



News Release

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President Mogae receives 2008 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership

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- Festus Mogae says that “Africa is reforming and improving”
 - Kofi Annan praises President Mogae’s work to “put in place one of Africa’s most progressive and comprehensive programmes for dealing with HIV/AIDS”
 - Mo Ibrahim hopes that “the prize will help President Mogae to continue to use his great experience and expertise”
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Alexandria, Egypt – Festus Mogae, the former president of Botswana, tonight accepted the 2008 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership in a ceremony at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

The Ibrahim Prize recognises and celebrates excellence in African leadership. The largest annually awarded prize in the world, the Ibrahim Prize consists of:

- US\$5 million over 10 years and US\$200,000 annually for life thereafter for the winner
- A further US\$200,000 per year, for 10 years, towards public interest activities and good causes espoused by the winner

The prize is awarded to a democratically elected former African Executive Head of State or Government who has served their term in office within the limits set by the country’s constitution, and has left office in the last three years. Every eligible sub-Saharan African leader is assessed on their exercise of leadership and the performance of their country during their time in office.

Festus Mogae was selected as the 2008 Ibrahim Laureate by a Prize Committee of six eminent individuals chaired by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Speaking at the ceremony in Alexandria **President Mogae** said, “Africa is reforming and improving. Botswana and Mozambique are not unique. There are other examples of good governance in Africa. It is my earnest hope that present and future African leaders will be inspired by this prize to rule their respective countries in the best interest of their citizens and emulate the best in the world.”

When presenting the award **Kofi Annan**, Chair of the Prize Committee, 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”.

President Mogae’s response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic was also recognised. Kofi Annan said, “Festus Mogae prioritised combating the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS, and put in place one of Africa’s most progressive and comprehensive programmes for dealing with the disease”.



In his address to the ceremony, **Mo Ibrahim** said: "I hope that the prize will help President Mogae to continue to use his great experience and expertise both in Africa and the wider international arena".

Among those speaking at the ceremony at the Alexandria library, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, were **Mary Robinson** (former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and member of both the Mo Ibrahim Foundation Board and Prize Committee), **Joaquim Chissano** (former President of Mozambique and the inaugural Ibrahim Laureate) and **Mohamed ElBaradei** (Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency and Prize Committee member). Guests were also treated to performances from celebrated African musicians including Youssou N'Dour, Angeliqwe Kidjo, Sipiwo Ntshabe, and Julia Sarr.

Mary Robinson said, "During a year in which we mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is wonderful to honour the achievements of President Mogae, a leader who maintained and entrenched his country's tradition of democracy while facing head on the threat of HIV/AIDS in Botswana. In celebrating excellence, the Ibrahim Prize shows what a difference effective leadership can make to a country's prospects and the development of the continent as a whole."

The award ceremony was attended by hundreds of dignitaries from all over the African continent, and was broadcast live to a number of African countries.

Following the ceremony, there was a concert featuring Egyptian super star, Mohamed Mounir.

- **A press conference with the second Ibrahim Laureate, President Festus Mogae, will be held on Sunday 16th November at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina at 11am UTC (9am GMT)**
- **High resolution photographs of the ceremony will be available on the Foundation's website shortly after the ceremony www.moibrahimfoundation.org/media**
- **An edited audio feature from the ceremony will also be available on the Foundation's website shortly after the ceremony www.moibrahimfoundation.org/media**

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For general media enquiries about the Ibrahim Prize and the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, please contact:

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For further information on the press conference with President Mogae in Alexandria on Sunday 16th November, please contact:

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Notes for Editors

- 1) Festus Gontebanye Mogae served as the third President of Botswana between 1998 and 2008. A full biography can be found at www.moibrahimfoundation.org/media



- 2) The full citation of the Prize Committee 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 Peace Prize 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 Peace Prize 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.
- 5) A not-for-profit organisation, the Foundation is governed by a board of trustees that comprises **Mo Ibrahim**, Founder and Chair of the Foundation and Founder of Celtel International; **Lalla Ben Barka**, Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and former Director of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Africa; **Lord Cairns**, Former Chairman of Actis Capital LLP and former Chief Executive Officer of SG Warburg; **Nathalie Delapalme**, Inspector General at the Inspection Générale des Finances and former Advisor on African Issues to French Foreign Ministers; **Mamphela Ramphele**, Former Managing Director of the World Bank and former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town; **Mary Robinson**, Former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; **Salim Ahmed Salim**, Former Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity and former Prime Minister of Tanzania; and **Nicholas Ulanov**, Managing Director of The Ulanov Partnership and co-founder of the Royal Institution World Science Assembly.