

Communiqué of “Afghanistan: The London Conference”

Afghan Leadership, Regional Cooperation, International Partnership

1. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community met today in London to renew their mutual commitment towards helping Afghanistan emerge as a secure, prosperous, and democratic nation. Today’s Conference represents a decisive step towards greater Afghan leadership to secure, stabilise and develop Afghanistan. The international community underlined its support for the Government of Afghanistan and its security, development and governance.
2. At the London Conference, President Hamid Karzai built on commitments set out in his inauguration speech, which articulated clear priorities for stabilising and developing Afghanistan.
3. The international community pledged to maintain its long-term commitment to Afghanistan, as previously set out in the 2001 Bonn Agreement, in the 2002 Tokyo Conference, the 2006 Afghanistan Compact, the 2008 Paris Declaration and the 2009 The Hague Conference Declaration. The international community re-affirmed its support for the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions upholding the security, stability and prosperity of Afghanistan and in particular the role of the UN itself in achieving this goal.
4. Conference Participants emphasised that the Afghan Government and the international community are entering into a new phase on the way to full Afghan ownership. Conference Participants re-affirmed the goals of greater Afghan Leadership, increased Regional Cooperation and more effective International Partnership. Together we are committed to make intensive efforts to ensure that the Afghan Government is increasingly able to meet the needs of its people through developing its own institutions and resources.
5. The London Conference will be followed by a conference in Kabul later this year, hosted by the Afghan Government, where it intends to take forward its programme with concrete plans for delivery for the Afghan people. These should be based on democratic accountability, equality, human rights, gender equality, good governance and more effective provision of government services, economic growth, as well as a common desire to live in peace under the Afghan Constitution. We remain convinced that together we will succeed.
6. The challenges in Afghanistan particularly in political, economic, development and security areas are significant and inter-related. It is in our shared interest to overcome them and we re-affirmed our commitment to doing so. The nature of international engagement in Afghanistan continues to evolve, in favour of increasingly supporting Afghan leadership in the areas of security, development, governance and economic assistance.

Security

7. Conference Participants expressed gratitude to Afghan citizens, Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and to those nations whose citizens and military personnel have served in Afghanistan. Conference Participants expressed their sorrow for all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for a secure and stable Afghanistan. Conference Participants also thanked those countries that have provided transit and related facilities to International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the ANSF.
8. Conference Participants reiterated their resolve to combat terrorism, in particular Al Qaeda, and commended Afghan efforts to this end. Conference Participants condemned in the strongest terms all attacks by the Taliban and their extremist allies, including Improvised Explosive Devices, suicide attacks and abductions, targeting civilians, and Afghan and international forces. These attacks undermine stabilisation, reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan.
9. Conference Participants noted that most civilian casualties are caused by insurgent attacks. Conference Participants welcomed the determination by ISAF, in partnership with the Afghan Government and ANSF, to

continue to do their utmost to protect and further reduce the risk to civilians and jointly to investigate civilian casualties.

10. Conference Participants welcomed the progress made by the Afghan security forces as they increasingly take responsibility for military operations. Conference Participants also welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's stated goal of the ANSF taking the lead and conducting the majority of operations in the insecure areas of Afghanistan within three years and taking responsibility for physical security within five years. To help realise this, the international community committed to continue to improve the capability and effectiveness of the ANSF. Conference Participants also committed to providing the necessary support to the phased growth and expansion of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) in order to reach 171,600 and 134,000 personnel by October 2011, as approved by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) on 20 January 2010. The international community also showed its full support for the continued development and implementation of the National Police Strategy. Beyond this, the Government of Afghanistan and the international community will decide if this is sufficient, based on the prevailing security situation and long term sustainability.

11. Conference Participants welcomed the decision by the North Atlantic Council, in close consultation with non-North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ISAF partners, in full agreement with the Government of Afghanistan and in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 9762, to develop, by the Kabul Conference, a plan for phased transition to Afghan security lead province by province, including the conditions on which transition will be based. Further to this, Conference Participants welcomed the shared commitment to create the conditions to allow for transition as rapidly as possible. This is with a view to a number of provinces transitioning to ANSF lead, providing conditions are met, by late 2010/early 2011, with ISAF moving to a supporting role within those provinces. Conference Participants welcomed the intention to establish a process among the Government of Afghanistan, ISAF and other key international partners to assess progress and monitor in areas other than security that influence transition.

12. Conference Participants welcomed:

- ISAF's increased focus on partnering ANSF and the principle that Afghan forces should progressively assume the leading role in all stages of operations;
- the Government of Afghanistan's determination to assume greater responsibility for detentions, in keeping with the growth of Afghan capacity, in accordance with international standards and applicable national and international law;
- the contribution the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) is making towards the growth and expansion of the ANSF and urged the international community to meet outstanding requirements for trainers and mentoring teams, and to continue efforts in this respect;
- the contribution made by EUPOL to monitoring, mentoring and advising the Ministry of Interior and supporting national and provincial level Afghan-led police reform and urged partners to reinforce and provide logistical support to EUPOL, especially in the provinces;
- bilateral support to the ANSF from a range of countries and urged the international community to coordinate closely in this work with the NTM-A and EUPOL, including through the International Police Coordination Board (IPCB);
- the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to continue development of a National Security Strategy with the support of the international community; and
- the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to devise and implement a National Security Policy, which is to be presented at the Kabul Conference and which outlines the security infrastructure and roles and responsibilities of the different security agencies.

13. In the context of a comprehensive, Afghan-led approach, Conference Participants reinforced the need for an effective and enduring framework to create and consolidate a stable and secure environment in which Afghan men and women of all backgrounds and perspectives can contribute to the reconstruction of their country. In this context, Conference Participants welcomed the plans of the Government of Afghanistan to offer an honourable

place in society to those willing to renounce violence, participate in the free and open society and respect the principles that are enshrined in the Afghan constitution, cut ties with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups, and pursue their political goals peacefully.

14. Conference Participants welcomed:

- the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to reinvigorate Afghan-led reintegration efforts by developing and implementing an effective, inclusive, transparent and sustainable national Peace and Reintegration Programme;
- plans to convene a Grand Peace Jirga before the Kabul Conference; and
- the international community's commitment to establish a Peace and Reintegration Trust Fund to finance the Afghan-led Peace and Reintegration Programme. Conference Participants welcomed pledges to the Trust Fund and encouraged all those who wish to support peace-building and stabilisation efforts in Afghanistan to contribute to this important initiative.

15. Conference Participants recognised the seriousness of the humanitarian situation in different areas of the country, particularly food insecurity. Conference Participants invited the international community to support the 2010 Humanitarian Action Plan.

Development and governance

16. Afghanistan faces formidable development challenges, which require sustained, long-term support from the international community. A better coordinated and resourced civilian effort is critical to overcoming these challenges. Economic growth, respect for Rule of Law and human rights alongside creation of employment opportunities, and good governance for all Afghans are also critical to counter the appeal of the insurgency, as well as being vital to greater stability in Afghanistan.

17. The international community noted the progress that the Afghan Government has made on economic development, including reaching the completion point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, which will provide Afghanistan with up to \$1.6 billion in debt relief from major creditors. This takes total debt relief to around \$11 billion. Conference Participants agreed that the priority, as established by the Government of Afghanistan, is accelerated progress on agriculture, human resources development and infrastructure, and to ensure these are underpinned by expanded capacity and structural reforms. Conference Participants looked forward to the new economic development plan, and to the start of discussions on a new Afghan-led IMF programme and to continued IMF in-country engagement.

18. Conference Participants welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to assume increasing financial responsibility for its own affairs, and underlined that critical reforms were needed to maximise domestic earnings, with a view to attaining fiscal sustainability over time, including:

- increasing tax and customs revenues;
- restructuring public enterprises in order to ensure greater accountability and efficiency; and
- pursuing the Road Map of the 2007 Enabling Environment Conference as reflected in the ANDS;
- continuing regulatory reforms including implementation of the new mining regulations and bearing in mind Afghanistan's current commitments under the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

19. Conference Participants welcomed:

- the Government of Afghanistan's plans for more coherent and better coordinated development. This involves aligning key ministries into development and governance clusters and refining the Afghan National Development Strategy development priorities, in particular infrastructure, rural development,

human resources development, agriculture and the main areas of governance. It also involves developing a work plan, which should be completed by the Kabul Conference;

- Conference Participants supported the ambition of the Government of Afghanistan whereby donors increase the proportion of development aid delivered through the Government of Afghanistan to 50% in the next two years, including through multi donor trust funds that support the Government budget e.g. the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund and the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan. But this support is conditional on the Government's progress in further strengthening public financial management systems, reducing corruption, improving budget execution, developing a financing strategy and Government capacity towards the goal. Conference Participants confirmed their intention to establish a detailed roadmap with the Government of Afghanistan, before the Kabul Conference, and to provide technical assistance to help develop the Government's capacity to achieve its goal;
- The Government of Afghanistan's plans to implement budgetary reforms, to increase budget execution rates and to take steps to improve domestic revenue collection in parallel with enhancing anti-corruption practices and institutions with the aim of achieving fiscal sustainability.

20. Conference Participants welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to develop an overall plan for more effective and accountable national civilian institutions, including the civil service. They welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's decision to approve the Sub-National Governance Policy and prepare implementing legislation in advance of the Kabul Conference. Conference Participants committed to support the enhancement of sub-national governance through the Government of Afghanistan's single framework of priority programmes. To facilitate its implementation, the Government of Afghanistan intends to publish the criteria for administrative boundaries. Conference Participants welcomed commitments made by the Government of Afghanistan and urged the international community to provide additional support to train 12,000 sub-national civil servants in core administrative functions in support of provincial and district governors by the end of 2011.

21. Conference Participants acknowledge the Government of Afghanistan's increasing efforts to implement the National Justice Programme with a view to making more transparent, fair, and accessible provision of justice available to all Afghans equally.

22. Conference Participants commended the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to improve access to justice and respect for human rights, including through its Justice and Human Rights Programme, political and financial support for the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, and the adoption and implementation of a new national policy as soon as possible on relations between the formal justice system and dispute resolution councils. The Government of Afghanistan reiterated its commitment to protect and promote the human rights of all Afghan citizens and to make Afghanistan a place where men and women enjoy security, equal rights, and equal opportunities in all spheres of life. Conference Participants also committed to strengthening the role of civil society.

23. Conference Participants welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's whole-of-government approach to fighting corruption, and its ongoing work to mount a concerted effort to tackle the key drivers of corruption, through development of clear and objective benchmarks and implementation plans, in advance of the Kabul Conference, including but not limited to:

- empowering an independent High Office of Oversight to investigate and sanction corrupt officials, and lead the fight against corruption, through decree within one month;
- during 2010, establishing a statutory basis for related anti-corruption bodies, including the Major Crimes Task Force and the Anti-Corruption Tribunal, guaranteeing their long-term independence;
- enhancing the effectiveness of the senior civil service appointments and vetting process and revising the civil service code. This will include, by the time of the Kabul Conference, identifying the top level civil service appointments;
- the intention of the President to issue a decree prohibiting close relatives of Ministers, Ministerial advisers, Members of Parliament, Governors and some Deputy Ministers from serving in customs and revenue collection departments throughout government;

- as a priority during 2010, adopting comprehensive legislation agenda to make Afghan laws consistent with the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, including the Anti-Corruption Penal Code, to expand provisions related to asset declaration; and
- inviting Afghan and other eminent experts to participate in an independent Ad Hoc Monitoring and Evaluation Mission which will make its first monitoring visit to Afghanistan within three months, develop clear and objective benchmarks for progress and prepare periodic reports on national and international activity for the Afghan President, Parliament and people, as well as the international community.

24. Conference Participants committed to helping the Government of Afghanistan's anti-corruption efforts by providing assistance to the new institutions and committed to increase the transparency and effectiveness of its own aid in line with the June 2008 Paris Conference Declaration and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. In particular, Conference Participants agreed to:

- work with the proposed anti-corruption bodies to review existing procedures and investigate instances of corruption that involve internationals; and
- work with the Government to improve procurement processes, including establishing additional measures to ensure due diligence in international contracting procedures.

25. Conference Participants noted the decision by the Afghan Independent Election Commission to postpone Parliamentary elections until 18 September in accordance with the Afghan Constitution and electoral law. In this regard, Conference Participants welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to ensuring the integrity of the 2010 Parliamentary elections and to preventing any irregularities and misconduct. Conference Participants also welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to work closely with the UN to build on the lessons learned from the 2009 elections to deliver improvements to the electoral process in 2010 and beyond.

26. The international community welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to implement the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan and to implement the Elimination of Violence Against Women Law. Conference Participants welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to strengthen the participation of women in all Afghan governance institutions including elected and appointed bodies and the civil service.

27. Conference Participants emphasised the pernicious links between the narcotics trade, the insurgency and other criminal activity, including corruption and human trafficking. Conference Participants therefore welcomed:

- the recent progress the Government of Afghanistan has made including the 22% reduction in poppy cultivation last year and increase in the number of poppy free provinces from 6 in 2006 to 20 in 2009;
- the undertaking by the Government of Afghanistan to update the National Drugs Control Strategy during 2010, which will include targeted programmes of agricultural development and the reduction of poppy cultivation;
- the ongoing support of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International community to support the Government of Afghanistan to counter this trade;
- the continuation of the "Paris-Moscow" process in counter-acting illegal production, consumption and trafficking of narcotics and the elimination of poppy crops, drug laboratories and stores. Also the interception of drug convoys as well as the continuation of consultations on the marking of pre-cursors and greater bilateral regional cooperation; and
- the contribution to multilateral anti-narcotics efforts by the Plan of Action of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Members, adopted in March 2009 by the Special Conference on Afghanistan in Moscow.

Regional cooperation/international architecture

28. Conference Participants reaffirmed their support for a stable, secure and democratic Afghanistan, acknowledged Afghanistan's potential role as a land-bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and the Far East and renewed their pledge to work together actively to this end. Conference Participants

underscored that regionally-owned and steered initiatives stood the best chance of success and welcomed a number of recent initiatives that showed the need for neighbouring and regional partners to work constructively together. In this context Conference Participants noted the recent Istanbul Regional Summit on Friendship and Cooperation in the “Heart of Asia” and its Statement. This regional co-operation includes reaffirming the principles of the Good Neighbourly Relations Declaration of 2002, and working actively for:

- Afghan sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity;
- Non-intervention in Afghanistan’s internal affairs and mutual non-interference;
- Afghan-led peace, reintegration and reconciliation efforts;
- Ending support wherever it occurs on each other’s territory for illegally-armed groups, parallel structures and illegal financing directed towards destabilising Afghanistan or individual neighbours;
- Combating terrorism including but not limited to increased intelligence- sharing, dismantling the logistical, financial and ideological support for terrorist networks and tackling the causes of radicalisation;
- Development of trans-regional trade and transit; including work on infrastructure and progress on energy, power transmission lines and transport infrastructure, including railway networks;
- Conducive conditions for the return of Afghan refugees; and
- Trans-regional co-operation against the narcotics trade.
- Supporting people-to-people contact, including interaction and exchanges between the civil society, academia, media and private sector.

29. Conference Participants welcomed the fact that Afghanistan and its regional partners would have opportunities in 2010 to develop and co-ordinate contributions to advance these principles. Conference Participants noted the value of a more coherent and structured approach to individual initiatives. In this respect, Conference Participants welcomed the fact that Afghanistan has invited the relevant regional bodies (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and Economic Cooperation Organisation in accordance with their respective mandates) and others including the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to develop as soon as possible a co-ordinated plan for Afghanistan’s regional engagement. Conference Participants invited the countries, regional organisations and fora concerned to offer regular updates, including at the Kabul Conference.

30. Emphasising the theme of enriching regional cooperation, Conference Participants welcomed the contribution made by specific bilateral and regional projects including that of the OIC on education and tackling radicalisation, the OSCE and the Afghanistan-Pakistan Cooperation Workshop (Dubai Process) on border management. Conference Participants were grateful for the information given by several countries on bilateral initiatives including the Afghanistan-Pakistan Trade and Transit Agreement, on which they welcomed progress achieved and looked forward to a timely conclusion, and the Indonesian programmes for capacity building including technical cooperation in the fields of education, health, agriculture, poverty reduction, renewable energy and small and medium enterprises.

31. Conference Participants recalled that the international community was engaged in Afghanistan in support of the Government of Afghanistan. Until such time as the Government of Afghanistan is able to assume the responsibility, Conference Participants noted with appreciation that UNAMA continues to be the primary international organisation for coordinating international support in line with the UNSCR 1868. Conference Participants welcomed:

- the Afghan Government’s presentation of clear priorities;
- the international community’s commitment to more effective and properly resourced civilian engagement to support the Afghan Government in order to improve the impact of international civilian assistance;
- the international community’s commitment to align its assistance more closely with Afghan priorities, in keeping with Paris Principles on aid effectiveness, thereby increasing Afghan government capacity;
- the international community’s intention to work closely with UNAMA to reinvigorate civilian delivery;
- the appointment of a new NATO Senior Civilian Representative; and
- the decision of the EU to strengthen its presence in Kabul under one single representative.

32. Conference Participants welcomed the decision by the UN Secretary General to appoint Staffan di Mistura; the decision by the NATO Secretary General to appoint Mark Sedwill; and the forthcoming appointment from the European Union (EU) High Representative; and looked forward to their taking up their jobs in the first few months of 2010. Conference Participants invited them to work closely together to ensure closer coordination in Kabul. Furthermore while noting recent improvements in the functioning of the JCMB, Conference Participants invited the co-chairs of the JCMB to recommend to its members additional measures to make the JCMB ever more effective.

33. Conference Participants took the opportunity to thank the incumbents: UN SRSG Kai Eide, NATO SCR Fernando Gentilini and EUSR Ettore Sequi and EC Head of Delegation Hansjörg Kretschmer for their invaluable work and commitment to Afghanistan.

34. We look forward to reviewing mutual progress on commitments at the Kabul Conference later this year.