celtel International and one of Africa's most successful business leaders, and has been established to support the attainment of good governance in Africa. A not-for-profit organisation, the Foundation is governed by a board of trustees that includes Dr Mo Ibrahim (founder, Celtel International); **Lalla Ben Barka** (Deputy Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa); **Lord Cairns** (Chairman, Charities Aid Foundation); **Dr Mamphela Ramphele** (former Managing Director, World Bank); **Mary Robinson** (former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights); **Salim Ahmed Salim** (former Secretary-General, Organisation of African Unity), and **Nicholas Ulanov** (Managing Director, The Ulanov Partnership)
  
- 5) **Nelson Mandela** states: "Mo Ibrahim has a vision to promote and recognise good governance that will drive Africa's political and economic renaissance... This is an African initiative celebrating the successes of new African leadership. It sets an example that the rest of the world can emulate. We call for leaders across the world – in government, civil society and business – to endorse its aims and back its vision."
  
- 6) **The Ibrahim Index of African Governance** is an innovative new ranking of governance quality in sub-Saharan Africa. Developed under the direction of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, with the help of an advisory council of African academics, the Ibrahim Index of African Governance assesses sub-Saharan Africa's 48 nation states against a comprehensive new index of governance indicators. To find out more: [www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index](http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index)