



Afghanistan Justice Sector Support Program Update *June 2008*

U.S. DOS/INL's JSSP program seeks to increase the capacity of the Afghan Government and Afghan legal practitioners to deliver fair and transparent criminal justice and rule of law services to the people of Afghanistan. To that end, JSSP advisors work with the Attorney General's Office and the Ministry of Justice on a wide range of initiatives. In addition, JSSP conducts police/prosecutor training in four provinces and works to promote Afghans' access to justice services by implementing provincial justice conferences, training and mentoring of defense lawyers, and working on a range of other projects.

JSSP Supports Public Private Partnership program



Afghan prosecutors participate in a demonstration of fingerprint detection techniques at the U.S. District Court of Utah as part of JSSP support for the Public Private Partnership training program

JSSP Justice Advisor accompanied 16 Afghan prosecutors from the Attorney General's Office to Salt Lake City, Utah for a three-week Public-Private Partnership training program. During their visit, the prosecutors spoke on the roles of prosecutors and judges in the Afghan legal system and discussed the differences in U.S. and Afghan trial procedures through mock trials at the University of Utah Law School's mock courtroom. The prosecutors visited a County Jail facility, toured a U.S. District Court in Utah, participated in practical exercises on gathering evidence at a mock crime scene and met with the Chief Justice of the Utah Supreme Court. The program concluded with a visit to the Utah State Prison and exchanges on professionalism, U.S. federal detention and probation, Afghanistan detention, domestic violence, victim rights and witness protection and a meeting attended by the Governor of the State of Utah, John Huntsman.

Strengthening the Ministry of Justice's Legal Aid Department

In June JSSP's new Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Justice Advisor initiated work with the MOJ's new Legal Aid Department. The legal aid department was transferred from the Supreme Court to the Ministry of Justice in March 2008 pursuant to Article 3(1) of the Advocates' Law. JSSP assessed the training needs of the department's 15 lawyers and based on the assessment, developed two initial training programs. The first program, modified from a previous curriculum, focuses on the role of the defense attorney as articulated in the recent Advocates' Law, Constitution, international covenants and the Interim Criminal Procedure Code and the second program focuses on writing defense statements.

Support for Balkh Prison Census Working Group

Also in June, JSSP led a meeting of the Balkh Prison Census Review Working Group. Attendees included CSSP-Balkh, the Balkh Provincial Prosecutor's Prison Monitor, and the acting Balkh Prison Commander and Records Manager. The group was joined by a representative of the Legal Aid Organization of Afghanistan-Balkh. The group continues to design a process to identify prisoners unlawfully detained and prisoners who may be released from custody in order to reduce significant overcrowding at the facility.



The Balkh Prison Census Working Group discusses methods for reviewing prisoner records.