



ANTI-CORRUPTION REFORMS MUST REMAIN A PRIORITY IN AFGHANISTAN – UN REPORT

KABUL, 18 June 2020 - Sustained and effective efforts in fighting corruption in Afghanistan remain critical for the country's future, finds a new United Nations report released today.

"Anti-corruption efforts and integrity reforms must be key priorities for Afghanistan's leadership, especially so given the country's pressing challenges and opportunities around peace and development," said Deborah Lyons, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan. "Addressing the COVID-19 crisis and building a peaceful, healthy and prosperous Afghanistan requires integrity and accountability – fundamental principles for the future of any nation."

UNAMA's fourth annual anti-corruption report, titled 'Afghanistan's Fight against Corruption: Crucial for Peace and Prosperity,' reviews the progress Afghanistan has made in anti-corruption reform and provides analysis and recommendations to support Afghanistan's institutions in combatting corruption to improve the lives of all citizens who must grapple each day with the issue.

The report describes how anti-corruption reforms slowed in 2019, with fewer legislative and strategic initiatives undertaken to fight corruption than in previous years. The report outlines how Afghanistan's 2017 anti-corruption strategy, which was a temporary policy document, ended without a successor. In addition, the report notes, the institutional gaps left by stalled progress in both strategy and implementation were not filled by the expected establishment of an independent anti-corruption commission.

The report makes several recommendations to Afghanistan's government, recognizing that its previous anti-corruption efforts had yet to positively impact the lives of most Afghans, and concludes that, notwithstanding the many legal and policy reforms that have been undertaken, corruption remains one of the most significant obstacles to Afghanistan's long-term peace and prosperity.

The report also acknowledges notable areas of progress, such as the Anti-Corruption Justice Centre enhancing its ability to prosecute and adjudicate high-level corruption cases.

"Additional progress in all areas of the fight against corruption is crucial, as the international community faces daunting economic challenges that continue to draw attention away from Afghanistan," said Lyons, who is also head of UNAMA. "The upcoming development coordination conference in Geneva is expected to reinvigorate much-needed international support to Afghanistan, but the country needs to make further headway in battling corruption."

The report recommends that the government develop a realistic long-term strategy that builds on past achievements; that the anti-corruption commission be swiftly established; that the law-enforcement capacity dedicated to corruption investigations and related arrests be boosted; that oversight and management of public resources be strengthened; and that justice sector reforms be prioritized by fostering judicial independence.

The report also recommends that the justice sector improve the transparency and accountability of its work and independently adjudicates corruption cases; that the National Assembly collaborate with the executive in anti-corruption reforms while strengthening internal accountability and integrity; and that civil society and the international community support anti-corruption reforms.



The United Nations remains committed to supporting Afghanistan in further implementing its obligations under the UN Convention against Corruption, which Afghanistan ratified in 2008.

The United Nations Convention against Corruption is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument. The Convention's far-reaching approach and the mandatory character of many of its provisions make it a unique tool for developing a comprehensive response to a global problem. The majority of UN Member States are parties to the Convention.

The full UN report on Afghanistan's fight against corruption is available here:

<https://unama.unmissions.org/corruption>.

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UNAMA supports the Afghan people and government to achieve peace and stability. In accordance with its mandate as a political mission, UNAMA backs conflict prevention and resolution, promoting inclusion and social cohesion, as well as strengthening regional cooperation. The Mission supports effective governance, promoting national ownership and accountable institutions that are built on respect for human rights. UNAMA provides 'good offices' and other key services, including diplomatic steps that draw on the organization's independence, impartiality and integrity to prevent disputes from arising, escalating or spreading. The Mission coordinates international support for Afghan development and humanitarian priorities.