



Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Security and Defence

Delegation for relations with Afghanistan

The Chairmen

Baroness Catherine Ashton of Upholland
High Representative of the European Union for
Foreign Affairs and Security Policy /
Vice-President of the European Commission
200 rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels

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Subject: European Parliament's mission to Afghanistan, 28-31 October 2013

Dear High Representative,

On behalf of our whole parliamentary delegation, we wish to express our gratitude for the support extended by the European External Action Service to the mission we have jointly led to Afghanistan on 28-31 October 2013. Both the EU Special Representative / EU Delegation office and the EU Police Mission Afghanistan played a decisive part in making it possible and in ensuring its success.

Upon our return to Brussels, we would like to share with you a couple of operational conclusions:

1) EUPOL has achieved positive results. But much remains to be done. In the face of mounting challenges -2000 policemen killed this year-, the EU support to law enforcement bodies should be adapted to the evolving circumstances and extended beyond 2014. More generally, it is of utmost importance that the EU reiterates at any given occasion its firm commitment to pursue its support to the Afghan people for the years to come.

2) The way the April 2014 elections are held will shape the future of Afghanistan as a whole. Interior Minister Omer Daudzai himself told us that '*30% of the polling station may not be accessible due to lack of security*'. His hope was that the '*dark spots*' would be spread across the country rather than in one part only (read: Pashtun-populated areas).

Moreover, the Afghan political elite we met with alleged that the outgoing President was trying to perpetuate his hold on power by distorting or even postponing the electoral process. In close coordination with our international allies, the EU should send a strong message to prevent this.

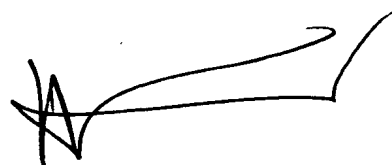
Conversely, credible elections and a clean break from past practices may give new momentum to democratic institutions, thus strengthening the hand of the government in the peace talks. In support of this objective, and in spite of obvious difficulties, the EU should support the electoral process by all available means, including through the deployment of an Electoral Observation Mission.

Please be assured that the European Parliament will support you in this common endeavour.

Yours sincerely,



Arnaud DANJEAN



Thijs BERMAN

Cc: Mr Paweł Robert Kowal, Member of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence
Mr Carlo Fidanza, Member of the Delegation for relations with Afghanistan