

The logo for UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan) features the acronym 'UNAMA' in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font.**United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan**

Strategic Communication and Spokespersons Unit, Kabul, Afghanistan

Press Statement<http://unama.unmissions.org>

UNITED NATIONS URGES TRANSPARENT AND CONSULTATIVE PROCESS IN APPOINTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONERS

KABUL, 2 January 2012 –The United Nations welcomes actions by the Government of Afghanistan and civil society to ensure appropriately qualified commissioners are appointed to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) through a transparent and consultative process, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said today.

The five-year appointment of the nine commissioners of the AIHRC expired on 16 December 2011. Discussions are underway now regarding the appointment of new commissioners.

The Government of Afghanistan has the primary responsibility to preserve the independence, integrity and legitimacy of the AIHRC, including through the appointment of commissioners, in accordance with Afghanistan's laws.

Afghan law requires the Government to uphold international standards of pluralism, transparency, diversity and consultation in the appointment process. Under Article 7 of the Law on the Structure, Duties and Mandate of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, the President of Afghanistan shall appoint commissioners with relevant academic background and experience in the field of human rights, and who are impartial, independent and committed to human rights.

Afghan law is consistent with the Paris Principles on National Human Rights Institutions, which hold that the selection of human rights commissioners should be transparent, include broad consultation, advertise vacancies to maximize the number of potential candidates from a wide range of societal groups, and select members to serve in their individual capacity.

The United Nations and the international community support an inclusive and genuinely consultative appointment process. This will allow the President to appoint qualified commissioners that reflect Afghan society's diversity in ethnicity, religion, language, region and gender and who represent politically and economically disadvantaged groups. The United Nations and the international community stand ready to assist and support an Afghan-led appointment process.

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