

## HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN

His Highness the Aga Khan, founder and chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), is the 49<sup>th</sup> hereditary Imam (spiritual leader) of the Shia Ismaili Muslims. In the context of his hereditary responsibilities, His Highness has been deeply engaged with the development of countries around the world for close to 60 years.

The AKDN is a group of private, international, non-denominational agencies working to improve living conditions and opportunities for people in specific regions of the developing world. The Network's organisations have individual mandates that range from healthcare (through over 400 health facilities including 13 hospitals) and education (with over 200 schools) to architecture, rural development, the built environment and the promotion of private-sector enterprise. Together, they work towards a common goal – to build institutions and programmes that can respond to the challenges of social, economic and cultural change on an on-going basis.

AKDN's **social development** agencies include Aga Khan Health Services, Aga Khan Planning and Building Services, Aga Khan Education Services, Aga Khan Academies, Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance, Aga Khan Foundation, Focus Humanitarian Assistance as well as two universities, the Aga Khan University (with 5 campuses and 3 teaching sites) and the University of Central Asia (whose School of Professional and Continuing Education has served close to 50,000 students in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan). **The Aga Khan Trust for Culture** co-ordinates AKDN's cultural activities, including the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme, Aga Khan Music Initiative, Aga Khan Museum, the on-line archive Archnet.org, and the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture (at Harvard and MIT). **The Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED)** is dedicated to building commercially viable enterprises – in tourism, banking, insurance, media, aviation, industry and infrastructure – in the developing world.

The Network works in over **30** countries. It employs approximately **80,000** people, the majority of whom are based in developing countries, and has an annual budget for non-profit development activities of approximately **US\$ 600 million**. In 2012, AKFED's project companies generated close to **\$3b** in total revenue – surpluses of which are all reinvested in further development activities. The AKDN enjoys close partnerships with public and private institutions, including amongst others, governments, international organisations, companies, foundations, and universities.

The AKDN has been actively engaged in Portugal for over two decades, mainly through the work of the Aga Khan Foundation, one of the nine agencies of the Network, which started its activities in 1983 and was officially recognized as a Portuguese Foundation in 1996. The Foundation's activities in Portugal range from development in the areas of early childhood education, social exclusion and urban poverty. Focus Humanitarian Assistance has been active in Portugal since 1995, when it established its headquarters in Portugal.

The activities in the country operate within the framework of the agreements established between the Ismaili Imamat and Portugal, particularly the Protocol of Cooperation with the Portuguese Government signed in 2005, the Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2008, and the International Treaty established with the Portuguese Republic in 2009.

The Aga Khan has received numerous honorary degrees and awards in recognition of his work including, in Portugal, the Grand Cross of the Order of Infante D. Henrique, the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit and the Grand Cross of the Military Order of Christ. In 2006, the Évora University conferred an honorary Doctorate upon His Highness, and in 2009 His Highness became a Foreign Member of the Academy of Sciences of Lisbon.