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*In This Issue* ■



◀ The Forgotten Children...  
Page 2



◀ Child Labor...  
Page 3



▲ Imprison  
Page 4



◀ Civil Society and...  
Page 6



▲ Afghan-Pak Youth...  
Page 8

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**Note From Editor**

**Dear All Readers,**

YLF newsletter enters the second year of its publication successfully. When member of YLF started this successful initiative, it looked far difficult to keep this publication running for a year. Fortunately, today we are publishing the fifth issue of YLF newsletter.

In this issue, we have put in focus the humanitarian crisis Afghanistan faces today as winter comes close. We have contributions from the street children of Kabul and members of YLF and for the first time we have contribution from the member of Pakistani youth recently visited Afghanistan in an G8 youth exchange between Afghanistan and Pakistan facilitated by FES-Afghanistan office.

The condition of Afghan refugees, internal displaced people due to the fighting in the southern provinces, child labor and women victim of war and domestic violence are the highlight of this issue.

I would like to thanks all the contributors who has send their articles and helped us to succeed in another issue of YLF newsletter.

I hope that all readers find this issue educational and informative.

"Allah helps those who help themselves."

Bahram Rahman



By Mahnaz

# From the Forgotten Camps of Kabul

The Letter...

Today is a warm day.  
The wind blow softly. Pampers me gently, Give me the hope and the new day of my life.  
It is my birthday. I am seven now.  
I asked my mother "where is my gift?" She keeps silence. She kissed my forehead and smiled.  
"Happy birthday my little daughter!"  
She helped me to dress and give me my little bag.  
"You have to go now my daughter." She said.

I have to leave the house... but to go where?  
May be I am not like them. As other girls and boys, but millions are like me, I know it.  
Sometimes I feel that may be the sun in my sky is different, because I do not see it bright, it is gray.  
I search the moon every night but it never gets full.  
I am I living on this earth or my planet is different.  
I left my house with little bag of mine.

Not be surprise. The street of my house does not end to the school of my city.  
I am not made to learn ... I have to work.  
I am the orphan of the war. I have lost a father and brothers. My mother cannot see. She lost the sight.  
I am the child of war.  
It is my birthday, But not a new day in my fortune.  
I am still standing on the streets of Kabul... with my little bag of bubble gum to sell.  
Today I have to bring seven breads to my house.  
Today is my birthday. I am seven now.





By Bahram Rahman

# The Forgotten Children of Kabul

It is Thursday evening. After the end of the familiar YLF bi-weekly discussion session, I left the FES office. I walked on the street, which ends up to the cosmopolitan area of Kabul, shar-e- Naw main street. The lights were on; the shops were crowded from buyers. I went to deep thinking with myself "Kabul is changing in right direction..." when someone touched my hand I was shocked and back to reality. I noticed that an eight-year-old boy waving a can of burning incense, begging for tips.

His name was Abdullah. It was the end of another day on the job for him. He is one of the tens of thousands Afghan children each day hustling on the streets of Kabul, all thrust there by poverty and the mass repatriation of refugee families that is overwhelming the country's fragile social structure.

Street children have been a chronic problem in Kabul, the Afghan capital. This social problem started to grow after the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, and has been increased after the mass return of refugees and internal displaced people to Kabul due to war, drought and joblessness during the years of civil war, Taliban and today's government.

The story of Shirin, a 14-year-old girl who sells water, does light manual labor and serves as a messenger in Kabul, is typical. Her family comes from Ghor province, but she can't return to their farm land there because of drought and because the Taliban destroyed the irrigation system and orchards to eliminate cover for its enemies. The family members sought safety in numbers in Kabul, where they struggle with overcrowding, high

costs and scarcities.

Afghanistan faces myriad health, food and shelter problems as it struggles to recover from a two decades of mayhem and dislocation. All the same, the plight of children is causing special concern. Their loss of childhood and education will make it harder for Afghanistan to break its vicious cycle of violence and hatred, this diminishes the hope of a more educated, bright and self confident future generation of Afghanistan.

Another case, Rasoul is a shoeshine boy whose family comes from another devastated farming area in Afghanistan, the Shomali plain, which was on the front line between Taliban and opposition Northern Alliance fightings.

**Countinue on page 4**





## Child Labor

By Saeed Sharifi

brothers work on the street in Kabul city. I sometimes wash cars or pick up plastic from the streets. I would love to go to school, but then who will help my father?"

### Afghanistan today

- Afghanistan is the poorest country in Asia
- Only 13% of the population has access to safe drinking water.
- 20% of Afghanistan's children die before their fifth birthday mainly from preventable diseases.

### Why Children DIE Needlessly?

Roughly, one death in every 5 in the world is the death of a child under the age of 5. Every day, 28,000 young children still die in the developing world from frequent infections and prolonged under nutrition – causes that are virtually unheard of in the developed world. This is roughly equal to 9 out of 10 children under 5 in San Francisco or three-quarters of children under 5 in Nashville dying in a single day. But we know it is possible to save most of these lives with basic affordable solutions that any developing nation can afford to implement and which every industrialized nation can afford to support.

Millions of children are still vulnerable to the same causes of death that prevailed more than 25 years ago. The most common killers of children at the age of 1 to 5 are pneumonia, diarrhea, malaria and vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles. Malnutrition is a contributing factor in over half of these deaths. AIDS is emerging as a major cause of death in some sub-Saharan African countries. The greatest risk of death is in the first days and month of life, when 4 million babies die each year, most at home, without contact with a skilled health provider. Three causes: birth asphyxia prematurity, low birth weight and infections account for 87 percent of newborn deaths. Recent analysis has shown that nearly 3 million of these newborn deaths could be prevented annually by improving access to basic, cost effective interventions that are not yet reaching those who need them mostly.

Millions of children around the world have to work to support themselves and their families. These children often become involved in dangerous or exploitative labor damaging their health, affecting their development and denying them access to education. Child labor can be found in developing countries worldwide, but often these children are invisible, hidden away in domestic homes or scavenging through rubbish. In Afghanistan, 20 years of conflict, food shortages and extreme poverty have forced countless children into the streets of the city searching for work. Children working in Afghanistan are exposed to extreme conditions, neglect, health problems and abuse. Unless these children are given access to the education and vocational training that they so badly need, the endless cycle of poverty will continue.

### Kabul's forgotten children

In Kabul City, more than 40,000 school-aged children are working on the streets of the city. They spend their

days scavenging through rubbish, collecting metal, polishing shoes or selling water. Over 85% of these children have never been to school. Girls are at particular risk of sexual abuse and often end up involved in prostitution at a young age.

An average working children in Kabul will earn less than 1\$ per day and will often work up to 14 hours without food and rest. Even when these children live with their families, the household income is so low that they are forced to continue working in order to survive. These children desperately need to go to school, to learn skills for a better future and reclaim their stolen childhood.

**Real live story:** Sakhi is ten years old and lives in Kabul city. He has five brothers and two sisters. His family is extremely poor and he has to work on the streets to help them to survive. "I don't have good memories of my life. I remember being a refugee in Pakistan for many years and back home there was a lot of fighting. My

## زندانی...

نویسنده: فاطمه حسینی



من زنم فریاد اسیری در هجوم سنگین دو حرف. من آوای خاموش نسل ها دردم که بر شانه های سکوت سجده نموده و اشک و آه شده مهر جبینم.

و من زنم همان مادری که بهشت مزین میگردد به قدومش به جرم زن بودن میسوزم در جهنم غرور و تعصب پوشالی و خیالی مردان مردنما. و من زنم آن که در گوشه های خیال زهر آلود مردان قبایلم به نام ناموس و عفت چ. متاعی لازم و ملزوم در آتش هوس و خودخواهی تمام آرزوهایم تمام لبخند هایم به اشک و ماتم میدل میگردد من زنم آنکه تمام سهمش از مادر بودنش تولد کودکی است که برای به آغوش کشیدنش پسر بودن کودکش شرط است نه گرمای عاشقانه وجود کودکش.

و من زنم آنکه آبله زد دستان خیالش در جستجوی هویت و تاریخ گم شده اش در وادی که زن را با نام خودش خواندن شرم و ننگی است سنگین. من زنم آنکه زیر شلاق نگاه خسته مرد به تماشا نشسته ام برای فروکش شدن حجم سنگین خستگی ناشی از ناملایمات زندگی.

و من زنم آنکه برای کودکم هرگز نتوانسته ام جواب دهم چرا نام مادرش را بر چهره تذکره اش نمی یابد. من زنم آن کسی که تمام شهامت شجاعت صداقت و پاکدامنی ام را با تشبیه نمودنم به مرد زیر پای خودبینی و بزرگنمایی مرد بسیار آسان و ساده نابود میکنند حال آنکه من بیزارم زین مرد بودن. و من زنم آنکه با نام پدر شوهر برادرم و یا حتی پسرم امضا میگردد تمام بدبختی ها و ناآرامی هایم و به نام بد در جزای گناهی که مرتکب نشده ام زندانی زندگی زهرآلودی میشوم که هیچ گاه آرامش و حتی تصورش را هم به خواب نمی بینم.

من زنم آنکه خدا مختارم نهاد ولی عاجزم زدرک این حس ناشناخته در این دیار که اختیار کردن و انتخاب کردن زندگی به دست مردان رقم میخورد. و من زنم آنکه شیطنت های کودکانه اش را با کلمه حقارت آمیز (سیاه سر میکوبند و میزبان عقده ی

نبرد با مرد حال آنکه سهمم در میدان زندگی پیکاریست ناتمام. من زنم که به زن بودنم به احساس پاکم به قلب حساس و لطیفم میالم. من فقط باورم را به عنوان یک انسان به عنوان نیمی از پیکر اجتماع به عنوان مادری که حق انتخاب اسم برای فرزندش را دارد به عنوان همسری که حق دارد دلتنگی ها و خوشی هایش را با شوهرش قسمت کند به عنوان خواهری که حق عاشق شدن دارد میخوامم. من باورم را بارور میخوامم.

استبداد و سلطه گرایی میگردد. من زنم آنکه از وحشت زیبایی این هدیه خدادادی می شود زندگی ام بستر هوس مردی مردنما. من زنم آنکه به جرم عاشق بودن در دادگاهی نا عادلانه در محکمه ای که قاضی اش شاکی اش و کیل مدافعه اش همه از جنس مرداند. به دار آویخته میشود تمام احساس پاک وجودم. من زنم آنکه سهم آزادی ام خودسوزی و فرار است. و من زنم آنکه تنها در یک حرف عقب مانده ام در

### Continue from page 2

The plain is roofed with so many land mines and their gardens have been burned-out so his family prefers to stay in Kabul.

Just as the situation becomes more acute for children, the government fails to protect them, teachers and schools from the attacks by Taliban and warlords. Each day families do not allow their children to allowed school due to fear of Taliban or organized crimes such as kidnapping."

The fighting resulted in mass destruction of schools, even today, seven years after of fall of Taliban our government failed to provide the children with shelter and food. They are forced to work to feed their families but their childhood, right of education and happiness of the future are lost." Mahboba Razavi working as a teacher in one of the schools in Kabul says.

Abdullah, his skin already parched and stained by sun and pollution, is not as lucky. He spends all days

outside with his incense burner, which is supposed to bestow good luck on those who cross its path. He says he needs to work to help his widowed mother who makes about 100 Afghanis a day. Still, Abdullah's intelligent face darkens when he is asked if he'd rather been in class.

He says "today I am a forgotten child on the streets of Kabul, I work to survive, I work cause I feel my self responsible for my family, have you ever felt way for me, Mr. President?"

Afghanistan is experiencing the worst humanitarian condition in its history today. It is right after Afghanistan gets unprecedented international attention since the emergence of the global war on terror. After decades civil war in Afghanistan more than 40 countries came to Afghanistan to stabilize the country and support the reconstruction process. Millions of hopeless Afghans after passing a dark period of Taliban regime, a period when every Afghan was thinking to leave the country and find a place for living outside Afghanistan, passionately wel-



comed the support. Millions of other Afghans living abroad even those who had no wish to return came back with a hopeful future. They think after years of sufferings and insecurity they will have peace with good humanitarian conditions but, drastically it is becoming worse as each year passes.

**Security Situation**

The security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated significantly. It is estimated that the frequency of attacks, bombings and organized crimes incidents in 2007 was up 30% on 2006. Insurgent and criminal attacks have intensified, resulted in killing over 900 Afghan police and 220 international soldiers last year. moreover, more than 140 suicide attacks have killed more than 200 civilians. It continues to deteriorate in 2008. In the south, south-east and east of the country insurgents are mounting an increasingly vigorous systematic terror campaign of threats, abductions and executions

# Humanitarian Crises in Afghanistan

By Aliase Hassani

aimed against members of the population suspected of being in any way connected to the Afghan government and its military and civilian international supporters.

In 2007 the conflict claimed over 8,000 lives, compared to roughly 4,000 for 2006; there have been over 1,500 deaths already due to the war this year. At least 1500 civilians were killed in 2007, 500-600 of whom were killed in operations conducted by international and Afghan forces. A high number of these casualties

can be attributed to air strikes in 2007. There were more than twice as many air strikes by international forces in Afghanistan as in Iraq. The increasing violence is reflected in higher numbers of International Military Forces casualties: in 2008 the total number of international soldiers killed in a single month in Afghanistan, exceeded the figure in Iraq.

Abusive searches conducted by Afghan and international forces have on a number of occasions involved within excessive use of force, extrajudicial killings, destruction of properties and mistreatment of suspects. In such cases it is typically extremely difficult to find out exactly which military or other foreign unit or agency was responsible.

**Inconsistency and lack of accountability:** The existence of ISAF and US-led commands, intelligence or foreign service actors, multiple overlapping mandates and divergent national

practices have created variable operating standards and inconsistent practices in protection and in civil military coordination. As the international community admits, there is profound lack of accountability and transparency as resulted investigation and punitive action following breaches of international law by foreign forces. Insecurity has had a significant impact on livelihoods, especially essential services. Direct attacks and kidnappings of teachers and health workers, as well as threats and intimidation have forced the closure of large numbers of schools including half of the 720 schools in the south and at least 36 health facilities in the south and east leaving 360,000 people with very limited access to healthcare.

There are up to 130,000 long term displaced people in Afghanistan and more recent fighting in the south has reportedly displaced up to 80,000. Over 2 million Afghan refugees are officially living in Pakistan, and nearly one million in Iran. In 2007, some 350,000 Afghans returned from Pakistan and 170,000, mainly economic migrants, were forcibly deported from Iran. Returning refugees and IDPs are often housed in settlements with poor conditions. Already, over 120,000 Afghan refugees have returned from Pakistan this year and further returnees are expected during the rest of 2008.

Up to 70% of Afghans are affected by food insecurity and some 5 million severely food insecure due to price increases, insufficient support for agriculture and extreme weather conditions especially prolonged periods of drought. Food is increasingly becoming unaffordable for Afghans and malnourishment is a major health threat for children under five, pregnant and lactating women.

**Countinue on page 6**





## Civil Society and Media in Democracy

By Reza Haidari

Civil society and media not only allows, but also encourages its citizens to take active part in public life. It is one of the key features of democracy that people act together in an organized manner in order to formulate and express their interests, values and identities. Civil society is the sphere where such organized 'bottom-up' activity takes place. The existence of civil society obviously requires a democratic political system that guarantees the civic freedom of association, opinion and speech. On the other hand, the functioning of democracy requires civic activity and the quality and strength of democracy are defined, among other things, by the level of civil society.

**media roles:** access to information is essential to the health of democracy for at least two reasons. First, it ensures that citizens can make responsible, informed choices rather than acting out of ignorance or misinformation. Second, information serves a "checking function" by ensuring that elected representatives uphold their oaths of office and carry out the wishes of those who elected them. By achieving above, democratic society will reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights and every one will be guaranteed to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. In this society, the government ensures to provide the same and equal opportunity for all persons.

### Continue from page 5

Recent drought in numbers of the provinces including Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar, Daikundi and Badakhshan, exacerbates the current food crisis. Lack of access to adequate food is also one of the major factors contributing to high mortality rates (still the highest in the world) and severe malnutrition among high risk populations especially the displaced, returnees and the disadvantaged. Yet the government's capacity to respond to the humanitarian crises is extremely limited. It remains continuously reliant on UN, NGOs and international helps. Last year there were at least 131 violent incidents by both criminals and insurgents, which directly targeted or impacted on the work of NGOs; at least 15 NGO staff were killed (the UN estimates a total of 40), and 88 were abducted. There were also more than 30 attacks on the WFP food convoys. Humanitarian access has been significantly curtailed and over a third of the country including most of the south and south-eastern provinces, It is now an extreme risk environment for NGOs, which are progressively scaling back their operations in these areas. Based on reports, UN is currently unable to operate in 78 of Afghanistan's 376 districts, with many more being de facto off limits in all but the most exceptional circumstances. In comparison to 2007, in 2008 the number of attacks on NGOs are increasing, but the numbers of attacks by insurgents and criminal groups up by 40% and the severity of attacks is increasing with at least 9 fatalities and the destruction of numbers of NGO's offices. The nexus between insurgency and criminal groups appears to be growing. To address the above mentioned points International community and Afghan government must take concrete actions to improve security and local governance at all levels. There must be concerted action to improve the effectiveness of international aid promote rural development and support the response to the current humanitarian crisis Afghanistan faces today.



څنگه کولای شو د ښځو په وړاندې تبعیض له منځه یوسو:  
د تاوتریخوالي د له منځه وړلو د کنوانسیون له  
خوا، ځینې لارښوونې

چطور تبعیض علیه زنان را از بین ببریم  
رهنمودهایی از کنوانسیون رفع تبعیض  
علیه زنان

ماده ۶

هغه دولتونه چې ددې کنوانسیون غړیتوب لري د  
ښځو د قاچاق او د بدکاري د مخنيوي به موخه  
باید ټول قوانین عملي کړي.

دوهمه برخه

ماده ۷

هغه دولتونه چې ددې کنوانسیون غړیتوب لري  
به سیاسي زوند او نورو برخو کې به د ښځو پر  
وړاندې تبعیض له منځه وړي، به حاکمري دول  
به ښځو ته لاندني حقوق د نارینو سره یو شان  
تضمینوي.

الف) به ټاکنو، ټولبوستونو او نورو ټولو برخو کې  
د انتخاب حق.

ب) د دولت به اجراتو، د دولت ټیټو او لوړو  
بوستونو ته رسیدل او دولت به ټولو اموراتو کې  
د مسولیت ترسره کول.

ب) د هیواد ټولنیز او یا سیاسي زوند لپاره به دولتي  
او یا هم غیر دولتي موسسو کې کډون کول.

ماده ۸

هغه دولتونه چې ددې کنوانسیون غړیتوب لري  
هغه کامونه به عملي کوي چې ښځې د نارینو سره  
سم برته له کوم تبعیض څخه به نړیواله کچه له  
خپل هیواد استازیتوب وکړي او به نړیوالو فعالیتونو  
کې ونډه واخلي.

ماده ۹

۱- هغه دولتونه چې ددې کنوانسیون غړیتوب  
لري ښځو ته به د تابعیت د ساتلو او یا بدلولو به  
برخه کې د نارینو سره مساوي حقوق برابر وي. به  
حاکمري دول له یو تن بهرني سره واده کول او یا  
د نکاح به دوران کې به د خپل تابعیت بدلولیشي  
او خاوند به یې به زور هغه تابعیت برې نه قبلوي  
چې خپل یې دي.

۲- غړي هیوادونه به د ښځو او نارینو د اولادونو د  
تابعیت به هکله برابر حقوق ورکوي.

ماده ۶

دول عضو کلیه اقدامات مقتضی، از جمله  
قانونگذاری، را به منظور جلوگیری از قاچاق  
زنان و بهره بری از روسپی گری زنان به عمل  
خواهند آورد.

بخش دوم

ماده ۷

دول عضو کلیه اقدامات مقتضی را برای رفع  
تبعیض از زنان در زندگی سیاسی و عمومی  
کشور به عمل خواهند آورد و، به ویژه حقوق  
زیر را برای زنان، برابر با مردان، تضمین  
خواهند کرد:

الف) رای دادن در همه انتخابات و همه پرسى  
های عمومی و داشتن حق انتخاب شدن برای  
همه نهادهای منتخب عمومی؛

ب) مشارکت در تعیین و اجرای سیاست دولت  
و رسیدن به سمت های دولتی و انجام کلیه  
مسئولیت های عمومی در تمام سطوح دولت؛

پ) شرکت در سازمان ها و انجمن های غیر  
دولتی مرتبط با زندگی سیاسی و اجتماعی  
کشور.

ماده ۸

دول عضو اقدامات مقتضی را به عمل خواهند  
آورد تا به زنان، در شرایط مساوی با مردان و  
بدون هیچ گونه تبعیض، فرصت داده شود که از  
دولت خود در سطح بین المللی نمایندگی کنند و  
در فعالیت سازمان های بین المللی شرکت داشته  
باشند.

ماده ۹

۱- دول عضو در مورد کسب، تغییر یا حفظ  
تابعیت، به زنان حقوق مساوی با مردان اعطا  
خواهند کرد. دولت ها به ویژه تضمین خواهند  
کرد که ازدواج با فرد خارجی یا تغییر تابعیت  
شوهر در طی دوران ازدواج، خود به خود باعث  
تغییر تابعیت زن، بی وطن شدن او یا تحمیل  
تابعیت شوهر به او نشود.

۲- دول عضو به زنان و مردان در مورد تابعیت  
فرزندان شان حقوق برابر اعطا خواهند کرد.





## Afghan-Pak Youth Exchange Programme

By Pakistani Delegation Members

The Youth Exchange Programme between Afghanistan and Pakistan is part of the confidence building measures supported by the international community to improve people to people contacts between both nations. The history of this exchange initiative goes back to the G-8 summit held in Germany in the year 2007. Something that was unique about this summit was that foreign ministers of both Pakistan and Afghanistan were invited to this summit. During this summit G-8 Foreign ministers expressed concerns over the current state of strained bilateral relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. It was eventually agreed that other than direct diplomatic, bilateral, multilateral efforts to improve relations, people to people contacts will be enhanced. The aim behind this is 'to create

awareness among the people of both countries about each other and regarding the relationship their governments at their level'. It was agreed that Exchanges of youth, journalists, civil society activists, parliamentarians as well as scholars will take place between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Federal republic of Germany was given this responsibility to organize and facilitate such exchanges. Therefore, as part of "G-8 Youth Exchange between Afghanistan and Pakistan", the first phase began when a group of Afghani youth visited Pakistan for a week in June 2008. The responsibility of organizing this exchange was assigned to Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), a worldwide German NGO having its offices in Afghanistan as well as Pakistan. This visit of Pakistani delegation to

Afghanistan (October 20-27, 2008) is actually the second phase of exchange of youth between Afghanistan and Pakistan. During the week's stay in Kabul, the Pakistani delegation had meetings with Government officials and ministers, civil society activists, youth, scholars etc. The following report provides an introduction of the members of the Pakistani delegation, overview of their meetings with certain groups and institutions as well as their reflections about this whole trip and initiative. At this point, I, on behalf of the Pakistani delegation would like to thank the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Offices in Kabul and Islamabad for organizing this trip. The whole delegation is grateful to the FES Office for all the help during their stay in Kabul.

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# Impressions from Pakistan Delegation Members

Afghans, stories of their loved ones have been written into history. Over 15 meetings in 7 days tended to inspire and motivate me. The works from Afghans youth from limited resources and in some cases no resources were speechless. However, good work doesn't last long unless they commit to something. In this case, they will commit to something, InshaAllah. Love Afghans forever. (Essaam)

Exchange with Afghan youth and intellectuals completely changed my perceptions about Afghanistan and its people. During my visit I have discovered a common desire between youth of both nations to have peace and good relations. Thankfully, both of us agree that a stable Afghanistan is important for Pakistan and vice versa. It was a wonderful experience which helped to remove a lot of misconceptions. We also came to know about the effort of Afghan government about the uplifting of Afghan people with scarce resources. This tour has established a bond of trust which will promote peace and harmony between two countries in the near future. (Ahmed Ali Babar)

Sweetness of familiar air was felt when I stepped on the Kabul airport. All the inflicting thoughts were removed from my mind about Afghanistan and more importantly about the people of Afghanistan. I am enlightened by FES's efforts. (Umar Farooq)

Before visiting Afghanistan, I thought that there are only Taliban there who have guns all over them and they don't love each other. I have been deeply impressed by the



youth and civil society here and I must confess, every Afghani wants peace and friendship with us....and we desire the same. (Veer ji Kohli)

My ideas about Afghanistan and its people have changed after this wonderful seven day interaction with Afghani institutions. People here are very friendly and I don't see any conflicts between us..but our governments. (Raees Akhtar)

It is a misconception among the common people of Pakistan that Afghans don't like Pakistan... perhaps this is not the case. They love Pakistani people as much as any other muslim nation with whom we have good brotherly relations. This visit to Afghanistan has been a real experience for me. It has enabled me what Afghans think about Pakistan and the issues that exist between governments of both of these countries. I brought a message of peace and mutual respect when I arrived in Kabul and I'm taking the same message from the Afghanistan to Pakistan. I wish and pray that God bless both of our countries the wisdom and courage to work together and stand as real brothers. Insha'Allah. (Nishat Kazmi)

My first impression was a dangerous place and unsafe which changed from almost the first moment we meet Salman Qiyamat his hospitality was awesome similarly I was amazed when I met youth from afghan young writers home who were working without any kind of funding similarly throughout the course of the tour meeting with youth I was impressed by other stories of resilience of people working in impossible conditions so my impression of Afghanistan and its people was a

country of people who were friendly and loving I hope when I go back I will be able to take some practical steps to help them. (Sher Afghan malik)



This trip has provided us an opportunity to meet people of Afghanistan who were related to different fields and most importantly to know their point of view about Pakistan which otherwise was not possible. The Programme has left deep impressions on all of us on the base of which, we will try our best to bring Pakistan and Afghanistan. (Salma)

The G-8 Youth Exchange Program between Pakistan and Afghanistan was a fruitful trip and it would help in improving bilateral relations between peoples of both countries. Our meetings with Kabul Youth, government officials, members of civil society, journalists, writers, researchers and other people of Afghanistan were very good. Playing of simulation games on bilateral business of both countries was very interesting and informative, which would help in bringing peace and sustainable regional security to the region.

During the visit, the officials of FES Kabul, delegation members and other people were extreme friendly. I am carrying a lot of things with myself to Pakistan and would share my experiences with relatives, colleagues and friends. I do hope that this trip of youth exchange would open ways for several delegation exchanges between the both countries in order to create mutual understanding between peoples of Pakistan and Afghanistan. (Muhammad Shafique)



