VOTER REGISTRY UPDATE

June 26, 2005

The update of the Voter Registry is under way across Afghanistan, with most of the 1,052 Voter Registration Stations in 720 locations open and operating since Saturday June 25.

With less than three months remaining until Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council elections on September 18, the Voter Registry is being updated to include Afghans who, for a range of reasons, did not register to vote last year, as well as Afghans who did register to vote but have since moved to a different province to the one listed on their Voter Registration card.

“Around 30,000 people have already come into our offices across the country to either register to vote, or to change the province listed on their Voter Registration card,” said the Chairman of the Joint Electoral Management Body, Bissmillah Bissmil.

“Reports from our field offices indicate large numbers of women coming in to register, plus many Afghans who turned 18 since the presidential elections last year, and large numbers of older people signing up to vote.”

“Despite obstacles posed by sandstorms in some areas, security problems in other areas, and swollen rivers blocking access in other areas, we were able to open around 1,000 of the 1,053 Registration Stations.”

Voter Registration facilities, with separate male and female stations, are operating in every district of Afghanistan for four weeks until July 21. Eighty-two Voter Registration sites are operating separately for Kuchis (nomads).

Voter Registry Update facts:
- 1,052 Voter Registration Stations operating in 720 locations across Afghanistan
- This includes 82 separate Voter Registration sites for Kuchis (nomads)
- Each district has separate male and female Voter Registration Stations

Around 11 million Afghans registered to vote ahead of the 2004 Presidential elections.

“Since then many Afghans have returned to their homeland, reached the legal voter age, or moved out of Kabul back to their home provinces,” Mr Bissmil said.

“This exercise is to enable as many Afghans as possible to exercise their right to vote in our land’s new democracy.”

For more information please contact:
JEMB National Spokesperson: Sultan Ahmed Baheen  
baheensultana@unops.org.af  
mob. + 93 (0) 70 29 89 92

JEMB International Spokesperson: Bronwyn Curran  
bronwyncc@unops.org.af  
mob: + 93 (0) 70 16 44 94