



## National Peace-Jirga of Afghanistan

### Joint declaration of the National Peace Jirga of Afghanistan and the Cooperation for Peace (Germany)

Peace is possible in Afghanistan, yet not by the continuation of the war and the repeated escalation of combat activities. Not only the USA plan reinforce their troops massively. Since July 1st 2008 the first German combat group is on duty. This fall the number of German soldiers should be increased by at least a thousand. As a next step it is already planned to deploy AWACS investigation airplanes equipped with German soldiers in Afghanistan. The asymmetrical war would be intensified. That is as if throwing a match into a barrel of fuel.

The further escalation as it seems cannot be stopped. Germany is in danger of being sucked deeper and deeper into the swirl of the war after seven years of military engagement in Afghanistan. The number of afghan casualties – mostly civilians, women and children – is steadily increasing. By now more foreign soldiers die month for month in Afghanistan than in Iraq. It seems to be just a question of time when German soldiers will have to pay with their blood to a higher extent.

In this - for Germany and Afghanistan alike - dramatic situation the National Peace Jirga of Afghanistan and the German Cooperation for Peace together argue for a peaceful solution of the Afghanistan conflict. The National Peace Jirga of which is made up of tribe representatives, intellectual and politicians represents a wide majority of afghan people who are tired of war and mainly come from the south and the east of Afghanistan. The Cooperation for Peace is a union of 50 peace organizations and initiatives in Germany. Together we appeal to the German government and to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, to the members of the German Bundestag and the afghan parliament, to the Wolesi Jirga, as to the civil societies of Germany and Afghanistan, to do everything possible in order to stop a further escalation of the war and to initiate a peace process

Primary principle of our approach is respect for the right of self-determination of peoples. Nobody has ever asked the people of Afghanistan for their opinion, nor for their problems and needs. At the moment the Afghans are the guinea pigs of the military powers. Decisions of strategic importance are still made in Washington, Islamabad, Brussels or Berlin. So where remains the right of the afghan people for sovereignty and independence? Never before has the desire for negotiation been as present in the afghan people, which should be put to its use. That would be practiced democracy.

Because of that the National Peace Jirga of Afghanistan and the Cooperation for Peace summon the German government :



## Cooperation for Peace

#### Members:

Aachener Friedenspreis e.V.  
Aktiongemeinschaft Dienst für den Frieden (AGDF)  
Aktiongemeinschaft Friedenswoche Minden  
Bildungs- und Begegnungsstätte für gewaltfreie Aktion KURVE Wustrow  
Bremer Aktion für Kinder (BAKI)  
Bund demokratischer WissenschaftlerInnen (BdWi)  
Bund für Soziale Verteidigung (BSV)  
Bundesverband Bürgerinitiativen Umweltschutz (BBU)  
Christen für gerechte Wirtschaftsordnung (CGW)  
Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft – Vereinigte KriegsdienstgegnerInnen (DFG-VK)  
EUCommunity  
Evangelische Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Betreuung von Kriegsdienstverweigerern (EAK)  
Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche in Deutschland – Friedensausschüsse  
Frauen in Schwarz Hamburg  
Frauen in Schwarz Köln  
Frauenetzwerk für den Frieden e.V.  
Friedensbündnis Hannover  
Friedensforum Münster  
Friedensgruppe Altenholz  
Friedensinitiative Nottuln e.V.  
Friedensinitiative Würselen  
Friedensrat Müllheim  
Forum Ziviler Friedensdienst (forumZFD)  
Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft (GEW), Hauptvorstand  
Infostelle für Friedensarbeit, Meckenheim  
IALANA (International Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms)  
IFIAS (Institute for International Assistance and Solidarity)  
IPPNW, Deutsche Sektion der internationalen Ärzte zur Verhütung des Atomkrieges / Ärzte in sozialer Verantwortung  
Internationale Frauenliga für Frieden und Freiheit  
Internationaler Versöhnungsbund – deutscher Zweig  
Komitee für Grundrechte und Demokratie  
Koordinierungsausschuss der Friedensbewegung in der Region Ingolstadt  
Lebenshaus Schwäbische Alb  
Leserinitiative Publik e.V.  
Menschen für den Frieden, Anti-Kriegsbündnis Düsseldorf  
Mönchengladbacher Friedensforum  
NaturwissenschaftlerInnen-Initiative "Verantwortung für Frieden und Zukunftsfähigkeit"  
Netzwerk Friedenskooperative  
Netzwerk Friedenssteuer  
Ökumenisches Friedensnetz  
Düsseldorfer Christinnen und Christen  
Ökumenisches Zentrum für Umwelt-, Friedens- und Eine-Welt-Arbeit, Berlin  
Pädagoginnen und Pädagogen für den Frieden (PPF)  
pax christi – Deutsche Sektion  
Rhöner Friedenswerkstatt im UNESCO Biosphärenreservat, Künzell  
Sichelschmiede, Werkstatt für Friedensarbeit in der Kyritz-Ruppiner Heide  
Ver.di-Jugend  
Werkstatt für Gewaltfreie Aktion, Baden

1. Abort combat activities on Afghan territory and abort the deployment of Tornado squadrons. These deployments have cost millions of euros and have played a part in the killings of 2500 civilians – most of them women and children. The number of soldiers in Afghanistan may not be raised, but concrete planning and fixed dates for a swift retreat of the German army should be proposed.

2. A new door for negotiations should be opened and this negotiation process should be strengthened by the German government, possibly in cooperation with other European governments, Islamic and block free states and in talks with different groups of the Afghan opposition including the Taliban and the Afghan government. Germany still has a historically grown high reputation among many Afghan people that can also be found among the conflicting parties. Only through military deescalation including a retreat of troops the German government will be enabled to play the role of a honest mediator between the conflicting parties in Afghanistan, which is favored by National Peace Jirga of Afghanistan and the Cooperation for Peace.

3. Civil help should be raised by the amount saved through troop retreats – which should be about 500 million each year. These funds should be used for development projects in Afghanistan that are considered important and useful by villages and regions and help improve the life conditions predominately for those living in the countryside. Top priority should be given to local and sustainable development projects that are divided into small parts. Development and construction projects must be divided between cities and provinces in a just way. The south of Afghanistan has only received little to no help in the last years.

4. Through own diplomatic steps, possibly in cooperation with other European governments, Islamic and block free states the perspective of an international conference Afghanistan and its neighbors (Pakistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan etc.) should be opened in order to restore Afghan sovereignty and pave a way for peace and security in the region. States like India, China, Russia, the USA and European states as well as the Islamic and block free states should participate in such a conference as observers and guarantee states in order to block future interventions.

Necessary condition for successful negotiations is a timetable stating when the retreat of international troops is going to start and end. Only this way a structure of its own can be shaped in the land. The publication of set dates for the retreat would create trust in the Afghan people and thus contribute to peace.

The National Peace Jirga of Afghanistan and the Cooperation for Peace ask the members of the German Bundestag not to extend the mandates for a German army deployment in Afghanistan, but to trigger a serious debate over ways which may support Afghanistan in a peace process.

The National Peace Jirga of Afghanistan and the Cooperation for Peace ask the government of Afghanistan :

1. to fight corruption that had gotten out of hands and hinders the poor from making use of their rights
2. to take the war criminals to an (international) court. At the moment many war criminals live in Afghanistan in freedom and still have a lot of influence also on foreign embassies and international organizations.
3. To decidedly fight the growing of drugs and drug trade in which part of the government is involved. In cooperation with the international community and the international aid organizations alternatives for the farmers are to be developed.
4. To develop the democratic build-up of the state of Afghanistan. This involves security forces that are controlled by parliament and justice and which guarantee respect for the law - also by the government.
5. To promote unity of the Afghan people. At the moment the different peoples of Afghanistan (Pashtun, Uzbek, Tadjik, Hazara etc.) have a poorly developed conscience of being bound together as Afghans.