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President Isaac Herzog to award Israeli Presidential Medal of Honour to individuals who have made a unique contribution to the State of Israel

President Isaac Herzog today, Sunday, announced the recipients of the 2025 Israeli Presidential Medal of Honour.

The Israeli Presidential Medal of Honour is awarded by the President of the State of Israel to those "who, by virtue of their skills, service, or in any other way, have made an exceptional contribution to the State of Israel or to humanity". The medal was initiated by the Ninth President of Israel, Shimon Peres, and was first awarded in 2012.

Upon taking office, President Isaac Herzog appointed an advisory committee, chaired by retired Supreme Court Justice Professor Yoram Danziger, tasked with recommending worthy candidates for the medal. Since then, the President has awarded the medal to leading figures in Israel and abroad across diverse fields, including heads of state, key social leaders from various sectors, and Jewish leaders in Israel and worldwide.

The Presidential Medal of Honour will be presented to the recipients by the President at a special ceremony at the President's Residence later this year.

The recipients announced today by the President are:

- Dr. Miriam Adelson
- Dr. Mathias Döpfner
- Justice (ret.) George Costa Karra
- Mr. Moti Malka



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- Prof. Avi Ohry
- Prof. Dina Porat
- Mrs. Galila Ron-Feder Amit
- Sheikh Muwaffaq Tarif
- Dr. Yossi Vardi

The President personally informed each of the laureates of their selection, and noted to the recipients: “Each and every one of you are a great personal example. Your unique contribution is worthy of special recognition. The State of Israel owes you profound gratitude for your work, for your uncompromising commitment to the values of excellence, solidarity, and innovation, and for your exceptional contribution to strengthening Israeli society and defending the State of Israel in the world.”

The President stressed: “Even at this very moment, the hostages are in all our hearts. We do not forget them, and we continue to act and to pray for their swift and immediate return.”

More information on the recipients of the Israeli Presidential Medal of Honour (alphabetical order):

Dr. Miriam Adelson – A groundbreaking scientist, physician, and addiction treatment expert who dedicated her life to saving lives, conducting pioneering research in drug rehabilitation, and fighting the stigmas surrounding addiction. Together with her late husband Sheldon Adelson, she made immense contributions to projects vital to the Jewish people and the State of Israel, in the fields of Jewish identity and Zionism, academia, education, research, medicine, and culture. As a Jewish and Israeli leader of global influence, she has used her power to shape



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American public opinion and media in support of Israel's national and security interests. Over the past year, she leveraged this influence towards the struggle for the release of the Israeli hostages held in Hamas tunnels, placing herself at the forefront of public and international advocacy, demonstrating her personal commitment to solidarity and the sanctity of human life. Her decades-long contribution blends medical, educational, and philanthropic achievements at both national and international levels, establishing her as one of the leading figures acting on behalf of the Jewish people and the State of Israel worldwide.

Dr. Mathias Döpfner – CEO of the German international media group Axel Springer. He is one of the most prominent and courageous voices in Europe and globally in the long struggle against antisemitism and in his resolute support for the State of Israel. Döpfner acts out of deep commitment to the values of liberty and democracy and solidarity with the Jewish people. Under his leadership, Axel Springer has embraced solid principles of commitment to Israel, in line with the vision of its legendary founder, Axel Springer. Alongside his media work, Döpfner has for years worked to strengthen Germany-Israel ties, supporting scientific, cultural, and educational collaborations, and encouraging initiatives that promote a historical and moral understanding of the Holocaust and its lessons. Since October 7 and throughout the war, he has taken unprecedented public steps to demonstrate solidarity with Israel, becoming an international symbol of commitment, courage, and loyalty to its values, even in Israel's most difficult hours.

Justice (ret.) George Costa Karra – A distinguished jurist, born in Jaffa to the Arab Christian community, who served as a Justice on the Supreme Court of Israel, one of the first from Israel's Arab society to attain this position. Rising through the judicial ranks, he became known for his courageous and fair rulings, and for his steadfast defense of the principle of equality before the law. Justice Karra presided



over complex cases and throughout his long legal career exemplified integration, excellence, and the breaking of glass ceilings in Israel's judiciary and society.

Mr. Moti Malka – Founder of the Israeli Andalusian Orchestra, dedicated to preserving and performing the classical Andalusian musical tradition that originated in Al-Andalus (Iberia) between the 9th and 15th centuries and blends Arab and Jewish influences and is characterized by poetic singing. Mr. Malka gave Andalusian-Jewish music a central stage in Israel, and thanks to his vision and leadership, this music, born from the encounter of Jewish and Muslim traditions arriving from Morocco, experienced a renaissance, with high-level artistic performances and connection across Israeli society. As a leader of Israel's multicultural revolution, he initiated, established, and directed dozens of cultural institutions, festivals, and events promoting Andalusian music and Jewish liturgical poetry. Malka was among the founders of the Andalusian Orchestra, which won the Israel Prize in 2006. His lifelong work made Andalusian music an inseparable part of Israel's cultural mosaic.

Prof. Avi Ohry – A pillar of rehabilitation medicine in Israel and one of the world's foremost physicians and researchers in the field. At a young age he was appointed head of the Department of Neurological Rehabilitation at Sheba Medical Center, which he brought to international professional prominence. In the rehabilitation of war-wounded, Prof. Ohry is regarded as a global leader. His personal experiences as a prisoner of war in the 1973 Yom Kippur War deepened his commitment to treating wounded soldiers and victims of both physical and psychological trauma. His professional and human contribution to the rehabilitation of thousands of patients has made him a model figure in Israel's health system and a symbol of perseverance, compassion, and professionalism.



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Prof. Dina Porat – A central academic figure in Holocaust research in all its aspects. Her book "Leadership in Dilemma" is considered a foundational text, serving as the basis for numerous subsequent studies on the response of the Yishuv, the Jewish community in Mandatory Palestine, to the Holocaust. She has authored and edited a long list of landmark works on the history of the survivors and Holocaust memory in Israel, many translated into other languages, winning prizes in Israel and abroad and receiving significant recognition in the academic community. Alongside her scholarship, publications, and teaching, Prof. Porat held key positions at Yad Vashem, and today serves as the institution's Chief Historian. From the outset of her career, she placed the fight against antisemitism at the center of her work, combining determined public activity against racist and antisemitic hatred. Her research has significantly deepened public understanding of the period and of the characteristics of contemporary antisemitism, reinforcing Israel's standing as a global leader in combating antisemitism.

Mrs. Galila Ron-Feder Amit – Author, journalist, and editor, a central figure in Israeli children's and youth literature for decades. Her extensive body of work includes hundreds of books that have become an inseparable part of the childhood of generations. Many have been translated into multiple languages and adapted for television and theater. Her works have instilled in Israeli society values of curiosity, tolerance, and love of the homeland. Through her life's work, she has not only provided captivating stories but also shaped the cultural and educational consciousness of entire generations of young readers. Her contribution to culture, education, and Israeli society is a source of inspiration for future generations and secures her place as one of Israel's most influential creators.

Sheikh Muwaffaq Tarif – The highly regarded spiritual leader of the Druze community in Israel, Sheikh Mowafaq Tarif has charted a path of moderation and



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mutual respect between religions and communities. In an era of tension and division, and especially now, his measured leadership stands as a powerful example of the ability to unite and heal rifts. Equally significant is his deep commitment to the unique covenant of life between the Druze community and Israeli society at large, and to the Jewish and democratic State of Israel. Sheikh Tarif has long established himself as a leader with a profound influence on Israeli society as a whole, and as a public voice dedicated to building bridges and forging a shared destiny and purpose in the State of Israel and across the wider region. These are values he has consistently upheld for decades, and since assuming the role of spiritual leader of the Druze community in Israel, he has become a global figure in matters concerning the Druze and their place in the region. The awarding of the Presidential Medal honors Sheikh Tarif while also expressing deep appreciation for the sons and daughters of the Druze community in Israel.

Dr. Yossi Vardi – One of the founding fathers of Israel's Start-Up Nation and a pioneer of the Israeli high-tech industry. He founded several of Israel's earliest software companies and was a partner in Israel's first "exit," the sale of Mirabilis and its ICQ software, which revolutionized global telecommunications and digital communication. Throughout his career he has been involved in founding and investing in dozens of Israeli companies in software, internet, energy, and advanced technologies, many of which were sold, went public, and continue to thrive worldwide. In parallel, he has held key roles in the public sector, including as chairman of government companies, director general of a government ministry, and economic adviser to prime ministers. Vardi has been active in many initiatives to promote high-tech and integrate diverse populations into the technological workforce, serving as a mentor to thousands of young entrepreneurs in Israel and abroad, providing them with inspiration, knowledge, and vision. Dr. Vardi enjoys a prestigious global reputation in the world's most important and influential forums.