

UNAMA**United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan**

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Press Statement<http://unama.unmissions.org>**MISTREATMENT OF CONFLICT-RELATED DETAINEES IN NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF SECURITY AND AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE FACILITIES REQUIRES ACCOUNTABILITY AND REFORM**

KABUL, 10 OCTOBER 2011: UNAMA today released a report that documents the torture and mistreatment of detainees in a number of detention facilities of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) and Afghan National Police (ANP) across the country. UNAMA is committed to assisting the Afghan Government and people attain the highest standards of human rights and its detention observation programme is a crucial aspect of this work.

UNAMA's report, the result of extensive interviews from October 2010 to August 2011 of 379 detainees at 47 facilities in 22 provinces, and of thorough analysis that concluded in September 2011, found the use of interrogation techniques that constitute torture under international law and crimes under Afghan law, as well as other forms of mistreatment. The report includes recommendations to the National Directorate of Security, the Ministry of Interior (Mol), the Government of Afghanistan, Afghan judicial institutions and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

In undertaking this study, using rigorous methodology and exacting standards of verification, UNAMA received the full cooperation of NDS and Mol which provided access to NDS and Mol facilities. The study found that almost half (125 or 46 per cent) of the 273 conflict-related detainees UNAMA interviewed who had been held by NDS experienced torture, as defined under international law, and 41 (35 per cent) of the 117 detainees held by the ANP experienced treatment that constituted torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

"UNAMA's findings indicate that mistreatment is not an institutional or Government policy," said Staffan de Mistura, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan. "The fact that the NDS and Mol cooperated with UNAMA's detention observation programme suggests that reform is both possible and desired as does the Government's announced remedial actions to end these abusive practices. UNAMA welcomes the Government's timely attention to this issue and steps taken to put in place corrective and preventive measures."

The Afghan authorities, following UNAMA's presentation of its early findings to them, launched their own investigations and initiated remedial action, which are reflected in their detailed response annexed to UNAMA's report. NDS and Mol have stated clearly they have an action plan to address these concerns, started investigations, reassigned personnel in the case of NDS, and have further indicated that responsible individuals will be suspended from their positions and in serious cases, prosecuted.

In early September, ISAF promptly stopped transferring detainees to 16 installations identified as facilities where UNAMA found compelling evidence of torture and ill-treatment by NDS and ANP officials, and has begun implementing a six-part plan of remedial measures prior to resuming such transfers.

“Torture is one of the most serious human rights violations under international law, a crime under Afghan law, and strictly prohibited under both laws,” said Georgette Gagnon, Director of Human Rights for UNAMA. “Accountability for torture demands prosecutions and the taking of all necessary measures by Afghan authorities to prevent and end such acts in the future.”

UNAMA expects the report’s findings to serve as a catalyst to reforms in the judiciary, prosecution and law enforcement sectors. UNAMA continues to monitor the treatment of detainees and is working closely with Afghan authorities to bring positive change.

The full report and the response from the Government of Afghanistan are available on the UNAMA website – <http://unama.unmissions.org>