

**TRANSCRIPT****Closing remarks delivered by the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Deborah Lyons at Afghanistan 2020 Conference.**

[check against delivery]

Geneva, 24 November 2020

Minister Skinnari, Ministers Atmar and Arghandhiwal, Excellencies,

Thank you very much and thank you to my co-chairs for the excellent cooperation throughout the preparations for this conference. Thank you again to the great team here at the Palais for the excellent support and your hospitality in these very special times.

I join my co-chairs in expressing my deep appreciation for the commitment we heard today for the Afghan people. Today's conference is a true expression of the international community's steadfast support to Afghanistan, with very significant financial pledges for the critical period ahead. The predictability of funding is essential as the country enters the sensitive stage of peace negotiations, faces manifold security challenges and battles the deep socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the completion of the Afghanistan Partnership Framework, Afghanistan and the international community have entered into a new phase of their longstanding partnership. This new cooperation will be shaped by conditionality and stronger review mechanisms. This is done with the aim to make sure that we deliver better results for the Afghan people. In addition, the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework provides a clear vision and strategy for the next five years.

Finally, today we have also adopted a very strong communiqué calling for an immediate, permanent and comprehensive ceasefire. We recognized the importance of sustainable peace through an Afghan-led and owned peace process with the participation of women, youth, ethnic, religious and other minorities. We renewed our partnership to strengthen a sovereign, unified, democratic and peaceful Afghanistan on its path towards prosperity and self-reliance for the benefit of all Afghans. I particularly appreciate your commitment to the United Nations and UNAMA's role in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Excellencies,

We have achieved a lot today, and we can rightly be proud and celebrate tonight. But tomorrow the hard work of implementation will start. Just a year from now we will have done our first assessment based on the Afghanistan Partnership Framework Principles. We set a foundation but there's a lot of hard work ahead.



The challenges Afghanistan faces are truly daunting. But with historic Afghan peace talks ongoing, the commitment of the regional countries and steadfast financial support from the international community, this is also a time of opportunity for unprecedented change and peace.

I look forward to working with all of you in the coming months and years. Today was a very good step forward. And we took it together.

* * *

UNAMA is mandated to support the Afghan Government and the people of Afghanistan as a political mission that provides 'good offices' among other key services. 'Good offices' are diplomatic steps the UN takes publicly and in private, drawing on its independence, impartiality and integrity, to prevent international disputes from arising, escalating or spreading. UNAMA assists the process of peace and reconciliation; monitors and promotes human rights, including the protection of civilians in armed conflict; promotes good governance; and encourages regional cooperation. The Mission also promotes coherent development support by the international community.