

Declaration of the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan

Issued Under the Authority of the Three Co-chairs

The President of the French Republic,
The President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan,
The Secretary-General of the United Nations



Paris, 12 June 2008

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community met today in Paris to reaffirm their long-term partnership to serve the people of Afghanistan, their security, prosperity and human rights.

This conference marks a new commitment to work more closely together under Afghan leadership to support the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). We reaffirm that the Afghanistan Compact remains the agreed basis for our work. We will give priority to strengthening institutions and economic growth, particularly in agriculture and energy. By focusing on these sectors, we will also accelerate progress in areas where important achievements have already been made. The Afghan Government has committed itself to pursuing political and economic reform. The international community has agreed to provide increased resources and to use them in a more effective way. We all commit ourselves to work in a more coordinated way.

We welcome the Review of the Afghanistan Compact prepared by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board co-chairs, which underlines the significant progress that has been made, most notably in health and education, in infrastructure and economic growth, as well as in building stronger Afghan national security forces. However, it also shows that daunting challenges remain, especially in the areas of rule of law and law enforcement, government capacity, development, private sector growth, and the personal security of all Afghan citizens. We endorse its substantive conclusions.

We welcome the commitments made to ensure the security and stability of Afghanistan, reaffirmed most recently at the Bucharest summit.

Today we have emphasized the following key elements that will be essential for the security and prosperity of the Afghan people:

To strengthen democracy in Afghanistan: We underlined the importance of the holding of elections in 2009 and 2010 as a crucial step to consolidate democracy for all Afghans. The international community pledged its strong support to help make the elections free, fair, and secure.



To support the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) in order to give the Afghan people a better future: This strategy, which was presented to us today, will be our roadmap for joint action over the next five years and sets our shared priorities. We will align our efforts behind the financing and implementation of the ANDS in order to achieve the objectives agreed in the Afghanistan Compact. We have agreed that to be successful the ANDS must have a substantial impact in every district and village throughout Afghanistan.

To stimulate investment in infrastructure, especially in the agriculture and energy sectors: The international community welcomed the determination of the Afghan Government to give priority to the agriculture, irrigation and energy sectors, while continuing support for roads, education and health. We promised to support efforts to expand agricultural production and to extend rural development, as well as to invest in larger scale power generation, transmission, and distribution, in order to stimulate Afghanistan's economic development and generate employment. We agreed to continue to work towards food security for all Afghans and to respond to current food shortages.

To create opportunities for Afghans through private sector growth: The Afghan Government committed itself to support private sector growth, including in the sectors mentioned above. It also committed itself to improve revenue collection and to create a legislative and regulatory environment that will attract investment and generate employment. The Afghan Government and the international community agreed to work together to promote freer trade that will benefit countries in the region, based on mutual friendship and trust, and adherence to international obligations.

To strengthen Afghan government institutions and improve delivery of services to all Afghans: In order to ensure that the progress achieved during the past six years is sustained, the Afghan Government agreed to take action to increase trust in government by improving public administration, local governance, justice, police and other law enforcement institutions. In this context, it committed itself to ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit. In support of these efforts, the international community agreed to increase support for strengthening state institutions at the national and sub-national level, including through larger scale civil service capacity-building.

To improve aid effectiveness and ensure the benefits of development are tangible for every Afghan: The international community agreed to provide increased, more predictable, transparent and accountable assistance. They agreed that all their development assistance would be delivered in a more coordinated way. It will be increasingly channeled through the national budget as strengthened, and accountable government institutions acquire greater capacity for management. The international community also committed itself to providing aid in a way that promotes local procurement and capacity-building. We agreed that the benefits of development must reach all provinces equitably. We also agreed to focus on state building efforts and avoid parallel structures.



To combat corruption: The Afghan government reaffirmed its commitment to intensify actions to combat corruption and to take concrete steps to that effect. The international community will support such actions. The Afghan Government and international community will undertake professional audits, including joint audits, of programmes financed through the core and external budgets, and will strengthen government capacity for audit and financial accountability.

To intensify counter-narcotics efforts: We expressed our concern that drug production and trafficking networks continue to threaten Afghan development, particularly in a few provinces. At the same time we welcomed the increased number of poppy-free provinces. We must ensure that these provinces receive the support required to sustain this achievement. The Afghan Government committed itself to taking more effective measures to counter the production and trade of illicit narcotics. The international community committed itself to provide coordinated practical assistance and other resources to support Government plans and efforts, especially alternative livelihood programmes.

To ensure greater civil society participation in the nation-building process: The international community welcomed the strong commitment of the Afghan Government to continue a productive dialogue with civil society and communities, and to reach out to disaffected groups to promote peace and participation of the people in shaping a democratic and pluralistic Islamic society.

To promote respect for human rights for all Afghans: We noted the vital importance for the protection of human rights of establishing the rule of law. We committed to support the implementation of the National Action Plan for Women. In particular, we emphasized the continuing need to ensure respect for International Humanitarian Law. As reaffirmed recently in Bucharest, we will continue to ensure that every measure is taken to avoid civilian casualties.

To strengthen regional cooperation: We highlighted the importance of regional cooperation on political, economic and security matters. We agreed that Afghanistan's neighbouring countries have an essential role to play in supporting Afghan Government efforts to build a stable Afghanistan with secure borders.

We underlined the expanded role of the Special Representative of the Secretary General and UNAMA in leading all aspects of coordination and committed ourselves to making full use of this role both with regards to coordination of international efforts and in coordination between the Afghan Government and the international community.

Today in Paris, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community have made a commitment to a strengthened partnership, based on Afghan leadership, on a set of agreed priorities, and on mutual obligations. We have reaffirmed our determination to fulfill the vision of a democratic, peaceful, pluralistic, and prosperous state based on the principles of Islam, as set out in the Bonn Agreement in 2001 and in the Afghanistan Compact of 2006.

