AFGHANISTAN CONFERENCE – Vienna, February 18, 2025

Statement Christian Reder

Ladies and gentlemen: Welcome to the 5. Conference for a Democratic Afghanistan in Vienna. I am Christian Reder, head of our Foundation for Human Rights, supporting all this meetings financially.

Why we do that? There are no secrets. I am – as all of you – involved into afghan tragedies since 45 years. Shocked by the Sovjet invasion, we started 1980 the “Austrian relief committee for Afghanistan”, realizing programs for refugees in Pakistan and the people in Paktia. With up to 300 afghan employees, half of them women, we operated basic health units, mother-child-programs, job-trainings, school classes, agricultural projects.

Beside my main job I managed this for 15 years. Our budget was funded by other Non Governmental Organizations from all over Europe, the Austrian Government and the United Nations, now worth more than 30 Mio. Euro. This humanitarian solidarity was the background for our – now renewed – engagement.

Later I published books on Afghanistan, one of it in Farsi.

Also this Vienna-meetings for a Democratic Afghanistan started as a human rights project, independent from involved governments. Our group just help to organize. Your challenge is to find in exile “a road map” for further steps towards a better future and international support. Some success could be reached already.

Signs of hope appear even after years of fighting in Syria – where I stayed once for months with my students –, if the rebel groups really build a regime, tolerant to minorities, to women and other religions. Then essential changes could happen in the Middle East.

Without such a new political balance, extremists – like Taliban, Hisbollah or Hamas – will follow their hostile dead-end strategy against their own population and the rest of the world. Where could this end? Never in peace…

Essential is therefor, to promote also in the World of Islam openminded democratic governments and human rights. Your challenge: Create for Afghanistan ways out of the actual disaster – as a model for more freedom, prosperity and cooperation.

<http://www.rd-foundation-vienna.org>

http://christianreder.net/