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The Aristotle Onassis International Prize for the Protection of the Environment 2010

The Aristotle Onassis International Prize for the Protection of the Environment 2010 is awarded to the organization "Friends of the Earth Middle East" «Friends of the Earth Middle East»

The Prize, accompanied by a €250,000 monetary award, is bestowed for the first time in Hamburg

The environmental organization “Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME)” is the first organization chosen as the winner of the Onassis Prize for the Protection of the Environment, which was established in May 2009. The official award ceremony will take place in the City Hall of Hamburg, on November 17, 2010.

“Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME)” is an environmental organization of the Middle East that brings together Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian representatives. For a long time, FoEME has been active towards maintaining the River Jordan as a vital natural resource for all people living within the borders of Israel, Palestine and Jordan. The core aim of FoEME is to consider water as a fundamental natural resource for the development of the region. FoEME has produced impressive results in protecting the water cycle in the region at a time when water scarcity is increasingly intense. FoEME’s project is realized with the active participation of the region’s populations. Thus, the organization contributes to the understanding between peoples in this sensitive area.

Senator of Urban Development and the Environment of the City of Hamburg Anja Hajduk, Chairperson of the International Prize Committee, stated: “The members of the Prize Committee decided unanimously to award FoEME, with great respect forthe actions of this significant and pioneering environmental organization. FoEME uniquely combines environmental protection with the effort for a peaceful coexistence in the area.”

Regarding the choice of FoEME as the laureate of the Onassis Prize 2010 for the Protection of the Environment, Anthony Papadimitriou, the President of the Onassis Foundation, stressed: “The Committee’s decision for 2010 has a dual significance for us. We are thrilled with the choice of the particular organization, which besides its outstanding work towards a sustainable environment involves actively people of different nationalities and thus advances peaceful living and harmonious cooperation towards a common goal.“

The prize will reward on a biannual basis persons or organizations for “outstanding contributions towards protecting and improving the environment, including sustainable use of energy”. It will reward persons or entities excluding politicians and political parties. The prize is accompanied by €250,000 - one of the more sizable monetary awards to recognize services to the environment.

The Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, which pays tribute to the late son of the ship owner Aristotle Onassis, and the City of Hamburg launched the Onassis International Prize for the Protection of

the Environment. Anthony Papadimitriou stressed, when presenting the Prize: “The Onassis Foundation and the City of Hamburg share a bond which goes back to the early 1950s, when Aristotle Onassis was expanding his shipping activities in Hamburg shipyards. It was an important reason that made us consider Hamburg as suitable venue for the awarding of the Aristotle Onassis Prize for the Protection of the Environment. What rapidly convinced us were the major efforts being made by Hamburg to link together urban development, climate and environmental protection. Our prize is genuinely at home here“.

Prize Committee:

The Prize Committee consists of nine members:

- **Mrs. Anja Hajduk,** Senator of Urban Development and the Environment of the City of Hamburg, Chairperson of the committee;
- **Dr. Anthony S. Papadimitriou**, President of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, Athens;
- **Mrs. Christine Grefe**, Journalist (DIE ZEIT), author of “The global countdown, justice or self-destruction – the future of globalisation”;
- **Prof. Jacqueline McGlade**, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency (EEA);
- **Mrs. Christine von Weizsäcker**, **Biologist, received** the Kant-World-Citizen Prize in 2006; has worked for food safety and biological diversity via ratification of the UN’s Cartagena Protocol, which regulates the use of genetic engineering in agriculture;
- **Prof. Dr. Petros Koutrakis**, Professor for Environmental Sciences at Harvard University (USA), Director of Exposure, Epidemiology and Risk Program at the Harvard University School of Health;
- **Prof. Dr. Mojib Latif,** Climate researcher and Professor at the Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences at Kiel University**;**
- **Dr. Michael Otto, Chairman of the Supervisory Board, Otto Group,**Chairman of the Foundation Board of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Germany; Chairman of the Committee of the Michael Otto Foundation for Environmental Protection**;**
- **Prof. Dr. Michael J. Scoullos**, Professor for Environmental Chemistry at Athens University, chemist and oceanographer, since 1992 founder and chairman of the Mediterranean Information Office for the Environment, Culture & Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), Chairman of the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-MED), the regional Mediterranean GWP platform for promotion of Integrated Water Resources Management.

For more information on the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, please visit: www.onassis.gr