

AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Press Release

For Immediate Release

His Highness the Aga Khan receives the Order of *Danaker* from the President of the Kyrgyz Republic Almazbek Atambayev



Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, 18 October 2016 - On the first day of an official visit to the Kyrgyz Republic, His Highness the Aga Khan was presented the Order of *Danaker* by His Excellency Almazbek Atambayev, President of the Kyrgyz Republic. The order is the country's highest recognition given to a foreign citizen for contributions to the strengthening of peace, friendship and cooperation between peoples and for working towards preserving inter-ethnic harmony and the mutual enrichment of

national cultures.

His Excellency commended His Highness for his steadfast commitment and for his contributions to development across the region. "It is my privilege to award the Order of *Danaker* to His Highness the Aga Khan," remarked President Atambayev. "The *Danaker* is a mark of honour awarded to individuals who unite people, nations and countries. On behalf of the people of Kyrgyzstan, and in my personal capacity, I would like to express sincere gratitude for the contributions and support Your Highness has been providing through AKDN in a variety of sectors including education, healthcare, agriculture and others."

The AKDN has been working in the country since 2001. Its programmes, operating in all seven oblasts, help develop an economically dynamic, politically stable and intellectually and culturally vibrant Kyrgyz Republic. Working in the fields of education, health care, economic development, microfinance, agricultural development and cultural preservation, the Network employs over 1,500 nationals.

"I would like to thank your Excellency for receiving me so graciously and for conferring this honour upon me. I look forward to many years of partnership and achieving development goals for the people of Kyrgyzstan, which is a country which is marking global thinking on pluralism, and successful pluralism is one of the most immediate global issues today," noted His Highness the Aga Khan after receiving the Award.

His Highness the Aga Khan is the 49th hereditary Imam (spiritual leader) of the 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 through the work of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). The Aga Khan is in Kyrgyzstan, accompanied by members of his family, for the inauguration of the Naryn campus of the University of Central Asia, a secular and private university, established under a treaty signed by the Presidents of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan and His Highness the Aga Khan.

During the day His Highness met with Speaker of Parliament Chynybai Tursunbekov and His Excellency Sooronbay Jeenbekov, the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic. In the evening the Aga Khan and members of his family were hosted to a dinner by President and Madame Atambayeva.

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