



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

18 May 2012

Excellency,


I would like to thank you for your letter of 12 March 2012, inviting me to attend the historic gathering of Heart of Asia countries at the Kabul Ministerial Conference on 14 June 2012.

Through my Special Representative in Afghanistan, Mr. Ján Kubiš, I have closely followed developments on the Istanbul Process since its inception in November of last year. I wish to congratulate Afghanistan for its excellent work in preparing the upcoming Ministerial Conference in Kabul, and maintaining the momentum for this important initiative. In particular, I note progress on the concept paper proposing specific confidence-building measures. I fully agree that the time is ripe to develop and undertake practical and tangible initiatives to increase prosperity and security throughout the region. I am also encouraged by the willingness of regional partners to take growing ownership and responsibility for cooperation and joint action.

While I regret to inform you that I will be unable to attend the Kabul Ministerial Conference, given the importance of the event, I have asked the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, to attend on my behalf. I would also be honoured to deliver a brief video address to this important gathering, should this be agreeable to you and technically feasible. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan stands ready to provide any available assistance in this regard.

I wish to take this opportunity to assure you of my strong commitment to continue to rally international support for lasting peace in Afghanistan and prosperity for its people.

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


BAN Ki-moon

His Excellency
Mr. Zalmay Rassoul
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Kabul

Letter to H.E. Mr. Rassoul
Drafted by: DPKO
Reviewed by: ABP, JA
Authorized by:

18/05/2012 