

# The Delta Prize for Global Understanding

The University of Georgia

Awarded in 2004 to

**President Václav Havel**





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Front cover: President Václav Havel of the Czech Republic (Photo/Alan Pajer)

Inset: The Delta Prize Sculpture. The Delta Prize sculpture was designed by Barbara Mann and Gary Noffke. The sculpture consists of a sterling silver medallion, approximately 2 1/4 inches in diameter and 1/8 inch thick, held in place by a titanium pin on a bronze triangular base. The medallion portrays the earth with the abstracted continents in low relief. In raised lettering surrounding the earth are, on one side, the words "THE DELTA PRIZE FOR GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING," and, on the other side, the words "THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA." The medallion rotates in place on the stand. The name of the recipient of the Delta Prize is inscribed on the bronze base. (Photo/Paul Efland)



## The Delta Prize for Global Understanding

The Delta Prize for Global Understanding, endowed by the Delta Air Lines Foundation and administered by The University of Georgia, is awarded on an annual basis to individuals who by their own initiative have provided opportunities for greater understanding among cultures and nations. The Delta Prize honors a variety of contributions to peace and cooperation, such as grassroots projects that diminish hostilities in a particular region of the world, international programs that facilitate communication or commerce among different peoples, and the leadership of individuals in the solution of global problems.

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## Foreword

Good afternoon. First, I want to thank Ambassador Martin Palouš and his staff for graciously hosting the 2004 Delta Prize award ceremony at the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington, D.C.

I also want to thank Delta Air Lines for their endowment of the Delta Prize for Global Understanding. The kind of public-private partnership between the University of Georgia and Delta is a model for excellence in higher education.

Finally, I thank the many individuals involved in the selection of the recipient of the Delta Prize. People from around the world nominate for the Prize men and women whose leadership has brought about and strengthened the capacity for understanding among ethnically and ideologically diverse groups. A University of Georgia Student Selection Committee, composed mainly of UGA Foundation Fellows, studies these nominations and submits a short list of ten to twelve names to our international Delta Prize Board. The Delta Prize Board selects the recipient.

Today the University of Georgia and Delta Air Lines award the 2004 Delta Prize for Global Understanding to Václav Havel for his role in liberating his country from oppressive communism. Václav Havel risked his life for a principle that Americans hold dear but may take for granted: the unrestricted exchange of ideas. Václav Havel will be known forever not only as the first President of the Czech Republic but also as a writer whose literary works, some believe, did as much to advance the causes of freedom and democracy in Central Europe as his political actions.

The 2004 Delta Prize goes to a man who led his people to topple a regime that had imprisoned Czechs for decades. On behalf of the University of Georgia, I am pleased to pay tribute to President Havel's courageous and successful efforts to establish freedom in the country that is now the Czech Republic.

**Michael F. Adams**

President of The University of Georgia  
Member of the Delta Prize Board

## Preface

The Delta Prize for Global Understanding was established to recognize individuals whose extraordinary ability to promote fruitful communication and social change has rendered the world a better and a more peaceful place. Former President Václav Havel of the Czech Republic is such an individual.

President Havel is a man of courage, integrity, and vision, who employed his talents, including his literary talents, to challenge the Soviet communist regime of Czechoslovakia. By his relentless non-violent efforts to bring freedom to Czechoslovakia, at great personal cost, President Havel set a standard for honorable, successful political action in the face of extraordinary injustice.

Václav Havel first won recognition in communist Czechoslovakia as a dramatist and dissident intellectual. He published his first play, *The Garden Party*, in 1963. And he has continued publishing plays and essays throughout his life. *The Art of the Impossible: Politics as Morality in Practice*, which includes speeches and essays from 1990-1996, came out in translation in 1997.

In 1977, Havel co-founded the Charter 77 human rights initiative. And in 1979, he helped form the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Oppressed, which protested the oppressive practices of Czechoslovakia's communist government. For his political activities, he spent almost five years in prison.

As a consequence of his leadership in the bloodless revolution of 1989, Havel won election to the presidency of Czechoslovakia. He conducted free elections in the summer of 1990 and won election a second time on July 5, 1990. After the establishment of the Czech Republic, on January 26, 1993, he was elected by the Chamber of Deputies to be the country's first president.

In his New Year's address of 2003, one of his last addresses in office, President Havel proudly declared that Czechs and Slovaks had learned to cooperate with each other. He said that their common goal was "to gradually forsake some of their countries' sovereignty in favor of increasing influence in the life of communities vastly larger and more powerful than countries are."

President Havel concluded his address with an eloquent statement of the principles for which he believed his people stood. He said:

I am not certain whether the Czech Republic has its own special, fundamental ideas that could be named, let alone proclaimed. But I am certain that many great men and women of our history formulated a set of wise principles of coexistence to which we should always return, which should be remembered, built upon, propagated and reflected into our lives and our work. These principles include responsibility not only for oneself and to oneself, but also for and to one's fellow citizens, not only for and to a community or country, but also for and to the broader human society. ... I thus think that we do not have to use the words nation, or national interest in every sentence, but that we should concentrate instead on our neighbors, be they on our street or on the other side of the world. Yes, I am indeed saying that we will serve our national interests best if we simply treat each other well, treat the country we live in well, treat other nations well, and think of human history, human fate and our human mission in this world without prejudices. May humility, interest in others, responsibility for mankind, and a sense of justice and solidarity be that which can be called ideas underlying the Czech state!

These ideals that President Havel has articulated as principles by which all peoples of the world should live are the ideals which the Delta Prize for Global Understanding was established to honor. We hope that by naming President Václav Havel the recipient of the 2004 Delta Prize for Global Understanding we will bring attention to these values in our troubled world.

**Gary K. Bertsch**

Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Delta Prize Program

**Betty Jean Craige**

Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Delta Prize Program



*President Václav Havel and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright participate in the unveiling ceremony of the statue of Thomas Masaryk in Prague on March 7, 2000. (AP Photo)*

## On Behalf of Delta

Delta is pleased to join the University of Georgia in awarding the 2004 Delta Prize for Global Understanding to former President of the Czech Republic Václav Havel. We appreciate former Chancellor Karel Schwarzenberg's acceptance of this award on behalf of President Havel, whose health prevented travel to the United States. Václav Havel, a distinguished intellectual and an extraordinary politician of the highest ethical standards, fought successfully for a free and independent Czechoslovakia, and then led the new Czech Republic as its first President.

President Havel is the fifth recipient of the Delta Prize, which was bestowed for the first time in 1999 to President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter and the Carter Center. Delta Air Lines collaborated with the University of Georgia in the establishment of the Prize, which Delta endowed and which the University administers. The other distinguished recipients are Archbishop Desmond Tutu, President Mikhail Gorbachev, and Mrs. Sadako Ogata.

Delta serves the world, and we hope that in taking travelers across international boundaries we promote more harmonious relationships among our world's many nations. So as an airline we share the goal of the Delta Prize: to increase understanding among the diverse peoples of our planet. By granting the Delta Prize to such moral and brave leaders as President Havel, we hope that Delta and the University of Georgia can inspire our younger generations to do what they can to make our world more peaceful.

**Paul Graves**

Vice President for Global Diversity and Community Affairs, Delta



*President Václav Havel talks with former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Prague on November 16, 1999. The two leaders were key players in the Velvet Revolution that ended communism in Czechoslovakia a decade earlier. (AP Photo)*

# Globalization and Cooperation

(Acceptance Speech)

Thank you for the honor you have bestowed upon me. The Delta Prize for Global Understanding has recognized very distinguished individuals in our international community who have worked with others to make this world a better place. I am very pleased to belong to a group of Delta Prize recipients that includes President Jimmy Carter.

In 2004, our world is a global society. We are witnessing a frenetic transformation of civilization that we cannot regulate, stop, reverse, or rid of its harmful and destructive features. In this situation, when mankind is unable to avoid the threats globalization brings, politicians, theologians, scientists, public personalities, and leaders of all kinds must reflect upon the state of this world, point out injustices, and draw public attention to human rights abuses, ethnic conflicts, and planetary pollution. They must not only speak out but also cooperate with other people unlike themselves, people from different countries, different continents, different professions, and different religions.

The Delta Prize you have awarded me today confirms my conviction that people capable of thoughtful dialogue must cooperate with each other to address the many threats to peace and justice in our world.

Thank you.

**President Václav Havel**

Recipient of the 2004 Delta Prize for Global Understanding



*President Václav Havel speaks at a news conference at the United Nations on May 14, 1997. (AP Photo)*

## From the Writings of Václav Havel

Politics is an area of human endeavor that places greater stress on moral sensitivity, on the ability to reflect critically on oneself, on genuine responsibility, on taste and tact, on the capacity to empathize with others, on a sense of moderation, on humility. It is a job for modest people, for people who cannot be deceived.

Copenhagen, Denmark, May 28, 1991

. . . I wonder whether genuine intellectuals, philosophers, and poets are not virtually duty-bound to stop fearing and loathing politics and to take upon themselves all the risks and requirements that go with it, even though they find them rather strange. Is it not time for intellectuals to try to give politics a new and, as it were, postmodern face?

Tokyo, Japan, April 23, 1992

. . . one can imagine a foreign-policy initiative that demonstrably does not merely pursue the selfish interests of a country, but instead displays a feeling of common responsibility for the fate of all of human society, its freedom, its plurality, and its life in peace.

Wroclaw, Poland, December 21, 1992

Today, more than ever before in the history of mankind, everything is interrelated. Therefore, the values and the prospects of contemporary civilization are subjected everywhere to great tests. Because of this, the future of the United States and the European Union is being decided in suffering Sarajevo and Mostar, in the plundered Brazilian rain forests, in the wretched poverty of Bangladesh and Somalia. Theoretically, almost everyone now knows this. But how does the knowledge find expression in practical politics? In the practical politics of each one of us?

*Foreign Affairs*, 1993



*President Václav Havel greets Pope John Paul II at the Prague airport on April 25, 1997. (AP Photo)*

If the world today is not to become hopelessly enmeshed in increasingly horrifying conflicts, it has, I think, only one possible course of action. It must deliberately breathe the spirit of multicultural coexistence into the civilization that surrounds it. There is no need at all for different peoples, religions, and cultures to adapt or conform to one another. It is enough if they accept one another as legitimate and equal partners.

New Delhi, India, February 8, 1994

There is one great opportunity in the matter of co-existence between nations and spheres of civilization, culture and religion that should be grasped and exploited to the limit. This is the appearance of supranational or regional communities. By now, there are many such communities in the world, with diverse characteristics and differing degrees of integration. I believe in this approach. I believe in the importance of organisms that lie somewhere between nation states and a world community, organisms that can be an important medium of global communication and co-operation. . . . Regional groupings in areas that have common traditions and a common political culture ought to be a natural part of the complex political architecture of the world. Co-operation between such regions ought to be a natural component of co-operation on a world-wide scale.

Cambridge, USA, June 8, 1995

We should perceive—much more intensively than before—that we are not only members of our family, employees or owners of our company, inhabitants of our village or town, representatives of our profession, members of our association or party and individuals belonging to a nation, but also inhabitants of this Earth. We should be aware that the fate of every one of us is affected by the fate of the entire human race more than it was ever before and, at the same time, that every one of us is now more co-responsible for the fate of the globe than we were in any previous period.

Prague, Czech Republic, January 1, 2000



*President Václav Havel walks toward the ballot box to cast his vote in a Prague polling station on the first day of the Czech general elections on June 14, 2002. (AP Photo)*

The human race must find a new relationship to the planet on which we live; to the environment; to human coexistence; to urban development; to our own technological achievements; and, to the fruits of our own intellect. Rededicating ourselves to the good dimension of the European spiritual tradition, and protecting it from its less noble features, seems to me to be a most worthy task for Europe in the century that lies ahead. This means refraining from intolerance, aggressiveness and violence; and, demonstrating how it is possible to build our life on the principles of equality and respect for one another, and in harmony with this planet. We cannot impose our own environmental standards upon the rest of the Earth but we can show by our own example how beneficial it is to observe them.

Paris, France, February 1, 2001

## The Delta Prize Board

Dr. Michael F. Adams  
Dr. Gary K. Bertsch  
Dr. Betty Jean Craige  
Mrs. Anne Cox Chambers  
Mr. John L. Clendenin  
Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala  
Ambassador Kai Eide  
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Heather Ripley  
Allie Scott  
Helen Smith  
Adam Sparks  
Tuquyen Mach

\*Associate Director, Foundation Fellows Program





## **Recipients of the Delta Prize for Global Understanding**

**1999**

President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter and The Carter Center

**2000**

Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu

**2001**

President Mikhail S. Gorbachev

**2002**

Mrs. Sadako Ogata

**2004**

President Václav Havel

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See also <http://www.uga.edu/news/deltaprize/>

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