

Siemens Opens Office in Afghanistan

Siemens AG, Berlin and Munich, officially opened a permanent office in Kabul on February 6, 2003. Following an over 20-year break in ties with Afghanistan, the company is resuming its business activities in the country.

Dr. Klaus Wucherer, member of the Siemens Managing Board responsible for business in the Asia-Pacific region: "Siemens looks forward to working closely with the Afghanistan government to help restore vital infrastructure and provide the basis for building up the economy and improving the living standards of the people in Afghanistan." Siemens will primarily concentrate on the areas of power generation, transmission and distribution; medical engineering; information and communications systems; and transportation systems. In addition, the company will also offer components for low-voltage systems, as well as mobile phones and lighting products from Osram. As part of its commitment to Afghanistan, the company intends to provide training for its customers' employees. Gholam Hassanzadah, 53, has been appointed head of the Siemens office.

The Kabul office will coordinate all Siemens activities in Afghanistan and offer customers a broad spectrum of products, systems, services and overall solutions from a single source. Three Siemens Groups – Industrial Solutions and Services, Medical Solutions and Power Transmission and Distribution – have already received their first infrastructure orders in the country.

Siemens also sees its support of the UNICEF initiative "Back to School" in Afghanistan as an investment in the future. The company therefore handed over a donation of 20,000 euros to UNICEF. UNICEF's biggest education campaign in the country enables more than three million children to visit schools and is providing the most important basis for a peaceful renewal of the country. Siemens and UNICEF are bound together by their common support of young people, regardless of sex, religion, nationality or race. Siemens entered into a partnership with UNICEF Germany at the beginning of the year.

Gholam Hassanzadah, born in Afghanistan, studied mechanical engineering in Kabul and Mannheim, Germany. He was responsible for the planning and implementation of power plant projects at Siemens. In 1993, following two years of sales and marketing activities in the U.S., he took over as head of sales for fossil-fueled power plants in China. In 2000, Hassanzadah coordinated the company's marketing of steam power plants in the Asia-Pacific region. He began setting up the Siemens office in Kabul in October 2002.

Siemens has maintained business relations with Afghanistan, with interruptions, since 1925. Up to the late 1970s, Siemens was established in the country with its power generation and telecommunications business. Siemens enjoys a high degree of brand familiarity in Afghanistan.