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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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World Sight Day 2008 Marks Bright Future for Seva Foundation and Global Blindness Prevention

Fresh from the Clinton Global Initiative and in its 30th year of service, Seva Foundation emerges as leader in global blindness prevention

BERKELEY, CA (October 9, 2008) – Today, [Seva Foundation](#) joins the global health community in observing World Sight Day to raise awareness about blindness, which ranks among the most debilitating yet preventable of public health issues.

While approximately 314 million people worldwide suffer serious vision impairment, the World Health Organization reports that the overwhelming majority of those cases—75%—could have been prevented or can still be cured. Of those cases, 90% occur in the developing world.

For thirty years, Seva Foundation has been a pioneering force in innovative eye care and continues to lead the fight against preventable blindness through its unique Global Sight Network, which supports high quality, self-sustaining community based eye care programs targeting the world's poorest populations throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

"Seva has a well-earned reputation for creating innovative, sustainable programs that benefit some of the world's most vulnerable populations," said Mark Lancaster, Executive Director of Seva Foundation. "The need for these programs has gotten so enormous, that we wanted to take our work to the next level."

Having recently unveiled its bold new sight campaign at the prestigious Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), Seva Foundation has been a major player in pushing blindness into the forefront as a global health and development priority. At CGI, Seva committed to a plan that will revolutionize eye care in the developing world to ensure that by 2015, an additional one million blind people receive sight-restoring cataract surgery each year.

"Building up to CGI, we at Seva dug deep into our collective experiences as field workers, advocates and public health experts to develop a new, specific and measurable approach to the global challenge of blindness," said Dr. Suzanne Gilbert, Director of Seva's Center for Innovation in Eye Care. "We are thrilled with the outcome from CGI and can't wait to begin this new campaign!"

As a result of its strong showing at CGI, Seva will launch its new campaign designed to improve eye care on several different fronts. The campaign will develop an eye care workforce and leadership, especially with women. It will also transform 100+ community eye care facilities through business development, build smart technology and innovative research and lead regional and global advocacy campaigns to raise awareness around the issues of eye care and gender equity.

For more information about Seva's *So One Million Eyes See Again* campaign, please visit:
www.seva.org/cgi

About Seva Foundation

Seva Foundation is most widely known for its innovative eye care programs in Asia and Africa, which have helped nearly three million blind people to see again through affordable cataract surgeries. In Guatemala and Mexico, Seva works with indigenous communities to provide the tools and training needed to sustain clean water systems, health care, and educational opportunities. Here in the U.S., Seva partners with Native American communities that are committed to building healthy communities, sustaining cultural values, and protecting the environment.

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