



News Release

For immediate release, Monday 20 October 2008

Festus Mogae wins the largest prize in the world

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

Festus Gontebanye Mogae, the former President of Botswana, has been announced today as the winner of the 2008 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership. Established to recognise and celebrate excellence in African leadership, the Ibrahim Prize is the largest annually awarded prize in the world, consisting of US\$5 million over 10 years and US\$200,000 annually for life thereafter. The Foundation will consider granting a further \$200,000 per year for ten years towards public interest activities and good causes espoused by the Laureate.

Announcing the 2008 Ibrahim 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:

"President Mogae's outstanding leadership has ensured Botswana's continued stability and prosperity in the face of an HIV/AIDS pandemic which threatened the future of his country and people."

Kofi Annan went on to praise President Mogae's stewardship of the Botswanan economy. He said:

"Botswana demonstrates how a country with natural resources can promote sustainable development with good governance, in a continent where too often mineral wealth has become a curse."

The Ibrahim Prize has been established by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, launched in October 2006 as an initiative to support great African leadership. The 2008 Ibrahim Laureate was selected by the Prize Committee of six eminent individuals. The Prize Committee assesses democratically elected former Executive Heads of State or Government from sub-Saharan African countries who have served their term in office within the limits set by their country's constitution, and have left office within the last three years.

The announcement of this year's Ibrahim Laureate comes a fortnight after the publication of the 2008 Ibrahim Index of African Governance in Addis Ababa. Assessed against 57 criteria, the Ibrahim Index ranks sub-Saharan African nations according to governance performance. The Ibrahim Index is one of a number of independent and authoritative sources which the Prize Committee uses in its deliberations.

On hearing the outcome of the Prize Committee's deliberations, Mo Ibrahim, the founder of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, said:

"I am delighted that the Prize Committee has selected President Mogae as the second Ibrahim Laureate. He is another example of outstanding leadership from the African continent. I offer President Mogae my warmest congratulations and best wishes."



In October 2007, Joaquim Chissano, the former President of Mozambique, became the inaugural Ibrahim Laureate. The Prize Committee's citation praised President Chissano's "achievements in bringing peace, reconciliation, stable democracy and economic progress to his country".

- Ends -

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Notes for Editors:

- **Media resources, including a video news release, photos, press releases, audio from the press conference and background material on the 2008 Ibrahim Laureate will be available from 11am BST (10am GMT) on Monday 20 October**
 - **The prize ceremony to confer the Ibrahim Prize will take place at the Bibliotheca Alexandria, Egypt on 15 November**
 - **Photos and audio and video clips, as well as the option of broadcasting the prize ceremony in full, are available to all broadcasters by contacting chande.r@moibrahimfoundation.org**
 - **The full data of the 2008 Ibrahim Index of African Governance has been published on the Foundation's website: www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index**
1. A full biography of the winner can be found at www.moibrahimfoundation.org/media
 2. Excerpts from the Prize Committee citation include:
 - During his two terms in office, President Mogae consolidated and built on the successes of his predecessors. His management of the economy continued its remarkable growth record, held down inflation and attracted foreign investment to Botswana.
 - President Mogae maintained his country's tough stance against corruption. In his final State of the Nation address, he told the people of Botswana that "prudent, transparent and honest use of national resources for your benefit has been my guiding principle and code of conduct."
 - The Prize Committee believes that good governance requires an environment conducive to peace, security and development, based on the rule of law and respect for human rights. Botswana has had to address the challenge of advancing each in a balanced way. This has been helped by the independence and integrity of its institutions which bodes well for further progress towards spreading wealth and opportunity across all sectors of Botswanan society.

The full Prize Committee citation can be found at www.moibrahimfoundation.org/media



3. The Prize Committee is chaired by former United Nations Secretary-General **Kofi Annan** and comprised of **Martti Ahtisaari**, former President of Finland and Nobel Laureate; **Aïcha Bah Diallo**, former Minister of Education in Guinea and Director of Basic Education at UNESCO; **Mohamed ElBaradei**, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency and Nobel Laureate; **Mary Robinson**, former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (and Board member of the Foundation); **Salim Ahmed Salim**, former Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity and former Prime Minister of Tanzania (and Board member of the Foundation)

Graça Machel, the renowned international advocate for women's and children's rights, is joining the Prize Committee of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation. She will begin participating in deliberations from January 2009.

4. The Mo Ibrahim Foundation was launched in October 2006 and is committed to supporting great African leadership. It was founded by Mo Ibrahim, one of Africa's most successful business entrepreneurs, and has the support of a number of global figures, including Kofi Annan, Nelson Mandela and Amartya Sen. The Foundation aims to stimulate debate around, and improve the quality of, governance in Africa.