



# The Commonwealth Peace Prize



The Commonwealth



COMMONWEALTH  
PEACE PRIZE

## About the Commonwealth Peace Prize

The Commonwealth Peace Prize will be awarded every three years to a distinguished peacebuilder with a strong track record of faith and values-based engagement in conflict resolution, the promotion of social cohesion and sustainable peace.

Prize awardees will receive £50,000 to expand their ongoing work and efforts to inspire others.

For 2025, some of the extraordinary nominees for the Prize have been selected as Commonwealth Peace Prize Fellows. They form a cadre of multidisciplinary experts who will mentor and upskill young people across the Commonwealth's 56 member countries.

The Commonwealth Peace Prize is part of a multi-phase collaboration between the Khalili Foundation and the Commonwealth Secretariat to support and amplify peacebuilding initiatives throughout the Commonwealth.



## The 2025 Commonwealth Peace Prize Winners



**Rev. Dr James Movel Wuye and Imam Dr Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa are joint winners of the inaugural Commonwealth Peace Prize. The two religious leaders founded the Interfaith Mediation Centre in Nigeria nearly 30 years ago.**

The Interfaith Mediation Centre, which now has over 20,000 members, reaches into militias and gives guidance to young people to prevent them from joining conflicts. They also train women, religious figures and tribal leaders to become civic peace activists.

As young men in the early 1990s they were on opposite sides of warring groups. However, after suffering losses in the conflict, a friend challenged them to choose between being agents of destruction or peace. Together, they now lead others towards the path of peace and reconciliation.

These two extraordinary peacemakers are being honoured by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Khalili Foundation for their unwavering commitment to nurturing dialogue, understanding and justice.



### **Reverend Dr James Movel Wuye**

Rev. Dr James Movel Wuye is the co-founder of the Interfaith Mediation Centre and the Assistant General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God Northern Nigeria. He is also a member of the Executive Council of the Christian Association of Nigeria North-West Zone. He has mediated in several interventions throughout Nigeria and in other countries around the globe.

In addition to the Commonwealth Peace Prize, his peacebuilding efforts have earned him numerous awards and recognitions, including honorary doctorate degrees from Boston University and the University of Glasgow. He is also a sought-after speaker whose words have inspired many.



### **Imam Dr Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa**

Imam Dr Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa is co-founder of the Interfaith Mediation Centre and founder of the Ashafa Relief Foundation. Both organisations focus on peacebuilding, interfaith dialogue and community development.

Through the Ashafa Relief Foundation he has provided humanitarian aid, education support, medical assistance and economic empowerment to vulnerable communities across Nigeria. A global advocate for faith-based conflict resolution, he was recognised as one of the 500 most influential Muslims in the world in 2009. He also holds honorary doctorate degrees from the University of Massachusetts and the University of Glasgow.

## The Interfaith Mediation Centre

The Interfaith Mediation Centre is a Nigerian organisation that was created 30 years ago to promote trust and tolerance between Christian and Muslim communities. The centre aims to create a peaceful society in Nigeria and beyond, using a faith-based approach.

Their peacebuilding efforts have been featured in various documentary films on forgiveness and reconciliation, which have been showcased to global leaders at the United Nations headquarters, the UK House of Commons and other high-profile fora. One film, *An African Answer*, supported by the United States Institute of Peace and the Initiative of Change UK, documented their mediation efforts in Kenya following the 2008 post-election tensions.

Rev. Wuye and Imam Ashafa have worked extensively in Nigeria and other African countries including Sudan, Somalia, Ghana, Burundi, Chad and Kenya. They have also provided training and spoken internationally to promote peace, transform lives and inspire others.

They have received several international honours in addition to the Commonwealth Peace Prize, including the UN Gold Prize for World Interfaith Harmony Week and the Hessian Peace Prize, both in 2013. The peacebuilding duo were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014, and were finalists for the 2022 Opus Prize. They also received the inaugural Fondation Chirac Prize for Conflict Prevention in 2009 and numerous other local, regional and international awards.

They have also co-authored several books and research papers on interfaith dialogue and conflict resolution, including *The Pastor and the Imam: Responding to Conflict* and *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Islam and Christian Perspective*. As a complement to their work, they also champion the re-greening of communities with autochthonous peace trees.

# Congratulatory Messages

## **Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President of Nigeria**



'It was with great pleasure that I received the news that the Commonwealth Secretariat has selected your good selves as winners of the inaugural Commonwealth Peace Prize for your work as co-founders of the Interfaith Mediation Centre in Kaduna. The centre serves as an important bridge across the religious divide, fostering mutual communal understanding and preventing violent conflict from arising between communities of different faiths. The positive impact of the centre is a testament to your exceptional contributions to peacebuilding and reconciliation in Nigeria.

'I congratulate you on this distinct honour and wish you greater success as you continue to inspire your communities and Nigeria at large, on our path to peaceful co-existence and nationwide development.

'Please accept, Dear Reverend and Imam, the assurances of my personal regards.'

## Sir David Khalili, Chairman of the Khalili Foundation



'It is my fervent belief that peace and harmony are prerequisites to an empowered humanity. I heartily applaud these two men of faith, once enemies, who are now working in harmony to build peace in their country.'

'It is my vision that this model will be used as a template to multiply our peacebuilding work throughout the Commonwealth.'

'Through the work of these two visionary leaders, thousands have found deeper meaning in our shared humanity. It is my hope that this award will multiply those efforts and will be truly transformative for the world.'



### About the Khalili Foundation

Over the past three decades, the Khalili Foundation has been a global leader in promoting interfaith and intercultural relations. The Foundation has funded projects that use the power of art, culture and education to enable peacebuilding, including a long-term partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat dating back to 2017.

[www.khalili.foundation](http://www.khalili.foundation)

## The Rt Hon. Patricia Scotland KC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth



'In a fragmented world facing multiple conflicts, it is critically important to focus on those who are engendering transformative and positive change. Helping to promote peace within our 56 member states, through constructive dialogue and ongoing advocacy, is the most important work that I do.'

'I am honoured to be celebrate these inspiring leaders from Nigeria for their extraordinary efforts. They inspire us to leverage the power of our voices to shape our world for the better.'



## The Commonwealth

### About the Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 56 independent and equal countries. It is home to 2.7 billion people, more than 60 per cent of whom are aged 29 or under. Thirty-three of the Commonwealth's members are small states, including 25 small island developing states.

The Commonwealth Secretariat works with the governments of its member countries to:

- protect the environment and encourage sustainable use of natural resources
- boost trade and the economy
- support democracy, government and the rule of law
- develop society and young people
- support small states.

## The Awards Ceremony

The Commonwealth Peace Prize was awarded to its joint winners on Monday, 10 March 2025, during the **Commonwealth Day** reception at Marlborough House. The theme for this year's Commonwealth Day, 'Together We Thrive', celebrates the enduring spirit of the Commonwealth family – 56 independent member countries united by shared values enshrined in the **Commonwealth Charter**.

To mark the inaugural Commonwealth Peace Prize, a commemorative song by Andrew Lloyd Webber, 'Love in Peace', was performed at the reception in Marlborough House by singers from the BRIT School and the Choir of The Queen's College, Oxford (pictured overleaf). The song features original lyrics by Ben Elton and additional lyrics by Bruno Major.





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