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PM Lee Hsien Loong to receive 2019 World Statesman Award by US-based interfaith group



The award will be presented to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the 54th Appeal of Conscience Foundation Awards Dinner in New York on Sept 23, 2019.

By Rei Kurohi

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong will be awarded the 2019 World Statesman Award by the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, a US-based interfaith organisation, at an awards dinner in New York on Sept 23.

Rabbi Arthur Schneier, the foundation's president and founder, said in a press release on Monday (April 15): "Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong will be recognised for fostering a society that embraces multiculturalism in which ethnic communities maintain their unique way of life while at the same time living harmoniously."

PM Lee will also be recognised for "supporting a knowledge-based economy and an education system that provides its citizens with the necessary skills and knowledge to survive in a globally competitive environment and for implementing a renowned world-class health infrastructure," Rabbi Schneier added.

The World Statesman Award honours leaders who support peace and freedom by promoting tolerance, human dignity and human rights, championing these causes in their homeland and working with other world leaders to build a better future for all, the foundation said.

PM Lee said in the statement: "It is my honour to accept the World Statesman Award. Singapore has embraced diversity and multiculturalism as fundamental ideals of our society. We strive to build a multi-racial, multi-lingual, and multi-religious society where people live peacefully and harmoniously together.

"Singapore shares the Appeal of Conscience Foundation's vision of a world underpinned by human dignity and respect."

The Appeal of Conscience Foundation was founded by Rabbi Schneier in 1965 to work on behalf of religious freedom, human rights, peace and tolerance worldwide, and seeks to uphold the principle of "live and let live".

The interfaith coalition of business, religious and foreign policy leaders seeks to promote mutual understanding, peace, interfaith cooperation and protection of minorities, and says it believes freedom, democracy and human rights are fundamental values that give countries around the world the best hope for peace, security and shared prosperity.

Previous World Statesman Award recipients include British Prime Minister David Cameron, Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

The award will be presented to PM Lee by Rabbi Schneier at the 54th annual Appeal of Conscience Foundation Awards Dinner.

A spokesman for Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said: "The award recognises Singapore's long-standing efforts to promote religious freedom and tolerance among our diverse ethnic and racial groups. Prime Minister Lee will accept the award in New York in September 2019."