



## National Center for Policy Research

### **Launching Ceremony of the Department of Peace Studies**

On Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> of July 2008, the National Center for Policy Research celebrated the establishing of its 4th Department, the Department of Peace Studies.

The celebration in the garden of NCPR was attended by more than 40 esteemed guests, including the Chancellor of Kabul University, Prof. Dr. Hamidulah Amin, the Deputy to the Ministry of Higher Education, Dr. O. Baburi, the Vice President of Kabul University for Academic Affairs, Prof. Dr. Q. Saifi, the Vice Country Director of DED (German Development Service), Ms Ingrid Sobel, the Country Representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), Dr. Babak Khalatbari, as well as Deans of Faculties, representatives of the German Embassy and the Embassy of the United States, representatives of NGOs and media.

The celebration was meant to inaugurate the Department of Peace Studies and to introduce the Head of Department, Ms Nicole Birtsch, who is working as Peace Building and Human Development Advisor with the German Development Service (DED).

The celebration began with verses from the Holy Quran, recited by Mr. Jamalludin, an instructor of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Dr. Noor Ebad, Director of NCPR, welcomed the guests. He gave an account of NCPR's history and the work of the three original Departments of Law & Politics, Economics and Social Sciences and appreciated the cooperation between KAS, NCPR und DED in establishing a Department of Peace Studies.



His Excellency, Prof. Dr. O. Baburi, Deputy to the Ministry of Higher Education, was the second speaker. He explained that about 15 years ago when the so called USSR collapsed a great hope that peace will come to Afghanistan arose. But unfortunately the situation did not change and instability and insecurity continued for years till the present moment. Fortunately Higher Education Institutes and Research Centers like NCPR are taking steps towards Peace Building. He mentioned that NCPR should work together with instructors, lecturers and professors of Universities in Kabul and provinces to collect and publish relevant material for statesmen regarding Peace Building. They should also conduct research on people's attitudes towards Peace Building and the factors of Peace in Afghanistan and provide this information for people and public. Prof. Baburi thanked KAS and DED for their assistance of the Department of Peace Studies and promised support from the Ministry side.



The following speaker Prof. Dr. Saifi, Vice President of Kabul University for Academic Affairs, appreciated the establishment of the new Department of Peace Studies and placed emphasis on the importance of Peace. He suggested that more work in that area is needed in Afghan society. He proposed to discuss the question: How could we establish Peace? War, administration corruption and drugs traffic are factors and causes of insecurity. Those friendly countries which support the Afghan people in this area in fact help the country to eliminate the causes of conflict and insecurity. Likewise he promised support to the Department of Peace Studies.

Dr. Khalatbari, Country Representative of Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), gave an account of the work of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Afghanistan and the cooperation between KAS and the Civil Peace Service Program of the German Development Service (DED). He stressed the importance of sustainable peace in Afghanistan and emphasized the role of NCPR as think and teaching tank which could contribute to a durable Peace in Afghanistan by the means of research and education.

Ms Sobel, Vice Country Director of DED (German Development Service), gave an overview of the different fields of activities of the DED in Afghanistan. The special program Civil Peace Service was founded in 2002. At present DED is working with this

program in 15 countries throughout the world. In Afghanistan this program is seconding 12 development workers to different Afghan partner organizations. The DED's contribution to Peace Building and Civilian Conflict Transformation is intended to support confidence building, reinforce dialogue structures between conflicting parties and promote locally adapted mechanisms of Civilian Conflict Transformation. She appreciated that DED cooperates with NCPR in supporting the Department of Peace Studies by enlisting Ms Birtsch as Head of the Department.

Ms Birtsch, Head of the new NCPR Department of Peace Building, explained in her speech the meaning of Peace Building and described the scopes of activities and projects of the Peace Department. Main focus is lying on Peace Building education and research at universities in Afghanistan.



Dr. Zadran, Head of NCPR Department of Social Science, outlined the speeches by Dr. Khalatbari and Ms Sobel which were given in English and translated the speech of Ms Birtsch in Dari.



The contract of cooperation between NCPR, KAS and DED was signed by Dr. Noor Ebad, Dr. Khalatbari and Ms Sobel.