Press Release

The Afghan Midwives Association celebrates their 7th Annual Congress and International Day of the Midwife together with the Minister of Public Health and the President of the International Confederation of Midwives.

On May 1st 2011 602 from 33 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces gathered to convene the 7th Annual Congress of the Afghan Midwives Association (AMA). Midwives traveled from all corners of the country to stand together in solidarity to demonstrate pride in their profession and unwavering commitment to the women and families of Afghanistan. Midwives eagerly engaged in topics concerning evidence-based midwifery care practices such as emergency obstetrical care, electronic partograph and prevention of post partum hemorrhage. Each province presented posters depicting stories of mothers and babies saved and shared with one another their experiences, challenges and lessons learned.

Immediately following the Congress the AMA joined the midwives of the world to celebrate the International Day of the Midwife. The Minister of Public Health, Her Excellency Dr. Suraya Dalil, the President of the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) Ms Bridget Lynch and dozens of government partners, international donors and implementing partners joined the AMA in both events, reinforcing the national and international commitment to reducing maternal and child mortality and morbidity and improving the health status of women and their families by strengthening the role of the Midwife.

The Minister of the Public Health encouraged midwives in their efforts saying, “Our way is too long, our travel is holy and our vision is Islamic. By walking together we will make this journey successfully.” After the fall of the Taliban in 2002, there was only one pre-service midwifery training program in Afghanistan and 467 practicing midwives. In 2004 the Ministry of Public Health launched a community midwifery education program and has since trained approximately 3,000 hospital and community midwives in 34 midwifery schools across the country. The President of the ICM acknowledged the high quality and well resourced midwifery education programs in Afghanistan as a model for the region. She concluded her remarks to the Midwives of Afghanistan by saying, “You are not alone. Tens of thousands of Midwives around the world will be holding you in their hearts”.

The acting President of the AMA, Feroza Mushtari, called on the continued support of all policy makers, donors and implementing partners. Concluding with a call to action and speaking on behalf of the entire membership of over 2,000 midwives she said, “together, the midwives of Afghanistan urge each of you to support professional development programs that ensure every midwife has access to the highest level of education she desires. We call on your continued support as the AMA facilitates the development of a combined Afghan Midwives and Nurses Council to regulate and set standards for the quality of midwifery education and practice. And finally, we ask for your support for the AMA as we continue to advocate for adequate policies, resources and on-going training for every midwife so that she can provide the highest quality of care to mothers and their families”.
