



German Cooperation with Afghanistan

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Afghanistan and Germany sign agreement to build secure printing facility

Today, Afghanistan's Ministry of Finance and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Foreign Office signed a memorandum of understanding to co-fund the construction and operation of an Afghan State Printing House (ASPH) for national ID cards and other official documents. The memorandum outlines a plan to produce identity cards and other documents according to international security standards. The printing facility will be built at a state-owned site in Jan-galak and is expected to start manufacturing in late 2016.

The technology and equipment will be provided by Germany's federal printing corporation, the Bundesdruckerei, which prints identity cards and passports. To ensure that construction management meets standards of security and quality, the German Government will also provide a team of international and national technicians.

As H.E. Abdul Razaq Vahidi, Deputy Minister for Administration at the Ministry of Finance said "It is vital that Afghanistan produces identity and security documents that meet international security standards. We look forward to working with our German friends to establish a suitable, secure, state-owned printing facility that will improve the reliability of security-related documents." He added that the facility would increase the efficiency of public administration and increase state revenue and economic development.

Wolf Plesmann, head of portfolio at GIZ working in partnership with the Ministry of Finance, added, "This new project is a significant step towards strengthening Afghan public administration with the help of German know-how. We are also happy that both the Afghan and German governments will be making a substantial contribution."

The memorandum for co-financing and cooperation involves that the existing state-owned printing house SUKUK will be expanded with a new building including a new production facility. The current staff will move to the new site, together with 250 to 300 new employees. With greater security against forgery and duplication of documents such as ID cards and certificates, the printing facility promises a range of improvements, both for the state and its citizens.