



“AFGHAN SPRING”: REBIRTH OF A COUNTRY

One and a half years after the overthrow and collapse of the Taliban regime, the international community—through reconstruction and humanitarian aid projects—continues its commitment to improving the lives of citizens in Afghanistan. With the start of spring and the beginning of a new school year, the U.S. Department of State has produced a documentary film, “Afghan Spring,” highlighting the progress made in the areas of infrastructure, agriculture, the economy, health care, and education.

Infrastructure – The U.S. has funded the repair and reconstruction of more than 4,000 kilometers of secondary and tertiary roads, as well as 31 bridges, making the movement of people, goods, and services across the country far easier. The film shows scenes of work crews working on the main highway from Kabul to Kandahar, a project that is targeted for completion this year.

Agriculture – Seed, fertilizer, and irrigation systems provided by the U.S. are improving agriculture, which provides the livelihood for about 70% of Afghans. In 2002, U.S. assistance helped to significantly enhance grain production, and Afghans experienced an 82% production increase from 2001. The film highlights the construction of the Mattak water division dam as well as aqueducts in Bamiyan.

Economic Activities – The U.S. continues to provide personnel to manage the distribution and exchange of Afghanistan’s new, more stable currency. A Kabul shopkeeper speaks of how the new currency has helped his business, and the film shows scenes of flourishing activity in the markets of Mazar-e-Sharif. In addition, the restoration of the famous Babur Gardens symbolizes hope for a revitalized Afghan tourist industry.

Health – U.S. and coalition activities in the country have brought basic health care services to about 2 million women and children living in rural areas. Highlighted in the film are military hospitals and clinics run by Jordan and the U.S., and a reconstructed health clinic in rural Gardez.

Education – In 2000, roughly one-third of school-age children were enrolled in school, and only 3% of the country’s girls attended school. Three years later, overall enrollment has more than doubled and has increased tenfold for girls. The documentary shows a reconstructed girls school in Gardez and school supplies donated by U.S. children to grateful peers in an Asadabad schoolhouse.

International Effort – Almost half of the 16,000 non-Afghan forces providing security in Afghanistan have been provided by other nations. The film highlights Italian Alpini soldiers training at Bagram Air Base as well as Slovak military engineers building an airport runway.

To view the “Afghan Spring” video log onto www.state.gov and click on “Video Connection”.

Progress in Afghanistan:

- Rebuilding or rehabilitating 1000+ schools
- Rebuilding road connecting Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat
- Rebuilt 72 hospitals, clinics, and women's health centers
- Grain production up 82% from 2001 to 2002
- Afghan Central Bank issued new currency
- Under authority of Afghan central government, new Afghan National Army being created and trained



Afghan Spring

