EU invests in cross-border trade and transit – and improves regional security

EU funded Border Management Project in Badakhshan will raise regional cooperation and enable secure trade with Afghanistan’s northern neighbours.

Kabul, 25 May 2014

As part of EU’s € 8 million Border Management Northern Afghanistan Project, EU Special Representative and Head of the EU Delegation to Afghanistan, Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin, on Thursday handed over a newly constructed Border Crossing Point to the Afghan Border Police. The event took place near the town of Djomarji Bolo in Badakhshan Province, on the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border.

Handing over the facility, Ambassador Mellbin said “This project will help increase cross-border trade. Today, regional trade is far below what it should be. Every day the people of Afghanistan and Tajikistan – Indeed of the whole region – are suffering from loss of economic opportunities, jobs and prosperity due to the lack of regional integration. The EU is investing to change this.”

The Border Management Project will strengthen the capacity of the Afghan authorities to develop and implement a cohesive strategy on cross-border trade and regional security. It is intended to enable transit and trade, leading to improvements in the economic situation of border communities.

One of the EU objectives in Afghanistan is to foster regional cooperation and enable the country to facilitate secure trade with its neighbours. This project is a part of a larger Regional Cooperation Programme between the EU and the Afghan Government, and complements other programmes in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Central Asia.

Border management is most effective, if similar strategies and capacities are developed on both sides of international borders. Accordingly, this project in Afghanistan mirrors what has already been provided through an EU-UNDP partnership on the Tajikistan side of the border.

Cross border cooperation and consultations between law enforcement officials is a vital component in the fight against illegal trafficking of narcotics. These contacts are being nurtured through EU assistance and in the future law enforcement agencies in Tajikistan and Afghanistan plan to meet regularly, to discuss and settle matters of mutual interest.

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