

Status: Tuesday, 22. November 2011

10 Years after Petersberg: Where does Afghanistan stand today?

All-day public event

Wednesday, 23 November 2011 9:00-21:00

International Conference

Beletage (conference centre) in the Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Schumannstraße 8, 10117 Berlin-Mitte

Languages:

German/English with simultaneous translation

Information:

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Short description of the event:

Despite the international community's massive civilian and military engagement, developments in Afghanistan, from the perspective of its citizens as well as of the "West," remain below expectations. The development of state institutions has been slow, the citizens are turning away from the state, and the still fragile structures are facing more and more challenges from insurgents. The Taliban are still a key factor, but the question how to involve the Taliban remains controversial and has become more difficult with the assassination of the head of the High Council for Peace, Burhanuddin Rabbani in September 2011.

The conference begins with a review of the last ten years of international engagement in Afghanistan. Together with guests from the region, we discuss the current state of political developments and analyse the role of neighbouring countries, especially that of Pakistan and India. We inquire about the future prospects of the country, particularly with regard to the Bonn Conference of Foreign Ministers on Afghanistan to be held in December 2011.

Programme (current draft, subject to modifications)

Wednesday, 23 November 2011, 9:00-21:00

8:30 **Registration**

9:00 **Welcome and opening**
Barbara Unmüßig (President, Heinrich Böll Stiftung)

9.15 – 11.15 **Panel 1: Where do we stand 10 years after the Petersberg Conference on Afghanistan? A look back and future prospects with voices from Europe and the region**

Despite the international community's massive civilian and military engagement, developments in Afghanistan, from the perspective of its citizens as well as of the "West," remain below expectations. The development of state institutions has been slow, the citizens are turning away from the state, and the still fragile structures are facing more and more challenges from insurgents. The Taliban are still a key factor, but the question how to involve the Taliban remains controversial and has become more difficult with the assassination of the head of the High Council for Peace, Burhanuddin Rabbani in September 2011.

Where do we stand today in terms of political development? How sustainable are the democratic institutions and what about the rule of law in Afghanistan? Which expectations have not been fulfilled? Where has there been success and how can we build on them?

Input:

- **Francesc Vendrell** (former UN/EU Special Representative to Afghanistan)
- **Amrullah Saleh** (former Director of the National Directorate of Security, Afghanistan)

Discussion:

- **Tom Koenigs** (Parliamentarian, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, Berlin)
- **Shinkai Karokhail** (Parliamentarian, Afghanistan)

- **Thomas Ruttig** (Afghanistan Analyst Network, Afghanistan)

Chair: Bente Scheller (Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Kabul Office)

11.15 – 11.45 Coffee break

11.45 – 12.45 Afghanistan on air

Forbidden under the Taliban, today television is a leisure activity for a large part of the Afghan population. 97 percent of participants in a HBS youth survey in Kabul admitted to regularly watching television and are familiar with the news and entertainment programmes of the broadcasters. The most successful Afghan TV station, Tolo TV, reaches up to 60 percent of the population nationwide. Which new media formats dominate Afghan society and their view of things? And what role does the popular media play in Afghanistan's transition process?

Input: Najiba Ayubi (Director of media group Killid, Afghanistan)

Presentation of broadcast examples: Trudi-Ann Tierney (Tolo TV, Afghanistan)

12.45 – 14.15 Lunch

14.15 – 15.45 Panel 2: Afghanistan as a state of citizens?

In recent years, the ethnic and religious divides in Afghanistan have deepened. The underdeveloped party system contributes to this divide, but so do civil society organisations that are perceived to represent either special interest groups or Western interests. The varying developments in the individual parts of the country raises the question, to what extent can the interests of the general population be pursued.

- *How has civil society developed over the last ten years?*
- *Are human rights on the rise or on the defensive? Are women's rights in particular under pressure?*
- *Which actions can the international community carry out to support civil society and how will they be perceived in Afghanistan?*
- *What role does Islam play in the (socio-) political development of the country?*

Input: Aziz Rafiee (Director of Afghan Civil Society Forum Organisation, ACSFo, Afghanistan)

Discussion:

- **Soraya Sobhrang** (Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Afghanistan)
- **Saghar Chopan** (former counsellor of Asraf Ghani Ahmadzai, Afghanistan)
- **Najiba Ayubi** (Director of media group Killid, Afghanistan)
- **Toiko Tönisson Kleppe** (Gender & Security expert, former Development Advisor at Norwegain PRT, Afghanistan)

Chair: Almut Wieland-Karimi (Director of ZIF, Centre for International Peace Operations, Berlin)

15:45 – 16:15 Coffee break

16:15 – 18:00 Panel 3: The "troubled" neighbourhood – security-political rivalry and cooperation in the region

The future of Afghanistan also lies in the hands of the neighbouring countries. Security-political rivalry and the assurance of spheres of influence appear to stand in the way of positive developments in Afghanistan. In particular, the Afghan-Pakistan relationship is shaped by mutual distrust. Knowing that the regional powers play a decisive role in Afghanistan, a large regional conference is being held in Turkey in October 2011. Which roles are the neighbouring states willing and able to play in order to stabilise the country, and will they be accepted in Afghanistan?

- *Afghanistan in the Afghanistan-Pakistan-India triangle. Where are the bilateral and trilateral difficulties and where are the solutions?*
- *Is the way to organising regional conferences meaningful and promising?*
- *Taliban – An Afghan and Pakistani problem*

Input: Christian Wagner (Head of Research Division Asia, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin)

Discussion:

- **C. Uday Bhaskar** (Director of National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi, former officiating Director of Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi)
- **Sanjar Sohail** (Journalist and Publisher of the newspaper 8am daily, Afghanistan)
- **Darcy Burner** (President of the Progressive Congress, former member of the Afghanistan Study Group, USA)
- **Ejaz Haider** (independent Security Analyst, Pakistan)

Chair: Britta Petersen (Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Lahore/Pakistan Office)

18:00 – 19:00 Dinner break

19:00 – 21:00 Evening event
10 years Petersberg and the impending withdrawal: Where does Afghanistan stand and what is achievable?

Petersberg, located near Bonn, is a historical place – not only in German, but also in Afghan history. It is ten years ago that the Petersberg Agreement, which outlined Afghanistan's democratic transition process, was concluded. It was there that the foundation for the international community's civil and military engagement, which continues today, was set. But while the military engagement draws to a close in 2014, the civil commitment will remain in place. Therefore, the foreign minister conference in Bonn will also address what will happen with Afghanistan when international troops leave the country. As part of our final panel, we will dedicate ourselves to these issues and place the withdrawal and future prospects of the country in the focal point. It is time for a look back and into the future.

- *How is the exit strategy being discussed in Afghanistan?*
- *What are the plans until 2014 and what is to be expected?*
- *What impacts will the withdrawal have on the international engagement in Afghanistan?*
- *What can be achieved until then?*
- *What about democratisation?*

Input: Fahim Hakim (Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Afghanistan)

Discussion:

- **Michael Steiner** (Special Representative of the Federal Government to Afghanistan and Pakistan)
- **Frithjof Schmidt** (Parliamentarian, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, Berlin)
- **Fazel Rabi Haqbeen** (Director of Asia Foundation, Kabul)

Chair: Barbara Unmüßig (President, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Berlin)

21:00 Reception with wine and pretzels