Sri Chinmoy Culture-Light Award Presented to Daw Aye Aye Thant, daughter of third UN Secretary-General U Thant

On 10 October 2017, Daw Aye Aye Thant, daughter of the third UN Secretary-General, U Thant, and President of the U Thant Institute, received the Sri Chinmoy Culture-Light Award from Ranjana Ghose, President of the Sri Chinmoy Centre. The Award honoured both Aye Aye and her father, posthumously, and was presented at Aspiration-Ground meditation garden in Queens, as part of the ten-year observance of Sri Chinmoy’s *Samadhi.*

In presenting the award, Ranjana said that it was particularly meaningful and appropriate to bestow this award on Aye Aye and her father jointly as they shared a vision and have worked together in so many ways. She thanked Aye Aye for the significant role she was playing to bring about world peace through the light of culture.

In her acceptance remarks, Aye Aye said, “I am grateful for this opportunity to help me resurface my mission and to reflect on my father’s vision which has always been my cherished pride. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to share with you. If and when I get more opportunities, I shall continue to help shine the light of my father in his quest for peaceful world.”

Also present were two special guests. Offering some reflections on U Thant was H.E. Ambassador Davidson Hepburn, President of the 35th General Conference of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); former Permanent Representative of the Bahamas to the United Nations; and Founding Executive Director, Government Public Policy Institute, University of the Bahamas. Ms. Rezwana Choudhury Bannya**,** a well-known recorded singing artist of both India and Bangladesh; a noted authority on songs by Rabindranath Tagore and director/founder of Shurer Dhara academy in Dhaka, performed songs by Sri Chinmoy and Tagore. Both special guests were previous recipients of the Culture-Light Award.

During the programme, the Singers performed songs by Sri Chinmoy dedicated to U Thant and peace. As well, Nilima Silver, Programme Coordinator of *The Peace Meditation at the United Nations,* offered the guests copies of *Songs of Peace,* songs and poems by Sri Chinmoy dedicated to the United Nations.

**Captions:**

Ranjana Ghose presents the Sri Chinmoy Culture-Light Award to Daw Aye Aye Thant, the daughter of third UN Secretary-General U Thant and President of the U Thant Institute.

Special guests display their copies of *Songs of Peace. From left to right:* Nilima Silver, Rezwana Choudhury Bannya, Aye Aye Thant, Ambassador Davidson Hepburn and Ranjana Ghose.