



Benazir Yakta Trading Company

شرکت تجارتی بی نظیر یکتا
د بی نظیر یکتا سوداگریز کمپنی

Date: Sep /08/ 2022

Mrs. Heidi Kuhn
Founder/CEO, Roots of Peace
4000 Civic Center Drive, Suite 330
San Rafael, California, 94901 USA

Dear Mrs. Kuhn,

On behalf of my Afghan woman-owned company, Benazir Yakta, Ltd., I would like to personally congratulate you on the 25th Anniversary of Roots of Peace—the vision of an American mother to transform minefields into thriving farmland worldwide.

I am the personal beneficiary of your vision to turn MINES TO VINES, as Afghanistan is the most heavily mined countries in the world. Yet, you have set your sites on cultivating peace through agriculture, as you have healed the wounds of war. My company exists as a result of your investment in peace, as USAID/CHAMP funded my business in 2017.

As a result of this program implemented by Roots of Peace, I was able to build my business from Kabul, to employ over 80 Afghan women to export fresh and dried fruits to international markets. Working with multiple provinces in Afghanistan, we provide pre-harvest and post-harvest programs to improve the value chain and increase income.

Agriculture is the basement of all nations. And, Heidi Kuhn, Founder, Roots of Peace worked diligently from the basement of her own home in California to bring this vision across the world to impact Afghan men and women. Our country is 80% dependent upon agriculture for jobs, and Mrs. Kuhn and her staff planted over six million fruit trees for sustainable peace through agriculture to thrive.

I would personally like to extend my most sincere gratitude to Mrs. Kuhn who mentored me as a young Afghan business woman. One year ago, when the U.S. military withdrawal occurred on August 31, 2021, she worked hard as a mother to evacuate her staff who were most at risk. As a Hazara woman, and business leader, my life was highly at risk.

Mrs. Kuhn wrote a personal letter to President Joseph Biden and Speaker Nancy Pelosi to assure that I was safely evacuated as a pregnant mother whose life was threatened.

She flew to Washington, D.C., and personally appealed to the U.S. Ambassador of Pakistan to secure a VISA to save my life. As a result, my husband and I were able to travel along a dangerous pass through the Torkham border and safely arrived in Islamabad—to deliver my first-born son, Amir, via emergency cesarian (C-Section) in the hospital.

The life of my son—and myself—were saved through her tireless efforts to assure our safe evacuation and delivery of life.

I remain most grateful to Roots of Peace for their continued efforts to plant over one million fruit trees in my beloved country in Afghanistan during the Spring of 2022.

Our hearts remain in our country, and we remain hopeful that Mrs. Kuhn may fulfill her dream to plant the Roots of Peace on former war-torn lands worldwide—for the sake of our families left behind who face staggering hunger and starvation in the months ahead.

Sincerely,
Benazir Yakta

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