

VUSAF



7 March 2007

Union of Assistance for  
Schools in Afghanistan.

***Marga Flader reports:***

Dear Friends

With this letter, unfortunately, we have to tell you that our regional director Rahmanqul was shot dead on 17 February 2007 at the gate of his house in Andkhoi. Rahmanqul leaves a wife and six children. We are all devastated and very sad. Two men were arrested but it seems some other people are behind the murder and we do not know who. The investigations are still going on.

With Rahmanqul we have not only lost our most important and able employee, but also our best friend. Rahmanqul was a very special person who was able to realize his many brilliant ideas with the help of his many friends. Together we have built a wonderful network to bring education to thousands of children, young men and women. If there were problems in the state schools which we supported, the teachers did not go the board of education, but to Rahmanqul. When we visited the schools, he told the children to look after their school and its garden and to do what the teachers told them. When people had problems they could not solve themselves, they came to him and asked for help. He was a good friend to everyone – the children, their parents, the teachers, the workers at our constructions sites, our friends from other places in Afghanistan or from abroad who supported our work in Andkhoi, and above all he was our friend and we miss him badly. He was a good husband and father. His devastated daughter kept on crying, ‘I can’t live without my father’. It will be difficult for everyone to live without this wonderful man. We cannot understand who could have killed him. We can’t stop thinking about it, but cannot find an answer. More than a thousand men came to the funeral. Hundreds of men and women came every day to house of the family in Andkhoi, as did I. Unfortunately it took me almost a week to reach Andkhoi from Hamburg. The flight connections and the weather were bad. As we did not know who committed the murder, we were also afraid. However, our visit was really needed to support the family. They saw how their husband/father was killed, and fear for their own lives and they do not know what the future will bring. In Afghanistan there are no psychotherapists who help the family in cases like this. There is no pension or payment from the state or an insurance company. We want to – and for this we ask for your support – help Rahmanqul’s wife, his son and his five daughters. As they cannot live in Andkhoi anymore because they fear for their lives, we would like to help them start a new life in Kabul. The son could continue his studies in Kabul – it was Rahmanqul’s greatest wish that his children would go to university. The girls could finish school and later also get further education.

I met Rahmanqul’s friends in Andkhoi. All men cried. One day we just talked about the murder and how it could have happened because we could not imagine that he had any enemies; everyone loved

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him. However, despite the great pain everyone was suffering, it became clear to me that our work in Andkhoi should continue. Rahmanqul would have wanted it that way. I asked our most important employees and Rahmanqul's friends for a second meeting and we talked about how we could continue our work in Andkhoi which is so very important for the region. Approximately 60 Persons are working directly for us and another 100 workers at our construction sites, i.e. 160 families or maybe 1500 people. The support which we are giving to the state schools with teaching material and teacher training is very important for a better quality of education.

While I was still in Afghanistan we found a group of people who are willing to form a Board of Andkhoi which is to run the committee's work in this area. For the different sections we have established departments and listed the work which needs to be done. These ideas will be discussed in a meeting to set up this Board of Andkhoi. Our office in Kabul is, of course, in close touch with Andkhoi. In this way we will move towards to our aim to provide help for self-help and delegate responsibility to several persons who want to work for education in Andkhoi.

Important for our future work, however, is also that the murderer will be found so that our employees do not have to fear for their own lives. It is very hard to bear that one of our employees was killed doing his work for the committee and that he lost his life working for his life's aim which was giving education to children.

Members of Afghanistan-Schulen and VUSAF (as we are known in Afghanistan) have the wish to continue our work despite the tragedy. We are sure that this is what Rahmanqul would want us to do. Of course, we can only continue if you continue trusting us. "Now more than ever", some of you might say, or "It is does not look good for Afghanistan, now in the north, too". However, if we give up now, then the "dark ages" would start again, those people who want Afghanistan go back to the bad past and the killers would have won and the people who have shown us over many years that they wish to have a different Afghanistan would suffer again. Intelligent young men and women are living in Andkhoi who want education and who want to work for their country. India has granted some scholarships for universities there. Six places for each province. Five young men and one young woman from the province of Faryab have the chance to go India to study. All are from Andkhoi and were students of our education center. We have been good and we do not want to have our good work destroyed. Will you help us in the future?

Those of you who would like to support Rahmanqul children Samia (23), Mardanqul (22), Fawzia (19), Farsana (15), Negina (11) and Anisa (7), we would like you to mention the words "Rahmanqul Shaheed" on your transfer notice. We will ensure that this money will be used for the education of Rahmanqul's children only.

In the hope that you will trust us and support us in the future, I remain  
Yours sincerely,

Marga Flader

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