

Afghan Wireless Celebrates 14 Years Of Connecting Afghans To The World

Fourteen years ago, in 2002, with much joy, anticipation and hope, President Karzai made the very first call using the Afghan Wireless Communications Network. On that day in 2002, fewer than 40,000 Afghans had cell phones?in fact, we launched Afghan Wireless with just 22,000 subscribers living in three provinces. We founded Afghan Wireless, because we were determined to help rebuild our country, by developing a wireless communications network that by connecting Afghans with each other, and the wider world, could lift Afghanistan's isolation and drive our country's economic resurgence.

Your support and partnership has helped Afghan Wireless enjoy fourteen years of breathtaking progress. Today, AWCC provides global-class 3G and 3.75G+ Voice, Data, Internet and My Money Mobile Payment Services to 4.2 million subscribers who live in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan. AWCC's 3.75G+ high speed network service is available in thirteen provinces. Since 2002, we've invested over \$400,000,000 to develop Afghanistan's largest and strongest communications network. And our partnerships with 425 carrier networks in 125 countries means that you can use your Afghan Wireless phone almost anywhere in the world.

On May 15, 2016, Afghan Wireless proudly hosted an Anniversary Ceremony to celebrate the fourteen years we've been honored to provide you, our fellow Afghans, with rapid, reliable and affordable communications services. Our Anniversary Celebration was attended by 1500 of my AWCC and Bayat Group colleagues?the people, whose hard work, creativity and dedication are the reasons that Afghan Wireless was able to pioneer our nation's wireless communications industry?and why our Company continues to lead the industry today.

For everyone at AWCC, sharing our great time of celebration with so many friends, colleagues and guests?while enjoying amazing performances from **Amir Jan Saboori** and **Shahzad Adeel**--it was also the perfect moment to think about just how much AWCC's Anniversary Theme, "Fourteen Years of Spreading Smiles Across Afghanistan," represents our Company's best intentions, our achievements and our continuing belief in a productive and prosperous future for Afghanistan.

We've always been committed to providing you with the most innovative communications technology available. But I'm proudest of these two additional achievements, which, together with our efforts to build and lead Afghanistan's telecommunications sector, have helped improve the lives of thousands of Afghans:

We're the only wireless company in Afghanistan that was founded by Afghans?and our company continues to be led by Afghans. 99% of our workforce is Afghan, and Afghan Wireless, together with our parent company, The Bayat Group (bayat-group.com), are Afghanistan's biggest providers of jobs.

We champion the effort of every employee at Afghan Wireless who wants to build up their educational and professional credentials. Today, Afghan Wireless provides scholarships to every one of our employees who is attending a University. And our internal professional development program offers over fifty-two professional development courses on a broad range of subjects including, Competition Strategy, Effective Management, English, IT and Accountancy.

But our support of education doesn't stop at AWCC's doorstep. Our partners at The Bayat Foundation (www.bayatfoundation.org), are building schools throughout Afghanistan and funding the expansion of existing educational institutions. AWCC will always be committed to helping our colleagues achieve their highest educational aspirations?and to helping build an Afghanistan where providing every citizen with the best education possible is viewed as the most important sign of our collective progress.

C.S. Lewis, the author and philosopher, said that progress ??means getting nearer to the place you want to be.? For Afghan Wireless, and Afghanistan, these last fourteen years, from 2002 until today, have been filled with great perils, but most importantly, together we have built and experienced a time of tremendous progress.

In 2002, Afghanistan's GDP stood at about 4.1 billion dollars, fewer than 800,000 children were enrolled in school and life expectancy for most of us was about 41 years. Today, our country's GDP is more than 20 billion dollars, our life expectancy is about 60 years and 10.5 million students?almost half are women?attend 16,000 schools throughout Afghanistan.

Despite the many challenges these fourteen years have presented to us, we Afghans continue to make progress, and we continue to move towards creating the nation we want to be: A country where every Afghan is respected, where every Afghan is educated and where every Afghan has the opportunity to build the best life possible for their families.

Happy Anniversary from Afghan Wireless. We're grateful to celebrate fourteen years of connecting you to the most important people and places in your life. And I hope that we will always be your partner in progress.

Until next time,

Ehsan

Dr. Ehsanollah Bayat

Entrepreneur and Philanthropist

Founder and CEO, Afghan Wireless Communication Company (AWCC)

Founder and CEO, Ariana Television and Radio (ATN)

Founder, Bayat Foundation