

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
PRESS RELEASE**

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Arts and Business Leaders Come Together to Support Amnesty International

Amnesty International today announced the launch of the Secretary General's Global Council, a forum that will see leaders in the arts, business and philanthropy work together to further human rights.

The Global Council members will contribute the expertise from their respective sectors to help raise support for Amnesty International and its human rights priorities. They have agreed to act as champions for the world's first and largest human rights movement as it looks to grow in the Global South and East.

The founding members of the Global Council are: the author Paulo Coelho; Executive Director of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, Hadeel Ibrahim; philanthropist Lord Michael Levy; Tanzanian entrepreneur Ali Mufuruki; financier and philanthropist Krishna Rao; and education entrepreneur Sunny Varkey.

"I am very grateful to all of those who have accepted my invitation to join the Global Council. I know they will bring invaluable support as we seek to ensure Amnesty's growth around the world," said Salil Shetty, Amnesty International's Secretary General.

"I look forward to working with such respected leaders in the arts and business. It will be beneficial to draw on their expertise to provide advice and guidance to help in our work to advance justice and human rights."

Sunny Varkey will serve as the co-Chairman elect. The first meeting of the Council takes place in Dublin on 17 September, to coincide with a ceremony for the recipients of the Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience Award.

Sunny Varkey commented:

"I am delighted to serve as the co-Chairman elect for this Council, which will bring the business community further into the conversation about the need for social justice around the world. I care deeply about the right to education and believe that joining the Council will provide an opportunity to work with the world's leading human rights group to champion this cause."

Critical human rights issues will be discussed at the Global Council as members hear from policymakers and those on the frontline defending human rights. The Global Council will learn about Amnesty International's strategic priorities, campaigns and its impact as they look at ways to support this work.

The Global Council will play an important role in generating support for the growth of Amnesty International in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

The initiative will see 10 regional offices open in major cities across the world by 2017, as the organization aims to build membership and human rights support throughout the global South and East.

The first regional offices will open in Dakar, Hong Kong, Johannesburg and Nairobi by the end of 2013 – to build on the national presence the organization already has in 54 countries around the world.

Notes to editors

For further information or if you are interested in an interview with members of the Global Council

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For biographies of the Global Council members please click [here](#).

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