



News Release

For immediate release, Monday 10 October 2011

President Pedro Verona Pires of Cape Verde wins the 2011 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership

President Pedro Verona Pires has been named as the winner of the 2011 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership. Established to recognise and celebrate excellence in African leadership, the Ibrahim Prize is an annual US\$5 million award paid over 10 years and US\$200,000 annually for life thereafter. The Foundation will consider granting a further US\$200,000 per year for ten years towards public interest activities and good causes espoused by the Laureate.

Announcing the 2011 Ibrahim Laureate, Salim Ahmed Salim, the Chair of the Prize Committee, said:

“The Prize Committee has been greatly impressed by President Pedro Pires’s vision in transforming Cape Verde into a model of democracy, stability and increased prosperity. Under his ten years as president, the nation became only the second African country to graduate from the United Nation’s Least Developed category and has won international recognition for its record on human rights and good governance.”

Salim Ahmed Salim went on to praise President Pires’s commitment to democracy and governance. He said:

“President Pires’s democratic credentials were further enhanced when he announced he was stepping down at the end of his second term. Dismissing outright suggestions that the constitution could be altered to allow him to stand again, he said: “This is a simple matter of faithfulness to the documents that guide a state of law.” Throughout his long career President Pires has been dedicated to the service of his people, including those in the diaspora, while retaining his humility and personal integrity.”

The Ibrahim Prize was established by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, which is marking its fifth anniversary this year. Each laureate is selected by a Prize committee comprising seven 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.

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



“It is wonderful to see an African leader who has served his country from the time of colonial rule through to multiparty democracy, all the time retaining the interests of his people as his guiding principle. The fact that Cape Verde with few natural resources can become a middle income country is an example not just to the continent but to the world. President Pires embodies the type of leadership the prize is designed to recognise.”

President Pires follows Joaquim Chissano (2007) and Festus Mogae, (2008) as Ibrahim Laureates. Nelson Mandela was made the honorary inaugural laureate in 2007. In 2009 and 2010 the Prize Committee, after in-depth review, did not select a winner.

- 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 2011 Ibrahim Laureate will be available at www.moibrahimfoundation.org/2011prize-media**
- **The prize ceremony to confer the Ibrahim Prize will take place in Tunis, Tunisia on 12 November 2011. 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.**

1. A full biography of the winner can be found at www.moibrahimfoundation.org/2011prize-media

The full Prize Committee citation can be found at www.moibrahimfoundation.org/2011prize-media

2. The Prize Committee is chaired by **Salim Ahmed Salim**, former Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity and former Prime Minister of Tanzania (and Board member of the Foundation) 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**, former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency and Nobel Laureate; **Graça Machel**, Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, and former Minister of Education and Culture in Mozambique; **Festus Mogae**, former President of Botswana and Chairperson of the Coalition for Dialogue on Africa; and **Mary Robinson**, former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (and Board member of the Foundation).



3. The Mo Ibrahim Foundation was launched in October 2006 to support good governance and great leadership in Africa. It was founded and is chaired by Mo Ibrahim.