

**Fact Sheet**

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U.S.-EU Cooperation in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has achieved extraordinary progress since the removal of the Taliban. The U.S. and European Union (EU) have many shared priorities in Afghanistan: democratization and electoral support; strengthening the counter-narcotics fight; reforming the security sector; and participating in Afghan economic reconstruction.

With the aid and support of the United States, the European Union and others, Afghanistan held free and fair elections in October 2004. Eight million Afghans, 41% of them women, voted. Parliamentary elections scheduled for spring, again with U.S. and EU assistance, will further the democratic process.

U.S. and EU assistance supports extensive reconstruction of Afghanistan's social infrastructure. With help from the United States and the EU, Afghanistan constructed or rehabilitated hundreds of schools and health clinics; school attendance for girls and boys increased to four million last year; 4.2 million children have been vaccinated against measles and polio; and 700,000 cases of malaria treated.

The United States has committed over \$4.5 billion to Afghanistan's reconstruction in fiscal years 2001-2004. In fiscal year 2005, the United States will provide at least another \$1.7 billion in assistance. The EU has pledged \$2.2 billion for 2004-2006 and has taken a lead role in supporting recurring expenses of the government of Afghanistan and salaries for teachers and other public servants.

In February 2005, the U.S. and EU participated in a conference organized by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR and EU Directorate General for Development that focused on repatriating Afghan refugees. Over 3.6 million refugees have returned since March 2002, the largest refugee repatriation operation in history. Working together through UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations, the U.S. and EU are facilitating returns and supporting reintegration of refugees. Large-scale refugee returns are expected to continue throughout 2005.



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