

Mahamadou Issoufou honoured with 2020 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership



Former President of Niger describes award as an honour for all Nigeriens

London, 3 June 2021 – H.E. Mahamadou Issoufou, the former President of Niger, was honoured today as the recipient of the 2020 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership in a special Leadership Ceremony held during the 2021 Ibrahim Governance Weekend.

Speaking from Niamey to a global audience via [MIF.Live](#), **President Issoufou** said: “I was moved and proud to be chosen by the Ibrahim Prize Committee. Through me, all the Nigerien people have been honoured. I thank President Festus Mogae and the members of the Prize Committee for choosing my modest person. I salute and congratulate Mo Ibrahim and the Mo Ibrahim Foundation for the comprehensive support they provide to the development of our continent.”

The Ibrahim Prize is a US\$ 5 million award that recognises and celebrates excellence in African leadership. It ensures that the African continent benefits from the experience and wisdom of exceptional leaders once they have left national office, by enabling them to continue to contribute in other civic roles.

Outlining the decision to make President Issoufou an Ibrahim Prize Laureate, **H.E. Festus Mogae, Chair of the independent Prize Committee and former President of Botswana**, said: “President Issoufou made history in Niger. He paved the way for Niger’s first-ever democratic transition of power. His example shows that those who lead, whatever the challenges, can do so with the greatest reverence for both the citizens they serve and the rule of law.”

President Issoufou was congratulated by leaders from around the world.

H.E. Mohamed Bazoum, President of Niger said: “During his ten years in office, President Issoufou remarkably stabilised the institutions of our Republic, strengthened the foundations of our economy, brought about a reduction in poverty, and provided real opportunities for the future of his country. I would like to say to the members of the Ibrahim Prize Committee that, in addition to the qualities that you have identified through his governance and leadership, President Issoufou’s moral and human qualities also make him an exceptional man.”

António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations said: “The awarding of this prestigious Prize to President Issoufou is a testament to his efforts as a champion of sustainable development, democratic consolidation, peace, stability, human rights and gender equality. Niger’s growing role in the international community, as a valued partner of the United Nations, was built on President Issoufou’s commitment to regional and international cooperation and consensus building.”

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission said: “President Issoufou addressed head-on the complex challenges the region faces. He has been a long-standing friend and valued partner of the European Union. I want to commend President Issoufou specifically on what he has done for gender equality and women’s empowerment. This is a priority for both the European Union and Africa, and an agenda close to my heart.”

H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission said: “Mahamadou Issoufou’s commitment to the development and well-being of his compatriots is known to all. We will remember his relentless fight against terrorism, for peace and stability in the Sahel. We were all impressed by his strong advocacy as a champion for the success of the African Continental Free Trade Area.”

Mo Ibrahim, Chair of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation said: “I am proud to see President Issoufou recognised as an example of exceptional leadership and I hope his legacy will inspire generations of African leaders to come. President Issoufou, I offer you my heartfelt congratulations and a warm welcome to the Foundation family.”

The Leadership Ceremony is part of the 2021 Ibrahim Governance Weekend, which is usually held in a different African country each year but is being held virtually in 2021 due to COVID restrictions.

At the heart of the weekend is the Ibrahim Forum, which brings together a powerful coalition of African and global leaders to discuss an issue that is critical to the continent’s future. The 2021 Ibrahim Forum is discussing [COVID-19 in Africa One Year On: Impact and Prospects](#), a new report from the Mo Ibrahim Foundation analysing the health, economic, social and political impacts of the pandemic, and highlighting key avenues for the continent’s recovery.

Notes to editors

Register for the 2021 IGW

Registration for media is open at the following link: <https://mif.live/igw/media/registration>

All registered media will be able to attend a dedicated media Q&A with IGW spokespeople at 09:00 GMT on Saturday 5 June.

[Download the 2021 Ibrahim Forum Report here.](#)

[Download the 2021 Ibrahim Forum Report key findings here.](#)

Contact MIF

For more information, or to request an interview with a MIF spokesperson please contact:

- MIF media team, mifmedia@portland-communications.com, +44 7922 877 489

We encourage you to follow the live feed and discussions on Twitter by using #IGW21, or following @Mo_IbrahimFdn.

You can follow the Mo Ibrahim Foundation on:

- Twitter: @Mo_IbrahimFdn
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MoIbrahimFoundation>
- YouTube: <https://youtube.com/user/moibrahimfoundation>
- Instagram: <https://instagram.com/moibrahimfoundation>
- Website: mo.ibrahim.foundation

About the Mo Ibrahim Foundation

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation was established in 2006 with a focus on the critical importance of political leadership and public governance in Africa. By providing tools to support progress in leadership and governance, the Foundation aims to promote meaningful change on the continent.

The Foundation, which is a non-grant making organisation, focusses on defining, assessing and enhancing governance and leadership in Africa through five main initiatives:

- Ibrahim Index of African Governance
- Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership
- Ibrahim Governance Weekend
- Ibrahim Fellowships and Scholarships
- Now Generation Network

The Ibrahim Prize

- Recognises and celebrates African leaders who, under challenging circumstances, have developed their countries, lifted people out of poverty and paved the way for sustainable and equitable prosperity;
- Highlights exceptional role models for the continent;
- Ensures that the African continent continues to benefit from the experience and wisdom of exceptional leaders once they have left national office, by enabling them to continue in other public roles on the continent;
- Is an award and a standard for excellence in leadership in Africa, and not a 'first prize' - there is not necessarily a Laureate every year.

Criteria

- Former African Executive Head of State or Government
- Left office in the last three years
- Democratically elected
- Served his/her constitutionally mandated term
- Demonstrated exceptional leadership

The Ibrahim Prize is the largest annually awarded prize in the world, consisting of:

- US\$5 million over ten years

Prize Committee

The winner of the Ibrahim Prize is selected by an independent Prize Committee, appointed by the Foundation Board, comprised of:

- President Festus Mogae (Chair) | Former President of Botswana; 2008 Ibrahim Prize Laureate
- Aïcha Bah Diallo | President, Network for Education for All in Africa; Former Minister of Education in Guinea; Former Assistant Director General for Education (ADG/ED), UNESCO; Founder and Chair, Business for the Empowerment of Women
- Mohamed ElBaradei | Director General Emeritus, International Atomic Energy Agency; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate
- President Horst Köhler | Federal President of Germany 2004-2010
- Graça Machel | President, Foundation for Community Development; Former Minister of Education in Mozambique; Mo Ibrahim Foundation Board Member
- Mary Robinson | Chair of The Elders and Adjunct Professor for Climate Justice in Trinity College Dublin; Former UN Special Envoy on the Great Lakes Region of Africa; Former UN Envoy on Climate Change; Former President of Ireland; Mo Ibrahim Foundation Board Member