

**VEHBI KOÇ FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES WINNER OF 8<sup>th</sup> VEHBI KOÇ AWARD, CELEBRATING THE FOUNDATION'S 40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY****THE VEHBI KOÇ AWARD WENT TO PROF. DR. TÜRKAN SAYLAN FOR HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION**

The Vehbi Koç Award is given every year in the fields of education, culture, and the arts by the Vehbi Koç Foundation, Turkey's first private foundation, now celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The award recognizes both individuals and institutions for their contributions in improving the quality of life for the Turkish people. This year the award went to Prof. Türkan Saylan as the Chairwoman of the Support for Modern Life Association (ÇYDD). The Chairman of the Board of Directors of Koç Holding, Mustafa V. Koç, delivered a speech at the award ceremony where founder Vehbi Koç was commemorated on the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. Mustafa V. Koç stressed the importance of giving the Vehbi Koç Award in the field of education this year because Vehbi Koç believed that Turkey's foremost social issue was education, emphasizing that democracy and development was only possible with an educated workforce. "The Vehbi Koç Foundation's priority for charitable contributions has targeted education, and the foundation's largest financial donations have been in this area for the last 40 years," he said.

The winner of the eighth Vehbi Koç Award, given by the Vehbi Koç Foundation, Turkey's first private foundation, was announced at a special ceremony. Attending were Süleyman Demirel, the 9<sup>th</sup> President of the Republic of Turkey; Semahat Arsel, Chairwoman of the foundation's Board of Directors; and Mustafa V. Koç, Chairman of Koç Holding Board of Directors. Among the speakers at the ceremony was Süleyman Demirel, where Vehbi Koç, the founder of both the Koç Group and the foundation, was commemorated on the thirteenth anniversary of his death.

**The Award Went to Prof. Dr. Saylan as Chairwoman of ÇYDD**

The eighth Vehbi Koç Award was granted to Prof. Dr. Türkan Saylan, Chairwoman of the Support for Modern Life Association (ÇYDD), for her successful lifetime efforts in the field of education. Semahat Arsel, Chairwoman of the Vehbi Koç Foundation Board of Directors, presented the award to Prof Dr. Türkan Saylan. Together with the Vehbi Koç award, Prof. Dr. Türkan Saylan was also granted \$100,000, the largest monetary prize in Turkey.

**"The work is more important than the one who accomplishes it."**

A documentary about Prof. Dr. Türkan Saylan was shown at the ceremony, illustrating that Saylan has not only participated in many projects but has also created and managed many others in the field of education throughout her life. As pointed out, countless projects are remembered because of her name or because of her

involvement with other individuals and institutions in developing projects. Highlighted at the ceremony was the fact that Prof. Saylan has always attached greater importance to the work itself rather to the one who accomplishes it. However, the public is well aware that many of these projects were either a product of her own mind or that they stemmed from her endless interest, research, and attitude towards sharing.

**She enhances the quality of life for the people in this country.**

In the ceremony, Prof. Dr. Türkan Saylan was given full credit for “...having contributed to raising the quality of life for people in our country...” one of the criteria for the Vehbi Koç Award. In this respect, Saylan managed to fulfil this mission to such an extent, normally not expected from a single individual. What Saylan has accomplished in her life clearly evinces how far a single individual can influence change in a society. Saylan is known as a team player, extensively influential in her circle.

**Mustafa V. Koç: “We wanted to recognize an individual who has contributed significantly to education and has developed innovative projects.”**

“We wanted to commemorate Vehbi Koç on this special day by recognizing a person who has contributed significantly to education and has developed innovative projects,” said Mustafa V. Koç, Chairman of Koç Holding Board of Directors.

**“Education was also Vehbi Koç’s top priority.”**

Mustafa V. Koç emphasized the importance of granting the Vehbi Koç Award in education this year because Vehbi Koç believed that Turkey’s most pressing social issue was education, emphasizing that democracy and development are only possible with an educated workforce. “The Vehbi Koç Foundation’s top priority for charitable contributions has targeted education, and the foundation’s largest financial donations have been in this area for the last 40 years. We aim to nurture productive, creative, sensitive, and independent-minded individuals with self-confidence by granting scholarships and by creating and supporting schools,” he said.

**“This year the Vehbi Koç Foundation celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.”**

Mustafa V. Koç said that Vehbi Koç had been an innovative, hardworking businessman and a visionary leader who had looked beyond the current era – a real philanthropist and patriot, sensitive to the problems of his own society – and had offered solutions to these problems. “The Vehbi Koç Foundation, created by Vehbi Koç for purposes of improving our work in social responsibility, going so far as to institutionalize this approach, celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. The Vehbi Koç Foundation has led the way for a myriad of projects in the fields of education, healthcare, and culture and the arts. The Vehbi Koç Foundation is Turkey’s first private foundation, established on January 17 1969, resulting from 21 years of conscientious efforts. In fact, the foundation has paved the way for establishing other foundations in Turkey. As in many areas in Turkey, Vehbi Koç was a pioneer in setting up foundations and took part in numerous foundation activities,” Mustafa V.

Koç said. The Vehbi Koç Foundation has aided many various institutions in Turkey in the fields of education, healthcare, culture and the arts and has supported tens of thousands of young people, Mustafa V. Koç stated. “The principle of corporate social responsibility, instilled in us under the leadership of Vehbi Koç, is an indispensable part of our business strategy at the Koç Group companies,” he declared.

### **About Prof. Dr. Türkan Saylan**

Türkan Saylan was born in Istanbul in 1935. She graduated from Kandilli Girls High School and the Istanbul Medical Faculty. In 1968, she began working as the chief assistant in the Dermatology Department of Istanbul Medical Faculty. She went to the United Kingdom with a British Council scholarship in 1971 and conducted short-term studies in the U.K. and France. She became an associate professor in 1972 and a full professor in 1977. She began working on Leprosy in 1976 and founded the Association for the Fight Against Leprosy. In 1986, she won the International Gandhi Award in India. Türkan Saylan was an advisor to the World Health Organisation on Leprosy until 2006, and she is a founding member of the International Leprosy Union (ILU). She is also a member of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology and of the International Leprosy Association.

While working at the university for 21 years between 1981 and 2002, Türkan Saylan also volunteered as the Chief Doctor of the Ministry of Health, Istanbul Leprosy Hospital. She was the head of the Dermatology Department at Istanbul University Medical Faculty between 1982 and 1987, and the Director of the Leprosy Research and Application Centre at Istanbul University Medical Faculty between 1981 and 2001. She played an important role in founding the dermatology laboratory and the polyclinic for Behçet's Syndrome and Other Sexually-Transmitted Diseases. In addition, she took part in projects and plans along with their implementation as the coordinator of the International Leprosy Control Program.

In 1989, she founded the Support for Modern Life Association (ÇYDD) together with a group of Atatürk intellectuals to protect and develop the revolutionary laws and the secular system; she is still the chairwoman of the association.

Saylan was among the founding members of the University Teachers Association where she was the deputy head at the beginning. In 1990, she took part in founding the Istanbul University Research and Application Centre for Women's Problems. Saylan was also among the founders of the **Kandilli Girls High School Culture and Education Foundation (KANKEV)** and continues her activities as its chairwoman. She is a member of the **Istanbul Chamber of Doctors** and the **Foundation for Children in Need of Protection**. Saylan is the Chairwoman of the **Association for the Fight against Leprosy**. She was appointed as a member of the **Social Services Advisory Committee** on March 31, 2000, by former President Süleyman Demirel and continues in this role. Having authored six books and hundreds of scientific essays published in Turkey and abroad, Saylan has been recognized with 50 domestic and foreign awards.

### **About the Vehbi Koç Foundation**

Celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Vehbi Koç Foundation was established on January 17, 1969, by Vehbi Koç, whose sagacity drove Turkey's industrial sector,, and is proud to have contributed to many various accomplishments and to have given support to tens of thousands of students in Turkey. As Turkey's first private foundation, the Vehbi Koç Foundation has since then carried out a great number of activities in the fields of education, healthcare, culture and the arts for the nation's wellbeing and for the creation of a modern, developing Turkey. Becoming a role model to other philanthropists and charitable organizations, the foundation pioneered the setting up of 27 institutions in the field of education; six, in healthcare; and five, in culture and the arts. The Vehbi Koç Foundation has also supported hundreds of different organisations along with setting up scholarships both for educational institutions and for those given directly to students, reaching 40,000 in 40 years.

### **The Vehbi Koç Award**

Since 2002, the Vehbi Koç Award is given every year to individuals or institutions to recognize and announce the work accomplishment in the areas of education, healthcare, and culture and the arts in Turkey. The award features the largest monetary prize in Turkey with a value of \$100,000.

Previous Recipients:

- 2002: Topkapı Palace Museum for work in the area of culture.
- 2003: The Mother-Child Education Foundation (AÇEV) for work in education.
- 2004: Bilkent University Faculty of Sciences, Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics for work in healthcare.
- 2005: Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca in culture and literature.
- 2006: Sakarya Governor Nuri Okutan for his contributions to pre-school education during his tenure.
- 2007: Prof. Dr. Aziz Sancar for his well-known studies on Molecular Mechanism of DNA Repair and Regulation of Biological Clock.
- 2008: Prof. Mehmet Özdoğan for his contributions to prehistoric archaeology in the Marmara region.