

# An interview with...



## Interview with His Excellency Dr. Yaar, Ambassador of Afghanistan to the United Kingdom

### Reflecting upon last year, what were the highlight events for your country?

The most important events in Afghanistan during 2013 were the transfer of full responsibility for security from NATO to the Afghan National Security Forces; and the preparations for the presidential and provincial-council elections in April of this year.

### What were the highlights for you personally in your role as Ambassador?

With great pleasure, I continued to represent my country in the UK, which is one of the staunchest supporters of Afghanistan and its nascent democracy. President Hamid Karzai visited Great Britain last October for a week and greatly enjoyed his trip; I naturally accompanied him to all his meetings with high-ranking UK officials. I was elated to see the continued unwavering support of the UK for the significant achievements in terms of democratisation and social progress Afghanistan has made over the last 12 years.

### Although you were in London for Nowruz, how would you celebrate it normally at home in your country?

Nowruz is celebrated in Afghanistan with great enthusiasm and pomp. If I were at home, I would have attended the Nowruz ceremonies in Mazar-e Sharif in the north of the country.

### Looking forward to the year ahead, what are you anticipating for your country in the coming year?

A new government will soon be in place in Afghanistan. All Afghans, including myself, hope that the coming year will bring peace as we continue to build better lives for ourselves and the region as a whole.

### And for yourself personally?

God knows better than I and I do not wish to out

### Whilst working in the UK what is the thing that you miss most about home?

Home is home; you miss everything about it.

### What would you recommend to your fellow citizens to do/see when visiting the UK?

The UK is a beautiful and unique country; everything British is investigating and enjoying. I personally, enjoy the depth and diversity of its culture as well as its tolerance towards other peoples and cultures from around the world.

### And what would you recommend UK visitors see in your country?

The landscape, the people, the human diversity - and Afghan hospitality which is world-renowned. Everything in Afghanistan is worth seeing and experiencing.

### Can you tell us a bit about your country's expat community in the UK?

There are about 90,000 Afghans living in the UK, with another 1500 in Ireland. The younger generation of Afghans raised in the UK are extremely well educated and a large number of them are eager to help their original country Afghanistan. Many Afghans have been able to establish businesses in different parts of London, and also enjoy over 80 community organizations and a number of mosques, where they can congregate and celebrate their religious and national days. We also have a small community of Afghan Sikhs in London.

### Looking back through your country's rich and diverse history and traditions, which cultural figure do you think really stands out and should better internationally?

Our women and athletes have become agents of change in our society. They all deserve better recognition and national and international levels.