

PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Development Programme

Afghanistan Country Office, Shah Mahmood Ghazi Watt, Kabul



Afghanistan

MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT INAUGURATED NEW DEPARTMENT BUILDING CONSTRUCTED WITH UNDP SUPPORT AND THE NEW UNDP URBAN DEVELOPMENT GROUP OFFICE ESTABLISHED AT MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

22 October 2008, Kabul-- The Minister of Urban Development, Yousaf Pashtun inaugurated a new office building constructed with support of UNDP and also opened UNDP Urban Development Group office newly established at Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD).

Speaking at the ceremony, the UNDP Country Director, Manoj Basnyat and Minister Yousaf Pashtun reaffirmed their commitment to a strengthened partnership in support of Afghanistan urban sector. It is estimated that about 70% of Afghanistan urban population live in informal settlements without basic services which leads to



deepening urban poverty. UNDP responded positively to the Ministry's request for increased capacity building to help address these challenges.

The UNDP Country Director mentioned partnership approaches as a means to extend outreach and expressed his intention of developing a stronger UNDP urban programme to support Afghanistan urban sector and MoUD in the future.

The Minister of Urban Development commended UNDP for being amongst the first UN agencies provided support to MoUD. He expressed his hope that an enduring partnership between UNDP and MoUD would build on the achievements already made. Minister Yousaf Pashtun thanked the UNDP Urban Development Group for supporting the Ministry and assisting with developing Afghanistan Urban Sector Strategy together with other partners for the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). He welcomed UNDP commitment to develop a larger urban programme for Afghanistan.

The opening ceremony was attended by Agha Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC), USAID, UN-HABITAT and other high officials of the ministry.

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