

AFGHANISTAN : ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

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Latest Events

The take-over of Kabul by Taliban forces on 27 September brought almost no interruption to Afghan Red Crescent (ARCS)/Federation services in the Afghan capital. Their services in the rest of the country were unaffected. During and immediately after the military offensive the Federation Delegation liaised closely with the ARCS and ICRC Delegation in Kabul, which has been obtaining assurances from the new authorities that Red Cross/Red Crescent services can continue unhampered. During the take-over, no attempts were made to enter RC installations or harass RC personnel.

The six members of the delegation in Afghanistan are all at their posts, or returning to them. The Head of Delegation who was in Kabul during this period has been joined by the Health Co-ordinator who returned to the capital today from field work in Kandahar. The Logistics Delegate is also returning to Kabul today from Peshawar. One Development delegate who is covering the Jalalabad area will shortly move to Kabul because of the tense situation in Jalalabad. Another Development Delegate is stationed in Kandahar and a third in Mazar-i-Sharif. A fourth Development Delegate, who was assigned to Herat, completed his mission on 30 September and has left the country. The Delegation's Finance Delegate continues to be stationed in Islamabad. Communications between the Delegation and the Secretariat in Geneva are working normally.

The President of the Afghan Red Crescent who has been out of the country on Red Crescent business for the past week is expected to return to Kabul this week. An acting president has been running the Society's affairs in his absence.

The situation in Kabul is now calm, if tense, the Federation HOD reports. ARCS/Federation clinics in the city report an increasing number of patients -- approximately 60 patients per clinic per day. Women working in the clinics -- a majority of the staff -- have been issued with laissez-passers signed by the ARCS Acting President and have so far not met with any difficulties in attending to their duties.

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