Top businesses honoured at African Business Awards

Africa's top business figures gathered together last week at the fifth annual African Business Awards in London. The event for celebrating excellence and achievement in African business took place at the Grosvenor House with approximately 300 guests.

Guests included BBC World News presenter Zeinab Badawi, the minister of trade for Burundi, the minister of commerce for Zambia, and Jean-Louis Ekra, president of the African Export-Import Bank.

At the awards ceremony, it was Innoson, a Nigerian SME, lead by entrepreneur Innocent Chukwuma, that took the title of African Business of the Year. The new award for Best Hospitality, Travel, and Tourism in Africa was won by Serena Hotels from Kenya.

The Nigerian conglomerate, Dangote Group won the Investor of the Year Award and received the trophy from Robert Sichinga, minister of commerce, trade and industry, Zambia.

The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Manu Chandaria, hailed as 'one of Kenya's leading industrialists'. Chandaria was given special credit for having built a world class conglomerate and set a benchmark for his peers and for young entrepreneurs across the African continent to follow.

Omar BenYedder, publisher of *African Business* magazine stated, "The awards were launched five years ago to reward not only successful businesses but those which had a positive impact on their communities and the country or region they operate in, what president Sata of Zambia called 'profit with a human face'.



African Business Awards 2012 winners

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We also wanted to encourage sustainable and inclusive growth. And I feel that the winners...have certainly risen to the challenge and are fulfilling these objectives. We have rewarded true pioneers operating on the African continent and we hope they will act as a benchmark for others to follow suit."

Sir Alan Collins, director general of the Commonwealth Business Council, during his speech, emphasised that "Africa is open for business".

The awards are organised by *African Business* magazine and Commonwealth Business Council in partnership with BusinessinAfrica Events. A panel of judges selected winners in eight categories from a pool of nominees that came from all over the African continent. The winners of the remaining categories were selected by the advisory board comprising of the editorial team of *African Business* magazine, and experts from the CBC.

Winners

- ### Most Outstanding Woman of the Year

Rachel Zodwa Mabaso, founder/managing director, Mboweni Mineral Resources, South Africa

- ### Award for Innovation

Entrepreneurial Finance Lab, South Africa

- ### Investor of the Year

Dangote, Nigeria

- ## Special Commendation

Olam, Gabon

- ## Award for Environmental Sustainability in Africa

Nedbank Group, South Africa
BTI Millman, Kenya

- ## Best Hospitality, Travel, and Tourism in Africa

Serena Hotels, Kenya

- ## Award for Good Corporate Governance

Diageo Africa

- ## Best Corporate Social Responsibility

BHP Billiton

- ## Business Leader of the Year

Egbert Imomoh, non-executive chairman, Afren

- ## African Business of the Year

Innocent Chukwuma (Innoson)

- ## Award for Best Agricultural Development

OCP, Morocco

- ## Country Achievement for Sustained Improvement in Investment Climate

Rwanda

- ## Creative Industry Award

Duro Olowu

- ## Lifetime Achievement Award

Manu Chandaria, Kenya
For more, go to the African Business Awards website.

For more, visit: https://www.bizcommunity.com