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## **Shabbir Ahmed to Head ILF-Afghanistan**

*Prominent lawyer chosen to lead growing Afghan legal aid nonprofit*

KABUL, Afghanistan -- The International Legal Foundation is pleased to announce that Shabbir Ahmad has been appointed as Country Director of ILF-Afghanistan, the nation's largest provider of indigent criminal defense services. A project of the International Legal Foundation, based in New York, ILF-Afghanistan has 13 offices located across Afghanistan and has represented over 15,000 poor Afghans since opening its doors in 2003. During this time, ILF-Afghanistan's lawyers have scored significant victories in court, strengthening the legal system by providing its clients with zealous, high quality defense.

"Shabbir was the obvious choice for this position" said the ILF's Chief Operating Officer Garth Meintjes, reached for comment in New York. "He has shown exemplary leadership in his year as Acting Director of ILF-Afghanistan. We are extremely pleased he has accepted our promotion to Country Director." Mr. Ahmad has served as ILF-Afghanistan's Acting Country Director since August, 2009 and will assume his new role on September 1, 2010.

With nearly 150 staff, including 57 lawyers, Mr. Ahmad will be taking over a very busy defense practice. Plans are underway to hire 20 additional lawyers and open 5 new offices in 2011-2012; an expansion Mr. Ahmad will oversee. In the coming year, Mr. Ahmad will also direct the registration process to certify ILF-Afghanistan as a local NGO, increasing its sustainability in Afghanistan. With his proven track record of building internal management systems and strengthening ILF-Afghanistan from the inside out, Mr. Ahmad is more than prepared for this

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challenge.

Born in Kama, Nengarhar, Afghanistan, Mr. Ahmad joined ILF-Afghanistan's Kabul office as a defense lawyer in early 2006. His skill and talent as a criminal defense lawyer, as well as his leadership ability quickly earned him a promotion to the head of the ILF-Afghanistan's Jalalabad Office and then to Acting Country Director of ILF-Afghanistan. Prior to becoming a criminal defense lawyer, Mr. Ahmad taught Islamic theology, culture, and jurisprudence at the teacher's institute of Nengarhar and Meya Omar High School, both in Jalalabad. He holds a B.A. degree from the Sharia Faculty's Department of Islamic Jurisprudence and Law at Kabul University.

ILF-Afghanistan currently receives funding from USAID, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency, the German Foreign Office, the Iceland Crisis Response Unit, the United Kingdom Provincial Reconstruction Team, the Oak Foundation, and the Open Society Institute.

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