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Al-Katib Becomes First Canadian to Receive Oslo Business For Peace Award

Committee of Nobel Laureates Selects Saskatchewan Entrepreneur Among 2017 Recipients

SASKATOON, SK – The Oslo Business for Peace Awards committee today announced that Saskatchewan’s Murad Al-Katib, whose commitments to the United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP) help feed an estimated 4 million families each year, will be among the recipients of this year’s award.

Al-Katib, President and Chief Executive Officer of AGT Food and Ingredients Inc. (AGT) in Saskatoon, will be the first Canadian to receive this prestigious honour, which will be presented in Oslo, Norway on May 16, 2017.

The Oslo Business for Peace Award is presented annually by an award committee consisting of Nobel Laureates in peace and economic sciences. The annual prize is awarded to international business leaders who create value for business as well as society in a responsible and ethical way.

“I am very proud to be recognized with such a prestigious international award. I believe strongly that entrepreneurship is key to finding solutions to problems facing the world. Whether feeding the world, climate change, stopping violence or ensuring safe drinking water – we can make a difference. Private sector entrepreneurs in partnership with government and NGO’s need to innovate and invest to find solutions,” said Al-Katib.

“I want to be a champion of compassionate entrepreneurship, a world in which entrepreneurs harness their energies to help society solve some of its problems. For me, food security, famine, food aid and emergency refugee food response is a chosen lifetime cause for me, one that I feel strongly about,” he said.

Al-Katib explained that, according to the United Nations, as a society we need to produce as much food in the next 50 years as has been produced in the past 10,000 years. Al-Katib is committed to be part of the solution through his company, AGT Foods.

Through a partnership with the UNWFP and International Committee of the Red Cross, AGT has helped to optimize the procurement, consolidation and distribution process to produce and deliver over 4 million family ration cartons to international agencies for Syrian refugees under food aid tenders. This program has saved the partner organizations millions of dollars per year and has aided in getting these life sustaining and critical food supplies to those most in need.

“I want to be known as an entrepreneur who worked hard to bring our environmentally sustainable crops to the world, as lentils, peas and chickpeas to play a big role in feeding the world. I want to be known as someone who made a difference to the economic success of the rural communities in which we operate, creating opportunities for the families of our employees, farmers and stakeholders,” said Al-Katib. “This, I hope inspires other entrepreneurs to mobilize their commercial enterprises for the betterment of humanity in some way.”

In selecting Al-Katib for this year’s award, the Business for Peace committee acknowledged his efforts to extend his knowledge of food production and logistics to improve the lives of people in other parts of the world.

“The Oslo Business for Peace Award is given annually to exceptional individuals who exemplify the concept of being ‘businessworthy’ – applying one’s business energy ethically and responsibly to create value for all,” said Per L. Saxegaard, Founder and Executive Chairman, Business for Peace Foundation. “It is an honour and a pleasure to have Murad Al-Katib as one of the four Honourees selected by the Award Committee to receive the 2017 Oslo Business For Peace Award.”

Nominated by the Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce

Submissions from more than 40 countries were reviewed for this year’s award from the foundation’s international partners including the International Chamber of Commerce, UN Development Programme and UN Global Compact. As a member of the International Chamber of Commerce, The Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce nominated Al-Katib for his outstanding business practices and humanitarian efforts.

“Chambers of Commerce worldwide have long championed the relationship between peace and business. Business deals are sealed with a handshake, and lasting business relationships are created when handshakes are made in good faith between partners desiring mutual benefits for one another,” stated John Danilovich, Secretary General of the International Chamber of Commerce in his congratulatory letter to Mr. Al-Katib.

Kent Smith-Windsor, Executive Director of the Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce, said Al-Katib reflects a proud tradition of ethical leadership in Saskatoon's business community.

"Our Chamber has recognized Business For Peace nominees for the past several years," said Smith-Windsor. "We are thrilled to see Mr. Al-Katib receive the prestigious recognition from the Business for Peace Foundation."

Previous Honourees of the Oslo Business for Peace award include: Pol Polmna, CEO of Unilever, Netherlands; Richard Branson of Virgin Group, United Kingdom; Ratan Tata, CEO of Tata Group, India; David MacLennan, COO and President of Cargill, USA; and Jeffrey Immelt, Chair of GE.

For more information on the awards, visit businessforpeace.no.

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For more information, please contact:

Kent Smith-Windsor
Executive Director
Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce
Email: chamber@saskatoonchamber.com
Phone: 306.244.2151

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON MURAD AL-KATIB AND AGT

About AGT

Under Murad Al-Katib's leadership, AGT has become a major partner with United Nations World Food Programme through its operations in Canada and Turkey. It participates in the family ration distribution program to assist Syrian refugees.

In addition, Al-Katib has made a multi-year committed to children's advocacy through the Canadian Red Cross and is involved in "Imagine No Bullying", an educational program that reaches 33,000 school-age children in Saskatchewan annually.

"I believe compassionate entrepreneurship can be a component to finding solutions to problems facing the world," said Al-Katib. "Whether for safe drinking water, climate change, stopping violence or feeding the world – the solution is out there, we just need to innovate and invest to find it."

Al-Katib has a passion for public service and has a strong interest in public policy and transformational governmental change in trade and infrastructure. He is passionate about his business and his country and strives to continually drive his company to grow responsibly and profitably while creating opportunities for the thousands of families that count on AGT for their livelihood.

Biography for Murad Al-Katib

Al-Katib is the President and CEO and a board member of AGT Food and Ingredients Inc. He completed his Masters from Thunderbird School of Global Management at the University of Arizona and a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Saskatchewan.

Al-Katib was hired as one of the founding staff of the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, an international trade promotion agency, where he became one of the province's top international trade specialists.

In 2001, he founded Saskcan Pulse Trading, providing the nucleus for AGT's future. Al-Katib has served on the following boards: Canadian Special Crops Association; Pulse Canada; as the Chair of the Advisory Board for Small and Medium Enterprise for the Canadian Minister of International Trade; as a panel member for the Government of Canada's renewal of Canada's Global Commerce Strategy; and the Advisory Committee for the Review of the Canada Transportation Act for the Minister of Transport. Currently, he serves on the Board of the Asia Pacific

Foundation of Canada and is the current Chair of the Regina Regional Opportunities Commission.

With his varied experience at AGT, Al-Katib has proven himself to be a strong financial and strategic business thinker, able to anticipate and mitigate the risks in international trading and commodities.

Previous Awards and Recognition

2016 – Ernst and Young “Canadian Entrepreneur of the Year” Award

2016 – Global Citizen Laureate Award, United Nations Association of Canada

2012 – Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Medal

2006 – Queen’s Centennial Medal

2004 – Ernst and Young “Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year” Award

AGT has twice been recognized by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce as its “Business of the Year” and by the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership as “Exporter of the Year.”

Al-Katib has been featured in the The Globe and Mail’s “Top 40 Under 40” list in 2005, PROFIT Magazine as one of Canada’s “30 Most Fabulous Entrepreneurs of the Past 30 Years” and in the Western Producer, Canada’s leading agriculture newspaper, on a list of “44 Innovators Who Shaped Prairie Agriculture”.