



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Joint Statement of the Afghanistan-UK Joint Commission

Kabul – 6 November 2013

1. The Governments of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United Kingdom held the second meeting of the Afghanistan-UK Joint Commission on 6 November 2013 in Kabul. The meeting was chaired jointly by Afghanistan's Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Ershad Ahmadi and the Senior Minister of State at the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Baroness Sayeeda Warsi.
2. The two sides reaffirmed the political importance for both Governments of the Enduring Strategic Partnership, signed by President Karzai and Prime Minister Cameron on 28 January 2012, and undertook to strengthen it in the years to come. The Ministers emphasised that a peaceful, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan was in the interests of both countries and the region, and underlined the determination of the Afghan people to uphold their historic gains in all areas since 2001, particularly in establishing democratic institutions, strengthened governance, education, health, human rights, infrastructure, and economic development.
3. The two sides recalled the significance and success of the recent visit of H.E. President Hamid Karzai to the UK. In this context, Deputy Foreign Minister Ahmadi welcomed the role that the UK has played in facilitating Trilateral discussions with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, most recently at the meeting between President Karzai, Prime Minister Cameron and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in London on 29 October 2013, in order to advance regional peace, stability and prosperity.
4. The two sides noted the Afghan authorities' substantial and ongoing preparations for the holding of Presidential and Provincial Council elections on 5 April 2014 and stressed the importance of a credible, transparent and inclusive electoral process for the future of Afghanistan.
5. Deputy Minister Ahmadi recognised the professionalism and sacrifice of the UK's Armed Forces in Afghanistan and welcomed the UK's investment in training and mentoring the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), including through the newly-opened UK-led Afghan National Army Officer Academy, and UK support for the Afghan police. Deputy Foreign Minister Ahmadi thanked the UK for the provision of training to the Afghan security officials in the UK institutions.

6. The two sides commended the progress made by the ANSF in assuming security responsibility across the country, as part of the overall assumption of responsibility by Afghanistan from the international community.
7. The two sides recalled the long-term commitments made by the International Community at the Chicago and Tokyo Summit, which will help safeguard Afghanistan's future security and development. On security, Baroness Warsi reaffirmed the UK's commitment to contribute £70m a year towards the funding of the ANSF. On development, she reaffirmed the UK's commitment to maintain its development funding at £178m a year until 2017. They underlined the need to implement fully the Mutual Accountability Framework agreed in Tokyo. Baroness Warsi reaffirmed the UK's commitment to its Tokyo targets of channelling 50 percent of its development aid through the Afghan budget and aligning 80 percent of the UK's development aid with Afghanistan's National Priority Programmes. Deputy Foreign Minister Ahmadi reaffirmed Afghanistan's commitment to implement the reforms agreed under the TMAF. In this regard, the government noted the progress achieved in the areas of election, budget transparency and steady progress towards World Trade Organisation accession. The two sides noted ongoing efforts to ensure implementation of the TMAF commitments in full and looked forward to the 2014 Ministerial meeting, which the UK and Afghan Governments will co-chair.
8. The two sides agreed to work together to support Afghanistan's economic development and progress towards fiscal self-reliance. They noted the importance of attracting foreign investment and developing a vibrant private sector especially in sectors such as mining, agriculture and agro-business. The Afghan Government recommitted to ensuring International Monetary Fund's Programme remains on track, including meeting targets for revenue collection and enacting structural reforms. The two sides also acknowledged the improvements achieved in the public finance management system, as assessed by the World Bank PEFA report. The two sides also emphasised the important role of anti-corruption and aid effectiveness efforts.
9. Baroness Warsi welcomed the agreement by the Afghan Cabinet of important legislation on banking, mining and VAT; and looked forward to these being approved by Parliament.
10. Deputy Minister Ahmadi outlined the Afghan Government's efforts, through the High Peace Council, to bring about lasting peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan. Deputy Foreign Minister Ahmadi welcomed the UK's strong support for the Afghan peace and reconciliation process, and thanked Baroness Warsi for the UK's contributions of over \$16 million to the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme since its inception.
11. The two sides noted the important role that regional co-operation could play in underpinning peace and prosperity in Afghanistan and the region. They welcomed the progress made under the Istanbul Process since its launch in November 2011, and

most recently the endorsement of six Confidence Building Measures which are designed to strengthen confidence and result-oriented cooperation among countries of the Heart of Asia region. Baroness Warsi reiterated the UK's support for this important regional process. Deputy Foreign Minister Ahmadi welcomed and expressed appreciation for the UK's support, particularly for the Counter-Terrorism and Commerce Trade and Investment Confidence Building Measures.

12. The two sides also reviewed the extensive co-operation between the UK and Afghanistan in the areas of culture, education, media and the arts.
13. The two sides were pleased to announce the entry into force of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on tax concerning Tax and Customs provisions applicable to UK-funded development projects, and their intention to conclude a separate MoU between the British Embassy and the Institute of Diplomacy of the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
14. The next meeting of the Joint Commission will take place in 2014.