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PAKISTANI WOMEN'S CLIMBING CAMP POSTPONED UNTIL 2008

Current Events Force Alpine Club of Pakistan Officials to Make Difficult Decision, Hours before American Alpine Club Representatives Depart for Islamabad, Pakistan

Golden, Colorado, July 16, 2007—An eight-member team of American Alpine Club representatives was set to depart for Islamabad, Pakistan today for the much anticipated Pakistani Women's Climbing Camp. The main goal of the Camp – a collaborative project of the Alpine Club of Pakistan and the American Alpine Club – was to introduce Pakistani women to climbing and mountaineering in a socially acceptable manner. Plans included a two-week introductory mountaineering course for one-hundred women followed by an attempt on 19,619 foot Kusheikh Peak by a select number of the participants. The unfortunate news that the Camp must be postponed came just hours before the women's scheduled departure for this historic event.

The project's postponement came at a time of increased tension throughout Pakistan as a result of quickly developing current events. "When the siege of the [Red Mosque] started on July 4, many here were hopeful that the crises would be resolved through negotiations," says Nazir Sabir, president of the Alpine Club of Pakistan. "[Then], on July 10 reports of blocking of the Karakoram Highway were received in addition to many disturbances in other areas as a reaction to the military response [to the siege]. For the present, much to our dismay and regret, we have decided to cancel the event as we are not aware as to how long the ramifications will continue."

"We were deeply saddened by this news," says team member Janet Bergman. "It is heartbreaking that this combination of circumstances could prevent an otherwise straightforward climbing course from taking place, but it also shows the importance of pursuing these collaborations. Many of us are even more motivated to be involved now, so if we have to wait until more settled times, then we are willing to wait."

In the weeks leading up to the Camp, many key areas of support were secured. Dozens of individuals contributed more than \$6,000 through the American Alpine Club, in addition to a special \$2,500 American Alpine Club challenge grant. Team member Charlotte Fox provided outstanding monetary and time contributions, despite an injury that would have inhibited her participation this year. While some donations had already been invested, the remainder will be applied to the postponed Camp.

The team wishes to thank the following for gear donations: Black Diamond; Cloudveil; Eastern Mountain Sports Climbing School; Exum Mountain Guides; Grivel USA; La Sportiva; Mountain Fund; Mountain Hardwear; Mountainsmith; Mountaintrip; Osprey; Patagonia; Sterling Rope Company; SUUNTO; and dozens of individuals who offered boots, crampons, ice axes, clothing and more for the participants.

More details about the program and future plans can be found on the team's blog: <http://www.behno.blogspot.com>.

About The American Alpine Club

Since 1902, the AAC has stood as the leading national organization devoted to climbers, and the areas they climb. The organization publishes the definitive annual record of the world's most significant climbs, the *American Alpine Journal*, and operates the Western Hemisphere's largest library and (soon to open) museum dedicated to alpine exploration. Building on a long line of significant conservation efforts, including the work of former AAC leaders John Muir and David Brower, the organization recently established the Alpine Conservation Partnership – the first global initiative to protect these vital ecosystems. To serve the climbing community, the AAC runs the Grand Teton Climbers' Ranch; offers major grants to fund climbing expeditions; provides rescue insurance, stages major events, and plays an internationally-recognized advocacy role. Members range from beginning climbers to a "who's who" of the world's most experienced mountaineers. For more information, visit: www.AmericanAlpineClub.org.

About the Alpine Club of Pakistan

Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP) was founded in 1974, by mountain lovers, as a Non-Governmental Sports Organization and national mountaineering federation. It is dedicated to the promotion of mountaineering and mountain related activities in Pakistan. The Club aims at providing facilities, including training, to mountain and nature lovers to enjoy the boundless beauty of Pakistan's mountains and participate in healthy adventure activities of climbing and mountaineering. The American Alpine Club and the Alpine Club of Pakistan share an exciting history starting with the first Ascent of Paiju Peak. It was during that expedition that American climbers Al Steck, Nick Clinch and others trained local Pakistani Porters, among them Nazir Sabir and Colonel Manzoor (both of whom are the primary organizers of the Women's Camp this summer), and then stood back while the Pakistanis claimed the first ascent of Paiju for themselves. The friendships created during those formative years have had a profound effect on all climbing in the Karakorum since. For more information, visit: www.alpineclub.org.pk.