



Woodrow Wilson
International
Center
for Scholars

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sharon McCarter

Phone: (202) 691-4016

sharon.mccarter@wilsoncenter.org

March 22, 2011

Release No. #20-11

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars of the Smithsonian Institution to Honor Bernard Arnault and Jacques Attali in Washington, D.C.

Leading French Citizens Recognized for their Contributions to Business and Philanthropic Endeavors

WASHINGTON—The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars of the United States' Smithsonian Institution will present the **Woodrow Wilson Award for Corporate Citizenship** to **Bernard Arnault**, chairman and CEO of LVMH Môt Hennessy Louis Vuitton, and the **Woodrow Wilson Award for Public Service** to **Jacques Attali**, founder and president of PlaNet Finance, at a ceremony to be held in Washington, D.C. on April 7, 2011. **David Rubenstein**, co-founder and managing director of The Carlyle Group, will serve as chairman of this awards dinner. **Tony Blair**, Quartet Representative and former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, will serve as distinguished guest of the evening.

“Mr. Arnault and Dr. Attali personify the attributes we seek to honor at the Woodrow Wilson Center,” said Jane Harman, director, president and CEO of the Woodrow Wilson Center. “Without question, their contributions in business, philanthropy and public service have been numerous and significant, and it gives me great pleasure that the Board of Trustees has chosen to recognize such exemplary leaders as the first French recipients of the Woodrow Wilson Award. Through LVMH’s generous societal commitment and the progressive work of PlaNet Finance, Bernard Arnault and Jacques Attali have made significant social, economic and cultural contributions to not only the citizens of France, but to people all over the world.”

Bernard Arnault is chairman and CEO of LVMH Môt Hennessy Louis Vuitton, which he has built over the past 25 years to be the world’s leading luxury goods group and one of the largest companies in the world. Under Arnault’s leadership, LVMH is engaged in a wide range of philanthropic and social responsibility initiatives, which he has solidly established as a cornerstone of LVMH’s corporate philosophy.

The LVMH Group is known for supporting humanitarian, scientific and medical research organizations to alleviate suffering and combat disease, such as Save the Children, the Foundation for Hospitals in Paris, and the Princess Grace of Monaco Foundation, among others. The Group has a deep commitment to promoting environmental sustainability across its own operations, establishing partnerships with groups such as Al Gore’s Climate Project, and signing the Global Pact initiated by Kofi Annan. LVMH has long been a strong supporter of the arts,

which will culminate in 2012 with the opening in Paris of the Louis Vuitton Foundation for Creation, designed by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry, to expose the public to LVMH's exceptional art collection and to provide a highly visible forum for promising young artists.

Arnault was made a Commander of the Legion of Honor for his services to the French nation and is also a Commander of France's Order of Arts and Letters.

Jacques Attali, founder and president of PlaNet Finance, is a widely respected economist and international humanitarian. He founded PlaNet Finance with Arnaud Ventura in 1998 with a mission of alleviating poverty through microfinance, providing access to financial services in the world's poorest regions to populations with limited or no access to banking. PlaNet Finance has grown to a staff of more than 1,000 employees working in 80 countries. Since its founding, the organization has developed into a group that brings together a foundation, an NGO and socially responsible businesses.

Prior to founding PlaNet Finance, Attali served as an advisor to President Francois Mitterrand (1981-1991), and as the first President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (1991-1993). At the request of President Nicolas Sarkozy, Attali is currently serving as chairman of a bipartisan commission on re-launching France's economy.

Attali is the author of 52 works translated into more than 30 languages, including biographies, histories, novels, plays, children's stories and essays on subjects ranging from mathematics to music. His latest book, *Tomorrow, Who Will Lead the World*, will be published on April 6, 2011.

"I am honored to Chair a dinner at which such distinguished individuals as Bernard Arnault and Jacques Attali are recognized for their great contributions toward making the world a better place," said Chairman of the awards dinner **David Rubenstein**. Rubenstein is co-founder and managing director of The Carlyle Group, one of the world's largest private equity firms. He is chairman of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; President of the Economic Club of Washington, a Regent of the Smithsonian Institution; and a trustee of the boards of numerous national and international universities and organizations.

International sponsors of this event are The Hearst Corporation, Mötet Hennessy, Larry Gagosian, Mr. and Mrs. Jamal Daniel, PepsiCo and Michael Grosvenor Capital Management, L.P. The Global sponsors are David M. Rubenstein and JCPenney.

The **Woodrow Wilson Awards** recognize leaders in business, government, science, the arts and beyond who have embraced openness, dialogue, and service in confronting the issues of their day on local, national and international levels. The Awards have been presented in major cities across the United States and around the world since their inception more than ten years ago. Previous recipients of the Award for Corporate Citizenship include E. Nevill Isdell of Coca-Cola, John Chambers of Cisco Systems and Peter G. Peterson of The Blackstone Group and recipients of the Award for Public Service include Paul A. Volcker, Frank O. Gehry and Senator John H. Glenn. This dinner marks the first time that these Awards will be presented to French citizens.

The **Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars**, established by an act of the U.S. Congress in 1968 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., is the living national memorial to the United States' 28th president. The Wilson Center is one of three American institutions (along with the National Gallery of Art and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts) created by Congressional statute to perform a national mission within the Smithsonian Institution and is governed by its own independent Board of Trustees appointed by the U.S. President.

A nonpartisan institution supported by public and private funds, the Center explores national and global issues through free, open, and informed dialogue. The Honorable **Joseph B. Gildenhorn** is chairman of the Board of Trustees, and previously served as U.S. ambassador to Switzerland (1989–1993). **Jane Harman**, director, president and CEO of the Woodrow Wilson Center, served as a member of Congress for seventeen years. Prior to serving in Congress, she was a top aide in the United States Senate, Deputy Cabinet Secretary to President Jimmy Carter, Special Counsel to the Department of Defense, and in private law practice. Harman received the Defense Department Medal for Distinguished Service in 1998, the CIA Seal Medal in 2007, and the National Intelligence Distinguished Public Service Medal in March 2011.

###

For information please contact:

Event Contact:

Nora Shuler

Phone: (202) 691-4339

nora.shuler@wilsoncenter.org

Press Contact:

Sharon McCarter

Phone: (202) 691-4016

sharon.mccarter@wilsoncenter.org