



2012 Winner of the Rafik Hariri UN-Habitat Memorial Award

Malaysia's longest-serving Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad received the 2012 Rafik Hariri UN-Habitat Memorial award, recognizing leadership, statesmanship and good governance, on September 28, 2012 during an award ceremony held at the New York Public Library.

The award's steering committee announced the winner on June 25, 2012 in Paris after an international jury selected Dr. Mohamad over 13 other nominations from Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, United States, Canada, El Salvador, Nicaragua, India, Bangladesh, UK, Japan and the Philippines.

The 87 year-old Malaysian's political career spanned almost 40 years, and he was Prime Minister for 22 of those years from 1981 to 2003. During his time in office, Malaysia underwent rapid modernization and economic progress. A dominant political figure who won five consecutive general elections, he remains an active political figure in his retirement.

In confirming the decision of the steering committee, Professor Banji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, UN-Habitat Scientific Advisor, stated, "This is a remarkable individual who did remarkable things for his country. Malaysia was on the way to considerable economic progress during Mahathir's time. It is recognized that he significantly influenced all other developing countries to show the way how it is possible to develop in a very rapid way in a very short time."

The international jury Chairperson Mervat Tallawy added, "The per capita income in Malaysia during his time increased eight times. The model of thinking to get out of problems and crisis was almost the same as that of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri."

The late Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri visited Malaysia several times while he was in office. "My husband was very impressed with the achievements of Dr. Mahathir," said Mrs. Nazek Rafik Hariri, President of the Rafik Hariri Foundation. "Their relationship was based on the shared interests of building confidence and economic success for their respective nations."

Commenting on the second cycle of the award Mrs. Hind Al-Hariri Al-Karout, one of seven international jurors, added, "It represents for us continuity, continuity of our father's legacy in a way that is not just on the borders of his country, but beyond that on the international level."

In his memory and to preserve his vision, the Hariri family established the award jointly with the UN-Habitat through the Rafik Hariri Foundation in March 2009. It is given to individuals, organizations or

institutions anywhere in the world for significant accomplishments in the following areas : leadership, statesmanship, and good governance; construction and reconstruction of settlements and communities; human resource development and benevolent activities in fighting urban poverty and implementing the Habitat Agenda.

In September 2004 Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, who held office five times, was awarded the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honor, Special Citation, the highest UN award granted for achievements in the field of human settlement.

The launch of the Rafik Hariri Award took place in March 2010 during the opening ceremony of the Fifth World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil when the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, was recognized in the category of leadership, statesmanship, and good governance. Especially noted was the fact that during his time as Mayor of Istanbul in the mid-1990s, he hosted the Second UN-Conference on Human Settlements, which led to the establishment of UN-Habitat as a fully-fledged UN program tasked with promoting adequate shelter for all.

The International Jury of the Rafik Hariri UN-Habitat Award includes Mervat Tallawy, Chairwoman of National Council of Women-Egypt, Erik Berg, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs-Norway, Kalyan Ray, former Chief of Water and Sanitation, UN-Habitat-India, Hind Al-Hariri Al-Karout, Rafik Hariri Foundation-Lebanon, Charles Rizk, former Minister of Justice-Lebanon, Rafic Bizri, President of the Hariri Foundation-USA, and Hoda Tabbarah, Lebanon.

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