

AFGHAN LINKS

ISSUE – 7 – 21ST February 2005 (TOTAL NO. 16)

Afghan Links is a free newsletter for readers who have a keen interest in Afghanistan, its history, people and culture. It invites news and articles from anyone who wishes to create and maintain constructive links between Afghanistan and other countries by sharing their expertise, information and ideas in any field.

CONTENTS home

ABUSE OF AFGHAN PRISONERS

- Troops destroyed Afghanistan abuse photos [page 2](#)
- An Open Letter to US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld – December 13, 2004 [page 2](#)

CHILDREN

Cold may have killed 1,000 Afghan children [page 3](#)

GOVERNMENTS' AID PROMISES

ActionAid / EURODAD (European Network on Debt and Development) / Oxfam paper - EU Heroes and Villains [page 4](#)

INVESTMENT

Afghanistan Investment Workshop- March 14-15, 2005, Kabul-Afghanistan [page 5](#)

MEDIA

- Call For Nominations - IWMF Courage In Journalism Awards And Lifetime Achievement Award [page 5](#)
- Independent Radio Sector Continues down the Path towards Self-Sufficiency [page 6](#)
- Internews Report – Spring 2005 [page 7](#)

MONEY TRANSFER

- Western Union - SENDING MONEY to Afghanistan [page 7](#)
- Crown Agents Financial Services Limited [page 8](#)

RAILWAYS

Iran wants railway line to Pakistan through Afghanistan [page 8](#)

RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction en Afghanistan - Afghanistan Agriculture and Rural Development Community Platform - Phillip Chabot [page 8](#)

SECURITY

PRT - Bamyan - Subject: DSS CH Security Advisory – White City Bamyan City, Demonstration –UPDATE Importance: High [page 9](#)

TALIBAN

4 getting Afghan amnesty - All were leaders of Taliban, agree to Karzai's rule [page 9](#)

ABUSE OF AFGHAN PRISONERS

- **Troops destroyed Afghanistan abuse photos**

In a case that echoes the Abu Ghraib prison scandal in Iraq, US soldiers in Afghanistan posed before cameras while threatening to shoot prisoners in the head, shoving a detainee into a wall, and in "trophy shots" with the corpse of an enemy fighter who invaded their camp last year.

Military documents released on Thursday say the American soldiers, fearing "another public outrage", destroyed many of the photos and video images after photographs of prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib were beamed around the world, resulting in widespread shock and criticism.

The remaining images were discovered by chance last year during the routine cleaning of a captain's office at Bagram airfield in Afghanistan. The photos were apparently shot at a small base in Afghanistan around the same time as the abuses at the large prison outside Baghdad triggered an internal army investigation.

This led to preliminary charges against eight soldiers for dereliction of duty after the army decided that more serious assault charges would not hold up.

It was unclear, however, whether the eight were prosecuted or disciplined. It was also unclear whether charges were brought against supervising officers in Afghanistan who admitted they ordered the destruction of many of the photos after the Abu Ghraib scandal erupted.

The army said on Thursday when asked about the case it "remains committed to addressing identified problems in detainee operations and to communicating the progress to the public".

Hundreds of pages of internal army investigative records, made public as a result of a public records lawsuit by the American Civil Liberties Union, recount interrogations of dozens of soldiers who were confronted with the photos. Most admitted to military investigators that they were posing in them. Many acknowledged that their behaviour was wrong.

The documents are the latest allegations of US military abuse of detainees in Afghanistan. Military investigators are investigating a December 2002 incident in which two detainees died after being captured and beaten.

American military investigators have also been looking into allegations of murder and torture involving an 18-year-old Afghan army recruit who died while in US custody last year. The inquiry has also focused on the alleged torture of seven other Afghan soldiers.

At least eight prisoners have died in US military custody in Afghanistan since the US-led invasion in 2001, military officials and documents say.

In the newly disclosed case, the images are said to show US soldiers "hazing" fellow troops by dressing them up as detainees with their hands cuffed and sandbags over their heads, then dousing them with water and rolling them through the mud. The soldiers said this was done to celebrate birthdays and promotions.

While it is not known what activities were depicted in the destroyed photos, the surviving images from Firebase Tcyz, near the Afghan village of Dah Rah Wod, do not show the kind of sexual humiliation of prisoners that was a hallmark of the sensational disclosures at Abu Ghraib.

Also, the Afghanistan case involved regular army troops rather than reservists.

The Abu Ghraib scandal became public last year and it appears that at that time many of the Fort Drum soldiers began destroying their pictures.

"After seeing the problems they had in Iraq I knew this was a problem and should have never been done," a specialist said. "I realised there would be another public outrage if these photographs got out so they were destroyed". **Source:** *By Richard Serrano* Washington (The Los Angeles Times)18. February 2005, 19:30

AND TO REMIND EVERYONE THAT ON 13TH DECEMBER 2004 – BRAD ADAMS – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH SENT THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO DONALD RUMSFELD. [home](#)

- **An Open Letter to US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld - December 13, 2004**

Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, 1000 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld,

We are writing to you regarding U.S.-administered detention facilities in Afghanistan. We are troubled by new allegations of serious abuse by U.S. military personnel and by the failure of your office to make public the results of investigations into past abuses and take adequate steps to

hold abusers accountable. In most cases of which we are aware, the Department of Defense has launched criminal investigations only after particular abuses received media attention. These investigations have proceeded extremely slowly and in excessive secrecy. An internal Pentagon investigation of detention operations in Afghanistan, conducted by Brig. Gen. Charles H. Jacoby, has been completed, but remains classified, unlike similar reports on abuses in Iraq.

Six detainees are now known to have died in U.S. custody in Afghanistan—including four known cases of murder or manslaughter—and former detainees have made scores of other claims of torture and other mistreatment. Some of the cases took place over two years ago. Yet to our knowledge, the U.S. government has conducted only a handful of criminal investigations, and has charged only two people with any crime in these cases.

The government's failure to hold its personnel accountable for serious abuses has spawned a culture of impunity among some personnel. And as you know, some of the personnel involved in earlier abuses in Afghanistan have now been implicated in later abuses in Iraq. Over nine months ago, in March 2004, we issued a report, "Enduring Freedom": Abuses by U.S. Forces in Afghanistan, focusing on arrest and detention procedures by U.S. forces in Afghanistan. The report documented cases of U.S. personnel arbitrarily detaining civilians, using excessive force during arrests of non-combatants, and mistreating detainees. Detainees held at military bases in 2002 and 2003 described being beaten severely by guards and interrogators, deprived of sleep for extended periods, and intentionally exposed to extreme cold, as well as other inhumane and degrading treatment.

The report discussed three deaths known at the time to have occurred in U.S. custody: the death of a detainee in Asadabad in June 2003, and the deaths of two detainees at Bagram airbase in December 2002 which were ruled as homicides by U.S. military pathologists.

The detention system in Afghanistan continues to operate outside the rule of law. The United States continues to hold Afghan detainees in legal limbo and in many cases incommunicado, in violation of U.S. obligations under the laws of armed conflict and applicable Afghan law. There are fewer recent complaints about the central detention facility at Bagram air base, where serious abuses had occurred in the past. However, allegations of abuse and arbitrary detention continue to surface at forward operating bases, such as those near Gardez, Khost, Urgon, Ghazni, and Jalalabad. **For the full letter please see ATTACHMENT 1.7.**

Source: Brad Adams Executive Director - Human Rights Watch.

[home](#)

CHILDREN

Cold may have killed 1,000 Afghan children

More than 1,000 Afghan children may have died of cold-related illnesses in a snow-bound Afghan province and the toll could rise if more relief supplies are not sent quickly, an international aid group has said.

Survey teams sent to 16 villages in a single district of Ghor province this week recorded an average of five deaths of children under five in each, most in the past two weeks, said Paul Hicks, director for Catholic Relief Services in western Afghanistan.

He said on Friday CRS feared the toll in Shahrak district could be far higher as most of its 250 villages could not be reached because routes were blocked by snow. Two other districts with a similar number of villages were also inaccessible by road, he said.

"I'd say several hundred and perhaps more children have died, and perhaps more children will die if they cannot get access to medicines and other relief supplies," Hicks said. "Our fear is that more than 1,000 deaths could be a conservative estimate."

Ikramuddin Rezazada, the deputy governor of Ghor province, said the government in the provincial capital of Chaghcharan had so far confirmed 136 deaths, mostly of children, in four districts -- Shahrak, Tulak, Sargar and Tuera.

He said the province-wide toll could be around 300.

Rezazada said the government had recorded 35 child deaths in Shahrak in the past three days, but the number could be higher. The deaths were caused by illnesses including whooping cough and measles, he said.

Another 39 deaths have been reported in Herat province, bringing the number of fatalities attributed to cold weather throughout Afghanistan in the past month to more than 200.

"We cannot get in touch with other districts far from Chaghcharan. We need the government to send in aid by air, otherwise Ghor will face a big disaster," Rezazada said.

Hicks said there was a need for helicopter flights to the snow-bound districts of Tulak and Sargar to assess the extent of the emergency and bring in relief supplies.

Maarten Roest, spokesman for the U.N.'s World Food Programme, said it was seeking the help of the U.S. military to fly in 20 tonnes of emergency food supplies each to Shahrak and Tulak.

He said trucks carrying of 140 tonnes of food had been unable to reach the districts because of heavy snow.

"We are trying to find out where food is needed and how we can get it there as quickly as possible," he said. "This is a very severe winter where the food needs of people at risk are rising." Afghanistan has received snowfall throughout the country this winter following several years of drought.

Hicks said Ghor had been particularly badly hit by the drought and the winter conditions were the worst officials could remember for many years. **Source:** By David Brunnstrom KABUL (Reuters) - 18. February 2005, 19:28. [home](#)

GOVERNMENTS' AID PROMISES

ActionAid / EURODAD (European Network on Debt and Development) / Oxfam paper - EU Heroes and Villains

Which countries are living up to their promises on aid, trade, and debt?

Published in association with Nagle Community, Presentation Justice Network (Ireland); Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary; Wingspread International; Columban Sisters, Ireland; Children in Crossfire International; International Federation Terre des Hommes; Trocaire; Austrian National Platform of Development NGOs; BOND (UK National Platform of Development NGOs); Ibis

Summary (extract)

2005 is already an extraordinary year. The tsunami in the Indian Ocean on 26 December 2004 caused widespread devastation, killed hundreds of thousands of people, left millions homeless, and plunged already poor countries into even deeper poverty. While the disaster has caused great devastation, the global wave of solidarity and public generosity that followed it offers grounds for hope. The outpouring of aid to those affected showed just what the international community is capable of when it acts in unison. The destruction caused by the tsunami was more than a 'natural disaster': the impact was made far worse by the prevalence of extreme poverty and marginalisation in the region, and it is generally recognised that the affected countries will need significant support for many years if they are to recover. But it should also be recognised that the lack of international action to reform debt, aid, and trade policies has a similarly devastating impact on poor countries and requires the same level of solidarity and determination by the world community. Every week, poverty kills more people than the Asian tsunami. The question is: was the reaction to the tsunami a one-off event, or will the concerns of the poor be a continuing priority for the rich world?

2005 could be the year when we make poverty history. The European Union will start to discuss how it can help the poorest countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) when Development Ministers meet on 15th February. The G8 Summit, scheduled to take place in the UK in July, will focus on the particular problems of Africa. In September in New York, UN members will review progress towards achieving the MDGs, which include fighting hunger, reducing infant deaths, and expanding access to primary education. To conclude the year, the World Trade Organisation will meet in Hong Kong to discuss reform of world trade rules that should benefit the poorest communities.

It won't be easy. Rich countries are way off-track in terms of meeting their commitments to support poor country efforts to meet the MDGs: today they give half as much aid, as a proportion of their income, as they did in the 1960s; poor countries are still labouring under the burden of massive debts; and the world trade system is in crisis – characterised by mistrust, a lack of transparency, and rules which are rigged against the poor. Co-operation and a concerted effort are essential if 2005 is to 'inaugurate a decade of bold action', as urged by Jeffrey Sachs, economic adviser to the UN Secretary General, in a recent report. The EU will be absolutely key to the success or failure of this venture.

In this paper we consider the heroes and villains in the EU's 25-member bloc. We ask: are they collectively doing enough to make sure that the EU seizes the opportunity to make poverty history?

The EU must take positive action on three key issues: improving the quantity and quality of international aid; easing the burden of unsustainable debt; and making the rules of world trade more fair.....

[For the full report please see ATTACHMENT 2.7 or go to http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/issues/debt_aid/eu_heroes_villains.htm

Footnotes

1 In preparing this report, we were very surprised to discover that EU countries do not all publish information about their policies and performance on aid, debt, trade and agricultural spending in a form that enables easy comparisons across countries; indeed, some essential information is not even published at all and often even the most authoritative source - the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - has received and published several different statistics for the same activity in the same year. We were therefore able to develop only a partial picture of the ways in which EU countries use public money to advance development in the poorest countries in the world.

Date of original publication February 2005.

[home](#)

INVESTMENT

Afghanistan Investment Workshop- March 14-15, 2005, Kabul-Afghanistan

The first Investment Workshop on sectoral promotion in Afghanistan, a two day workshop will take place on March 14-15, 2005 in Kabul. The main goal of the workshop is to promote investment in the targeted sectors. The sectors are as follows:

- Agro-business and agro processing
- Construction material
- Carpets

The workshop will have representatives from companies, domestic and foreign investors, high ranking government officials, business organizations, donors, banks, and NGO's.

The first day will involve high ranking politicians and key speakers. It will address the investment climate and investment conditions. The second day will be held in three parallel workshops, each addressing one sector by inputs about investment conditions and examples of investment projects. In each workshop, the format will be very interactive to allow the private sector be the main player. It will give domestic and foreign investors the chance to network and a comprehensive overview not only about the political framework, but also other conditions like financial services, industrial land etc.

The workshop will be hosted by Afghan Investment Support Agency (AISA) and German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ) under the framework of Ministry of Commerce. The workshop will lead to a major investment conference (and exhibition) in autumn 2005, which will be organized by AISA and Federation of German Industries (BDI).

To confirm your participation in "Afghanistan Investment Workshop", March 14-15, 2005, please fill in the attached Registration form – please see ATTACHMENT 3.7.

Note:

The registration fee is 100 USD.

All the payment instructions are mentioned in the registration form.

AISA license holders are exempt from registration fee.

[home](#)

MEDIA

- ***Call For Nominations - IWMF Courage In Journalism Awards And Lifetime Achievement Award***

The International Women's Media Foundation is seeking nominations from around the world for its 2005 ***Courage in Journalism Awards*** and ***Lifetime Achievement Award***.

The *Courage in Journalism Awards* honor women working in the news media who have demonstrated extraordinary strength of character in pursuing their profession under difficult or dangerous circumstances, such as government oppression, political pressure, physical danger or other intimidating obstacles. This prestigious award carries a cash prize of US\$5,000 and a crystal sculpture which symbolizes freedom and courage.

The *Lifetime Achievement Award* recognizes a woman journalist who has a pioneering spirit and whose determination has paved the way for future generations of women in the media. Recipients also demonstrate a strong commitment to freedom of the press and a solid record of accomplishments in journalism. A crystal sculpture is presented with this award. The IWMF will present three women journalists with *Courage in Journalism Awards* and one woman journalist with the *Lifetime Achievement Award* at ceremonies in October 2005 in New York City and Los Angeles. The International Women's Media Foundation is celebrating its Fifteenth Anniversary Year in 2004-2005. Founded in 1990, the IWMF is a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to strengthen the role of women in the news media worldwide and help protect freedom of the press.

Eligible candidates: For both awards, candidates can be full-time, part-time or freelance women journalists working in print, broadcast or online media working in any country. Candidates for the *Lifetime Achievement Award* can be retired journalists.

To nominate a journalist: Please note that self-nominations are not accepted. All nominations must be in English and include:

- Completed nomination form (available at www.iwmf.org/courage/nominate.php)
- Nomination statement completed by a professional associate
- Brief biography of the candidate highlighting her work as it relates to the *Courage in Journalism Awards* or the *Lifetime Achievement Award*
- Resume or CV of the candidate
- Examples of the candidate's work (details on the nomination form)
- Two letters of support from professional associates

Deadline: All nominations must be submitted between January 1, 2005 and March 15, 2005. *Completed nominations, including all supporting documents, must be received by the IWMF no later than March 15, 2005.* Nominations can be submitted by regular mail, courier service, fax or E-mail. Winners will be announced in May 2005.

Questions: Please contact Charity Fain, Project Manager, IWMF, 1625 K Street, NW, Suite 1275, Washington, DC 20006, USA. Tel. +1 (202) 496-1992, fax +1 (202) 496-1977, E-mail: courage@iwmf.org.

Brief bios of all previous award winners are available at www.iwmf.org/courage/awardees.php

[home](#)

- **Independent Radio Sector Continues down the Path towards Self-Sufficiency**

As part of its ongoing strategy to ensure the long-term sustainability of the independent radio sector, Internews recently hired local business development officers in Herat City, Ghazni, and Bamiyan. The business development officers will seek out local advertising revenues on behalf of their respective radio stations, thereby helping stations to pay salaries, cover operating expenses, and enable future expansion.

Training of the new employees occurred in Kabul during a two-day workshop. Mrs. Gulalaley from the Voice of Afghan Women radio station joined the course as well. The workshop introduced the fundamentals of business by covering topics such as marketing, financial reporting, sales techniques, and pricing of radio advertisements. The trainees benefited from Rohullah Jafari conveying his experience gained as a local business development officer in Mazar-e Sharif during the previous five months. At the end of the second day, seasoned business development officers from the Internews Kabul office acted out a sales pitch with a prospective client. This performance illustrated the techniques taught during the workshop and trainees agreed that it was the culmination of the workshop.

The trainees left Kabul highly motivated and eager to work with their respective stations. Tawab Quaney from Radio Sahar in Herat said, "I am thankful to the Internews Business Development Department. This short workshop was really useful and taught many basic things about business. I will try my best to support the station."

Business development officers operating in Mazar-e Sharif, Balkh City, and Khost have produced impressive results since the local business development scheme was implemented in August 2004. The revenues obtained from shopkeepers and small businesses have enabled these stations to purchase much needed generator fuel and help pay for the transportation costs incurred by journalists.

For more information on the activities of the business development department or to receive a rate card, please contact noah.miller@internews.org. **Source:** Internews – 20th February 2004.

[home](#)

- **Internews Report – Spring 2005**

IN THIS ISSUE

FOCUS: MEDIA IN AFGHANISTAN

[\(PDF version of the Spring 2005 newsletter\)](#)

[Jacki Lyden's Afghan Diary](#)

[Providing Radio for Eight Million Afghans](#)

[Inside Internews](#)

[Editor's Note: Media in Afghanistan](#)

[Bushkin, Pennekamp to Co-Chair Board](#)

[About Internews](#)

[home](#)

MONEY TRANSFER

- **Western Union - SENDING MONEY to Afghanistan**

Note: This service may not be available at all locations.

Visit your nearest **Western Union**[®]

Fill out a Send Money form

Provide payment to the clerk in cash - including the amount to be sent and appropriate fee(s). Identification may be required. Additional restrictions may apply.

Get the receipt that includes your Money Transfer Control Number (MTCN).

Give the MTCN to the person picking up the funds for extra convenience. A test question may be required by law or may be used to help Western Union identify the receiver of the funds.

RECEIVING MONEY at an Agent Location

Visit your nearest Western Union

Fill out a Receive Money form.

For faster service contact your sender for the Money Transfer Control Number (MTCN).

Present the completed form and valid identification to the clerk. Additional restrictions may apply.

Currency Available

Money transfers may be paid out in: Afghani

Click below for important requirements pertaining to money transfers

<http://www.westernunion.com/info/intlCountryInfoIndex.asp?country=AF>

For a list of Western Union Agent Locations/Addresses in Afghanistan please see ATTACHMENT 4.7.

[home](#)

- **Crown Agents Financial Services Limited**

Multi-Currency Banking and Payment Services

Current accounts are available with us in all the major currencies and many other traded currencies. Accounts can be operated through our free internet banking service, e-banking@crownagents, which provides secure and constant account access.

Clients using our Banking and Payment Services benefit from:-

A dedicated Account Manager, assigned to ensure we provide a reliable, efficient and personal banking service with the flexibility to meet your specific requirements.

The ability to make [payments](#) worldwide - in all major [currencies](#) as well as other traded and exotic currencies. Full supporting documentation can be provided for each payment made.

Administered payment services for international payments of salaries, [pensions](#), [student grants](#) and other standing order payments worldwide with payment schedules providing full documentation.

Comprehensive account statements available by SWIFT, e-banking@crownagents, post or fax.

Marketable amounts can be placed on call or fixed deposit to earn higher rates of interest when current account balances are not required to meet payments helping to maximise the return on your funds.

Advance facilities on current accounts with credit terms depending on market conditions.

Contact Us: House 68, Street 13, Wazir Akbar Khan, Kabul. Tel: **Mobile: +93 (0) 79001569**

email: ca_kabul@ceretechs.com

contact: **John Pullinger, Manager & Operations Director**

<http://www.crownagentsbank.com/default.asp?step=4&pid=818>

[home](#)

RAILWAYS

Iran wants railway line to Pakistan through Afghanistan

Iran plans to construct a railway line linking Iran with Pakistan through Afghanistan, a step that will connect Afghanistan to the international market.

The proposal to construct a railway line from Turbat e Jam in Iran to Pakistan through Afghanistan was discussed in a meeting of Iranian and Afghan officials in the Western city of Herat on Monday. Senior officials from Iran's Ministry of Finance were in Afghanistan to discuss the financial details of the project.

Mohammad Ullah Afzali, a spokesperson for the Herat governor told Pajhwok Afghan News: "the 207-km railway starts from Sangan area of Iran to Pakistan through the border city of Islam Qala in Herat."

On the importance of the project for Afghanistan, Herat Governor, Sayed Mohammad Khairkhwa, told Pajhwok: "This project will have an extraordinary importance in terms of our economy and we are ready to cooperate in every way on the proposal". **Source:** HERAT, Feb. 15, - By Ahmad Ehsan Sarwaryar (Pajhwok Afghan News).

[home](#)

RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction en Afghanistan - Afghanistan Agriculture and Rural Development Community Platform - Phillip Chabot

The purpose of the Afghanistan Agriculture and Rural Development Community Platform is to facilitate the sharing and transfer of information about the agriculture and rural sector in Afghanistan. Recently there has been a great deal of work done to better understand different elements of the rural sector in Afghanistan. UNFAO, USAID, DFID, and various NGO's have all completed different evaluations and studies of different facets of the rural sector in Afghanistan. For various reasons however, this information is not shared and disseminated as widely and as effectively as it might be; and individuals looking to find out what work has been done probably encounter more difficulty than they need to.

The site is intended to promote a wider discussion between all parties working in the Afghan rural sector. The current effort is a work in progress, and the parties currently involved are open to expanded collaboration with other individuals and organizations having an interest in working on the further development of this platform.

The site is a collaborative pilot effort between members of Mercy Corps Afghanistan, the Agha Khan Foundation Afghanistan, and the Eldis Programme at the Institute for Development Studies, Sussex. (Photo credit: USAID)

Related Links:

- [Afghanistan Agriculture and Rural Development Community Platform](#)
- [dgAfghanistan Resources: Agriculture and Food Security](#)
- [Database of Agriculture Projects in Afghanistan](#)

<http://community.eldis.org/afghanistan/>

[home](#)

SECURITY

PRT - Bamyan - Subject: DSS CH Security Advisory - White City Bamyan City, Demonstration –UPDATE Importance: High

The demonstration has formed at the mosque, at around 0915 and is proceeding on foot towards the governors office/police station at this time. There are supposed to be some 250 persons in the demonstration, all peaceful at the moment. The intent is to demonstrate their case (protesting against the removal of the old deputy chief police, Abdul Rahman, and the governor, Aliyar) and to hand over petitions at both, the government offices and UNAMA office.

There are also plans among the demonstrators to have a gathering at the mosque tonight (no specific time mentioned) to discuss the issue. There is also an unconfirmed report of another demonstration in support of the new governor, timing and venue unknown, to be confirmed. Police have increased the guard strength at the UN compounds, all quiet at the moment.

Christian Friedrichs, AFSCO Bamyan, Central Highland, Afghanistan

Office: 0039083124 - ext: 6486

Sat: 0087376362490

Thuraya: 008821651110790

Mobile: 0093(0)79402576

E-mail: friedrichs@un.org christian.friedrichs@undp.org

[home](#)

TALIBAN

4 getting Afghan amnesty - All were leaders of Taliban, agree to Karzai's rule

Four senior leaders of the Taliban have accepted a reconciliation offer from the Afghan government, a Western official with direct knowledge of the deal said Tuesday.

Under the agreement, which the official said will likely be announced within days, the men recognized the legitimacy of President Hamid Karzai's government in exchange for assurances that they will not face arrest by Afghan or foreign security forces.

The official identified the four as Abdul Hakim Mujahid, formerly the Taliban's envoy to the United Nations; Arsullah Rahmani, former deputy minister of higher education and a former commander in southeastern Paktika province; Rahmatullah Wahidyar, former deputy minister of refugees and returnees; and Fawzi, former charge d'affaires at the Afghan Embassy in Saudi Arabia and then first secretary at the Afghan Embassy in Pakistan. Like many Afghans, Fawzi uses only one name.

All four had fled to neighboring Pakistan after U.S. forces and Afghan militias drove the Taliban from power in late 2001, the official said.

Karzai's spokesman, Jawed Ludin, refused to identify the former Taliban officials involved but confirmed that they recently accepted the president's offer and are in Kabul.

Twenty-two low-level Taliban members in several provinces have agreed to lay down their arms as part of a similar reconciliation arrangement, said the Western official, who spoke on the

condition of anonymity because the Afghan government has the lead role in the process.

Karzai and U.S. officials have repeatedly stressed that former followers of the Taliban are eligible for such arrangements, with the exception of an estimated 100 to 150 known to have associated with terrorist groups such as al-Qaida or to have committed atrocities during the fundamentalist Islamic militia's rule from 1996 to 2001. **Source:** Washington Post, Feb. 16, 2005 12:00 AM, KABUL, Afghanistan. [home](#)

If you want further information on any of the above subjects please email Jeanne Bryer at Afghanlinks@aol.com

NB. All information contained here identifies the source and is shared with readers in good faith. If you find any incorrect details please let me know and they will be rectified immediately. *Afghan Links* is produced by Jeanne Bryer who formerly worked for the British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group and who currently works for Khorasan Orphanage in Kabul and the Kathy Evans Afghan Education Trust. If you no longer wish to receive the Afghan Links Newsletter please send an email to Jeanne Afghanlinks@aol.com and your address will be removed.

