SHIMON PERES
Prime Minister of Israel

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to the building of the State of Israel and to the advancement of its diplomatic and cultural reputation, and because of his continued efforts for many years for the benefit of the State, and of the Jewish people and of his considerable assistance to Higher Education in Israel.

Born in Poland in 1923, he arrived in Israel in 1934. On completion of his schooling at the Ben Shemen Agricultural School he joined Kibbutz Allumot. At the age of twenty, he was elected Secretary of the Labor Youth Movement.

A member of the Haganah, he worked with David Ben Gurion and Levi Eshkol in the Haganah Headquarters. With the establishment of the State, he served in the Defense Ministry, responsible for equipment acquisitions. In 1953, at the age of 29, he was appointed Director General of the Defense Ministry and in this capacity initiated ties with France, which enabled the I.D.F. to equip itself until after the Six Day War. He was also responsible for the emphasis on research and development of Israel’s military industry.

In 1959, he was elected to the Knesset and was appointed Deputy Defense Minister, a post he held until 1965.

In a long political career, he has also served as Minister of Absorption 1969, Minister of Transport and Communications 1970, Minister of Defense 1974 and in 1977 when Yitzhak Rabin resigned — as Acting Prime Minister.

In 1984, with the establishment of the Government of Unity he became Israel’s Prime Minister.

Mr. Peres is the author of several books dealing with politics and society.