

## **Ismaili Muslim Community Exceeds Its Pledge of One Million Hours of Service for Canada.**

March 21, 2018 – The Shia Ismaili Muslim community in Canada today will announce that it has surpassed its pledge to volunteer one million hours of service for Canada.

The statement, to be made today in the presence of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, commemorates Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of confederation and the Diamond Jubilee of His Highness the Aga Khan - celebrating sixty years of his spiritual leadership of the Ismaili Muslim community worldwide.

The one million-hour pledge is the cornerstone of the Ismaili CIVIC 150 initiative, rooted in the community's commitment to improving the quality of life of all Canadians.

"Our community's one million hours of service is a demonstration of Ismaili Muslims' enduring commitment to Canada," offers Malik Talib, President of the Ismaili Council for Canada. "In communities across the country, Ismailis volunteered as mentors and coaches to build the next generation's skills. Ismailis also delivered employment and settlement support services to new Canadians, provided care for the elderly, supported anti-poverty initiatives, and maintained natural and public spaces. Volunteerism and service to the broader community are both central to Ismaili and Canadian values, and the Ismaili CIVIC 150 initiative is a reflection of that."

As of March 21, 2018, the Ismaili community volunteered a total of 1,127,549 hours of service across the country. Partners included organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Terry Fox Foundation, the Food Bank, Canadian Blood Services, amongst many others.

As part of Ismaili CIVIC 150, members of the community across the country marked the formal launch of the initiative by engaging in a national day of service on September 17, 2017 - Ismaili CIVIC Day. Over the course of the year, members of the community, young and old, engaged in additional acts of service, individually and collectively, to contribute to the one million-hour pledge.

The national milestone exceeding one million hours will be revealed at a special event to be held today at the Ismaili Centre, Toronto celebrating Nawruz, the first day of Spring and the new year for millions of Muslim communities worldwide. Prime Minister Trudeau is expected to join members of various local communities, not-for-profit Ismaili CIVIC 150 partner organizations and volunteers to commemorate the special occasion around the Nawruz themes of renewal, hope and optimism.

The symmetry between Canadian and Ismaili Muslim values of voluntary service were highlighted by His Highness the Aga Khan in his historic address to the joint session of Parliament in Canada on February 27, 2014:

*"I have been impressed by recent studies showing the activity of voluntary institutions and not-for-profit organizations in Canada to be among the highest in the world. This Canadian spirit resonates with a cherished principle in Shia Ismaili culture — the importance of contributing one's individual energies on a voluntary basis to improving the lives of others. This is not a matter of philanthropy, but rather of self-fulfillment — 'enlightened self-fulfillment.'"*

To celebrate and honour the community's devotion to Canada, Ismaili CIVIC 150 will continue as an annual legacy initiative and as part of the Shia Ismaili community's responsibility and commitment to Canada.

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