



**JOINT COORDINATION AND MONITORING BOARD
INAUGURAL MEETING PROCEEDINGS
30 APRIL 2006**



INAUGURATION CEREMONY IN THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE

30 April 2006 saw the first meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board for the Afghanistan Compact. The role of the JCMB is to resolve strategic issues and provide high-level political support for the Compact's implementation. Its lifespan is five years till March 2011 (the end of Afghan year 1389), in line with the lifespan of the Compact.

The inaugural meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) was held at the Presidential Palace in Kabul with all 28 members represented. It was preceded by a luncheon for members hosted by the President of Afghanistan. In his inaugural speech, the President highlighted the pilot character of the Afghanistan Compact and the JCMB, and referred to the resilience and unfailing determination of the Afghan people as well as the generous support of the international community as key to the success so far. He noted that the JCMB would be crucial for ensuring unity in the joint efforts of the Government of Afghanistan and the International Community while emphasizing Afghan ownership in the process. He also pointed to the heavy burden of responsibility and accountability on the JCMB and expressed his understanding that the JCMB has been set up 'to get things done' for the welfare of the people in Afghanistan.

The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), Tom Koenigs, defined the JCMB as a political body in the sense that it will resolve strategic issues, provide strategic advice and sustain high level political support to the Afghanistan Compact. He stressed that the Board must push and to pull, give advice and support, coordinate efforts and monitor progress as well as shortcomings to achieve each and every of the many benchmarks in time. The Board stands for the determination of the International Community and the Government of Afghanistan alike to collaboratively realize the goals set forth in the Afghanistan Compact.

FIRST JCMB MEETING AT THE SEDARAT

The meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board was opened by the two Co-Chairs, who welcomed the 28 member body established under the Afghanistan Compact to oversee and monitor the implementation of the high-level benchmarks.

Mr Tom Koenigs (SRSG) welcomed the inauguration of the JCMB and noted the political commitment of both the Afghanistan Government and the international community to work jointly towards the successful implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. He highlighted that the international community and the Afghanistan government had acknowledged the need for unified, coordinated and harmonized action – by providing a high-level political coordination and decision making mechanism – the JCMB. By committing to the principles of the Paris declaration on Aid Effectiveness, these efforts will help strengthen Afghan ownership. The JCMB would meet to a) ensure overall strategic coordination b) provide advice on significant issues and c) report to the President of Afghanistan, the National Assembly, the UN Secretary General, the donors and the public. The JCMB will work towards problem-solving on issues that are not resolved under other coordinating structures such as the various ANDS working groups. He stressed the need to avoid duplication and ensure that the coordinating mechanisms are effectively used. He proposed that the clock for achieving the Compact benchmarks could start from the Afghan New Year (21 March 2006) and not the London Conference of 1 February 2006 which was accepted by the members of the Board.

Professor Nadiri (Co-Chair) started by noting the considerable effort that had gone into the ground-breaking international agreement reached in London and the preparation of a comprehensive national development strategy. Concrete results were now needed, and this opportunity represented the best hope for Afghanistan to escape poverty and terrorism. First he highlighted the need for the JCMB to be ambitious and result-oriented. Second, the JCMB was a high-level political forum – not a technical committee: ‘use the forum wisely and collegially for the best aspiration for Afghanistan’. Third, he noted the breadth of the Compact and ANDS: the JCMB should address security, political and economic issues, as well as cross-cutting issues, not shy away from politically sensitive challenges. Fourth, he highlighted the importance of ensuring that other processes do not hinder Afghanistan’s development. Fifth, he noted the importance of using this forum to strengthen the leadership of the Afghan government. Sixth, he stressed the importance of aligning the strategies and resources to achieve the benchmarks. Professor Nadiri proposed that a) since lack of capacity in the government was a key issue, it should therefore be included as an additional cross-cutting issue for the ANDS; b) the reform of the Consultative Groups for the 8 sectors and 6 crosscutting sectors so that the donors and ministries can effectively support each other and c) the interim-ANDS has to be developed into a full ANDS – priority was developing the full ANDS, refine the annual operational benchmarks, and develop clear indicators of progress, which will be completed in the next 20 months. The reason for this timetable was to fulfill the requirements of the PRSP that is highly consultative and reliant on statistics yet to be collected. This process has to speed up and momentum maintained. The JCMB process

was not merely a set of ad-hoc meetings but a dynamic process for actively resolving conflicts that may arise during the process of the implementation of the Compact.

The opening statements were followed by a discussion on the Terms of Reference (TOR) and a presentation made by representatives of the Afghan Government (Director ANDS). The TOR defining the overall goals of the JCMB as well as working procedures were adopted taking note of minor changes. The presentation summarized the activities to date by the ANDS Working Group to streamline efforts towards the Afghanistan Compact by the government and the international community. It outlined the planned calendar of activities for the monitoring and implementation of high-level benchmarks, as well as costing and prioritization exercises. The presentation detailed the statistical work to be completed for establishing the baselines for various benchmarks, as well as other capacity building efforts needed towards achieving the Compact. The various data sources need to be harmonized especially for monitoring purposes.

Generally, the afternoon's first working meeting of the JCMB at the Sedarat was marked by the same spirit of cooperation and collegiality that characterized the London Conference. Members expressed their optimism about and commitment to the Afghanistan Compact, which was described by Afghan government representatives as a unique mechanism for cooperation between a national government and the international community. Members did describe some challenges in the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, in particular the ambitious benchmarks. However, these comments were offered as a reason to commit more fully to the JCMB. Consensus was easily reached on the documents and positions presented during the meeting.

Concluding the session, the Co-Chairs outlined the schedule of meetings for the JCMB as follows: 30 July 2006, 5 November 2006 and 4 February 2007.