



**AGA KHAN FOUNDATION U.S.A.**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**27,500 PARTICIPATED AT PARTNERSHIP WALK  
TO HELP END GLOBAL POVERTY**

**Atlanta, Georgia, November 10, 2007** – Over 5,000 people participated in the Atlanta Partnership Walk, today at Piedmont Park, an event held annually in five major cities across the U.S. to raise awareness and funds to help alleviate global poverty. The Walk brings together families, community groups, students and leaders in government, business, media and the arts for a day of learning activities, fundraising and entertainment. Teams from corporations, universities, schools and community groups registered for the Walk to take a step to end global poverty. Nationwide, over 27,500 participated as Partnership Walk was also held today in Houston. Earlier in the season, the Chicago, Dallas and Los Angeles Walks were held on Sunday, October 14, 2007 bringing together over 12,500 participants.

Partnership Walk is an initiative of Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A. (AKF USA) and organized by its network of volunteers in communities across the America. **100% of funds raised at Partnership Walk go directly to the projects supported by the Foundation.** The cost of organizing the Walk is completely underwritten by AKF USA and in-kind contributors. No contributions are used for administrative costs. Over the past 12 years, 239,500 have participated in Partnership Walk across the U.S. raising over \$28 million.

An opening ceremony at the Atlanta Partnership Walk featured distinguished guests and celebrities along with entertainment celebrating the diversity of world cultures. Addressing the crowds, keynote speaker Bob Rathbun, sports broadcaster for the Atlanta Hawks and Atlanta Braves, acknowledged the value of giving back to the community and working together as a team to have a greater influence and impact on communities worldwide. Bob Bolling, founder and executive director of the Atlanta Community Food Bank since 1979, noted that “Out of our diversity comes a unifying theme of helping those most in need. No matter our country, our religion, no matter our station in life, no matter our age, color, or family background, we are called to do what we can do. We are called today to be a living symbol to people around the world to help our fellow man and women, to speak up, speak out, and be a witness to the value of brotherhood and sisterhood. ... We join with the Aga Khan Foundation and we join with young people knowing that we can change the world. The best way to have peace and prosperity is to take a step, just as we are going to take a step today.”

Iqbal Noor Ali, chief executive officer of Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A., addressed the enthusiastic crowds noting that “We are here to celebrate. We are here to celebrate the art of the possible. If you go to the Global Village you will go through a small journey of the power of possibility. A little bit of help

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*An agency of the Aga Khan Development Network*

can change lives for people for generations to come. ... Our investing in the right kind of things in difficult places like Afghanistan can help create models of cooperative citizenship, create jobs, and enable women to be employed and to be trained.” The program was hosted by Dale Russell, Fox 5 senior investigative reporter. A stage program of music, dance and performances throughout the day engaged participants in a multicultural celebration of world cultures. Visit [www.partnershipwalk.org](http://www.partnershipwalk.org) for more information.

The theme for Partnership Walk 2007 was *Innovative Solutions to Create Hope and Opportunity*. Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A. celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary beginning in October 2006. This year’s theme captures the depth, scope and impact of a quarter century of achievements. In every undertaking, the overriding goal of the Foundation’s work is to assist in the struggle against poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy through the discovery and implementation of innovative solutions to development.

Throughout the day, participants took part in the interactive exercises and exhibits of the *Global Village in Action*. Visitors traveled virtually to Afghanistan, East Africa, India and Pakistan as well as Central Asia to see how the Foundation is creating hope and opportunity in poor and often remote regions. As participants visited the exhibits for each geographic region, they got a taste of the culture’s traditions, music, dance and food. Interactive exhibits introduced visitors to the practical ways Aga Khan Foundation is alleviating hunger, disease, illiteracy and how it connects to and complements the work of other agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network.

AKF USA, established in 1981, is a private, non-denominational, non-profit international development organization committed to alleviating poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy. AKF USA is part of the Aga Khan Development Network ([www.akdn.org](http://www.akdn.org)), a network of private, non-denominational, development agencies around the world, established by His Highness the Aga Khan to empower communities and individuals, often in disadvantaged circumstances, improve living conditions and opportunities. His Highness the Aga Khan is the Founder and Chairman of the Board of Aga Khan Foundation and 49th hereditary Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims. The overarching goal of the Network’s programs is to help poor communities achieve a level of self-reliance whereby they are able to plan their own futures. The Network’s agencies work for the common good of all citizens, regardless of gender, origin or religion and its underlying impulse is the ethic of compassion for the vulnerable of society. The Foundation presently supports over 100 programs in 18 countries for the common good of all citizens regardless of their gender, origin or religion. The geographic focus of the Foundation’s development programs is in East Africa and South and Central Asia.

**For further information, please contact:**

Ms. Martha Sipple, Communications & Public Affairs Officer, Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A.  
888-253-9255 or (202) 293-2537; [msipple@akfusa.org](mailto:msipple@akfusa.org)

Ms. Farida Jooma, Media Coordinator for the Atlanta Partnership Walk Team  
Phone: (678) 480-0786; [faj110@aol.com](mailto:faj110@aol.com)