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EU's ROLE IN AFGHANISTAN BEFORE AND AFTER 2014

Transition

- The EU and its member states have been committed to Afghanistan for the past 11 years to ensure that Afghanistan shall never again become a safe haven for terrorists threatening international peace and stability, to help reduce poverty and to promote the respect for human rights, good governance and build democratic institutions.
- The EU is supporting Afghanistan through a comprehensive approach that ensures synergies between political, security and development efforts. We contribute to democratic reform by supporting good governance, reform of the justice sector and the promotion of human rights. The EU has been a loyal and strong supporter of UNAMA in fulfilling their mandate in support of preparation for the elections. Through EUPOL we contribute to develop the Afghan National Police into a professional civilian police force and with our development instruments we have made substantial contributions to the health and agriculture sectors, including counter-narcotics.
- The EU and its member states are in Afghanistan for the long haul. We are committed supporting the Afghan Government and people far beyond 2014. The Afghan Government needs to take further steps in implementing necessary reforms on good governance, rule of law and human rights, in order for us to be able to fulfill our commitments.
- Transition gains are evident, but fragile and reversible and can only be successful if based on pillars of governance. If transition is to be successful it needs to be politically driven. Currently, the military is giving the space back to where it belongs - to political actors. Using the COIN terminology: The Clear and Hold has been a work in progress, conditioned on ANSF and continued IC support and mentoring, while Building and Transfer is problematic due to the weak local governance structures and the limited reach of the central government.

Situation in Afghanistan

- **However, positive changes have occurred.** Afghanistan has made visible progress during the last decade.
- At least 65% population now has access to basic health care from a mere 9% in 2002 with a goal to extend this to 90% of the population by 2015. This is impressive though as health status improves the range of services will have to increase.
- **Significant measures have been undertaken to tackle widespread illiteracy and access to education in Afghanistan.** This was no easy challenge considering that the education system had been left in tatters following decades of fighting and the attack on the education system by the Taliban government. In 2002, less than one million children were enrolled in formal education; **this number now surpasses 6 million**, the highest number ever for Afghanistan, including **2.7 million girls**; a significant achievement, despite the obvious concerns regarding the quality of education.

- **Afghanistan has a huge potential through economic development. The Afghan economy is growing** (9-11% each year). It should, however, be recognized that the economy is expected to contract 4-6% as the presence of the international community and assistance contracts decreases. In going forward, the economic model will have to adapt: less external aid and more foreign investment and shift from public to private sector.
- In addition, nearly 8,000 kilometres of national highways, regional highways and provincial roads have been built, cutting travel times between centres by 75 percent. Access to electricity has increased by 250%, allowing more than 30% of the population to have access to electricity.
- International training and mentoring is increasingly focused on developing specific ANSF capabilities including logistics, leadership, medical services and Special Forces. As of 21 December 2012, the ANSF continues to build and sustain forces, currently fielding 330,884 soldiers, airmen and police, working towards of the final objective of 352,000. Once reached, they will remain at that level until 2015. Thereafter it will according to the plan gradually decrease from 352,000 to 228,500 in 2017/2018 as agreed by the SSC with delegated authority from JCMB on 7 April 2012.
- However, at present, the ANSF real capacity to take full responsibility over security is not clear. As per Gen. Sher Mohammad Karimi's (Chief of Army Staff) assessment, only a limited number of divisions out of the total are apparently able to conduct operations independently.
- Moreover, the re-emergence of local warlords'-led militias is still a concern, and needs to be taken into consideration. Indeed, in the wake of the elections we are already witnessing a transformation of the political landscapes in the country: new alliances and political parties are formed, however, often with the old former warlords as key actors. Broadly, Afghanistan in 2015 is likely to have an uneven pattern of security and government control.
- International understanding of the need to promote civilian, evidence-led policing as distinct from a paramilitary force increased during the past year, as did the recognition that an expansion of the ANP should not be at the cost of its professionalisation. Furthermore, it is important that police is accessible for women, which requires more female police within the ANP. Female police are currently facing many challenges in their working situation as well as in the perception of the Afghan public towards their role and position. The EU supported their Afghan partners in developing the ANP as a professional, effective, female friendly and civilian police force. While this process is increasingly Afghan-led, Afghan partners continue to seek and rely on international policing expertise.

Future prospects:

- There is, however, the danger that all we have jointly achieved in more than 11 years of intensive engagement in institution building and development could gradually crumble post 2014.
- However, this is not the most likely scenario to unfold. If we, the European Union, regional actors and the international community, promote a sense of confidence and ownership to encourage the Afghans and the Afghan government sticks to its commitments and takes this ownership, the more likely scenario will be slow but steady progress towards a more democratic and more stable Afghanistan. This progress admittedly will be shaken by backlashes and crisis; but there is no reason to depict the future in bleak pictures.

- **IC commitments extend well beyond 2014**, as proven by the strategic partnership agreements signed by many countries. The EU itself is in the final stages of negotiating a **ten year Cooperation Agreement for Partnership and Development (CAPD) with Afghanistan**.
- Also, during the Chicago summit on 20 May 2012, NATO member states committed to start planning for a future mission that will advise and train the ANSF. The EU committed to continuing to support the Afghan National Police after 2014. Currently, the programming for post 2014 is in its early stages and it is not clear yet how much support will be earmarked for support to the police. **In Chicago “Almost a billion dollars have been pledged to support the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). Funding is perhaps the greatest challenge for the ANSF.** The exact mechanism for ANSF funding has yet to be determined and this will be subject to further discussion.
- **[NOTE: Annual costs are approximately \$6 billion, nearly half of Afghan GDP and roughly four times total Afghan government revenue. Afghan security is thus reliant on foreign donations, more than 90% of which have been coming from the United States.]**
- At Tokyo last year, the **International Community committed to providing over 16 billion USD** over four years (2012-2015) and sustaining support, through 2017, at or near levels of the past decade to ensure Afghanistan's economic development through the transformation decade. Living up to such commitments will be crucial in allowing the Afghan Government to anticipate revenues while at the same time working towards self-reliance and project themselves with confidence into the future.
- However, for the first time these international commitments are conditional and based on Afghan capacity and depending on their willingness to deliver their Tokyo commitments to:
 1. Hold credible and transparent elections in 2014 with a legitimate outcome
 2. Support anti-corruption.
 3. Promote justice and improve the human rights situation, especially of women.
 4. Support economic development and generate revenues.
 5. Improve public management, in particular at the local level.
- The reform agenda is very ambitious and implementation has proved difficult and slow. Political issues have been combined with the expectations that money would continue to flow. But **now we need to acknowledge that these mutual commitments come with conditionalities in order to maintain our credibility. It is important that EU citizens are aware of our efforts in Afghanistan, as we are accountable to our taxpayers back home.** For example, last year, given the lack of progress in the Justice Sector Reform, **the EU decided to delay the implementation of its 20 M EUR commitment in support of this sector until there is a coherent and agreed Justice Sector Strategy in place.**
- Moreover, the **EU is taking an active role as a member of the so-called "5+3 group"**. A group of core donors following up Tokyo commitments and preparing the Senior Officials Meeting in July 2013 together with the government. **Ultimately it is up to the Afghan Government to make the most of these opportunities and to create a sustainable future for the Afghan people.**
- But they (the Afghans) must find unity and coherence, and fair cooperation among institutions.
- We should not expect miracles or quick fixes in the remaining year of this administration. The EU is encouraged by the fact that **Afghan political leaders, both government and**

opposition, are increasingly prepared to take a stronger lead and are assuming full political and security responsibility as 2014 approaches.

- Concerning Human Rights as a whole, ensuring democratic safeguards, and building the capacity of civil society, it is important to realise that these have been almost entirely donor-driven endeavors, and therefore any progress is at risk of being reversed. **The delayed appointment of the AIHRC commissioners (already one and a half year) could be seen as an example of the limited commitment of the government to the subject.** Therefore, there may be a need to manage expectations as to what can realistically be expected to endure. (Reference could be made again to the TMAF hard deliverables, which also indicated that AIHRC Commissioners should be appointed in accordance with Article 11 of the AIHRC Law and Paris principles, and drawing on consultation with cross-section of civil society organizations. The appointment process should enable AIHRC to retain its 'A' accreditation by the International Coordination Committee of National Human Rights Institutions.)
- **The Afghan security puzzle cannot be addressed without engagement of the regional actors.** There is an increased realization that peace and sustainable development in Afghanistan rests on regional cooperation and steps have been made in this respect. **The Heart of Asia Process was launched in Istanbul in November 2011** to promote the stability, integrity and prosperity of Afghanistan and the region through a series of confidence building measures to promote trust and regional cooperation.
- Moreover, the EU recognizes **that Peace in Afghanistan will have to rest on a political settlement** comprising all national, regional and international stakeholders. Steps have been made in order to initiate talks on various levels, but there are still few concrete developments.

The EU's role:

- As the compelling example of reconciliation and regional cooperation the EU has invested significantly in supporting politically and financially the capacity of the Government to contribute to dialogue in the region, in order to gradually build new patterns of mutual interdependence, interconnectivity, trust and confidence but also to control its borders and administer its customs.
- Regional support is key in supporting any peace process with the Taliban. In particular, to secure Afghanistan, Pakistan will need to be involved. Both Afghanistan and Pakistan have demonstrated an increasing appreciation of their interdependence and the need to address the root causes of conflict and tackle fundamentalism collectively. **These are positive signs, but building a conducive relationship is a process, which needs promoting and requires a certain level of pragmatism.** It is important that both countries avoid public recriminations and accusations against each other
- Reconciliation in Afghanistan has to be an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process, while respecting the Afghan constitution including its provisions on human rights. Particular attention must be paid to the rights of women. The EU aims to assist the Afghans with advice and assistance, drawing from its own rich experience in conflict resolution and reconciliation. EU MS have contributed to positive initiatives to support this intra-Afghan dialogue, such as Chantilly while the UK's trilaterals aim to improve the relationship with Pakistan in support of the peace process.
- By building on our long experience in crisis management we are training the Afghan National Police and rule of law institutions with our CSDP Mission, EUPOL, and through financial support through LOTFA, as the third largest donor. Last year EUPOL trained more than 4.000 police officers, including 1.000 detectives. The EU has so far committed

around 420 million to LOTFA (EUR 320 million already contributed since 2002, plus 99 million still to be contracted).

- The upcoming elections are crucial for the path of Afghanistan beyond transition and into transformation. The EU has been supporting UNDP ELECT II in their election preparations and we should continue to do so. This includes not only technically ensuring that elections are conducted properly, but ensuring that the preparations and conduct of the elections are carried out in a consultative and inclusive manner involving all relevant stakeholders. As a major donor of ELECT II, the EU has committed € 10 million from its Instrument for Stability (IfS) to support the election preparations.
- Progress has been made but the situation is still extremely challenging. The development of better functioning and more transparent institutions able to deliver high quality services for the people of Afghanistan are among the EU top priorities. **The EU supports reforms in the public administration and justice sectors.**
- **Our support is also directed towards improving the capacities at local and provincial levels**, as gaps need to be filled with the phasing out of the PRTs. The EU has been funding the UNDP-managed Afghanistan Sub-National Governance Programme with € 12 million in 2010 – 2013.
- **EU has played a key role in supporting the agriculture sector** which constitutes the livelihood for almost 80% of the population and a source of employment for 70% of the workforce; health services in order to provide basic health care and hospital services for 14 million people, almost the half of the Afghan population in the coming years; and counter-narcotics, a cross-cutting issue which both the Afghan government and international community recognize the need to address in a holistic approach. Through DCI Assistance, the EU's comprehensive engagement combines alternative livelihoods, health care, legal restrictions and border control (BOMNAF project), regional UNODC program support as well as political regional cooperation (Heart of Asia CBM led by Russia), as will be enshrined in the CAPD.
- Finally, we are encouraging the government and civil society to eliminate violence against women, challenge early and forced marriages, and provide safe shelter for those in need. We are also actively pursuing and monitoring the legislative work on Human rights and Women's' rights and strongly support the work of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission.

Concluding remarks

- As the Special Representative for the EU in Afghanistan for 3 years, I have witnessed the progress that we collectively achieved in support of Afghanistan. The war may end by the end of 2014. However, the root causes of the conflict: extremism, radicalism, illiteracy and poverty might persist;
- We all have to draw lessons from the past. We can not afford to repeat the mistakes of 1992. We have to demonstrate staying power of continued support for Afghanistan through the transformation decade. We will have to learn to do more for less. To do it with the greater support of regional neighbors, led with confidence and vision by the Afghans. Our Afghan partners must take their commitments much more seriously. There is no more room for complacency.
- The exceptional support pledged in Chicago and Tokyo will only be continued if the presidential elections in 2014 are conducted in an inclusive and consultative manner and produce a legitimate outcome, and if genuine steps are undertaken to deal with corruption, justice and human rights, especially to ensure the rights of women are improved, and a conducive environment for economic development and revenue generation are created.

- In this broad dialogue, we should play a constructive role. If we get overly frustrated with lack of performance, civilian assistance will decrease rapidly. However, in order to maintain the stability achieved at such a high price, funding to ANSF is likely to be maintained.
- The EU commitment to Afghanistan is long-term. We look forward to the swift completion of the negotiations on the Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development (CAPD) between Afghanistan and the EU in the course of this year;
- Based on our historic experience, we should continue to support and inspire reconciliation. We should focus on strengthening capacity building, the rule of law and training to civilian policing, as well as continue support to agricultural development and the creation of conducive environment for investment (local and international) in the promising mining sector. We need to cement the gains achieved in human rights and women's rights (especially children and elimination of violence against women). In doing so, as Transition advances and the PRTs are closing down, we have to make use of all opportunities to ensure the greater cohesion among MS to pool resources together to create a more effective and long lasting international intervention.
- The EU is currently giving more than one billion Euros in development assistance to Afghanistan a year. And we will continue to prioritize and enhance support to Afghanistan in the 'decade of transformation'.