

Press Release

Geneva - September 20, 2007

Kofi Annan Receives Russell-Whitehead Business Humanitarian Award

The Business Humanitarian Forum Association has presented its annual Russell-Whitehead Business Humanitarian Award to former Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi A. Annan, for his exemplary work in encouraging responsible business policies and private sector support for humanitarian agencies of the United Nations. The award was conferred during a ceremony at the Hotel Intercontinental in Geneva on September 20 and attended by numerous heads of UN agencies, embassies as well as local government and private sector representatives.

The Business Humanitarian Forum Association (BHF), established in 1999, encourages private sector support for humanitarian efforts, and promotes sustainable economic development where it is needed most. The BHF does this by arranging for direct private sector involvement and investment in post-conflict and developing countries, and by providing training and facilitating dialogue between public organizations and private companies. The BHF has initiated and carried out several humanitarian and economic development projects in different parts of the world and has helped create partnerships between business, humanitarian agencies 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 recognize outstanding achievement in the field of humanitarian affairs involving the private sector.

The 2007 award has been presented to former United Nations Secretary General Kofi A. Annan in recognition of his continuing efforts to raise awareness globally of the need for private businesses to help resolve humanitarian problems. Through organizational creativity such as the establishment of the Global Compact as well as through countless personal efforts to bring the two sectors into more productive alignment, Mr. Annan has shown exceptional understanding of the real humanitarian potential that the private sector can bring to sustainable economic development in the world at large. His admirable work has helped increase mutual comprehension by both the public and private sectors, both of which must contribute to achieving mankind's goals of reducing poverty, creating jobs, and providing a better life for people everywhere.

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.

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.