H.-G & M. Hoprich & Family
Josef Reichlgasse 7
A–7000 Eisenstadt
AUSTRIA
Tel.: +43–2682–76021
Fax : +43–2682–63740
Mobile: +43–664–55 44 021

E–mail: HansMaggiHoprich@aon.at
SKYPE ID: HansMaggiHoprich
Internet: <www.DMGint.de>
<www.beg.or.at>
<www.johannes-rebmann-stiftung.de/en/missionaries/hoprich.html>
<http://hoprich.beeplog.de/blog.pl?blogid=78401&sess>

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Late November 2008

Dear Friends,

We were quite overwhelmed by the many different responses to our last previous 'BURGENLAND NEWS' and we would like to **thank all those** who replied and gave us so much encouragement!

On the evening of Sunday 23rd November, I (Hans-Georg) returned from my travels which had begun on 6th November with the flight to the eastern Mediterranean region and continued on 10th November to Central Asia.

Never before has it been **so hard to say goodbye to my family**, not even in the days when I was often away for several weeks at a time in the jungle of Papua New Guinea… but, just as I did back then, I gave my wedding ring back to Margret as I said goodbye…just in case.

It was a very moving time involving **many meetings with precious faithful fellow workers** who serve in the most difficult, often highly dangerous circumstances with great personal commitment. The long conversations and the cheerful fellowship – in spite of everything – was a **real privilege** for me and it also gave an insight into their difficult everyday life – nothing is taken for granted!

The thing that made the greatest impression on me was the **visit to the British cemetery** in the capital – the graves of those who served faithfully for many years in this country and also the last resting place of those who paid with their lives for their courageous service here, some of whom were very young.

During a short **spell of sickness** in the north of the country I sensed particularly that many people were praying for me and I was able to continue with our travel and visits as planned without having to make many changes, for which I am extremely grateful!

My colleague and I experienced much protection on the very dangerous roads and in the very remote mountainous regions. Twice I actually held my breath as I feared that we were about to go off the road and plunge a hundred metres down the mountainside…

Our travels included an internal flight, but because of **bad weather** and the first snowfall our light aircraft couldn't land and took us straight back to the capital. So the next day we had to make the eight–hour trip in a jeep, which allowed us to see many amazing things: huge mountains, camel trains, bustling bazaars and overloaded, colourfully decorated lorry-taxis…

Even when we 'lost' two days of our schedule – the internal return flight that we'd booked was also cancelled, giving us a 14 hour return journey by road – we were given an amazing insight into the country and its people, which we wouldn't have missed in spite of the great physical discomfort of the journey! **Often we were not able to catch up on our sleep** in the car, because there were so many exciting things to see…

All these impressions are still very fresh in my mind and I am still working my way through **all the many experiences and meetings**, the jet–lag and the change in climate and altitude, the extreme desert heat during the stopover on the return journey and the overnight stay in Dubai and coming home to snow in Burgenland… It will take a quite a while to digest it all.

There is so much to share and I would love to come to your church or group to tell you about this visit and show you a selection of my many photos.
I've attached a couple of them to this 'BURGENLAND UPDATE'.

I'm so grateful for your intercession – none of your prayers was wasted!

Greetings from myself and Margret and we wish you a blessed and anticipation–filled Advent and Christmas time.

Regards,

Deutsche Missions Gemeinschaft

Hans-Georg