



THE BUSINESS HUMANITARIAN FORUM ASSOCIATION

THE POSITIVE POTENTIAL OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Press Release

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Professor Iqbal Quadir of MIT Receives Russell-Whitehead Business Humanitarian Award

The Business Humanitarian Forum Association (BHF) has presented its 2012 Russell-Whitehead Business Humanitarian Award to Professor Iqbal Z. Quadir, Entrepreneur, as well as Founder and Director of the Legatum Center for Development and Entrepreneurship at MIT, for his visionary contribution to economic and social development in Bangladesh through the establishment of Grameenphone, a telecommunications operator now providing access to over 35 million subscribers throughout that country. The BHF honors him equally for his personal engagement, teaching and leadership at the Legatum Center at MIT championing the role of entrepreneurship, technology and innovation as key drivers for lifting people out of poverty and empowering citizens in low-income countries.

The 2012 award has been presented to Professor Iqbal Z. Quadir in conjunction with a BHF conference on harnessing the potential of the private sector for development which brought together high-caliber speakers from key international organizations including the Secretary General of the International Chamber of Commerce and the Executive Director of the International Trade Center as well from multinational companies based in Switzerland discussing new ways how the private sector can expand economic opportunities in developing countries. Senior attendees from companies, governments, UN agencies, non-profit organizations and academia had the opportunity to engage in a constructive and frank discussion on the rationale, mechanisms and impact behind such initiatives.

The Business Humanitarian Forum (BHF), established in 1999, encourages better understanding and cooperation between the public and private sectors, and works with partners to address humanitarian problems and promote sustainability, responsibility and equity in economic development. The BHF does this by arranging for direct private sector involvement and investment in areas where it is needed, and by providing training and facilitating dialogue between international organizations and private companies. The BHF has initiated and carried out several economic development and humanitarian projects in different parts of the world and has helped create partnerships between businesses, humanitarian agencies, NGOs and local governments

The Russell-Whitehead Business Humanitarian Award is named after the two Honorary Co-Chairmen of the BHF, Mr. George F. Russell Jr, and Mr. John C. Whitehead. The award was established in 2004 to honor an outstanding personality or organization for having made a significant contribution to facilitating private sector efforts to bring sustainable investment, job creation and economic development where they are needed most.

The first award was presented to Mr. Rory O’Riordan, President of the European Generic Medicines Association, for his work in bringing the resources of the generic pharmaceutical sector to bear on providing essential medicines to post-conflict and developing areas. The second awardee, in 2006, was Mr. Farooq Kathwari, CEO of Ethan Allen Industries, for his humanitarian efforts relating to the problems of Kashmir. The third award was presented to the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, in honor of his exemplary work in encouraging responsible business policies and private sector support for humanitarian agencies of the United Nations. In 2009, Mr. James Wolfensohn, Ninth President of the World Bank, received the award for his exemplary leadership in bringing about far-reaching institutional reforms and reshaping the Bank’s approach to development.

Further information:

More information on the Russell-Whitehead Business Humanitarian Award and the BHF can be found on www.bhforum.org or via the BHF Secretariat in Geneva at +41 (0)22 795 18 00 or info@bhforum.org