

Press Release:

Admission procedure halted: once again government failure hits protection seekers

Last week, the German government temporarily suspended the admission procedure for Afghanistan in order to introduce an extended security check. This was based on indications of possible misuse of the procedure. In principle, we welcome such a review, provided that the new procedure is carried out in accordance with international standards while safeguarding the rights of those seeking protection.

However, the fact that the new procedure is to be introduced after an indefinite time is strongly criticized by the non-governmental organizations Kabul Luftbrücke and the New Association of Judges (Neue Richtervereinigung). Since the issuance of visas for protection seekers is suspended until then, a majority of them will be exposed to further dangers as a result.

"The German government has had over a year to set up an appropriate screening process in its embassies. We have also been calling for this for a long time. Due to this renewed government failure, over 1000 people are now stuck in neighboring countries in the process of leaving the country," says Herta Mirea, Ground Operator Pakistan, from Kabul Luftbrücke. "Many families have little or no financial means. Those who are already in Iran or Pakistan due to their visa deadlines are now unable to continue their onward journey despite being promised admission. If no solution is found in time, they are threatened with deportation back to Afghanistan. A large number of people with approval are also still there. They have to stay in the country despite Germany's acceptance and recognition that they are particularly at risk from the Taliban regime."

Protection seekers mustn't be the ones who suffer!

The organizations Neue Richtervereinigung, Kabul Luftbrücke and many other NGOs have been filling the gap for a central contact point for vulnerable people in Afghanistan for over a year. With the delays now caused by the far too late elimination of security gaps and the introduction of uniform procedures, state failure is once again being played out on the backs of those at risk. "Both for protection seekers who are already waiting for their visa appointments in neighboring countries and cannot stay there any longer, and for those acutely at risk in Afghanistan, solutions must be found immediately, and the improved security checks resumed promptly," demands Tilly Sünkel from Kabul Luftbrücke.

"The government has once again acted with little foresight and ignored civil society's criticism of the procedures currently in place, which had already been repeatedly voiced in advance."

Since the planning phase of the federal admission program, Kabul Luftbrücke, along with other NGOs, has criticized the role these organizations have been assigned within the process and has called for more accountability on the part of the federal government. NGOs and other agencies authorized to report cases at no point decided who would receive an admission approval and who would not. Kabul Luftbrücke therefore clearly rejects the accusation that NGOs do not sufficiently examine cases. The NGOs have always emphasized that both the review and the granting of admission approvals fall under the sovereign right of the state and are not the task of civil society.