Travel Report by Professor Dr. Roland Gugler, Karlsruhe

Professor Gugler visited Afghanistan again from February 1 to 15, 2006, with the intention of lending support to the training in gastroenterology of both female and male physicians there.
From the beginning of January to the middle of February 2006, a continuing-education course in gastroenterology and gastrointestinal endoscopy took place
in Kabul. It was organized and directed by Dr. Q. Sediqi. The course was made possible with the support of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the collaboration of the umbrella organization of the Afghan Specialized Medical Staff (DAMF). This was a course for physicians who had already spent one year of basic training in gastroenterology under the direction of Professor Wienbeck. The object of the course was further development of endoscopic
techniques, the teaching of methods of therapeutic endoscopy, the expansion of the terminology of gastroenterological endoscopy and diagnosis, and special training in the rules of disinfection and hygiene.
Three female physicians and six male physicians took part in this course. Five of the participants were from Kabul; the others came from the provincial towns of Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Kunduz. At the end of the course, leading staff members of AliAbad Hospital conducted a ceremony to issue certificates.

One special item in Professor Gugler's travel program was the presentation of three fiber colonoscopes and two fiber gastroscopes, which he had obtained via the Wienbeck Foundation for Medical Development in Germany. The Minister of Public Health, Fatimie, handed these over to the departments of endoscopy in the respective provincial towns and in Kabul, and he used this occasion to express his high regard for the work of Professor Wienbeck and the achievements of the Wienbeck Foundation.
Also featured on this trip were conversations with the Minister of Higher Education, Hasanyar, with the goal of reaching agreements that would secure the continued existence of the Wienbeck Center for Therapeutic Endoscopy at AliAbad Hospital. These talks were necessary because AliAbad Hospital had been transferred from the realm of authority of the Minister of Health to that of the University of Kabul. When such structural changes take place, negative developments can easily take place and even lead to the loss of independence of such centers.
Furthermore, Professor Gugler discussed plans with Dr. Sediqi for the training of more physicians in the coming six months.
This trip was important in that it ascertained the success of the activities of the Wienbeck Foundation, and supported local projects in collaboration with Afghan physicians and their points of contact.