



Media Release

EMBARGO: 22h00, Thursday, 29 October 2009

President Mutharika Among the 2009 Southern Africa Drivers of Change Award Winners

The 2009 Southern Africa Drivers of Change award winners were announced on 29 October 2009 at Summer Place, Hyde Park in South Africa. Among the 2009 southern Africa Drivers of Change that were honoured was Dr Bingu wa Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi.

In the government category, His Excellency, Dr Bingu wa Mutharika, was recognized for changing Malawi from a country in perpetual food deficit to one that is entirely food-sufficient. The boom in this sector has had a direct impact on millions of poor people. Under his leadership, poverty in Malawi has declined from 58 to 42 percent in five years. Through his direct involvement in turning Malawi's future around, he is building new confidence and hope amongst the citizens of Africa in their governments.

In the individual category, Archbishop Njongo Ndungane, was honoured for his lifelong commitment to place the poor at the centre of social and economic policies and his efforts to drive change in the way leadership is exercised in Africa. Through his African Monitor initiative, he remains as steadfast as ever in pushing rich countries to meet their commitments to the poor in Africa while also working to ensure that the aid that is given benefits the poor.

In the civil society category, the Luanda Urban Poverty Programme (LUPP) in Angola was recognized for driving systemic change in the way poverty reduction programmes are run in Angola, through a fresh approach that others have struggled to achieve. It is building participatory governance and more effective delivery of housing and basic services such as water. Benefitting over 400,000 of Luanda's poorest, LUPP has successfully laid the foundation for poor citizens to become active in shaping their futures.

In the business category, a unique partnership between Dr Xolile Ngethu, WBHO Construction, and the ComMark Trust was the winner for driving change in the way corporate social responsibility is practised. When WBHO Construction won the contract to build a road between Mount Frere and Matatiele in South Africa's Eastern Cape province, it partnered with ComMark and Dr Ngethu to support black farmers earn more income from their cattle. The initiative has seen black farmers access previously inaccessible red meat markets, turning their cattle into assets that are generating real and lasting returns. The project is making markets work for the poor in the Eastern Cape.

The panel of judges also awarded special commendations to Bishop Kevin Dowling of South Africa and Emma Kaliya of Malawi. Bishop Dowling was honoured for his extraordinary contribution to driving social change as much in the churches as in society at large. Emma Kaliya, for her tireless efforts to increase the number of women parliamentarians in Malawi from 14% to 22%.

Benjamin Mkapa, the former President of Tanzania delivered a keynote address at the awards.

The Drivers of Change awards are presented jointly by the Southern Africa Trust and the Mail & Guardian newspaper, together with the annual Investing in the Future awards. The awards event attracts over 300 business, government, and civil society leaders from across the southern African region each year.

The prestigious non-monetary awards recognise outstanding new ways of working to overcome poverty. They recognise individuals and organisations from the business, government, and civil

society sectors that are making a real and lasting difference to overcome poverty by doing things differently from before. This year, nominations were received from 9 southern African countries.

Neville Gabriel, Executive Director at the Southern Africa Trust said, "The Drivers of Change awards celebrate the tentative signs that things are beginning to change in our region. The awards applaud some remarkable people and organisations for pushing the frontiers and leading the charge to a new way of doing things in our region. This year's award winners represent a new kind of leadership, equally at the centre as at the periphery, that is needed to change our situation for good".

The Southern Africa Trust is an independent non-profit agency that supports deeper and wider regional engagement to overcome poverty in southern Africa.

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