Excerpts: His Highness the Aga Khan on accountability

"I believe that there is no such thing as an underdeveloped country - only under-managed countries and for me the most important word is accountability. We must be accountable at all times to the organisations we serve and to the people we serve."

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 1986 CBC interview with Roy Bonisteel (Canada)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/3268/

"[Good government] is absolutely essential. I cannot think of anything more central to development than good government. I don’t think you can through external forces impose good government. Good government comes from within, not from outside -- and I would tend to say 'good governance' rather than 'good government'.

"(By 'governance' [the Aga Khan] means the competence with which both public and private sector entities are run), from higher education to the management of resources to intelligent and honest planning (with) clearly-stated objectives (and) answerability for the people who are responsible for running things."

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 1991 Financial Times Interview with William Dawkins and Edward Mortimer (London, United Kingdom)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/4462/
"Let me close these remarks by asking what may seem to be an impertinent question. How do we know whether these programs are actually working or not? How do we know whether they are improving? It would be very easy to mislead ourselves on this score and to assume that because we are trying hard, or spending significant sums of money, or are inspired by noble intentions, or are holding a lot of meetings -- we must therefore be making an effective impact. But this is not always the case. And that is why it is so important that all of us should be held accountable for the results we produce -- that our work should be measured by its observable, positive impact on the quality of people's lives."

His Highness the Aga Khan's 2007 address to the Enabling Environment Conference (Kabul, Afghanistan)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/8072/

"Performance ... is to me a key word where both social institutions and commercial enterprise are concerned."

His Highness the Aga Khan's 1982 Aga Khan Social and Development Institutions Luncheon address (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/2521/

"Society is ... likely to become more meritocratic, demanding performance at the highest levels of competence, and concomitant accountability."

His Highness the Aga Khan's 1992 address at the banquet hosted by the Vice-President of India (New Delhi, India)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/4571/
"One of the most familiar of Western political values is expressed in the phrase: 'Freedom of the Press'. I believe that Press Freedom, properly understood, is a universal human right. But we must be careful about how we define it and that it does not isolate the press from the rest of the social order. What is originally meant -- and properly still means for me -- is that the press should be free from the control or constraint of governments, and strong enough to resist all forms of intimidation. Why is this precept so important? Because the health of any government should depend on public evaluation of its work. Not even the most enlightened government can do this for itself. And only if a pluralistic press is allowed to report freely about any government, will the public be able to hold their governments accountable.

"The problem comes, of course, when Freedom of the Press is stretched beyond this meaning and used to shield the press -- not just from government interference, but from any sense of social accountability. And that is when press liberty turns into press license. Just as press freedom is a means for holding governments accountable, so must the press itself be held accountable for the way it does its work. Accountable to whom? To the political leaders of the moment? Never. To the larger community and the cultures that comprise it? Always -- provided we see the community not as a mere majority of the moment, but as an organic, pluralistic entity."

His Highness the Aga Khan's 1986 Commonwealth Press Union Conference Keynote Address (Cape Town, South Africa)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/5137/

"That the holder of a political office is accountable for his actions, is part of our faith. As it says in the Qur'an."

His Highness the Aga Khan's 2002 Spiegel Online Interview (1st), with Erich Follath (Germany) [Translation]
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/6515/
See also: His Highness the Aga Khan explains three imperatives for successful human endeavour


See also: His Highness the Aga Khan’s advices for leaders which enables sound national and community progress and development


Click here for this post in PDF format.