



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

12 April 2011

Excellency,

I wish to thank you for your letter dated 22 March 2011, co-signed by General Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank, Mr. Tom Koenigs, Lord Mark Malloch-Brown, Mr. David Miliband, Lord Robertson of Port Ellen and Mr. Francesc Vendrell, sent on the occasion of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1974 (2011).

As you are aware, I have long underscored the need for a political solution to the current conflict in Afghanistan. The United Nations has been in the forefront of advocating for inclusive dialogue, even long before such a position was accepted by the major stakeholders supporting it. I thus welcome your thoughtful comments, pointing out important issues that are helpful to advance the peace process.

It is important to recognize that, in order to be sustainable, the political process should be Afghan-led and Afghan-based, in line with the mutual commitments made by the Government of Afghanistan and the international community at the London and Kabul conferences in 2010. The Afghan Government has demonstrated leadership in promoting an intra-Afghan dialogue and this momentum needs to be maintained. The holding of the National Consultative Peace Jirga in June 2010 and the establishment of the High Peace Council in September 2010 created first a broad understanding and then the mechanism for such a process. The United Nations is supporting the High Peace Council substantively and logistically. At the same time, my Special Representative, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, is engaged in a regional dialogue to support a peace process.

His Excellency  
Dr. Robert D. Finn  
Former United States Ambassador to Afghanistan  
Washington

I am encouraged by the growing consensus amongst international and regional actors that there is no purely military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. It is equally crucial that there be unity of purpose and continued support by all relevant stakeholders for the articulation of a clear vision and strategy by the Afghans. This is a precondition to securing a comprehensive settlement. In my discussions with world leaders, I continue to work towards strengthening such unity of purpose and support.

The United Nations remains committed to playing its part in achieving these goals and will continue to support Afghanistan towards achieving the peaceful coexistence of all segments of its society.

I have addressed a similar letter to the co-signatories of your letter.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



BAN/Ki-moon

**The Secretary-General's response to the letter sent by Dr. Robert Finn and others on the need for an internationally-backed process in Afghanistan**

1. H.E. Dr. Robert D. Finn, Former US Ambassador to Afghanistan
2. H.E. General Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank, Former Chief of the UK Defence Staff
3. Mr. Tom Koenigs, SG's Former Special Representative on Afghanistan
4. H.E. Lord Mark Malloch-Brown, Former UK Foreign Office Minister
5. Mr. David Miliband, Former UK Foreign Secretary
6. H.E. Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, Former NATO SG and UK Defence Secretary
7. Mr. Francesc Vendrell, SG's former Personal Representative on Afghanistan and EU Special Representative for Afghanistan

Drafter: DPKO

Proofread by: KG/SA

Approved by: 

Date: 12 April 2011

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