



2020 AFGHANISTAN CONFERENCE AND THE PATH TO PEACE, PROSPERITY AND SELF-RELIANCE

KABUL, 15 September 2020 -The 2020 Afghanistan Conference scheduled for 23-24 November 2020 in Geneva is a milestone event in Afghanistan's journey to peace, prosperity and self-reliance.

The quadrennial ministerial level pledging conference is jointly organized by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Government of Finland and the United Nations.

The aim of the conference is to renew international and Afghan commitments to the development and stability of Afghanistan, to agree to joint development goals for 2021-24 and to coordinate development cooperation regarding financial support for Afghanistan.

The conference takes place at a historic moment. The commencement of Afghanistan Peace Negotiations affords new opportunities for development. Strengthened partnership and sustained international support are pivotal as Afghanistan and the Afghan people take on the challenging task of building and sustaining peace after four decades of war and suffering.

"Afghanistan is at a critical juncture. On peace, we have moved from desirability to feasibility and credibility due, largely, to the sacrifices made by the Afghan people and the unmatched confidence building measures taken by the Afghan government. When we look into the future, we must remain united in our vision and ambition to realize a progressive, prosperous, democratic, free and stable Afghanistan in peace with itself, its neighbors and the world. On development, while maintaining emphasis on high-level planning, the focus must shift to delivery and implementation. The Afghan government and its international development partners must work together on a vision for demonstrable reduction in poverty that is realistic and well-targeted. Investment in peace and development must provide sufficient guarantees for gender equity, protection of human rights, women's rights and the rights of minorities as well as democratic principles. The Republic is a true embodiment of Afghanistan's diversity and must be strengthened. Corruption, which drains Afghanistan's valuable resources and interrupts the process of realizing self-reliance, must be fought in all its forms," said Afghanistan's Acting Minister of Finance, H.E. Abdul Hadi Arghandiwal.

"For the first time in decades there is a real chance for peace. Finland stands firmly with other development partners in supporting Afghanistan and the Afghan people towards sustainable development, prosperity and a lasting peace. Inclusivity and women's meaningful participation at all stages of the peace process are vital for peace and development," states Pekka Haavisto, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Progress since 2001 has improved the political, social and economic outlook in Afghanistan. Yet decisive efforts are required for Afghanistan to reach its potential as a stable, peaceful and self-reliant society during the last years of its Transformation Decade (2015-2024).

"This is a critical moment for Afghanistan, as it embarks upon Afghanistan Peace Negotiations to end the decades-long conflict. I hope the international community uses this occasion in Geneva to reaffirm its steadfast support to Afghanistan's development, in parallel with the peace process. The UN is committed to working with the Afghan Government, Finland, and the donor community to deliver the best possible outcome for the benefit of all Afghans," said Deborah Lyons, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan.

"Finland is looking forward to co-hosting the pledging conference together with the Government of Afghanistan and the UN. Solving the complex challenges in Afghanistan





require joint efforts and long-term commitment from Afghanistan and the international community. Together with our partners we are committed to reshaping the aid architecture while ensuring that it will preserve the progress achieved over the past decades and strengthen the further realization of human rights and democratic principles,” said Ville Skinnari, Finland’s Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade.

The event will take place at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, in a hybrid format where delegates may also participate virtually. More than 70 countries, international organizations and Afghan Government officials, as well as civil society representatives are expected to participate in the conference.

In view of ongoing travel and gathering restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, further information about Conference logistics and the agenda will be made available closer to the date of the event.

Media accreditation to the Conference will start in late October. More information on the format of media events will be announced in due course.

Questions on technical preparations for the conference can be directed to the Finnish 2020 Afghanistan Conference Task Force.

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