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Press Release

Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief & Development

ACBAR strongly condemns recent attacks on humanitarian aid workers, facilities and civilians in Kunduz, Afghanistan

ACBAR, the Agency Coordinating Body of Afghan Relief and Development, strongly condemns the recent attack on a Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) hospital in Kunduz city. It has been reported that in the early hours of the 3rd October 2015, the hospital was repeatedly hit by a series of aerial bombing raids which resulted in the deaths of twelve staff members and at least seven patients, including three children. Thirty Seven people were also injured including nineteen staff members.

ACBAR on behalf of its members would like to pass its condolences to the families of the victims of this attack. ACBAR also fully supports a swift, independent and transparent investigation into how and why this incident occurred. Both State and non-state actors to are obliged to adhere to principles of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) which provides protection to health care services. In times of conflict, attacks on and interference with health care services, compromise the ability to provide humanitarian assistance when it is needed most. This directly affects civilian populations, and especially affects the most vulnerable of people.

It is of the utmost importance that humanitarian relief agencies are able to act in circumstances of extreme humanitarian need, including situations of armed conflict, with the assurance that their personnel, their property, and their activities will not be attacked. Any attack, intimidation, violence or threat against humanitarian workers will ultimately result in delays in aid implementation, which will negatively impact the welfare of the people of Afghanistan.

ACBAR is also concerned about reports of violence, civilians caught in cross-fire and looting in Kunduz and other areas of the northern region which endanger humanitarian staff and obstruct humanitarian action in the area. ACBAR therefore calls for all parties to the Afghan conflict to respect the neutrality of NGOs, their staff and their facilities, as well as to allow humanitarian access to those in need.

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Notes for Editors

ACBAR, the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief & Development, is an Afghan independent body bringing together 135 national and international NGOs working in Afghanistan. ACBAR provides a framework for NGOs, UN agencies, the Afghan Government, and the donor community to exchange information, share expertise and establish guidelines for a more coordinated, efficient and effective use of resources for aid to the Afghan people. http://www.acbar.org

Humanitarian Principles

- Humanity
- Impartiality
- Independence
- Neutrality

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