



## ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK AND AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP

**GOUVIEUX, FRANCE (30 January 2008)** – His Highness the Aga Khan, the Spiritual Leader (Imam) of the Shia Ismaili Muslims and founder and chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), today met with Mr. Haruhiko Kuroda, President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), for discussions on joint collaboration between the ADB and AKDN. The meeting preceded the signing of an agreement aimed at expanding the partnership between the two institutions.

“A strengthened partnership between ADB and the Aga Khan Development Network provides an effective channel for supporting inclusive development in the region, especially for the benefit of the poorest and most vulnerable people in society,” said Mr. Kuroda.

The Aga Khan’s younger brother, Prince Ayn Aga Khan, who signed the agreement on the Aga Khan’s behalf, thanked the ADB for its long-standing cooperation and lauded ADB’s efforts to adopt a new long-term strategy this year in the face of growing challenges and opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region.

Prince Ayn Aga Khan expressed confidence that the agreement will enable an intensification of the collaboration between the two institutions, thereby helping to transform the lives of many.

The joint ADB/AKDN agreement stresses the need “to find ways to undertake investments to connect the poor to the opportunities of growth and to connect services to the poor emanating from national and regional growth benefits.”

ADB and the AKDN collaborate across multiple sectors in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, India, and Pakistan. The agreement signed today reinforces the need for cooperation in sectors such as infrastructure, economic development, and human capacity building. It expresses the joint commitment of both institutions to local and regional ownership of development policies and programs, long-term approaches to sustainable development, and investments that connect the poor to growth opportunities. Among the new areas for potential partnership are investments in higher education, including with the Aga Khan University and the University of Central Asia.

\* \* \* \* \*

ADB, based in Manila, is dedicated to reducing poverty in the Asia and Pacific region through pro-poor sustainable economic growth, social development, and good governance. Established in 1966, it is owned by 67 members – 48 from the region. In 2007, it approved \$10.1 billion of loans, \$673 million of grant projects, and technical assistance amounting to \$243 million.

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) is a group of private, non-denominational development agencies working to empower communities and individuals to

improve living conditions and opportunities, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, Central and South Asia, and the Middle East. The Network's nine development agencies focus on social, cultural and economic development for all citizens, regardless of gender, origin or religion. The AKDN's underlying ethic is compassion for the vulnerable in society. Its annual budget for social development is in excess of US\$300million.

**For more information please contact:**

For Asian Development Bank:

Jason Rush  
Media Relations Specialist  
Tel: (632) 632-6480  
Email: jrush@adb.org

For Aga Khan Development Network:

Aly Nazerali  
European Representative and CEO  
Tel: +442075916800  
E-mail: aly.nazerali@akdn.org