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THE SENLIS COUNCIL
Security and Development Policy Group

BUY AFGHAN MORPHINE

**A GLOBAL CAMPAIGN
FOR A
HUMANITARIAN BRAND OF AFGHAN MORPHINE**

Letter of Understanding

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Letter of Understanding

The Italian Red Cross and The Senlis Council jointly support **Buy Afghan Morphine**. This international campaign aims at promoting with countries around the world special trade agreements with Afghanistan for the purchase of a humanitarian brand of Afghan morphine. **Buy Afghan Morphine** will help Afghanistan to build a legal and sustainable economy while contributing to tackle the “World Pain Crisis”.

The fight against pain is one of the fundamental battles countries, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and civil society organisations have a special obligation to wage. The dire shortage of pain killers affects the constituents of countries globally, especially in the developing world. Under the ‘World Pain Crisis’, as coined by WHO, too many people still endure unnecessary pain as AIDS and cancer patients face their daunting illnesses without adequate palliative care. The humanitarian mission of the Red Cross mandates a special duty to engage with health and advocacy projects raising awareness on the need for a universal pain-relief.

In parallel, there exists another major crisis with consequences that extend worldwide: the illegal opium crisis in Afghanistan. Opium is the backbone of the Afghan economy, and the only source of income for thousands of rural communities, but the heroin trafficking cripples development and hampers security enforcement in the country. Moreover, the drugs trade is the source of considerable international social distress as Afghanistan provides more than 90% of the world’s heroin. Opium, therefore, lies at the core of the Afghan security and development crisis, and the international community has a special obligation to support the country in its efforts to tackle illegal drugs trafficking.

Opium can also become an opportunity for development: opium is the raw material for essential pain killers such as morphine and codeine. Opium is cultivated legally in Turkey and India for the supply of essential medicines. An opium licensing system for Afghanistan would help to tackle the security and development crisis in the country while turning the curse of heroin into a reason for hope to fight pain worldwide, and help poor Afghan farming communities to subsist.

An Afghan morphine brand provides a response to two crises with global implications: to the illegal opium crisis in Afghanistan by removing a significant part of the opium production from the illegal market; and to the 'World Pain Crisis' by supplying new morphine-based medicines to countries around the world which face an acute shortage of pain-killers.

The Italian Red Cross and The Senlis Council are committed to promote Buy Afghan Morphine, together with a 'Good Will Coalition' of countries and organisations around the world as a policy solution of two of the most salient moral and political challenges of our day.

AGREED TO THIS

DAY OF 2006

Italian Red Cross

The Senlis Council