



PRESS RELEASE

UN Award for European Commission Humanitarian Aid Partner in Pakistan

BRUSSELS (22 June 2009) – The European Commission congratulates Development Workshop France (DWF) and Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FHA) for receiving the prestigious United Nations' Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction.

DWF received the Certificate of Distinction and FHA the Certificate of Merit. Both are longstanding partners of the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) working with local communities in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters and helping them to protect themselves against such disasters. Both are honoured for their comprehensive work in disaster risk reduction. This work includes, for example, Commission-funded and DWF-run preparedness projects in Vietnam demonstrating that preventive strengthening of buildings is cost-effective and efficient.

Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, said: *"I warmly congratulate Development Workshop France and Focus Humanitarian Assistance on winning this prestigious award. Better than just waiting for the next tragedy, the Commission is committed to supporting disaster risk reduction work. We are glad to have highly professional and dedicated partner organisations like DWF and FHA to help us improve the capacity of communities in developing countries at risk from natural disasters"*.

In 2008, Development Workshop France won the UN Habitat Award for its work preventing typhoon damage to housing in central Vietnam.

Focus Humanitarian Assistance is an affiliate of the Aga Khan Development Network. It received the Certificate of Merit for its disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness activities to reduce the vulnerability of over half a million people living in the mountainous northern areas of Pakistan.

The UN Sasakawa award for disaster reduction was established in 1986 by founding chairman of the Nippon Foundation, Mr Ryoichi Sasakawa. The award has three elements: the Laureate as well as a Certificate of Distinction and a Certificate of Merit. Previous laureates include, among others, the Global Fire Monitoring Center in Germany and Dr. Ian Davis from the UK.

Contact:

Tomas Niklasson, Political Counsellor +92-344-858.33.50

For further information: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm

For further information on the UN Sasakawa award for disaster reduction:

<http://www.unisdr.org/eng/sasakawa/sasakawa.html>