

## Information letter December 20th 2020.

Dear Friends,

At present, the Taliban and the Kabul government are holding peace talks in Doha. In Afghanistan they continue to fight each other. The Kabul government is demanding a ceasefire during the peace talks. The Taliban reject this.

The Islamic State is not taking part in the negotiations. But it is very active in the Afghan theater of war - especially in eastern Afghanistan and Kabul. The Islamic State - its people are called "the Da'esh" in the Orient - excels in raids on educational institutions and on Shiite facilities. The government, and even more resolutely the Taliban, are fighting the Da'esh. How much they actually have to do with the Islamic State, which is rampaging through Iraq and Syria, is unclear. Afghans see the Afghan Da'esh as a creature of Pakistan that would not exist without Pakistani weapons and material support. At first glance, it is paradoxical that Pakistan should afford two militias in Afghanistan that are also fighting each other.

Pakistan is also not participating in the peace talks, although it has considerable demands on the policy of a future Afghanistan and believes it can only enforce them if it has strong influence in Afghanistan. When the Taliban ruled Afghanistan, they were dependent on Pakistan. Without the supply of weapons and Islamic supporters coming to Afghanistan through Pakistan, there would have been no Taliban movement then. Nor would the current Taliban be conceivable without the influx of Pakistani arms and dollars.

But foreign rule based only on the granting of important resources is vulnerable. For the Taliban, their relationship with Pakistan has never been a matter of the heart. A peace deal in Doha could deprive Pakistan of its influence over Afghanistan through the Taliban. In that case, the Da'esh would be an alternative.

Many of you will say that I am repeating a lot of what I have said before. That is true. It shows that the constellation in and around Afghanistan is hovering unchanged. The future U.S. administration has not yet said anything specific about its country's commitment in Afghanistan. Whether a troop withdrawal will be carried out as Donald Trump has announced, we will probably only know once all seats in the U.S. Congress have been allocated and the new administration is in office.

There is not much to report from OFARIN's work. Next week, Muzhgan's fiancé will visit the OFARIN office. One should see this with only modest hopes. Here OFARIN interferes in the internal affairs of families, a delicate undertaking.

Once I had written down some of the things that happened to my wife and me in Afghanistan. Those were the crime stories. In addition, I had written down some thoughts about the Afghans as such, in order to be able to classify the experiences. These were the ethnos. The ethno-crime stories are the compilation of these texts. In an entertaining way the ethno-crime stories can contribute something to the understanding of the Afghan society. In order to bring the ethno-crime stories to the people, everyone could acquire the text against the payment of 10 € over our homepage. That was troublesome for the buyer. If many people had used this possibility, OFARIN would have become a profit-oriented business enterprise and would have had to pay taxes. But for this to happen, tax-free allowances would have had to be exceeded. Thanks to the complexity of the procedure, this did not happen. The action was also never planned as a source of wealth. It was intended to create understanding among our friends for the country in which we were working. On the 10 € way this did not succeed.

Sebastian Dietrich is currently in charge of the homepage **ofarin.de**. Sebastian is a doctor. He was in Afghanistan with his family for several years. There he managed and developed the Lepco program, which successfully fights leprosy and tuberculosis. We have now included in the ethno-crime stories pictures that Sebastian's family and we took in Afghanistan. What fascinates people like us about Afghanistan? Probably the pictures help you to understand.

If you tippen to **Ethno-Krimis** on the German side of the homepage, an introduction will appear. At the bottom you can press **Herunterladen**. Then you have the text with all the pictures on your computer. You can read the text or print it or copy it. And you can make a small donation to OFARIN.

Even though the text of all the ethno-crime stories together is not very long, you may not want to read it all at once. If you go further down the ethno-crime page of the homepage, you will find the titles of each ethno and crime story under a picture each. If you tap on the picture or the title, only the text of the corresponding story will open. And once you started to read it, you will read it to its end. As you can see, we made it easy for you to access the ethno-crime stories. Have fun with it! You will find the ethno-crime stories in English in a few months in the English part of the homepage.

We had hurriedly informed those of you we could reach via the Internet on Tuesday, Dec. 15, that the Gütersloh Christmas Singing would be held on Thursday, the 17th from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.. This choir singing takes place every year in front of the Gütersloh Apostle Church. Choirs of Gütersloh sports clubs sing. Kamilla Matuszewska conducts the concert. Mrs. Matuszewska is a music teacher and a member of OFARIN. Singing together in front of the Apostle Church was not possible this year. But Mrs. Matuszewska did not let it get her down. She sang in her apartment. A friend made sure that everything was recorded in good quality and broadcast on the Youtube channel "Kamilla's Choirs". A link was made to OFARIN's homepage. The sportsmen choirs and all people could sing along or just listen. Mrs. Matuszewska made the event a benefit concert for the handball youth and for OFARIN.

The private atmosphere, the personality of Ms. Matuszewska and her beautiful voice made the event an intense experience that we enjoyed very much.

I am not reporting this now to thumb my nose at everyone who failed to turn up to it despite the announcement. No, the event is not lost to anyone. It can still be downloaded from our homepage ofarin.de for four weeks - if you want right now, on Christmas Eve, on New Year's Day, or on Epiphany.

To do this, you need to go to the German part of the homepage and then down one page to "Herzlich Willkommen bei OFARIN!" Still a little below, Mrs. Matuszewska is looking at you. Press on the yellow bar **Hier geht's zum Konzert !**

I wish you a Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

Peter Schwittek.

Translated with [www.DeepL.com/Translator](http://www.DeepL.com/Translator) (free version)