

INTERVIEW WITH ‘STAY IN AFGHANISTAN’

We Have Been Created To Do Something Beneficial for Each Other

Jason Ross of the Schiller Institute conducted this [interview](#) with Zuhul Sherzad and Amina Sadati, representatives from the group Stay In Afghanistan, on November 8, 2023, in Kabul, Afghanistan. Their organization is dedicated to improving education in their country, focusing on the vocational education required to train the work force in order to expand infrastructure and industry, as well as on business opportunities for women.

Let me ask you, what does *Stay In Afghanistan* do?

Zuhul Sherzad: *Stay In Afghanistan* is a vocational and educational bridge between Afghanistan and Germany. We would like to be the bridge to transfer the concept of education. Now we are trying to transfer the educational concept and knowledge of Germany’s dual educational system to Afghanistan by adopting the local requirements and by making the local require-



Lema Sadati

Jason Ross of the Schiller Institute interviewing Zuhul Sherzad (center) and Amina Sadati (right) from the group Stay In Afghanistan. Kabul, Nov. 8, 2023.

The discussion took place during a conference on the development of Afghanistan, held in Kabul November 6–8, 2023. A delegation of the Schiller Institute participated in the event, and a report on the conference, which was titled “Operation Ibn Sina: The Coming Afghan Economic Miracle,” can be read in the November 17, 2023 issue of EIR.

Jason Ross: Hi, I’m Jason Ross with the Schiller Institute here in Kabul, Afghanistan. I’m having a discussion with Zuhul Sherzad and Amina Sadati of the group *Stay In Afghanistan*.

ments adaptable to that system, and to bring it to Afghanistan.

Ross: So, what are some of the problems in Afghanistan that you’re trying to solve through this project?

Sherzad: One of the biggest problems in Afghanistan is the lack of technical workers. We have lots of machinery, we have factories, we have the equipment, but the thing that we lack is the professional workers. Therefore, we need to ask for them from different countries, from our neighboring countries, in order to invite

them to Afghanistan. So right now, by using the industrial and electronics programs that we are bringing into our program, we hope to support Afghanistan, the financial system of Afghanistan, and the economy of Afghanistan, and make Afghanistan strong and economically stable; and therefore industrial stability should come to Afghanistan. So, we would like to solve the problem in order to make a stable country. This is the main point. Would you like to add anything?



Schiller Institute/Jason Ross

Stay In Afghanistan is working to develop an educational program to advance the nation's development, as well as business opportunities for women.

Amina Sadati: Yes. Also, we are targeting three important groups of people in Afghanistan, because in the industrial sector we have students, teachers, and technical teams. As we mentioned, we also provide educational assistance for them, from Germany to Afghanistan—the knowledge of Germany to Afghanistan. So, it will be really good for the industrial sector of Afghanistan.

Ross: So, the industrialization of Afghanistan, does this also affect infrastructure development? Is a lack of skilled workers something that also affects the ability for railroads and energy, water, and this kind of thing?

Sherzad: It really does on the infrastructure, and also the lack of labor and lack of professional workers. So, we have to see or find the origin or roots of the problem. The roots of the problem go directly to the lack of knowledge. If we remove this problem, we are going to remove the technical problems which we have in field machinery and other equipment. We can have the capacity to invest and get the investment from other countries to Afghanistan, especially Germany. Germany right now would like to invest in Afghanistan in different ways, because they are the biggest industrial country in the world, and they will provide lots of good machinery as well. They are in a very equal competition with China. But right now, I think that after solving the problem of education and transferring the concepts and knowledge, we can also solve the other problems as well.

Ross: So, how is it going? What kind of support are you getting? How is it going with building up networks on this?

Sadati: We have a group of professors in Afghanistan, and also in Germany who have Afghan roots. So, they would like to help Afghanistan in this effort. They are professional and skilled, and they want to transfer this knowledge from Germany to Afghanistan. Also in Afghanistan, there are many professors and also some institutions that want to help Afghanistan in this way. Zuhul, do you want to add anything else?

Sherzad: Yes. Regarding the network and how we do this, and how far we have come to this idea—we have gone through a needs assessment process. We talked with many factories in Afghanistan, we have covered almost 400 factories, and talked with them about which sections have problems, and in which section they need the knowledge. For example, the electronic industry is the first important thing that Afghanistan needs. So, now we would like to work on the concept of transferring the knowledge to the electronic industry in Afghanistan. Once that industry has stability, we can go on with the next field as well.

We also would like to have a program for women's business management; that's also an important goal for us.

In the next five years, we would like to bring five different fields into Afghanistan that will really help the system.

By the help of the networks we have, as we mentioned before, we have a related organization which is working in the same way as we are in the industrial sector. Also, the network we have in Germany, the group of professors and the group of professionals who really know about these specific fields, they are in touch with us. And up to now, we have also conducted one of the biggest conferences and symposiums in Afghanistan that took place last year. It was very beneficial, because we met those technical workers—the people who are technically involved with the machinery in the factories and the different companies. They went in front of everyone, in front of the government, in front of *Stay In Afghanistan*, and explained their problems: in which sector they have problems.

Our vision is that we should not be dependent on other countries. If you would like to ask for an industrial worker, professional worker, you should not ask other countries to help us in this sector, because every country should be stable by means of their own people. This is what we really think about our vision.

Ross: So, you're developing ... let me make sure I understand this right. You're doing technical worker training is the goal, and the people who would be teaching these courses are involved in exchanges through Germany on developing the ability to train the workers.

Sherzad: Well, the concept is creating or establishing an educational institute in Afghanistan. We would like to make a separate institute which is totally for this purpose. And the teachers will be internal [Afghan] teachers and external [foreign] teachers. We have our own teachers as well. And before establishing this institute, we would like to have a training for our own teachers. And when we are first training our own Afghan teachers, we will tell them that they should go on with teaching students. And of course, we have the



Members of Stay In Afghanistan, including the group's Afghanistan chief, Waisullah Sediqi (third from right). Kabul, Nov. 8, 2023.

Lema Sadati

help of the external teachers and the teachers who are foreigners, who are German, who are not from Afghanistan. So, technically we will have the materials, we will have the educational system made by them, but with the inputs that we have put forward according to the local needs and requirements. So, that's the plan that we have.

Ross: Let me ask you both a personal question, which is: How did you get involved with *Stay In Afghanistan*? How did you choose to make this the project that you're working on?

Sadati: When I was at university, when I graduated, I was thinking, "How can I help Afghanistan?" Because I'm young, so I want to be beneficial for my country. I find *Stay In Afghanistan* the most beneficial, because they work on the kinds of projects that are the most important needs for Afghanistan. So, I feel really happy to work here, because I know now what the needs are in Afghanistan, and how we can help in this field. So, it's really nice working here.

Ross: Is there anything you'd like to add?

Sherzad: Of course. I think I can add my personal

views as well. For me, it's always amazing and fun to tell you about my perspective. I think that we have been made to do a mission in this world. We have been created to do something beneficial for each other. So, I always think of how I can make a change in my country. And after my country, how this change can affect everyone in this world.

So, I thought that, as an Afghan woman, and as a human, I have and should have the ability to not be normal, and not sit and watch. I should take part in change, or at least if I can do nothing, at least I can support the people who are making a change. So I thought when we came together, we were a group of three people who came together with an idea. We worked on this idea, and lots of people told us that it's quite a big vision, that it might not work, because it's something that needs lots of dedication, lots of power, lots of passion. But we said that, if it's for the development of the country, we need to be really, really dedicated to that. Whether it works or not, at least we will

be happy that we have done something, and that we have tried.

We have just started, and we have been really successful. I couldn't believe that we would have this much success. When it is about the issue of industrial growth, when there is the issue of technological growth, and Afghanistan's improvement, of course I will be interested in working on it. So, that was my perspective and my journey how I joined.

Ross: That's really wonderful.

Sherzad: Thank you.

Ross: The joy of doing something that's necessary.

Sherzad: Absolutely!

Ross: It's good; you must be very happy.

Sherzad: Thank you.

Ross: Let me ask then, where this is heading; what is your vision for the future of the country, maybe 10, 20, 50 years down the line? What's Afghanistan's future?

Sadati: Most everyone in Afghanistan wants to see Afghanistan at a high level. But my point is that I want to see Afghanistan in a high economical group. So I want to see Afghanistan have more development, and be a good player and participant globally. And also, it would be really nice to see Afghanistan experience growth.

Sherzad: And I would like to add that, as a plan for the next 10 years, we want to continue bringing in new fields. Our target over the coming five years is to bring five new fields to Afghanistan. But this is not the end. We would like to prolong this journey. We have even thought about the next 50 years, how can we add a positive impact over the next 50 years. Of course, we will preserve and observe the situation and different things that may happen, but what we want is that in 10 years, we should be able to establish our institute and the system should be in process.

It's important to mention that we would like to include women as well in one of the industrial-electronic fields. Not electronics necessarily, but overall in any



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industrial field that women can work in and can have the joy or interest to work on.

Ross: So, in this, you're developing the independence of Afghanistan. You're also partnering with people and companies in Germany. Let me ask in terms of people around the world, how do you see other countries' people who want to be friends to Afghanistan? What can they do, and how do you see Afghanistan as being a friend to the world?

Sherzad: Well, our very first mission is to keep our closeness, our friendship and peace between all the regions, between all the countries. Of course, this is something that needs the collaboration of everyone—of all people in the world. So, even right now, apart from Germany, we have a very broad network in other countries as well. Two of our team members are from China. They are living in China and supporting us and doing work from there. We have networks in Spain; we have networks in other countries as well. We have networks in Dubai, and many other countries

What we want is to see that all countries can visit Afghanistan; they can have meetings with us; we can sit together; we can just share the concept of Afghanistan, because it's beautiful that we can have this joint collaboration. We can go on and that will be a positive point for these countries.

For now, it's a mission. I think it's something that even the humanitarian laws and the United Nations goals are in agreement with: that we should all work for the goal of the development of society. Even right now, *Stay In* is focusing on implementing the SDG [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals] goals. The program we have is supporting all the goals except health and water.

So, this is what we want, that every country should take part, because this mission belongs to all of them. Afghanistan is a country which has been through many conflicts, which has been through many bad days, and it needs such support. Every country has witnessed that war has been extensive in Afghanistan. We have fought many conflicts. This is something that the world should take care about. Right now, the education system—which is really important for a country—does not have a good solution or status.

So, I think considering the situation, the world really needs to contribute to Afghanistan through such educational platforms, which are really needed, and crucial for the people.

Ross: Is there anything you'd like to add on that?

Sadati: She has completely said everything that we want to do for Afghanistan, for our nation.

Ross: Is there anything else you'd like to share with our audience?

Sherzad: Just thank you very much for this great interview, our talk and discussion. I'm really glad, and I hope that anybody who is seeing me and hearing my voice, can just try to collaborate and accompany us on this great journey. We will be so happy to have other great individuals as you. Thank you very much.

Sadati: Thank you very much. Thank you for the interview, and thank you for your time.

Ross: Amina Sadati, Zuhail Sherzad, thank you very much.

Afghanistan

Look at this land of rampant peak on peak,
With mass on mass, ridges of rising rock,
The highest passes lonely, hard, and bleak!
Far down below, the people meet to talk;
So small and far—one cannot hear a word,
The Hindu Kush stares down on them unmoved.
And yet it looks as though they have been stirred
To action by a concept they have proved—
Perhaps they're speaking now of human powers,
To find in peace what they have lost in war,
To seed the desert, cross the land in hours,
Greet the East, and reach the sea once more.

They look up at the peaks, as if to show
How far beyond the mountains thought can go.

—Paul Gallagher, Nov. 12, 2023