

PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION OF THE
SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF MALTA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
216 EAST 47th STREET / 8 FL
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017
PHONE: (212) 355-6213 - FAX: (212) 355-4014
e-mail: orderofmalta@un.int

INFORMATION NOTE ONE HUNDRED THIRTY



Attack on UN convoy: Malteser International staff member killed in Afghanistan

Herat/Cologne. A local staff member of Malteser International, the Sovereign Order of Malta's worldwide relief service, was killed yesterday in an attack in northwestern Afghanistan. He was on his way from Quala-I-Nau to Herat with a UN convoy, which was ambushed with rocket-propelled grenades around noon. The 30-year-old Malteser International doctor and head of the health care center of Malteser International in Quala-I-Nau, managed to run away at first, but was shot while fleeing. The driver of the car, an employee of UNICEF, also died immediately. Another UNICEF staff member was heavily injured. It is certain that the attackers had the clear aim to kill staff members of the United Nations. The convoy consisted of three vehicles (a UNICEF car and 1 local transportation car) and was guided by Afghan security forces (4 to 5 men on a Hilux).

"We mourn for Dr. Ezmeray and our colleagues of UNICEF. Our compassion is with the families of the victims," Nicolas de Cock Rameyen, President of Malteser International, expressed the condolences of the organisation. "We are shocked by this terrible offence."

Dr. Ezmeray was buried at Herat on Saturday in the presence of Malteser International staff members. Dr. Ezmeray's family will be granted financial aid from Malteser International according to the Afghan tradition. Also, psychological aid will be offered to the family and to Malteser International staff.

Malteser International has been active in Afghanistan since 2002. You may recall in, in August 2004, Mohammed Idrees Sadiq and Emal Abdul Samad, two local staff members of the Malteser International, were killed in an ambush in Southeast Afghanistan. The two men had been working to support the return and reintegration of refugees, the building of local income-generating measures, and the efficient development of infrastructure as part of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Because of the tense security situation, all staff members have to comply with strict security standards. Trips in the region are allowed only during the day and with an escort. At the moment, Malteser International's staff in Afghanistan consists of six international employees from Germany, Great Britain, India and Ethiopia and 20 Afghan locals.

For further information, please contact Ingo Radtke, secretary general of Malteser International:
+49 171 / 3013452.

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