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## Afghan police improve security with new border facilities

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KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – An important step was taken to stop the illegal transportation of goods and improve security in a border town in the western Herat province of Afghanistan.

The second phase of border crossing facilities – consisting of an Afghan Border Police compound and a second customs warehouse – was unveiled during a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Jan. 19 at Islam Qala.

The majority of trade between Afghanistan and Iran passes through here in the west and will now transition through new facilities.

The new border crossing point will be used and maintained by the Afghanistan Border Police and Customs Police, according to Donny D. Davidson, Jr., Herat area engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Afghanistan Engineer District – South (AES). AES supervised the second phase of construction.

“Included in this project is a 100-person barracks, a 50-person dining facility, a storage warehouse, and a police administration building consisting of six offices, a conference room, armory and reception area,” he said.

Attending the ceremony were Karl Eikenberry, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan; Lt. Gen. David Rodriguez, commander of International Security Assistance Force Joint Command; and Maj. Gen. Jay Hood, chief of staff of the U.S. Central Command.

Eikenberry noted the border project aims to help the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.



*U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, second from right, tours the newly constructed border crossing facility in Afghanistan. (Photo by Donny Davidson)*



*Karl Eikenberry, center, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, and Lt. Gen. David Rodriguez, right, commander of International Security Assistance Force Joint Command, attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony in western Herat, Afghanistan. (Photo by Donny Davidson)*

“I am pleased that the United States has been able to partner with the Afghan Government to further develop this border crossing point, which provides the resources and technologies necessary to increase the efficient movement of legitimate trade and travel while also deterring illegitimate activities at this important gateway to Afghanistan,” Eikenberry said.

An efficient border and customs police force is a priority for the Afghan Government according to an ISAF release. It also stated that controlling the movement of goods and people across the border represents not only a security concern but also a major aspect of the economic development of the country.

In addition to the buildings, the official port of entry project, which neighbors Taybad, Iran, includes 3,800 square meters of asphalt roads; 800 square meters of sidewalks; a complete water distribution system; an electrical distribution system with a backup generator; and a complete sanitary sewer system. Technologists, Inc. completed the \$4.3 million project.

“Finally, as the Chief of the United States Mission here, it is one of my greatest pleasures to have the opportunity to travel and see first-hand, the exciting new projects and processes that are jointly developed with our Afghan partners to bring about greater security and economic prosperity for the people of this region and all of Afghanistan,” Eikenberry said.

The first phase of border crossing facilities, also constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers, opened June 17, 2009.