

Refugee Review Tribunal

AUSTRALIA

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

Questions

1. What is the current law and order situation in Western Kabul (for instance in Dasht Barchi)?
2. Is an acceptable level of protection offered to the local inhabitants there by the police and/or other security forces?
3. If not, is a significant element of the reason the fact that the local inhabitants are predominantly Hazara?

RESPONSE

1. What is the current law and order situation in Western Kabul (for instance in Dasht Barchi)?

The information provided in response to this question is organised under the following two headings.

- Western Kabul; and
- Kabul City

Western Kabul

Question 1 of RRT Research Response AFG16615 dated 2 April 2004 provides information on the March 2003 demonstration in Dasht-e-Barchi (also known as Dasht-e Barchi, Dashte Barchi and Dasht Barchi) (RRT Country Research 2004, *Research Response AFG16615*, 2 April – Attachment 1).

An article dated 14 April 2004 in *The Detroit Free Press* reports that “militias associated with warlords are a growing presence, particularly in Kabul’s western suburbs.”

The Afghan capital, Kabul, is considered the most stable city in the country and a bastion of pro-Western democratic change. A force of international peacekeepers is in the capital and will prevent it from descending into chaos, most officials agree.

But even that control is tenuous; militias associated with warlords are a growing presence, particularly in Kabul's western suburbs

...In west Kabul, residents regularly report being robbed by troops of the former fundamentalist mujahideen leader Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, whose headquarters in the Paghman district are less than an hour from Kabul.

Car mechanic Sayad Zaher, 28, a resident of west Kabul, said a police officer occupied his house last month and refused to leave until he paid \$1,000. They bargained down to \$300.

"Herat is better than Kabul," Zaher said, referring to the western city controlled by powerful warlord Ismail Khan. "The rule there is strong. The police can't rob you, beat you. The shops are open late. There is peace, real peace. The peace in Kabul city is not real" (Garcia, Malcolm 2004, 'Security woes plague Afghanistan - Widespread crime, lax police worrying officials, peacekeepers', *Detroit Free Press*, 14 April http://www.freep.com/news/nw/afghan14_20040414.htm – Accessed 31 March 2005 – Attachment 2).

An article dated 2 August 2004 by Reuters reports that a rocket landed in Western Kabul, wounding a construction worker.

At the scene of impact, a large crater had been blown into the side of a metal container. A worker on a construction site around 20 metres (yards) away was hit by shrapnel in the shoulder and head, leaving a pool of blood on his mattress.

Police who saw the man did not know the extent of his wounds, but said they did not appear to be life-threatening.

Witnesses heard a rocket being fired not far from the U.S. embassy at around 10 p.m. (1730 GMT), around the time the missile landed near the construction site ('Rocket fired in Kabul, one Afghan worker wounded' 2004, *AOP Afghan News*, source: Reuters, 3 August – Attachment 3).

An article dated 6 November 2004 in *Panjara* reports that many "worrisome incidents" have taken place in Kabul over the past few weeks including "various murders and robberies in western Kabul" ('Insecurity threatens the lives of citizens' 2004, *BBC Monitoring Alert*, source: *Panjara*, 6 November – Attachment 4).

On 10 November 2004 Ahmed Rashid, in a video conference on Afghanistan for the RRT, provided information on the security situation for Hazaras in Kabul including West Kabul.

SYDNEY/MELBOURNE: You talked about the large numbers of Hazaras who've returned to Kabul. What's the security situation like there for them at the present time?

MR RASHID: Well even in Kabul there's an enormous amount of harassment from Sayaf's people. Abdul Sayaf you know once a member of the Northern Alliance, very close to the hardline Sunni, Wahabbi Islam, a person who has been responsible for carrying out massacres and programs against the Hazaras during the civil war. There's a lot of harassment in West Kabul, where a lot of the Hazaras are concentrated, by Sayaf's people. Secondly,

there's a lot of criminality which has been fuelled by police commanders and militia commanders, a lot of the Panjsheris who've stayed behind, who are still armed, who have not been disarmed in Kabul, and a lot of that criminality is aimed at the Hazaras. I mean it's easy to rob or steal or rape or whatever it is – you know Hazaras are easier than others because Hazaras are less effective in getting revenge, retribution, or getting the authorities to deal with these cases. So I think these two issues are still quite important for the Hazaras. And what Karzai does with Sayaf – I mean there is talk of making Sayaf and he is very keen to become – Chief Justice of the Supreme Court – which is being very, very strongly opposed by most people. I think it would be a disaster because you would have the Supreme Court passing all sorts of very tough Islamic legislations which would really roll back a lot of the stuff that the government is trying to do right now. And there doesn't seem to be much of an effort by the Americans even to try and reduce Sayaf's power. So even in Kabul – you know the fact that this hostage taking took place in Kabul in broad daylight in a very sophisticated way, and these hostages were then spirited out of Kabul and kept – quite close to Kabul – but the fact that all this could happen under the eyes of a city which has got NATO troops and a very tough security presence and intelligence, etc. – I mean this points to the fact that Kabul is not necessarily the most secure place, and as a result the Hazaras will be feeling very vulnerable there (Rashid, Ahmed 2004, *Transcription Of Video Conference between RRT Melbourne, RRT Sydney and Ahmed Rashid in Pakistan on Wednesday 10 November 2004*, 10 November – Attachment 5).

An article dated 3 January 2005 by Agence France Presse reports that armed men attempted to kidnap an American aid worker in Western Kabul.

Armed men attempted to kidnap an American aid worker in the Afghan capital Sunday, giving up after he put up a fight but beating him badly, a western security source told AFP.

Three men confronted the elderly American as he was waiting on a motorcycle outside his office in western Kabul, snatching his bag and trying to force him into a waiting car, the source said.

“He was beaten with the butt of one of the assailant's guns,” the source said.

Police could not be reached for comment (‘US aid worker escapes hostage-taking attempt in Afghanistan’ 2005, Agence France Presse, 3 January – Attachment 6).

No other information on the law and order situation in Western Kabul was found amongst the sources consulted.

Kabul City

Question 1 of RRT Research Response AFG16615 dated 2 April 2004 provides information on the security situation in Kabul (RRT Country Research 2004, *Research Response AFG16615*, 2 April – Attachment 1).

The Danish Immigration Service conducted a fact-finding mission to Kabul from 20 March to 2 April 2004. The subsequent report provides the following information on the security situation in Kabul.

The UNAMA [United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan] explained that the presence of the ISAF forces is the main reason for the relatively good security situation in Kabul.

The DACAAR [Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees] mentioned that it is long time since there have been attacks directed against the civilian population in Kabul. The attacks that have taken place have been directed against the ISAF and other foreign players, for example the bombing of the ISAF in January 2004. The employees of the DACAAR live an almost normal life in Kabul and are free to travel around the city. They can, however, not go out during the night or visit places they do not know. Other international organizations have stricter security regulations for their employees than the DACAAR. The source mentioned that many of their local employees have returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan without their families. They do not want their families to return to Kabul due to the security situation, the cost of living and the level of crime.

The SCA [Swedish Committee for Afghanistan] informed that Kabul is a relatively peaceful city, and that the degree of crime is in the order one can expect in a city the size of Kabul. The source mentioned, though, that there has been bomb attacks in the city. The source found that the growth of the population in Kabul could decrease security situation considerably in the city (Danish Immigration Service 2004, *The political conditions, the security and human rights situation in Afghanistan – Report on fact-finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan 20 March-2 April 2004*, November – Attachment 7).

According to the 21 September 2004 report of the independent expert of the UN Commission on Human Rights “[i]n Kabul, where the Government’s strength is concentrated and where ISAF [International Safety Assistance Force] and the international community are headquartered, violations are the fewest in number and improvements are most visible” (UN General Assembly 2004, *Report of the independent expert of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan*, A/59/370, 21 September – Attachment 8).

According to the 18 March 2005 report of the UN Security Council the “overall security situation has been relatively calm for almost four months.”

15. The overall security situation has been relatively calm for almost four months. The severe winter season has presented a significant impediment to the operations of extremists, terrorists, factional forces and criminal (including narcotics) elements. In areas least affected by winter conditions (particularly the south-eastern and southern regions), the coalition forces, the Afghan National Army and Government institutions continued to be targeted by extremist elements employing anti-tank mines, small unit ambushes and rocket attacks, albeit at a lower level than in the latter part of 2004.

16. Factors that have also contributed to the security environment include progress made in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme; the increased strength and quality of the Afghan National Army and police forces; the expansion of ISAF in the north and north-east; popular support to the new President and Government; political changes brought about by the central Government in provinces such as Herat; and initiatives to facilitate the demobilization of Taliban combatants.

17. However these positive developments should not lead to complacency. ...Significant weapons caches have been found by the Government forces and ISAF in Kabul and Parwan provinces. These developments suggest that those opposed to the Government (including the Taliban and Al-Qaida) will continue to try to demonstrate their capability to plan and stage high-profile attacks, such as hostage taking, suicide attacks and vehicle bombs. On 7 March, a British adviser to the Government was murdered by unknown gunmen in Kabul.

18. The determination of extremist elements to take advantage of the open political environment of the parliamentary elections should not be underestimated. The opening of

provincial electoral offices, the carrying out of political campaigns, and other visible elements of the electoral process will provide potential targets long before polling day itself (UN Security Council 2005, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan*, A/59/744-S/2005/183, 18 March – Attachment 9).

The following news articles provide information on the current security situation in Kabul City.

An article dated 18 July 2004 by *BBC News* reports that an Afghan woman was killed when a rocket landed near the NATO headquarters in Kabul.

Witnesses said shrapnel from the rocket killed a woman in her 40s as it came down among homes in the Shashdarak district of the Afghan capital.

...The rocket landed a few hundred yards from the headquarters of the 6,400-strong International Security Assistance Force (Isaf).

Neighbours said it smashed into a tree in the courtyard of a two-storey house, killing a woman, according to the Associated Press.

“A piece of shrapnel hit her in the neck,” said Abdul Basir, a doctor who lived nearby.

He said the area had been rocketed several times. “Isaf should move out of this residential area,” he was quoted by AP as saying.

Isaf spokeswoman Major Rita LePage confirmed a woman had died.

She also said the Nato-led troops were investigating two other explosions north of the airport in Kabul.

“It was rocket or mortar fire,” she said.

Random rocket attacks have been a frequent hazard for residents in Kabul over the past six months, says the BBC’s Andrew North in Afghanistan.

A guard at a police compound was injured in an attack in June (‘Kabul rocket attack kills woman’ 2004, *BBC News*, 18 July http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/3905449.stm – Accessed 30 March 2005 – Attachment 10).

An article dated 31 July 2004 by Reuters reports that Kabul police “foiled a sophisticated and potentially deadly bomb plot in the Afghan capital this week.”

Commander Chris Henderson, spokesman for the 6,500-strong NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul said police and the National Directorate for Security (NDS) acted on “solid intelligence” to prevent the attack.

He told a news briefing that on Thursday morning police and NDS members arrested a man riding a motorcycle in which was hidden around 3 kg (6.6 lb) of explosives connected to a timing device of a compact disc player to detonate it remotely.

Further along the crowded Jalalabad road in the centre of the city police found seven BM-12 rockets and 30 sticks of dynamite covered in gravel and scrap metal and rigged with two electronic detonators.

The explosives were concealed in an apple vendor's cart near a petrol filling station.

"It would appear that the plan was for the motorcycle bomb to have been detonated around 10 o'clock," Henderson said ('NATO says major bomb plot foiled by Kabul police' 2004, *AOP Afghan News*, source: Reuters, 31 July – Attachment 11).

An article dated 2 August 2004 by Reuters reports that "a missile landed near the Chinese embassy last week" (Rocket fired in Kabul, one Afghan worker wounded' 2004, *AOP Afghan News*, source: Reuters, 3 August – Attachment 3).

An article dated 29 August 2004 by Associated Press reports that an explosion at Dyncorp Inc in the Shar-e Naw district of Kabul killed as many as six people and seriously injured several more.

An explosion tore through the office of an American defense contractor in the heart of the Afghan capital Sunday, killing as many as six people and seriously injuring several more, officials and residents said. The victims included several apparent U.S. citizens.

The blast hit the office of Dyncorp Inc., an American firm that provides security for Afghan President Hamid Karzai on behalf of the United States and works for the U.S. government in Iraq, said Nick Downie of the Afghanistan NGO Security Office.

...He said the exact nationalities of the victims were unclear.

... "It was a very, very big explosion, and there were a lot of injured," said Ahmad Emal, a young shopkeeper watching from behind the police cordon. "These foreigners should leave the residential areas."

The charred wreckage of a car was also visible in front of the house. Afghans crowded around what appeared to be the engine block lying several hundred yards away, suggesting the explosion might have been caused by a car bomb.

"There was a crater right in front of the office door," Downie said. "There's not much doubt about the target" ('Six Dead in Afghanistan Explosion' 2004, *AOP Afghan News*, source: Associated Press, 29 August – Attachment 12).

An article dated 29 August 2004 by Reuters reports that the Taliban has claimed responsibility for the Kabul blast.

"I contacted our colleagues and they said that it was a suicide attack by a Taliban fighter," Taliban spokesman Abdul Latif Hakimi told Reuters by satellite phone (Salahuddin, Sayed 2004, 'Taliban claim Afghan bomb blast', *AOP Afghan News*, source: Reuters, 29 August – Attachment 13).

An article dated 1 September 2004 by Radio Freedom Europe/Radio Liberty reports that 10 people were killed in the Kabul bomb attack and 10 others were injured.

The Afghan Interior Ministry's chief of security for Kabul, General Baba Jan, said on 30 August that 10 people were killed in the bomb attack in central Kabul on 29 August, Radio

Afghanistan reported. Ten others were injured, and a large number of shops and residential houses were destroyed or damaged. Three U.S. citizens, three Afghans, and three Nepalese Gurkhas working as security guards have been confirmed killed (Tarzi, Amin 2004, 'At Least 10 Killed in Kabul Bomb Attack', *RFE/RL Afghanistan Report*, 1 September, Vol. 3, No. 31 – Attachment 14).

An article dated 8 January 2005 by *BBC News* reports that Supreme Court Judge Naqibullah was arrested for sheltering two suspects believed to be behind the August bomb attack in Kabul.

A senior Afghan prosecutor, Abdul Fatah, told the Associated Press news agency that the two men organising the attack "stayed at his [Naqibullah's] house all the time, from the beginning to the end of their mission".

Mr Fatah said the 65-year-old judge was accused of both harbouring the men in his Kabul home and of failing to inform anyone of their plans.

Intelligence agents said they had also discovered explosives hidden at the judge's home.

Last week police announced they had arrested two men over their alleged role in the deadly attacks.

One of them – Tajik national Mohammed Haidar – admitted organising the attack last August, according to Afghan television.

The second suspect was detained for his part in a bombing in Kabul's busy Chicken street on 23 October 2004 which killed one woman and a child.

Intelligence officials say that Haidar organised the attacks on the instructions of an Iraqi national and al-Qaeda member called Attaullah, based in neighbouring Pakistan ('Judge arrested over Afghan bombs' 2005, *AOP Afghan News*, source: *BBC News*, 8 January – Attachment 15).

The British Agencies Afghanistan Group (BAAG) *Afghanistan: Monthly Review September 2004* reports that on 9 September 2004 four rockets hit a residential area of Kabul injuring two adults and a child.

On 9th September, four rockets hit a crowded residential area in Kabul when aimed at the airport. Two adults and a child were slightly injured. The Taliban claimed responsibility (British Agencies Afghanistan Group 2004, *Afghanistan: Monthly Review September 2004*, September – Attachment 16).

An article dated 7 October 2004 by *BBC News* reports that a rocket attack on the embassy area of Kabul resulted in zero casualties.

A loud explosion in the Afghan capital, Kabul on the eve of the country's presidential elections, was caused by a rocket attack, officials said.

There were no casualties in the blast, which happened in the embassy area of the city, a police chief said ('Kabul explosion on eve of polls' 2004, *AOP Afghan News*, source: *BBC News*, 8 October – Attachment 17).

The BAAG *Afghanistan: Monthly Review October 2004* reports that on 11 October 2004 four rockets hit Kabul killing one man and injuring one child.

One man was killed and a child injured when four rockets hit Kabul on 11th October. The Taliban claimed responsibility (British Agencies Afghanistan Group 2004, *Afghanistan: Monthly Review October 2004*, October – Attachment 18).

The UNHCR Return Information Update for 15-31 October 2004 reports that on 16 October 2004 three BM-12 rockets landed in District 10 of Kabul “causing minor damage to houses in the area” (UNHCR 2004, *Return Information Update 15-31 October 2004*, 1 November, Issue 68 – Attachment 19).

The BAAG *Afghanistan: Monthly Review October 2004* reports that on 23 October 2004 a suicide bomber in Kabul killed two people and injured five others.

A suicide bomber blew himself up in Chicken Street, the main shopping street used by expatriates in Kabul, on 23rd October. A female freelance translator from the USA and an Afghan girl were killed. Three members of ISAF were also wounded and are thought to have been the targets of the attack. The injured included two other Afghan civilians (British Agencies Afghanistan Group 2004, *Afghanistan: Monthly Review October 2004*, October – Attachment 18).

An article dated 28 October 2004 by *BBC News* reports that three foreign election workers have been kidnapped in Kabul by the Army of Muslims.

The poll workers – one a dual British-Irish national, the others Filipino and Kosovar Albanian – were taken at gunpoint. Two are women.

The BBC’s Andrew North in Kabul says it is unclear if they were targeted because of their election links, or because they are foreigners.

...The kidnapping – the first of foreigners in broad daylight in Kabul – has sent shock waves through the expatriate community.

...“They were forced out of their car and then taken into another vehicle,” Isaf spokesman Valery Putz said.

...Eyewitnesses say there were at least three kidnappers wearing camouflage and armed with Kalashnikov rifles.

...The kidnappers reportedly carried the two women off on their shoulders and then drove away.

One lorry driver who was nearby said the whole incident lasted just a few minutes.

The driver of the UN vehicle was reportedly beaten, but is now said to be in safe hands (‘Foreign poll staff held in Kabul’ 2004, *AOP Afghan News*, source: *BBC News*, 28 October – Attachment 20).

An article dated 23 November 2004 by *BBC News* reports that the three hostages were freed unharmed.

The exact circumstances of their release remains unclear, though the Afghan interior minister denied any deal had been done with the kidnappers.

...He said the three had been “abandoned in a location inside Kabul”. He insisted there had been no payment to secure their release (‘UN hostages freed in Afghanistan’ 2004, *BBC News*, 23 November http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4034225.stm – Accessed 30 March 2005 – Attachment 21).

An article dated 9 March 2005 reports that Steven MacQueen, a British development expert was shot dead in Kabul.

Some aid agencies in the Afghan capital, Kabul, have tightened security procedures – including enforcing earlier curfews for staff – in response to Monday night’s shooting of a British development expert.

Steven MacQueen was shot dead with a handgun at close range while in his car, according to security sources. Unknown assailants in two 4x4 vehicles had first blocked his car’s path.

His death has unnerved the aid and development community here, after months of relative calm in the capital.

...Mr MacQueen was driving alone after leaving a restaurant when he was killed late on Monday night. It is believed he had been followed.

...Afghan and international officials increasingly believe Mr MacQueen was deliberately targeted, although it is still unclear why.

...The Taliban have said they carried out the attack, but few are taking that claim seriously.

“The way it was carried out, it looks like a contract killing,” said a Western official, who did not want to be named (North, Andrew 2005, ‘Kabul killing unnerves foreigners’, *BBC News*, 9 March http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4333321.stm – Accessed 30 March 2005 – Attachment 22).

An article dated 28 March 2005 by *BBC News* reports that a roadside bomb exploded in Kabul injuring four people.

A roadside bomb has exploded in the Afghan capital, Kabul, injuring four people, Afghan officials said.

An investigator from the Nato security force said the bomb was detonated by remote control as a Canadian diplomatic vehicle passed.

An Afghan interior ministry official said one Canadian was injured.

No group has yet said it carried out the bombing, although US forces have warned that Taliban attacks may increase as winter recedes (‘Four injured by Kabul road bomb’ 2005, *AOP Afghan News*, source: *BBC News*, 28 March – Attachment 23).

2. Is an acceptable level of protection offered to the local inhabitants there by the police and/or other security forces?

Many of the following sources suggest that while the recruitment and training of the Afghan police force continues, serious concerns as to their ability and desire to provide protection remain. This is compounded by the failure to completely disarm the militias in Kabul and the recruitment of former militia men into the police force.

The information provided in response to this question is organised under the following two headings.

- Police; and
- Disarmament

Police

Question 1 of RRT Research Response AFG16615 dated 4 June 2004 provides information on the Afghan police force (RRT Country Research 2004, *Research Response AFG16776*, 4 June – Attachment 24).

The Danish Immigration Service conducted a fact-finding mission to Kabul from 20 March to 2 April 2004. The subsequent report provides the following information on the reconstruction of the Afghan police force. The report notes that “there still continues to be problems with the way the police carries out its work.”

Various sources explained that the implementation of a national police force is proceeding, but there continues to be problems with the way the police carries out its work.

The UNAMA explained that the training of the police is proceeding slowly, although results have been achieved. The Ministry of the Interior has established a human rights office, and two human rights officers have been placed in every district. These officers will monitor the human rights situation and train people in matters concerning human rights. The intention is that they should attend to complaints of encroachment. The source explained that this project is supported by the UNAMA and that 1.6 million US dollars have been allocated.

Nevertheless, the source was of the opinion that the behaviour of the police is still a massive problem. There are continuously cases of abuses that are completely unacceptable [researcher emphasis added]. The source mentioned one case in which two or three members of the police had beaten up a little boy. The boy was hospitalised and the mother complained to the police and two people were arrested. Later the mother complained one more time telling that she had been threatened again and that someone had tried to take the boy out of the hospital. In the end, the two individuals who had been arrested in the case were set free without further prosecution.

The EU Special Representative explained that the work of the police has improved and that human rights are being discussed in the Ministry of the Interior. Germany has commenced a training programme for the police in which they concentrate on the training of trainers. The U.S.A. has also carried out short courses for the current police personnel. **However, it is still a problem the way the police demonstrate their power, and corruption is still widespread although there are local differences** [researcher emphasis added]. In Kabul, there is a legal system with a certain infrastructure, which does not exist in the provinces. There are examples of low-ranking commanders using force and extortion, or demanding road taxes or tolls, committing acts of violence, etc. The government is not in a position to interfere due to the lack of a regular national police force and a functioning legal system.

The ICG explained that six months ago the German training programme was the only programme designed to improve the working methods of the Afghan police. The U.S.A has

granted 50 million dollars for 7 regional training centres. If a well-focused recruitment programme will follow up the German and the American training programmes this will raise the standard of the police in the future. For the time being, commanders are working both for the police and the military. Attempts are made to train as many police personnel as possible before the presidential and parliamentary elections. **However, ICG found that apart from a few districts there have only been marginal improvements in the standards of the police. Often the police are only formally civilian, but in reality many of the policemen are former mujaheddins, especially in the provinces. In practice there is no difference between the police and the military and anybody can call himself “commander”** [researcher emphasis added]. The ICG expressed concern, as to whether the police will be able to provide the necessary degree of protection during the coming elections.

The Interior Vice Minister found that improvements are occurring all the time. Within the police, every district now has a human rights office. Training centres have been established for police personnel in four districts, and will be extended to six districts. The aim is to improve the level of training for both the existing and the future police officers. The ministry of interior has planned to complete the training of 20,000 (twenty thousands) police officers in 2004 and for another 52,000 (fifty-two thousands) police officers in the first part of 2005. The total will be of 75,000 (seventy-five thousands) trained police officers. New recruits as well as the current police officers will be trained.

The Lawyers Union of Afghanistan explained that policemen from approximately 8 (eight) or 9 (nine) of Kabul's 18 (eighteen) police districts have been trained. **You can ask the police for help, but often there is no point in doing so. The source explained that it depends on where people live, whether or not they go to the police if they are being robbed in their home in Kabul. If you live in a district with a powerful warlord, you do not go to the police since there is a high risk that the warlord himself is behind the breakin** [researcher emphasis added] (Danish Immigration Service 2004, *The political conditions, the security and human rights situation in Afghanistan – Report on fact-finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan 20 March-2 April 2004*, November – Attachment 7).

According to the 12 August 2004 report of the UN Security Council the “existing [police] force suffers from a shortage of trained policemen and equipment and weak command and control structures.”

33. The need for Afghanistan to have a trained and properly equipped national police force is acute, both for long-term state-building and in particular in the context of the upcoming elections. The existing force suffers from a shortage of trained policemen and equipment and weak command and control structures. ... To date some 19,500 police have received training... The target strength of the force provides for a core of the 47,500 national police, 12,500 border police and 2,500 highway police to be reached by the end of 2005 (UN Security Council 2004, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security*, A/58/868-S/2004/634 (04-45327 (E) 130804), 12 August – Attachment 25).

According to the 21 September 2004 report of the independent expert of the UN Commission on Human Rights, the personnel of the Afghan police services “are for the most part poorly trained, underpaid, and lack motivation to service the Government's policies of security, reconstruction and the affirmation of the rule of law.”

39. The Government has distinct security forces: ANA [Afghan National Army], under the direction of the Ministry of Defence, the Afghan police services (composed of the National Police, the Border Police, as well as local and regional police), under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior, and an intelligence apparatus, the National Security Directorate

(NSD), under the direction of the Presidency. The personnel of these institutions are for the most part poorly trained, underpaid, and lack motivation to serve the Government's policies of security, reconstruction and the affirmation of the rule of law. **The allegiances of these bodies' personnel remain linked to ethnic and local leaders** [researcher emphasis added]. There is poor coordination between these bodies, reducing their effectiveness. **There is also no system of internal control over illegal, corrupt, or unauthorized practices or to stem human rights violations. Even combined, these forces are unable to control the warlords, local commanders, drug cultivation and trafficking, common criminality and human rights abuses** [researcher emphasis added].

40. All of these combined factors have produced a situation wherein gross violations of fundamental human rights are commonplace. It is self-evident that the security conditions described above, the absence of effective army and police forces, the weakness of the judiciary, and the generally dysfunctional and corrupt administration augur poorly for enforcing the rule of law (UN General Assembly 2004, *Report of the independent expert of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan*, A/59/370, 21 September – Attachment 8).

According to Ahmed Rashid, Hazaras are easier to target “than others because they are less effective in...getting the authorities to deal with their cases.” Ahmed Rashid also comments on the high level of criminality in Kabul some of which he attributes to police commanders (Rashid, Ahmed 2004, *Transcription Of Video Conference between RRT Melbourne, RRT Sydney and Ahmed Rashid in Pakistan on Wednesday 10 November 2004*, 10 November – Attachment 5).

According to the Human Rights Watch *World Report 2005* “[l]ocal military and police forces, even in Kabul, have been involved in arbitrary arrests, kidnapping, extortion, torture, and extrajudicial killings of criminal suspects” (Human Rights Watch Human Rights Watch 2005, *World Report 2005 – Afghanistan*, January – Attachment 26).

An article dated 10 January 2005 by Xinhua reports that the first model police station has been established in Kabul.

The computerized station, according to Afghan Interior Minister, has been equipped with all necessary means.

“Establishing district 10 police station as a Model Police Station is a major step by the first Afghan elected government towards improving policing in Afghanistan,” Interior Minister Ali Ahmad Jalali noted at the opening ceremony of the station.

A total of 300 policemen in the first model police station are equipped with 40 vehicles, 20 motorbikes and 40 bicycles (‘Afghan government sets up model police station in Kabul’ 2005, *AOP Afghan News*, source: Xinhua, 11 January – Attachment 27).

An article dated 17 January 2005 by Xinhua reports that there are currently 53,000 police in Afghanistan.

“Today there are 53,000 police officers in the Afghan National Police. Of these 32,000 have been newly trained and the others are former policemen,” she told journalists at a news briefing here.

The post-war central Asian state would have 62,000 strong police force by the end of 2006 ('Afghan police force reaches 53,000' 2005, *AOP Afghan News*, source: Xinhua, 17 January – Attachment 28).

The US Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004* provides the following information on the Afghan police force. The report notes that "[s]ome members of security forces committed serious human rights abuses."

Police, under the Ministry of Interior, had primary responsibility for internal order; however, civilian authorities did not always maintain effective control of security forces. Some local and regional commanders maintained considerable power, as the Government was not in a position to exercise effective control nationwide. NATO retained command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul; its U.N. Security Council mandate was extended to October 13, 2005. Some members of security forces committed serious human rights abuses.

...The Government's human rights record remained poor; although there were some improvements in a few areas, serious problems remained. There were instances where local security forces and police committed extrajudicial killings, and officials used torture in prisons. Efforts to bring to justice serious human rights offenders were often ineffective; impunity from the law remained a serious concern. Punishment of officials usually took the form of administrative actions rather than prosecution.

...In many areas, the lack of an effective police force, poor infrastructure and communications, instability, and insecurity made it difficult to investigate unlawful killings, bombings, or civilian deaths, and there were no reliable estimates of the numbers involved.

...The Constitution prohibits arbitrary arrest or detention; however, arbitrary arrest and detention were serious problems. Legal and law enforcement institutions operated unevenly throughout the country, and justice was administered on an intermittent basis according to a mixture of codified law, Shari'a law, and local custom.

Human rights groups reported that local police authorities extorted bribes from civilians in return for their release from prison or to avoid arrest. The Afghan National Police (ANP) had approximately 26,000 trained policemen and women at year's end, roughly half of the Government's target of 62,000 ANP. Judicial and police procedures and practices for taking persons into custody and bringing them to justice followed no established code and varied depending on the area and local authorities. Some areas had a more formal judicial structure than others. Limits on lengths of pretrial detention were not respected. The AIHRC received several hundred reports of pretrial detention during the year. According to the laws, police can detain suspects for up to 24 hours, primary and secondary courts can detain for up to 2 months, and the final court can detain for up to 5 months (US Department of State 2005, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004 – Afghanistan*, 28 February, Introduction, Section 1a & 1d – Attachment 29).

According to the 18 March 2005 report of the UN Security Council "the task of training, staffing and sustaining an effective police force has proved to be challenging."

33. As previously reported (A/59/581-S/2004/925, paras. 23 and 24), the task of training, staffing and sustaining an effective police force has proved to be challenging. As of February 2005, the German-led and United States-assisted programme of building the Afghan National Police had trained 53,400 personnel, including 17,705 officers and 35,695 non-commissioned officers and patrolmen.

34. Key areas yet to be effectively addressed include: in-depth reform of the existing structure of the police force, post-deployment monitoring and assistance and an expansion of the force to 62,000. Measures are also required to identify and exclude corrupt and anti-government elements remaining in the force. Efforts to develop professional and reliable police and military forces will require the payment of benefits that the Government cannot yet afford. At present, police salaries, equipment, institutional development and infrastructure development continue to be funded by the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan administered by UNDP (UN Security Council 2005, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan*, A/59/744–S/2005/183, 18 March – Attachment 9).

An article dated 28 March 2005 by *The Afghan Islamic Press* reports that the newly appointed Security Commander of Kabul, General Mohammad Akram Khakrezwal has said he will try to organise a “professional and properly-trained police force which will, in a true sense, be at the service of society” (‘New Kabul security commander promises professional police’ 2005, *BBC Monitoring South Asia*, source: *Afghan Islamic Press*, 28 March – Attachment 30).

An International Crisis Group report dated 23 February 2005 reports that many of the disarmed militias “have found a new lease of life as police forces or private militias associated with governors or district administrators.”

Militia leaders have frequently managed to subvert DDR with the tacit support of the central government and/or the U.S.-led Coalition. A key element in this is the reassignment of AMF commanders to civilian posts, particularly as governors and police chiefs. These offices fall outside the ambit of the ANBP, so commanders can employ their former militiamen as police, maintain patronage links with sub-commanders, and protect their economic interests.

...Yet another challenge confronting the DDR process is the reintegration of ex-combatants into the ANA and the Afghan National Police (ANP) (International Crisis Group 2005, *Afghanistan: Getting Disarmament Back on Track*, 23 February – Attachment 31).

An article dated 31 March 2005 in *The Guardian* reports that the “line between cops and robbers is becoming increasingly blurred.” The article notes that underpaid policemen amongst others are behind the lawlessness in Afghanistan.

The robbers who cleaned out Qader Yusifi, a Kabul moneychanger, were swift and single-minded. Within minutes they burst into his home, locked his wife and children into a bathroom, and stole away with £6,000 – his entire working capital.

But they were no ordinary thieves, said Mr Qader, hunched over a gaslight after yet another power cut in his rundown, Soviet-built apartment block.

The masked robbers wore green military fatigues, brandished AK-47 guns and, according to neighbours, escaped in a Toyota Landcruiser with tinted windows – vehicle of choice for Afghan army commanders, former Mujahideen fighters and senior government officials.

“I am 100% sure they were military,” he said. And there was little hope of police collaring the culprits. “The police are working with the thieves, I am sure.”

...But ordinary Afghans, alarmed by a swelling crime wave, see it differently. Armed robbery, kidnapping and intimidation have displaced the Taliban as the principal security problem. The line between cops and robbers is becoming increasingly blurred.

Although no official statistics are available, the perception of a worsening situation is widespread.

...Demobilised Mujahideen fighters, underpaid policemen and corrupt officials are behind the lawlessness, according to Afghan officials, western diplomats, and victims.

...By contrast with the US-led training of the new Afghan army, the 38,000-strong police force is considered a failure by diplomats and other officials [researcher emphasis added].

Scanty training and poor wages are part of the problem. Judge Abdulbaset Bakhteyari said his children had been detained for several hours recently after police pulled their driver over to seek a bribe.

“Officers have no faith in the future so they work for their own benefit,” said Judge Bakhteyari, who works with AK-47 propped against the wall behind his desk.

Thousands of newly demobilised mujahideen fighters have been inducted into police ranks. Many have retained their criminal sidelines [researcher emphasis added].

The crime wave has heightened worries that a culture of impunity has taken root in the Karzai administration.

Several aid officials, requesting anonymity, said they believed a senior police officer was behind the killing of five Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) aid workers last June, which prompted the agency to leave Afghanistan. The officer concerned has retained his job (Walsh, Declan 2005, ‘Crime wave sweeps across Afghanistan’, *The Guardian*, 31 March <http://www.guardian.co.uk/afghanistan/story/0,1284,1448773,00.html> – Accessed 31 March 2005 – Attachment 32).

Disarmament

The Danish Immigration Service conducted a fact-finding mission to Kabul from 20 March to 2 April 2004. The subsequent report provides the following information on the disarmament process.

All the sources with whom the delegation spoke found that the disarmament process has not really embarked, even though it is a very important step in creating peace in Afghanistan.

According to the EU Special Representative, no real disarmament is going on. There has not been any substantial progress in this area, and in reality the authorities have not achieved anything. The government is trying to achieve 40% disarmament before the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections, but according to the source, the government still has not come up with a serious proposal within this area.

The Norwegian Chargé d’Affaires was also of the opinion that the disarmament process was proceeding slowly. The source explained that the disarmament of the many warlords is postponed because reforms in the Defence Ministry and the Ministry for the Interior, which are a prerequisite for the disarmament process, have not yet been implemented.

The ICG explained, along with other sources, that the disarmament process has not really begun, and found that it is a serious problem that Defence Minister Fahim continues to keep his forces in Kabul. According to the Bonn Agreement, the Pansjiri-Tadjik troops should have withdrawn from Kabul. This has not happened [research emphasis added]. The U.S.A and Japan have tried to persuade the Defence Minister, Fahim to remove his troops from Kabul and to disperse two divisions, but the Minister still has three divisions present in the city. According to the ICG, the problem is that if the Defence Minister chooses not to disperse any of his troops, the other warlords will not start to disarm their own forces too. The ICG did not think that one could expect President Karzai to put Defence Minister Fahim under pressure at the moment, since President Karzai needs the Defence Minister's full support in the government. For this reason the source believed that a disarmament process would not have any effect without considerable international support and pressure (Danish Immigration Service 2004, *The political conditions, the security and human rights situation in Afghanistan – Report on fact-finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan 20 March-2 April 2004*, November – Attachment 7).

An International Crisis Group report dated 30 March 2004 provides information on the militias yet to be disarmed in Kabul.

Even Kabul, where militiamen from Panjshir and Shamali remain concentrated more than two years after their entry into the capital, is not yet demilitarised.

...The salient feature of the UNDP-managed DR fund, known as Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP), is that it is an essentially voluntary process, with the ministry of defence having ultimate authority to identify the target personnel.

...A major impasse developed in early 2004 over ANBP implementation in the central region, encompassing the provinces of Kabul, Parwan, Kapisa, Wardak, and Logar, and including the key units directly accountable to Vice President and Defence Minister Mohammad Qasim Fahim. The main phase of DR there was originally slated for February but was stalled by the defence ministry. The Army Chief of Staff, General Bismillah Khan, insisted that all pilot projects should be completed before the main DR phase was launched in Kabul. Subsequent developments led some international observers to speculate that the ministry was attempting to stall those other pilot programs in order to protect the militia presence in Kabul.

...A compromise reached on 25 March 2004 by UNAMA, the ANBP, President Karzai, and Defence Minister Fahim, in the presence of U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, entailed only modest concessions by the minister. Under its terms, a 40 per cent reduction in the size of the AMF is to be achieved by decommissioning 20 per cent of the units and downsizing a further 20 per cent by July 2004. The decommissioning is projected to include four Kabul based units: Division 7, composed of Badakhshani and Panjshiri troops, linked respectively to former President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Fahim; Division 10, composed of troops from Paghman, linked to Ittihad i-Islami leader Abd al-Rabb Rasul Sayyaf; Division 31, composed of Hazara troops from the Harakat-i Islami faction led by Agriculture Minister Sayyid Hussain Anwari; and Regiment 42, a Pashtun unit. Of the units to be decommissioned, the most significant politically would be Division 10, based in West Kabul, near Sayyaf's stronghold of Paghman; neither Rabbani nor Anwari wield much authority in the capital.

Two of the three units in Kabul directly linked to Fahim, Divisions 1 and 8, composed largely of troops from Panjshir and Shamali, are slated only for downsizing. The failure to decommission these units ultimately reflects inadequate pressure on the defence minister from Coalition members, a result perhaps of the erroneous assumption that Fahim's present support for Karzai makes the disarmament of his forces less critical (International Crisis Group 2004, *Elections and Security in Afghanistan*, 30 March – Attachment 33).

According to the 12 August 2004 report of the UN Security Council there has been “insufficient progress in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of factional forces.”

29. There has been insufficient progress in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of factional forces.

...30. As at 31 July, the number of men who had turned in their weapons and entered the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme stood at some 12,245...Among the corps and units whose contribution to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration — relative to their strength — was inadequate, were the forces loyal to the Minister of Defence. These include the two largest corps of the Afghan Militia Forces, the central corps in Kabul and the corps in Parwan; only 5 per cent of these units have entered the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

...31. Of the total number of former officers and soldiers who have been demobilized, some 10,380 have started their reintegration in the following areas: ...5 per cent in the Afghan National Police, the Afghan National Army and contracting teams (UN Security Council 2004, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security*, A/58/868-S/2004/634 (04-45327 (E) 130804), 12 August – Attachment 25).

An article dated 30 August 2004 by the FDCH Regulatory Intelligence Database reports that 170 officers and soldiers of the 31st Division in Kabul joined the DDR process.

Crew-served heavy weapons – mortars, rocket launchers, anti-aircraft guns and machine guns – as well as individual weapons and ammunition were turned over to the Afghan New Beginnings Program’s mobile disarmament unit.

...Zakery [Commander of the 31st Division] said that 600 to 700 of his best soldiers had already left the division to join the Afghan National Army and that he, too, was waiting to see if his nomination for a command in the ANA would be approved. Former and present soldiers of the 31st Division agreed with the division commander as to the necessity to disarm. “We must turn in our weapons to the government,” said former commander Abdul Rahman. “It is the time for peace” (‘Militia division disarms in Kabul, becomes “Heroes of Peace” – Department of Defence’ 2004, FDCH Regulatory Intelligence Database, 30 August – Attachment 34).

An article dated 1 September 2004 by The Associated Press reports that Kabul has been “declared free of heavy weapons” (‘Afghan Capital Free of Heavy Weapons’ 2004, *AOP Afghan News*, source: Associated Press, 1 September – Attachment 35).

According to the 21 September 2004 report of the independent expert of the UN Commission on Human Rights, the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process (DDR) “is progressing slowly, essentially because the Government and ISAF do not have the military capabilities to carry it out, and the Coalition forces are disengaged from the process” (UN General Assembly 2004, *Report of the independent expert of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan*, A/59/370, 21 September – Attachment 8).

On 10 November 2004 Ahmed Rashid, in a video conference on Afghanistan for the RRT, provided information on the disarmament process.

A couple more issues – disarmament I think will be able to be speeded up now. The Defence Minister, Marshal Fahim, is no longer there – there will have to be a new Defence Minister – the blockages in the Defence Ministry will evaporate, as soon as he leaves. I think DDR will now be able to progress much faster (Rashid, Ahmed 2004, *Transcription Of Video Conference between RRT Melbourne, RRT Sydney and Ahmed Rashid in Pakistan on Wednesday 10 November 2004*, 10 November – Attachment 5).

An Afghanistan Television report dated 19 December 2004 reports that 1,861 officers and soldiers of Infantry Division No 10 in Kabul joined the DDR process ('Infantry Division Disarmed in Afghan Capital 2004, *BBC Monitoring Email Alert*, source: Afghanistan Television, 19 December – Attachment 36).

According to the 18 March 2005 report of the UN Security Council 43,710 troops have been disarmed and 38,984 have been demobilised. The report notes that illegal armed groups throughout Afghanistan still need to be demobilised.

20. As previously reported (A/59/581-S/2004/925, para. 17), the presidential election generated much-needed momentum for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, which is led by Japan with the support of the UNDP Afghan new beginnings programme. So far, 43,710 troops of the Afghan militia forces have been disarmed — almost half of them over the past six months. Of that number, 38,984 have been demobilized. ...It is estimated that less than 10,000 Afghan militia forces remain to undergo the programme by 30 June 2005.

21. Of the total number of former officers and soldiers who have been demobilized, some 37,806 have started their reintegration programmes, including...3 per cent in the Afghan National Army and the National Police.

...24. Disarmament of the Afghan militia forces remains insufficient to create a secure environment for parliamentary elections. The Government, with the support of the international community, must now tackle the problem of illegal armed groups. These groups, who are not on the payroll of the Ministry of Defence, exist throughout the country and may include ex-combatants from decommissioned units who did not enter the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. These groups perpetuate the drug industry, impose illegal taxes on individuals in reconstruction programmes and impede the progress of State expansion. Through a pilot project, under the leadership of the National Security Council, UNAMA and the Afghan new beginnings programme are working with national and international security agencies to map and categorize more than 1,000 such groups (UN Security Council 2005, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan*, A/59/744-S/2005/183, 18 March – Attachment 9).

An article dated 24 March 2005 by *BBC News* reports that in the final four months of the disarmament process, “weapons will be collected from the remaining militia units, particularly around Kabul.” The article notes that 45,000 men have been disarmed to date (MacWilliam, Ian 2005, 'Final phase in Afghan disarmament', *BBC News*, 24 March http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4377821.stm – Accessed 30 March 2005 – Attachment 37).

An International Crisis Group report dated 23 February 2005 provides information on the shortcomings of the DDR process in Afghanistan including the failure “to make significant inroads in disarming the powerful Tajik-dominated units in Kabul.”

Thus far it has helped decommission or reduce most of the officially recognised militia units in Afghanistan, and with the support of the Coalition and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), has collected the bulk of their heavy weaponry. But it has failed:

- to make significant inroads in disarming the powerful Tajik-dominated units in Kabul and the Panjshir;
- to keep pace with the evolving nature of Afghanistan’s militia structures, many of which have found a new lease on life as police forces or private militias associated with governors or district administrators; and
- to tackle the threat posed by unofficial militias, which are outside the mandate of the current DDR program and are maintained by most contending regional and local forces, including registered political parties.

Unless the DDR program, known as the Afghanistan New Beginnings Program (ANBP) and managed by the UN Development Program (UNDP), tackles these realities, its legacy is likely to prove more cosmetic than substantive, and militia networks will remain a central and destructive element in Afghanistan’s politics and economy.

...The ANBP reported on 9 February 2005 that it had disarmed some 37,992 AMF soldiers, representing 70 per cent of the estimated AMF personnel.²⁷ Most – 34,743 – have gone through the formal demobilisation; 33,352 entered the reintegration process. The rest of the force, dispersed among the remaining AMF divisions, is slated to be disarmed during the third and final phase of DDR, beginning in March and ending in June 2005.

...The ANBP has yet to disarm fully the larger, more powerful, Shura-yi Nazar affiliated units. The AMF, as it stood in April 2003, was unevenly distributed throughout the country. The 5th Corps, based in Parwan province and encompassing Panjshir and the Central Corps in Kabul, represented about 48 per cent of the AMF’s declared strength – that is, the number of troops on the ministry’s payroll. Divisions 055 and 1, as well as various independent brigades and regiments (directly accountable to the defence ministry although not officially part of the Central Corps) were also Kabulbased. The 5th Corps, Division 8 of the Central Corps, and Divisions 055 and 1 representing the principal Shura-yi Nazar units were formally under the defence ministry but in reality loyal to the Shura-yi Nazar.

From 17 May 2004 to now (February 2005), the 5th Corps’ declared strength has been reduced by 9 per cent and that of the Central Corps by 21 per cent. These figures fall well short of AMF formations in other regions. As a result, the two units’ share of the AMF has risen from 48 to 60 per cent. The downsizing of the Central Corps, moreover, masks the fact that much of that reduction has resulted from the demobilisation of its non-Panjshiri component units. By contrast, negotiations with Panjshiri commanders have yet to result in significant progress (International Crisis Group 2005, *Afghanistan: Getting Disarmament Back on Track*, 23 February – Attachment 31).

3. If not, is a significant element of the reason the fact that the local inhabitants are predominantly Hazara?

Some sources included in Question 1, 2 and 3 of this response suggest that ethnicity - Hazaras predominately live in Western Kabul - may be one of the reasons local inhabitants of Western Kabul may have difficulty accessing police protection.

Question 2 of RRT Research Response AFG16615 dated 2 April 2004 provides information on the position of Hazaras in Kabul including their treatment by police (RRT Country Research 2004, *Research Response AFG16615*, 2 April – Attachment 1).

On 10 November 2004, Ahmed Rashid in a video conference on Afghanistan for the RRT provided information on the position of Hazaras in Kabul. He notes that Hazaras are not only scared of Pashtuns in power in their areas but are equally scared of Uzbeks and Tajiks.

MR RASHID: ...A couple of other points, there has been a huge return of Hazaras, but unfortunately they are returning mostly to the cities which is creating an enormous urban problem, and they are taking very menial jobs – many of them are not going home simply because there is nothing for them back home because of the lack of investment. The second factor is that it's not just the Pashtuns they're scared of, they're equally scared of Uzbek, Tajik power in their areas, although that I think will diminish given the ... withdrawal and the demobilisation, especially of the Tajik militias – the Pancheris.

...SYDNEY/MELBOURNE: I wonder if you could give us an update on Hazaras in Kabul.

MR RASHID: There are huge numbers of Hazaras in Kabul. I mean much of it of course is the traditional population, but there's a huge influx of refugees from Iran and people coming back from Quetta, Pakistan also. Unfortunately in Kabul – they are the ones with the least money, the ones who are having to take the menial jobs – in a sense there is a fear that they will go back to this kind of second class status that they had in Afghanistan before 1979, where they were treated as cheap labour, taking the menial jobs, becoming servants for people in houses, etc., rather than having the ability where they can open shops, do trading, get other kinds of jobs, etc., etc. So it's not a good situation because when you're coming back as a refugee from Iran or wherever, you have this little package from UNHCR which brings you wherever you're going, but doesn't give you anything to start a new life there. I mean what is needed very drastically is some kind of micro credit scheme which of course is being looked at by the World Bank and by others, but I think it's particularly needed for the Hazaras. And don't forget that the Hazaras coming back now are extremely well educated – they're much better educated than other elements who are coming back from – other ethnic groups the Pashtuns, some amongst the Tajiks – Hazaras who have been living in Iran for 20 years are used to a different kind of lifestyle – their women and their boys are all very well educated – and then you're asking them to take on labouring jobs, become taxi drivers, etc., etc., and this is breeding resentment (Rashid, Ahmed 2004, *Transcription Of Video Conference between RRT Melbourne, RRT Sydney and Ahmed Rashid in Pakistan on Wednesday 10 November 2004*, 10 November – Attachment 5).

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Region Specific Links

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Hazara.Net <http://www.hazara.net/>

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UNHCR *REFWORLD* UNHCR Refugee Information Online

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