



The Seating of the Afghan National Assembly

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Washington, DC
December 19, 2005

Today Afghans are inaugurating their first elected legislature since 1969. On this historic occasion, I congratulate the new National Assembly and wish them well as they assume the tremendous responsibility for Afghanistan's national welfare.

Over the past four years Afghans have worked hard to transform their country into a new democracy. The adoption of a new constitution, last year's presidential election, and September's legislative vote were significant events in Afghanistan's road to democratic governance.

The extremist elements who threatened to disrupt Afghanistan's electoral process and democratic institutions have failed. The seating of the National Assembly is the final step in the process begun four years ago with the assistance of the international community to create Afghanistan's democratic institutions.

Afghanistan's legislators represent the Afghan people's aspirations to build a peaceful country with democratic institutions and an improving quality of life.

The United States has made a long-term commitment to help Afghans build a free, secure and prosperous future. We applaud the Afghan people and government on this momentous occasion.

2005/1186

Released on December 19, 2005

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Published by the U.S. Department of State Website at <http://www.state.gov> maintained by the Bureau of Public Affairs.