

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Hundreds of thousands of people across the Emirates unite to Stand Up and Speak Out Against Poverty and Inequality

Dubai, October 17, 2007 - Over 100,516 people from all walks of life registered to participate in the 'Stand Up and Speak Out Campaign' in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Fujairah and Al Ain. Schools, companies, governmental institutions and humanitarian organisations joined millions around the world to raise their voice against poverty and inequality.

This year the United Nations hopes to break last year's record of 23.5 million people standing up within a 24-hour period. The United Nations recognises October 17th as World Poverty Eradication Day and on this day, in a two-minute pledge, people remind their governments to recommit to the goals set by the United Nations Millennium Development Campaign to end poverty and inequality around the globe.

The largest single group that registered for the Campaign in the UAE is the Al Habtoor group of companies, with 25,000 employees committing to the cause. They were joined by 2500 students from St. Mary's Church and another 7000 from the ETA Group of Companies.

In the UAE, this event was organised by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) along with IAHV and the Art of Living. The 'Stand Up and Speak Out' Campaign comes with the endorsement of HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, UN Messenger of Peace and the International Humanitarian City.

Referring to the Campaign, Dr Khaled Alloush, UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator in the UAE, said " Successful cases demonstrate that MDGs can be attained, only if, concentrated additional actions are taken immediately and sustained until 2015, especially the financial support from developed to developing countries. On the other hand, achieving MDGs requires the full commitment and collaboration of governments, UN and other multilateral organizations, NGOs and the private sector."

Addressing the press in a televised message, HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, UN Messenger of Peace and Chairperson of the International Humanitarian City said, "We live in a world that is driven by the communication age, so many causes and crusades



remain to a certain extent peripheral to peace. We must recognise that hunger is a grass roots issue and a root cause of social unrest. I am honoured to add my energy to a community that fights for making a better world for our children.”

Speaking of the mammoth effort that went into the organising of the event, Rugmani Prabhakar, Country coordinator IAHV, says, “Hundreds of volunteers from the IAHV and the Art of Living worked days and nights throughout an entire week to ensure that participants properly register, collect their Pledge and campaign ribbons and send photographic evidence and a report with the final number of participants to the organisers.” Sri Sri Ravishankar, the founder of Art of Living and the International Association for Human Values has said that such participation was essential to the success of the campaign. He said, “All the nations of the world have come together and have set up eight Millennium Development Goals, and it will remain just a dream if we don’t stand up and participate.”

About the United Nations Development Program (UNDP):

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. They are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. Progress towards the achievement, of the Millennium Development Goals, by 2015, is an integral part of UNDP's works

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About the International Association for Human Values:

The International Association for Human Values (IAHV) is an NGO established in Geneva in 1997 and holds special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.. Its Middle-Eastern headquarters was established at the Dubai Humanitarian City (now IHC) in 2003. Through programs educating people about shared values, the International Association for Human Values along with its sister organisation the Art of Living Foundation (AOL) has been working towards building healthy, sustainable communities in over 150 countries around the world. IAHV and AOL develop and promote programs of personal development to encourage the practice of human values in everyday life. It also has programs of community education that foster greater awareness of shared values among diverse cultures.

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About the International Humanitarian City:

International Humanitarian City (IHC) is a global humanitarian and aid hub, which aims to facilitate aid and development efforts by providing local and international humanitarian actors with facilities and services specifically designed to meet their needs. An independent free zone authority created by the Government of Dubai and chaired by HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, Wife of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE, Ruler of Dubai, IHC consolidates Dubai as an essential link in the humanitarian value chain. Leveraging the proven Dubai free zone model, IHC addresses the specific needs of the humanitarian aid and development community, while grouping them in a secure environment that fosters partnerships, social responsibility and global change. By co-locating, non-profit and commercial entities are encouraged to share best practices, increase their operational efficiencies and improve institutional learning. More than 52 UN agencies, non-governmental organisations and commercial companies are currently registered with IHC. IHC is a non-religious, non-political and non-profit organisation.

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