

The header banner features the UNAMA logo in large blue letters, followed by the full name of the mission and its communication unit. A dark blue wave-like graphic separates the header from the main text. The UN logo is faintly visible in the background on the right side.

UNAMA

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

Strategic Communication and Spokespersons Unit, Kabul, Afghanistan

Press Statement

<http://unama.unmissions.org>

**UNAMA URGES DIALOGUE TO INCREASE
PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN AFGHANISTAN**

KABUL, 25 February 2013 – The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) acknowledges the Taliban’s “Open Letter”, publicly issued on 22 February 2013, in reaction to UNAMA’s *Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict for 2012* (full report on UNAMA website: <http://unama.unmissions.org>).

UNAMA welcomes the Taliban statement as an invitation to engage in meaningful dialogue on human rights and humanitarian issues for the benefit of all people of Afghanistan. This dialogue should also focus on the treatment of civilians in armed conflict in conformity with international humanitarian law, on verification of civilian casualty incidents regardless of their source, and on the treatment of detainees.

UNAMA encourages the Taliban to review the full details of its report which provides answers to some of the points raised in their “Open Letter”.

UNAMA confirms its openness and readiness to engage in this dialogue in an effort to increase the protection of civilians and respect for human rights throughout the country, which has for so long been tragically affected by armed conflict.

END.

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Kabul, Afghanistan

All media contact details are online at: <http://unama.unmissions.org>