

BHF Newsletter

E-News for Friends of the BHF: September 2003

Honorary Co-Chairmen George F. Russell, Jr. The Honorable John C. Whitehead

The Business Humanitarian Forum brings the resources, energy and creativity of the private sector to bear on the world's most pressing humanitarian problems, promoting economic development, human security and well-being.

HEADLINES

Afghan Generics S.A. Established At Signing Ceremony at BHF in Presence of Afghan Ambassador

Afghan Generics S.A., a new private sector company, was established at a signing ceremony at BHF headquarters in Geneva on July 15, in the presence of Afghan Ambassador Dr. Shamsuzzakir Kazemi. The agreement setting up the company was signed by the BHF, the European Generic medicines Association (EGA), and Dr. Karim Baz, the CEO-designate of the company. The agreement will be signed separately by the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) country office in Kabul.

Afghan Generics has been developed as a private sector reconstruction project assembled by the BHF in cooperation with the UNDP Country Office in Kabul, based on a donation of generic medicine manufacturing equipment provided by the EGA. EGA will also provide, free of charge, training for the company's technical personnel, plus managerial advice and guidance for one year, and an initial supply of ingredients for the medicines to be produced.

Construction of the Afghan Generics plant will begin soon in Kabul. Production will respond to the serious shortage of medicines in Afghanistan, and will ensure low-cost quality medicines as well as a number of jobs for Afghans. The company will be owned by private sector Afghan citizens.

In commenting on the ceremony, Ambassador Kazemi said he was overcome with emotion and gratitude to those who had worked to create this new company, which would respond directly to one of the most critical needs of his country.

Dr. Mohamed Karim Baz is a medical doctor and businessman in Kabul, who was nominated to fill the leadership role of Afghan Generics S.A. in consultation with the Afghan government. Afghan Generics will offer employment opportunities and vocational training to Afghan technicians. The company will also serve as a business model for good corporate practices and cost-effective methods for further business development in Afghanistan.

Signing of Afghan Generics Project Document by UNDP and Minister of Health in Kabul

In a related event, the Afghan Minister of Health, Dr. Sohaila Siddiq and Mr. Ercan Murat, head of the UNDP Country Office in Afghanistan, signed the Project Document for Afghan Generics S.A. in Kabul on July 19, 2003, thus giving this project official recognition as a key element of the reconstruction of Afghanistan's productive infrastructure and development of the private sector.

Visit by Foreign Policy Advisor to Afghan President Hamid Karzai

The Foreign Policy Advisor to Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Mr. Yahya Maroofi, visited the BHF on July 1, for a briefing on BHF projects in his country. The BHF staff briefed Mr Maroofi on the BHF's objectives and program, focusing on its work in re-developing the Afghan private sector in cooperation with the UNDP Country Office in Kabul. Mr. Maroofi recognized that stimulating the private sector is an essential part of the post-conflict reconstruction effort, and expressed his government's gratitude for BHF's work on specific private sector projects.

Liechtenstein Seminar

At the request of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), and the Liechtenstein Institute, the BHF organized a discussion panel in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, on September 5, on the subject of "Business and Conflict." The panel, which was part of a seminar entitled Business and Security After 11 September 2001; Protecting the Legitimate and Blocking the Illegitimate," was moderated by the BHF, and included speakers from the DeBeers Group, Lundin Oil, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Its purpose was to inform an interested Liechtenstein audience of the ways in which companies can respond positively in situations of conflict. The BHF considers that its post-conflict reconstruction efforts contribute in important ways to transforming societies prone to conflict into societies which can develop economically and socially, and reach real stability and prosperity.

UN Chronicle article

At the invitation of the UN Chronicle, the official periodical of the UN system, the BHF contributed an article on its innovative model for private sector development projects to the autumn 2003, issue no. 3, edition. The article, entitled "The Business Humanitarian Forum's Innovative Programmes for Post-Conflict Reconstruction," outlines the BHF's project model for Afghanistan, including its cooperative relationship with UNDP.

Two BHF Projects in Finals of World Bank Competition

Two BHF projects have been selected for the final round of competition for the World Bank's Development Marketplace (DM). The projects, for a generic medicines production facility and a ground station for connectivity to the satellite system, will both

be developed in Afghanistan in cooperation with private sector partners. DM offers grants to organizations that develop innovative projects in cooperation with partners from governments, academia, organizations or the private sector. The projects must provide new services to the poor to help alleviate poverty and support the development of a strong, indigenous private sector in developing countries. Less than ten percent of all applications advance to the final round, and the winners will be announced in December of this year.

Forthcoming events

Meeting with UNDP Bosnia on post-conflict reconstruction in Bosnia, October 2003
Meeting with Afghan investors and the Jack Hidary Foundation on rehabilitation of the financial sector in Afghanistan, October 2003
Meeting with Ethan Allen corporation and Afghan investor on furniture production in Afghanistan, October 2003
Meeting with Afghan investors on rehabilitation of the grain milling sector in Afghanistan, November 2003
Meeting with Swiss Red Cross and companies on supporting AIDS clinics in Swaziland, November 2003

Contact BHF

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