

AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Aga Khan visits UNHCR headquarters to discuss enhanced cooperation

From the UNHCR Press Release:



Geneva, Switzerland, 6 November 2015 - His Highness the Aga Khan, visited UNHCR headquarters today to meet UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres and discuss past and future cooperation in emergency operations around the world.

UNHCR staff greeted the Aga Khan before he held private talks with Guterres followed by a meeting with senior UNHCR officials on the long-standing partnership between the Aga Khan Development Network and the UN refugee agency.

The two sides looked at ways of further strengthening their partnership in the Middle East, Asia and East Africa. They discussed possible new joint initiatives in areas such as contingency planning; pluralism and diverse societies; and country specific cooperation in areas where AKDN is active as well as global advocacy to bridge the humanitarian-development divide. They also discussed the global political situation and the effects of extremism and sectarianism on previously tolerant and diverse societies.

"We must do everything possible to prevent human suffering," said the Aga Khan. "But preempting humanitarian emergencies requires investments, equipment and the necessary resources to ensure the response system is already in place when the crisis hits."

The High Commissioner agreed, noting that "UNHCR and the Aga Khan Development Network have a lot in common. It is partnerships like ours that can help broaden the way the international community responds to crises today – through a stronger humanitarian-development link, and by promoting closer cooperation with actors from different cultural and geographical backgrounds."

The Aga Khan is the 49th hereditary imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims and nephew of the late Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, who was high commissioner for refugees from 1965-77, a pivotal period in the organisation's history.

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