



TURKEY AND AFGHANISTAN FIRST EXAMPLE OF STATE TO STATE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Turkey and Afghanistan have traditional ties of close friendship which date back to several centuries. During the Turkish Independence War (1919-1922) Afghans extended their support to the Ankara Government and became the first State to recognise it. After the proclamation of our Republic in 1923, President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk sent military personnel, scholars, doctors, specialists and trainers to Afghanistan to contribute to the establishment of main state institutions and modernization of the country. Faculties of medicine, engineering, art (which all together formed the bulk of the future University of Kabul), as well as the first war academy and conservatoire in Afghanistan were established in this period as the joint projects of Turkey and Afghanistan. This might have constituted one of the first, if not the first, example of state-to-state development assistance.



King Amanullah Khan (front row in the middle) paid a visit to Turkey in 1928 and returned back to Afghanistan inspired by Atatürk's reforms and his efforts to shape the young Republic in accordance with contemporary values.

Turkey's support to Afghanistan continued in times if not through the Afghan governments, but through the Afghan people constantly.

From 1990s onward, during the period of internal conflict, Turkey strived for the establishment of peace and stability, while at the same time implementing assistance projects particularly in the humanitarian field, providing medical and educational services and shelter to the Afghan people.

Turkey's friendly relations embracing all Afghan people continued unabated throughout these troubled years in the Afghan history.

After years of invasion and civil strife, Turkey once again extended its assistance to brotherly Afghanistan. In this context, Turkey assumed the command of ISAF-II (June 2002-February

2003) and ISAF-VII (February-August 2005). Turkish and Canadian forces and humanitarian agencies are serving side by side in Afghanistan.

Turkey continues its active participation in ISAF by assuming the joint leadership of the Regional Command in Kabul together with France and Italy in August 2006. During Turkish command between April-December 2007, our military presence in Afghanistan increased to about 1,220. Turkey continues its contributions to ISAF with 750 troops at present.

Turkey believes that building a strong national army and an effective national police force is crucial in Afghanistan, not only for long-term security, but also for the national unity and territorial integrity of the country. With this understanding, Turkey's contributions to the training of the Afghan National Army and the Police Force continue.

Turkey believes that another important requisite with regard to peace and security in Afghanistan is the expeditious implementation of reconstruction projects. Turkey took an active stance in this respect, especially in the areas of health, education and agriculture.

Turkish-built, equipped and operated health centers in Afghanistan provide free medical treatment to some 900 patients a day. The number of Afghans who received such medical treatment in these health centers has exceeded 800,000 so far. Turkey has also built and equipped 27 schools (including those just for girls) in various parts of Afghanistan which provide proper education to almost 50,000 Afghan students. Moreover, constructions of a hospital, a comprehensive health clinic and 16 schools across the country continue. Turkey is also planning to build 4 hospitals and health clinics along with 14 schools in 2008.

Turkish Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) established in Wardak became operational in November 2006. The Turkish PRT carries out significant projects in order to contribute to the economic development and reconstruction of the province. It has built several schools, health centers and cold storage facilities in various districts of Wardak so far. It carries out training programs for the Afghan National and Auxiliary Police Forces. The PRT also carries out humanitarian aid programs on various occasions.



Since 1983, Kabul Atatürk Children's Hospital is an example of Turkish dedication to support Afghanistan and the Afghan people. Each year more than three thousand children are treated in these facilities. The hospital has been severely damaged and reconstructed or refurbished various times during harsh times of the country.

As the only children's hospital in Kabul, if not the only one in all country, the premises serve as one of the main continuously active health facility in Kabul. Many humanitarian NGO's were able to provide aid to the needy children through these gates. With all our support, this pledge will continue to the future.