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AFGHANISTAN'S MARKETPLACE GOES VIRTUAL

Published on Tuesday, May 20, 2008

The Canadian non-profit organization Peace Dividend Trust (PDT) announces the launch of Afghanistan's first comprehensive online marketplace at www.BuildingMarkets.org.

BuildingMarkets supersedes PDT's very successful Afghanistan Procurement Directory (www.buyafghan.af), which was released in September 2006. The Procurement Directory includes profiles of over 3,500 verified and legally registered Afghan vendors, providing a wide variety of products and services ranging from construction materials and advanced pharmaceutical packaging to solar energy systems and film production. With over 22,000 page views in March 2008 alone, the online Procurement Directory is a staple for anyone looking to procure goods and services in Afghanistan. PDT's Procurement Directory helped the Afghanistan Marketplace project surpass its initial goal of facilitating US\$5 million into the Afghan economy. As of April 2008, the project successfully facilitated contracts worth over US\$68 million to Afghan businesses, confirming PDT's reputation as a non-profit organization delivering concrete benefits wherever it works in the world.

BuildingMarkets features the Procurement Directory's listing of over 3,500 local companies, as well as information about buyers operating in the country, research and white papers relating to Afghanistan's economy and investment opportunities, and information on PDT's other services.

"With the launch of BuildingMarkets, we've moved from having a procurement directory to having a real 'Business to Business Marketplace' where international buyers and Afghan suppliers can come together. The site provides buyers with reliable information on which to base purchasing decisions, and gives Afghan suppliers a way to reach buyers around the world. This service helps everyone understand the sophistication and size of the Afghan marketplace and learn about the progress being made here," said Shirine Pont, PDT's Country Director.

Starting in July, registered buyers and suppliers on BuildingMarkets will be able to post and receive tender notices about active projects in Afghanistan. Buyers will also have access to detailed profiles of Afghan businesses, supplier ratings, and shared vendor lists. Registration is free and encouraged for all international buyers and local companies in Afghanistan.

The BuildingMarkets initiative in Afghanistan is primarily funded by the USAID Small and Medium Enterprise Development programme, while PDT-Afghanistan's largest donor is the Canadian International Development Agency. PDT also manages a BuildingMarkets service in Timor-Leste, funded by the Australian Agency for International Development, and has initiatives in other countries currently underway.

About Peace Dividend Trust

Peace Dividend Trust is a Canadian non-profit organization that fosters and implements innovations in peace and humanitarian operations. Our goal is to make missions efficient, effective, and equitable, delivering a stronger peace and larger peace dividend. Our Afghanistan Marketplace project connects international buyers to Afghan suppliers, helping to create jobs and inspire long-term economic growth in Afghanistan.

Learn more about Peace Dividend Trust by visiting the website: www.PeaceDividendTrust.org.

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