

News Release

Geneva, Switzerland - Monday 2nd April 2007

Kofi Annan appointed Chairman of Prize Committee for the Mo Ibrahim Prize

Mo Ibrahim Foundation announces committee to select winner of world's largest prize

Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary-General, is to be joined by five eminent individuals on the Prize Committee that will select the winner of the largest prize in the world: the Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership. The announcement is being made after the Prize Committee met for the first time this weekend in Geneva, Switzerland.

Worth US\$5 million dollars over 10 years and US\$200,000 annually for life thereafter, the Prize is open to former heads of state or government from sub-Saharan Africa who have left office in the last three years and demonstrated exemplary leadership.

Mr Annan is joined on the Committee by:

- **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**, former Finance Minister and Foreign Minister of Nigeria
- **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)

The Committee will assess every sub-Saharan African leader who has left office in the last three years on their exercise of leadership. The Foundation will announce the first winner of the Prize on 22nd October 2007.

The Committee will draw on research from the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, and other sources, and 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.

Speaking in Geneva at the announcement of the Committee, Mr Annan says:

"The task that lies before us - identifying the best in African leadership - is challenging. While developed countries have an important role to play in creating an enabling environment for Africa's development, it is for Africa to lead and take ownership of Africa's development process. Good governance and leadership are central to finding solutions to the vast challenges that face Africa. We hope that the Mo Ibrahim Prize will help to energise African leadership and encourage a new generation of young leaders to step up to this most urgent of challenges."

Dr. Mo Ibrahim, founder of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, says:

"I am delighted to have all these people here today. The Foundation will benefit enormously from the insight and experience of Mr Annan, Mr Ahtisaari, Mrs Okonjo-Iweala, Mrs Bah Diallo, Mrs Robinson and Mr Salim. With this Prize and the Ibrahim Index, we hope to make a unique contribution to assessing governance and recognising leadership in Africa."

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CONTACT

In Geneva (from Friday 30th March)

Tim Allan
+ 44 (0)7764 660 355
Tim.allan@portlandpr.co.uk

Robert Watkinson
+ 44 (0)7984 433 486
robert.watkinson@portlandpr.co.uk

In London (on Friday 30th March)

Hannah McCullagh
+ 44 (0)207 404 5344
+ 44 (0)7739 147 841
hannah.mccullagh@portlandpr.co.uk

Images from the inaugural meeting of the Prize Committee are available via AFP and on the Foundation's website – www.moibrahimfoundation.org

Notes to editors:

1. 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 (Director, Regional UNESCO Bureau for Education); 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).
2. The Ibrahim Index of Governance in Africa is a new, comprehensive ranking of good governance in sub-Saharan Africa. Developed under the direction of Professor Robert Rotberg of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, the Ibrahim Index aims to promote debate not just in Africa but around the world on the criteria by which governments should be assessed.
3. The Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership recognises African leaders who have demonstrated excellence in political leadership. Unprecedented in its scale and scope, the Prize affirms the importance of nurturing outstanding leaders in Africa. The Prize will consist of US\$5 million dollars over 10 years and US\$200,000 annually for life thereafter. There will be a further \$200,000 a year made available in the first ten years for good causes espoused by the leader. The Mo Ibrahim Prize is the world's largest annually awarded prize.