

Royal Netherlands Embassy  
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Contact: Carla Bundy, 202-274-  
2632, [cy.bundy@minbuza.nl](mailto:cy.bundy@minbuza.nl) or Martin  
Austermuhle, 202-292-4285,  
[martin@embassyofafghanistan.org](mailto:martin@embassyofafghanistan.org)

*Press Release*

**IN AFGHANISTAN**  
HANS STAKELBEEK

**DUTCH PHOTO EXHIBIT OF RECONSTRUCTION IN AFGHANISTAN  
OPENS IN THE UNITED STATES**

The Royal Netherlands Embassy and the Embassy of Afghanistan will present a stirring collection of images that document everyday life in Afghanistan. The photo exhibit by Dutch photographer Hans Stakelbeek, entitled *In Afghanistan*, will be displayed for the first time in the United States from September 10th through October 4th, 2008, at the Touchstone Gallery in Washington, D.C.



*The remains of the old royal palace Dar-ul-Aman*



*A school for girls in Uruzgan*

Hans Stakelbeek was commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to document the reconstruction of Afghanistan during ongoing efforts to restore peace and stability to the country. Stakelbeek made four trips there, photographing in Kabul and Uruzgan, as well as other remote areas. Stakelbeek's photos capture the essence of the people, the country, and the reconstruction efforts.

“The Royal Netherlands Embassy is proud to partner with the Embassy of Afghanistan to bring the ‘In Afghanistan’ photo exhibition to Washington,” said Dutch Ambassador Renée Jones-Bos. “As partners in the reconstruction effort, we are moved by the strength and tenacity of the Afghan people, and their commitment to

rebuild their country. These images capture that strength and hope.” added Ambassador Jones-Bos.

*In Afghanistan* presents images that pay tribute to the determination of the Afghan people to survive and live as normally as possible through the upheaval, building homes, going to school and working and playing in trying times. Stakelbeek’s accompanying written commentary reveals the personal stories in each of the photographs.

“The Netherlands has been a generous friend and trusted partner of Afghanistan,” said Afghan Ambassador Said Tayeb Jawad. “This exhibition highlights our close cooperation in fighting extremism and working to build a peaceful and prosperous society in Afghanistan. We are proud of our close working relations with the Royal Netherlands Embassy, and grateful for its efforts to exhibit the daily joys and struggles of the Afghan people,” he added.

Members of the media are invited to attend a private opening reception on September 17<sup>th</sup> at the Touchstone Gallery from 6pm to 8pm. Newly appointed Dutch Ambassador Renée Jones-Bos, Afghan Ambassador Said Tayeb Jawad, and photographer Hans Stakelbeek will be available for interviews. Media must contact Carla Bundy, 202-274-2632 or Martin Austermuhle, 202-292-4285 to attend the reception.

#### EXHIBITION INFORMATION

**Location:** Touchstone Gallery, 406 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Washington, D.C, 20004

**Exhibition Dates:** September 10th – October 4th, 2008 (Admission is free)

**Opening Times:** Wednesday-Friday 11am - 5pm; Saturday and Sunday 12pm -5pm

**For further information:** [www.touchstonegallery.com](http://www.touchstonegallery.com); [www.netherlands-embassy.org](http://www.netherlands-embassy.org) or [www.embassyofafghanistan.org](http://www.embassyofafghanistan.org)

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