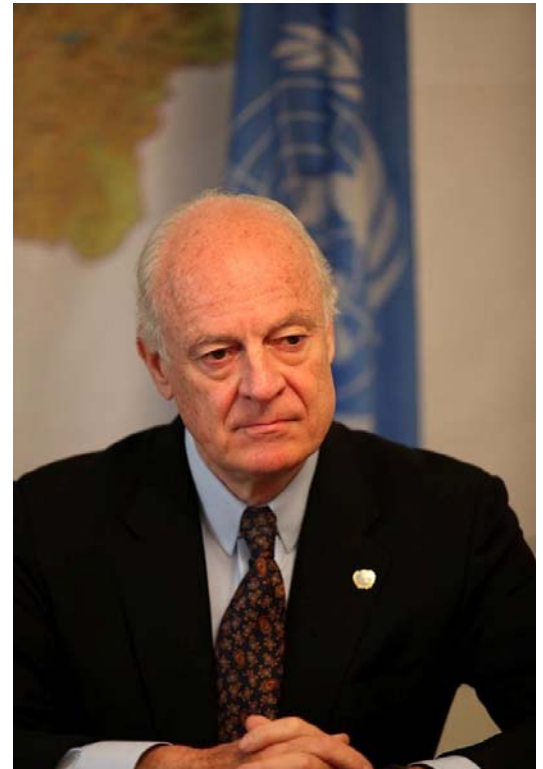


## Statement by UN Special Representative Staffan de Mistura on Kabul suicide attack

**18 May 2010 - The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Afghanistan condemns in the strongest possible terms the attack in Kabul today which reportedly killed tens of Afghan civilians, a number of international troops and left several dozen other Afghan civilians injured.**

"This senseless violence and killing of innocent civilians and those working together with Afghans in bringing stability to this country should be brought to an end," Mr de Mistura said.

The Special Representative offers his condolences to the families of the victims and wishes a speedy recovery to those injured.



### Afghanistan: Top UN envoy speaks out against deadly Kabul attack

**18 May 2010 - The top United Nations official in Afghanistan strongly condemned today's deadly attack in the capital, Kabul, which claimed more than one dozen lives.**

According to media reports, the attack occurred during rush hour when a suicide car bomber attacked a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) convoy.

Afghan civilians and international troops were killed in the blast, which also wounded many others.

"This senseless violence and killing of innocent civilians and those working together with Afghans in bringing stability to this country should be brought to an end," Staffan de Mistura, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, said in a statement.

Earlier this month, he deplored deadly attacks on Government buildings in the country's southwest, which he characterized as a "despicable display of violence."

Gul Makai Wakili, a member of the Provincial Council, along with at least three police officers, were killed in the attacks repelled by Afghan National Police in Zaranj, the capital of Nimroz province, reports said. Four civilians and seven police officers were injured in the incident.



## Nancy Dupree proffers five ways to preserve Afghanistan's rich culture on "International Museum Day"

18 May 2010 - "The country is so rich – put a shovel anywhere and you will come back with something!"

"The country" is, of course, none other than Afghanistan – the crossroads for marauding conquerors from surrounding civilizations since time immemorial.

And eternally hatching ideas on how to get Afghans themselves to appreciate – and preserve – their own rich culture is American historian Nancy Hatch Dupree for whom Kabul has been home for half a century.

In an hour-long interview with UNAMA's Spokespersons Unit for the Heritage edition of UNAMA's quarterly magazine *Afghan Update*, the "grandmother of Afghanistan" unveiled her latest set of proposals to stem, if not stop, the fast deterioration and/or loss of Afghanistan's rich cultural heritage.

This time, recommended are five simple ways to easily preserve at ground level the fast-disappearing heritage of her beloved adopted country.

### Guarding archaeological sites – more guards, higher salaries

Asked what the Government of Afghanistan can do, Ms Dupree first pointed to the lack of guards to protect Afghanistan's several archaeological sites.

"There are so many sites – the country is so rich – put a shovel anywhere and you would come back with something!"

"Down in Gardez, they are huge sites! There are not enough police to put guards on the archaeological sites. They pay them so little so the traffickers bribe them or kill them," noted Ms Dupree.

"Number one, that's a good start," she said.

### Awareness via the educational system

Second, Ms Dupree says heritage awareness and preservation just have to be made part of the educational system.

The one-time educator – having taken over the courses taught in North Carolina by her late husband, archaeologist Prof Louis Dupree – pointed out that Afghanistan's rich heritage has "never been in the education system."

"Awareness of cultural heritage is a big – long, long haul..." she sighed, even as she revealed that she had tried getting the Government to include heritage in the education system.

"Oh, yes. We have been talking and talking. They are revising the curriculum."

"Awareness should start from Grade I," she added as she regaled UNAMA about the books she has been producing for Afghanistan's "new literates."

### Turn archaeological sites into "living sites"

Third, she recommended that instead of being "in the middle of nowhere," archaeological sites should become "part of the community – living sites."

"In their history, nobody really made a point of saying you have to preserve your heritage," noted Ms Dupree, recalling how a museum in Herat "suffered from lack of maintenance, not from looting, rocketing."



And so to her mind, communities should be set up closer and closer to the heritage sites so that the surrounding residents themselves could guard the sites as a matter of course.

### Localize cultural preservation via provincial museums

Ms Dupree's fourth suggestion is the localization of cultural preservation. "I am an advocate of having provincial museums."

Earlier informing the Ministry of Culture about her localization plan, "they shook their heads" and said, "we cannot even run the national museum!"

"So I said, let the people man it. You don't have to run it like other museums. I am not talking about ancient artefacts. And they do not have to be big. Start with your (native implements) and so people recognize that they are producing things that are part of their heritage; and then introduce embroidery from different parts of the country.

"They should be run by the communities. Foreigners cannot save the heritage – it has got to be the Afghans themselves. They have to appreciate it and be willing to preserve it themselves," she stressed.

Ms Dupree said the local governments could initiate the project: "Now we have established Provincial Councils – the bedrock of democracy.

"If they want, they can have a small room as a local museum. I would like to localize the preservation of heritage – but not just pretty objects but (including) carpentry tools."

Ms Dupree's idea of bringing preservation to the doorstep of every Afghan home has its roots in her father's being "one of the pioneers of rural reconstruction," the precursor of what is now dubbed as "countryside development."

"I was brought up on the principles of development. One principle that is talked (about) over and over again is that you don't develop a man's life in just one direction – you have to work on them (health, education, religion) at the same time."

To the international community trooping to Afghanistan to help out, Ms Dupree said: "If we have to go to the basics of development, if we haven't come here knowing this – it is very sad."

"We know it in theory but we do not practice it – one of the main things is sustainability," she stressed.

*Continued on next page...*

# UNAMA NEWS

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan  
Website: <http://unama.unmissions.org>

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Kabul, Afghanistan

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*Continuation:*

## Nancy Dupree proffers five ways to preserve Afghanistan's rich culture on "International Museum Day"



"I have been very lucky. My father was not rich but he never let us worry about money. I had two husbands – Louis, for instance, was very bad about money but there was enough coming in..."

"Now, I spend all my time asking for money and I hate it because it is humiliating. But fundraising is the name of the game – but I would like to be doing much more productive things."

And last – so far – but not the least, Afghanistan would do well to heed Ms Dupree's own philosophy to stop the degradation and looting of the country's rich cultural past: "I don't give up: You don't start – and then stop."

By Aurora Verceles Alambra, UNAMA

## Appeal to donors: Include cultural preservation – and coordinate!

Fifth on her off-the-cuff tips on preserving Afghanistan's heritage sites is for donor countries to include cultural preservation in their menu of supported projects.

"Poor Afghanistan – everybody is stirring the pot but not for Afghanistan's agenda."

"Donors would say, no, that's not in our mandate. But it does not have to cost much. It does not have to be a huge amount."

"Donors have tunnel vision – they are so pre-occupied with life, with critical life-saving projects – they don't see beyond..."

Still on donors, Ms Dupree stressed: "Coordination is the buzzword. Do they coordinate? They've got to coordinate."

As for fund-raising for cultural preservation projects, Ms Dupree expressed exasperation: "This particular strategy is very, very, very exhausting."

"Because I have never paid any attention to money..."

## Kabul celebrates "International Museum Day" today

18 May 2010 - On International Museum Day that is celebrated world-wide today, UNAMA brings you photographs of artefacts that were looted from Afghanistan, subsequently recovered, and now on display at the Kabul Museum.



## A secret weapon in Afghanistan: Agriculture

By *Mohammad Asif Rahimi and Tom Vilsack*

**15 May 2010 - So it was not surprising that during this week's meetings in Washington between US and Afghan officials that agriculture was a principal topic of discussion.**

In Afghanistan, 85 per cent of the population relies on agriculture to earn a living, and strengthening Afghanistan's agricultural sector is a critical element in stabilizing the nation.

But until the agriculture sector can support legitimate crops such as wheat and fruits, the Taliban will continue to prey upon disaffected, out-of-work youth and push the production of poppy.

Unfortunately, poppy production provides little return to the farmers; pomegranates will earn a farmer five times that of poppy on the open market, almonds will earn seven, and grapes will earn eight times as much.

That is why the United States and Afghanistan are working together with a shared strategy to rebuild Afghanistan's once-vibrant agricultural economy. Our efforts are already yielding results in troubled provinces such as Helmand, the heart of Afghan poppy production.

The strategy is fourfold: First, we must increase the productivity of staple crops such as wheat, introduce complementary crops such as soybeans, and improve the yields of cash crops such as horticulture and nuts.

Second, we must protect Afghanistan's natural resources by investing in watershed management, sustainable forestry efforts and soil conservation.

Third, we must redouble our efforts to rebuild the country's agricultural marketing system and return Afghanistan to its once-prominent position as the fruit and nut epicenter of Central Asia.

Fourth, our countries must continue to work together to restructure Afghanistan's Ministry of Agriculture by recruiting competent professionals, especially in the rural areas where extension agents with technical know-how and expertise can make a real difference to farmers and herders.

The possibility of the turnaround we envision is real. International demand for Afghan agriculture is returning.

In Dubai recently, at the region's biggest food and trade expo, Afghanistan's tiny stall was overrun with customers from Europe, Africa and the Middle East with orders for dried fruit and nuts. For the first time, Afghan apples and other fresh fruit are being air freighted to India.

Just recently, a Kabul businessman obtained his certification to begin exporting raisins to Europe. And, in what might be the biggest boon to Afghanistan's agricultural economy thus far, the nation's first concentrated juice factory opened near Kabul in October 2009, selling out its entire production for 2010 in just six weeks. The plant employs hundreds of Afghans and is planning an expansion so it can continue to ship its products across the globe. Other similar facilities are being planned across the country.

Furthermore, the US and Afghan governments are working with Afghan farmers to introduce new production and post-production technologies, while improving existing crops with enhanced cultivation and seed varieties. American support is helping to develop Afghan grading, packaging and sanitary methods per international standards. And together, we are building the infrastructure and opening the transportation routes necessary to get Afghan grains, fruits and nuts to consumers.

The Afghan Ministry of Agriculture also needs help to build research and agricultural extension services — from satellite mapping to experts standing in a field teaching farmers. This is an area where USDA's assistance is crucial. USDA has contributed more than 100 highly skilled individuals to this effort — foresters, soil and plant scientists, marketing specialists, and water and rangeland specialists — all with a special ability to share their knowledge through demonstration.

USDA is partnering with the US Army National Guard, the State Department, the US Agency for International Development, other US federal agencies and, most important, Afghans, to solve complex agricultural issues.

Moreover, the Afghan government has reorganized its Cabinet so that ministries focused on solving the problems facing its rural communities are teamed together: agriculture, electricity, water, construction and counternarcotics.

For 85 per cent of the Afghan people, the path to a better job and life for their family is likely to pass through a farm. That is why, despite the challenges that certainly lie ahead, we are committed to building a better life for the Afghan people by working together to rebuild its once-vibrant agricultural economy.

***Tom Vilsack is the United States Secretary of Agriculture, and Mohammad Asif Rahimi is the Afghan Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and***



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## UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon meets DSRSG Kobler

17 May 2010 - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (right) meets with Martin Kobler, his Deputy Special Representative (Political) for Afghanistan.

Mr Kobler is one of the two deputy heads of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

He is responsible for political issues, including electoral and parliamentary matters, as well as questions relating to peace and stability, security-sector reform and human rights.

Photo: Mark Garten (UN).

## UN helps rush in aid to thousands of flood victims

14 May 2010 - The United Nations is helping Afghanistan rush in emergency food and non-food aid for thousands of people hit by floods earlier this month, particularly in the three worst-affected western provinces.

Within hours of the floods striking the provinces of Herat, Ghor and Badghis, where at least 70 people have died, hundreds of houses have been destroyed and thousands of livestock have perished, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) teamed up with the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) to bring in children's kits, jerry cans, blankets, biscuits, tarpaulin packs and tents.

The remote Bala-Morqhab district of Badghis province, one of the worst-affected areas, is inaccessible to both Government and humanitarian agencies, and community elders led by UNAMA and ANDMA are now assessing how to deliver aid there.

Some 20 provinces in all have been hit by flooding and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) is providing food to 5,800 families as assessment reports continue to be received.

At least 120 people have died overall and 10,000 homes have been damaged or destroyed, nearly a quarter of them in Ghor province alone, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported.

Assessments have yet to be completed in Herat and Badghis.

With significant damage to infrastructure and livelihoods, road clearance, rehabilitation of agricultural land and air access are among priorities that need to be addressed, OCHA said in its latest update, citing an ANDMA briefing.

In Faryab province in the north, 2,082 houses have been destroyed and 678 houses partially damaged, while in the north-eastern province of Baghlan nearly 2,000 houses have been destroyed or partially damaged.



# UNAMA

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan