

UAE President honours global dignitaries for contributions to success of COP28

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President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan today bestowed the First Class Order of Zayed II on several global dignitaries in recognition of their contributions to the success of the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) hosted by the UAE late last year.

During the ceremony held in Abu Dhabi, His Highness expressed his gratitude to all recipients for their sincere efforts that contributed to the success of COP28 and resulted in the historic UAE Consensus that has become a key framework for global climate action and sustainability.

His Highness emphasised that the legacy of sustainability established by the UAE's Founding Father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, is a cornerstone of the UAE's efforts to support sustainability, promote effective climate action, and ensure equitable economic and social development for a better future for humanity.

He praised the spirit of cooperation demonstrated by the world during COP28 and the unity of nations in addressing one of the most pressing global challenges. His Highness reiterated the UAE's commitment to enhancing international cooperation and its constructive role in advancing climate action to find practical solutions to climate challenges by leveraging the achievements of COP28.

The ceremony was attended by H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan; Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad bin Tahnoun Al Nahyan, Adviser for Special Affairs at the Presidential Court; Dr. Sultan bin Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and COP28 President; Sheikh Abdulla bin Mohammed Al Hamed, Chairman of the National Media Office (NMO), and a number of officials.

The event also honoured the late Prof. Saleemul Huq, a member of the COP28 Presidency Advisory Committee. His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan presented the award to Prof. Huq's wife, son, and daughter in recognition of his distinguished efforts and contributions to operationalising the Loss and Damage Fund. Prof. Huq's work in promoting equitable climate action, particularly for developing and low-income countries most affected by climate change, was also recognised.

The honourees of the First Class Order of Zayed II were:

Dan Jørgensen, Minister for Development Cooperation and Global Climate Policy, Denmark, was part of the Global Stocktake ministerial pair, which contributed to consultations with Negotiating Groups and Parties.

Yasmine Fouad, Minister of Environment, Egypt, was a vocal advocate of the UAE and COP28 Presidency, as well as part of the finance ministerial pair, which contributed to consultations with Negotiating Groups and Parties.

Dr. Muawieh Radaideh, Minister of Environment, Jordan, was a respected COP28 Presidency Advisory Committee member who advocated for COP28 among parties.

Alioune Ndoye, Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Ecology Transition, Senegal, and Chair of the Least Developed Countries Negotiating Group, supported in garnering inputs and support among the most climate-vulnerable countries on the UAE Consensus outcomes.

Ruslan Edelgeriev, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, Russia, provided key support in driving consensus on the Global Stocktake and negotiated outcomes.

Ambassador Pedro Luis Pedrosa Cuesta, former Chairman of G77 and China, Cuba, was a strong supporter of COP28 and played a critical role in unifying the G77 and China around COP28 draft negotiated outcomes, especially the Global Stocktake.

Ambassador Fatumanava-o-Upolu III Dr. Pa'olelei Luteru, Permanent Representative to UN, Samoa, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States, helped to ensure small island developing states' input and support in the final decisions, particularly on mitigation and Loss and Damage.

Mark Carney, UN Special Envoy for Climate Action, was a supportive partner to the UAE, particularly concerning the delivery of key Presidential Action Agenda outcomes across climate finance and energy.

Jennifer Jordan-Saifi, CEO, Sustainable Markets Initiative, was a firm advocate of COP28 and facilitated the engagement of senior government leaders.

Kate Hampton, CEO, Children's Investment Fund Foundation, was a COP28 Presidency Advisory Committee member who provided valuable advice in the lead-up to and during COP28.

Badr Jafar, CEO, Crescent Enterprises, was a dedicated COP28 Presidency Advisory Committee member and Special Representative for Business and Philanthropy who mobilised multistakeholder engagement at the Business & Philanthropy Climate Forum to advance net zero and nature-positive goals.

Ajay Banga, President of the World Bank Group, was a firm advocate for the UAE in the lead-up to the climate conference, especially on advancing climate finance outcomes and reform of the international financial system.

Larry Fink, Co-founder, Chairman and CEO of BlackRock, was a valued COP28 Presidency Advisory Committee member who provided counsel to COP28 in the run-up to the conference and beyond, as well as engagement with private sector leaders.

Dr. Vera Songwe, Chair and Founder of the Liquidity and Sustainability Facility, as a leading figure in macroeconomics and debt issues was instrumental in helping COP28 deliver the Global Climate Finance Framework and climate finance outcomes.

Hindou Ibrahim, President of the Association for Indigenous Women and Peoples of Chad, was a committed member of the COP28 Presidency Advisory Committee who consistently represented and conveyed the views and priorities of indigenous peoples and local communities in the climate process.

Prof. Carlos Lopes, Chair of the African Climate Foundation Board, was a valued member of the COP28 Presidency Advisory Committee who lent his esteemed support and guidance to COP28.

Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, provided her valuable expertise on food systems transformation and supported the delivery of the COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems and Climate Action.

Fatih Birol, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency, was a supportive partner to COP28 and mobilised global cooperation and co-convened four high-level energy dialogues in the lead-up to COP28.

Prof. Saleemul Huq, a passionate advocate for addressing climate challenges affecting the world's most vulnerable, was posthumously honoured. He passed away at 71 in October 2023, with his wife, Kashana, and son and daughter accepting the award from His Highness the President. As founding director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development in Bangladesh, Prof. Huq became a leading voice from the developing world on the climate crisis. His advocacy contributed to the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund at COP28. Prof. Huq played a crucial role in UN climate talks and advised governments on adaptation and climate finance for the LDC Group.

Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, former President of Iceland, provided political guidance and counsel as a COP28 Presidency Advisory Committee Member.

John Kerry, former US Presidential Climate Envoy, was an active and loyal partner to the UAE in the lead-up to and during COP28 by enhancing global cooperation and advocating for COP28.

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