



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

King Hussein Leadership Prize
Presented to Robert Freling of the Solar Electric Light Fund
Award Honors Leader's Transformative Impact on Environment

Washington, DC – March 27 – Her Majesty Queen Noor today presented the 2008 King Hussein Leadership Prize to Robert A. Freling, executive director of the Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF), at the Aspen Institute Energy and Environment Awards in Aspen, Colo. Each year the prize is awarded to an individual, institution or group who has demonstrated exceptional humanitarian leadership in promoting sustainable development, human rights, equity, and peace.

For the 2008 award, the King Hussein Foundation Board sought to honor a leader who has made a transformative impact on the environment. The Foundation cited Mr. Freling's work with SELF and its goal of providing solar electricity to some of the two billion people in the world who are living beyond the reach of an electric power grid as "inspiring and honorable."

In honoring Mr. Freling, Her Majesty Queen Noor said: "Robert Freling is a visionary leader working at the intersection of environmental stewardship and sustainable human development, whose work has had a transformative impact on the quality of life, opportunity, and the security and stability of communities around the world. SELF helps whole villages leapfrog from no reliable energy to affordable, green power that in turn provides access to other basic rights – clean water, education, healthcare and economic empowerment. Bob's commitment and determination to abolish energy poverty around the globe embodies the humanitarian vision and indomitable spirit of King Hussein that we celebrate with this award."

Upon receiving the award, Mr. Freling said: "To be recognized by the King Hussein Foundation for my work with SELF is an extraordinary honor. This award validates our commitment to providing sustainable energy as a means of breaking the cycle of poverty and generating light and hope in some of the poorest, most marginalized parts of the world. Access to electricity, as an absolute prerequisite for development, has a vital role to play in the securing of peace, equality, and human rights for all."

The King Hussein Humanitarian Leadership Prize is an international award that was established in 1999 to honor His Late Majesty King Hussein's unique gifts as a regional, national and international leader. The Prize recognizes extraordinary contributions to the ideals which His Majesty's leadership inspired in Jordan, the Middle East and throughout the world.

Previous winners include Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders); the first prize was awarded to Professor Muhammad Yunus, founder and creator of the Grameen Bank.

Steven L. Swig, the chair of SELF's board of directors, said, "I believe fervently in SELF's mission to bring clean, renewable energy to the developing world, and I am so pleased that Bob's dedicated and visionary leadership has been recognized in this exceptional way."

SELF is a Washington, DC-based nonprofit working to combat climate change and reduce energy poverty by bringing solar power and wireless Internet access to remote rural villages in the developing world. Mr. Freling joined SELF in 1994 and was named executive director in 1997. Under his leadership, SELF has pioneered innovative applications of solar power such as for drip irrigation in Benin, telemedicine in the Amazon rainforest, vaccine refrigeration in Rwanda, online distance learning in South Africa, and microenterprise development in Nigeria. These successful pilot projects culminated in SELF's whole-village approach, or Solar Integrated Development model. Since 1990, SELF has completed projects in 18 countries, making it a leader among non-governmental organizations in realizing practical and cost-effective alternative energy solutions for rural villagers.

About SELF

The Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF) is a Washington, DC-based nonprofit organization working to end global poverty by bringing solar power and Internet access to the world's poorest people in remote rural areas. SELF utilizes clean, renewable electricity to reduce greenhouse emissions while improving the health, education and welfare of the two billion people living in energy poverty. Since its founding in 1990, SELF has launched sustainable projects in 18 countries, including Benin, Brazil, China, India, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. For more information, please visit www.self.org.

About the King Hussein Foundation

The King Hussein Foundation was founded in 1999 as a nonprofit, non-governmental organization to build on His Majesty the late King Hussein's humanitarian vision and legacy in Jordan and abroad. The foundation fosters peace and security through programs that promote cross cultural exchanges, education and leadership, economic empowerment and participatory decision making. For more information, please visit www.kinghusseinfoundation.org.

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