

United Nations



Nations Unies

Executive Office of the Secretary-General
Cabinet du Secrétaire général

To: DSG

Attached for approval is the draft report of the SG on UNAMA. The report, prepared by the Mission and DPKO in consultation with all relevant departments, is due to be issued on 12 December. The report contains some 7,800 words. The SC debate on Afghanistan is tentatively scheduled for 19 December.

The report provides an update on the situation in Afghanistan since the last report (of 13 September 2012) and presents key political and security developments, as well as progress and challenges related to the Kabul process and human rights. The level of security incidents was lower compared to the same period in 2011 despite higher insurgent activity in late Ramadan. There was a 28 per cent increase in civilian casualties over 2011. The report also covers progress on implementing Tokyo conference outcomes, developments related to elections, reconciliation, counter-narcotics as well as continuing humanitarian concerns.

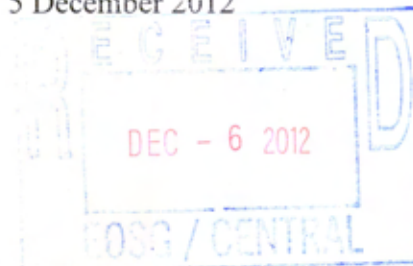
The Observations section reminds donors of keeping their commitments and commends the Government for supporting UNAMA's Track II efforts.

AK

Political Unit
5 December 2012

cc: CDC

12-10849



ACTION AG | w.
COPY DSG | encl

CONFIDENTIAL

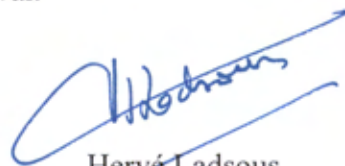
Immediate

Note to Mr. Eliasson



Draft report of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan

1. Please find attached, for the Secretary-General's approval, the draft report to the Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan to be submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2041 (2012), in which the Council extended UNAMA's mandate until 23 March 2013 and requested the Secretary-General to report on developments in Afghanistan every three months.
- 13 Sept 2012
2. This draft provides an update on the situation in Afghanistan since the last report of the Secretary-General of 20 June 2012, presenting key political and security developments, key regional and international events, as well as progress and challenges related to the Kabul process and human rights. On security, the level of security incidents remained lower as compared to the same period in 2011, despite some unusual insurgent activity towards the end of Ramadan and an increasing focus on infiltration routes towards Kabul. During this quarter, the human rights section notes a 28 per cent increase over 2011 in civilian casualties, in contrast to the downward trend of the first half of 2012. Progress on implementing Tokyo conference outcomes, developments related to elections, reconciliation and counter-narcotics as well as continuing humanitarian concerns, especially displacement, are also elaborated upon. The Mission support section notes key operational elements of the Mission's reconfiguration including the closure of the final five provincial offices.
3. The observations section welcomes the seriousness applied to the implementation of the Tokyo Framework, while reminding donors of the need for progress on their own commitments. Mention is made of progress on preparations and next steps for elections as well as positive developments on reconciliation and the support of the Government for UNAMA track II efforts. Concerns over civilian casualties, the economic impact of transition and the need for increased funding for humanitarian issues are also raised.
4. The Security Council debate on Afghanistan is scheduled for 19 December in the afternoon. The Secretary-General's report is due to be issued on 12 December. As per standard practice, the text of the report (minus the observations) has been submitted for advance translation. We would be grateful for its early approval.


Hervé Ladsous
30 November 2012

cc: Ms. Malcorra
Ms. Haq
Mr. Feltman

PKG/04/001

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/16 and Security Council resolution 2041 (2012), in which the Council requested me to report on developments in Afghanistan every three months.

2. This report provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including significant humanitarian, development and human rights efforts, since my previous report issued on 13 September 2012 (A/67/354-S/2012/703). It also provides a summary of key political and security developments and regional and international events related to Afghanistan

II. Relevant developments

A. Political developments

3. During the reporting period, much attention was focused on agreeing on the systems and structures to implement and monitor mutual commitments made at the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan. Afghan and international stakeholders demonstrated a seriousness of intent to ensure momentum through the transition period and a solid foundation for the transformation decade, 2015-2024.

4. Elections, as the cornerstone of Afghanistan's political transition, continued to garner intense interest among Afghan stakeholders. The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework reiterated the Government's commitment to credible and inclusive Afghan-led and managed elections in accordance with the Constitution. How this is best achieved has been the subject of wide-ranging debate. On 17 September, the Council of Ministers rejected the Independent Election Commission's proposal for a new voter registration exercise to create polling centre-specific voters' lists. An approach based on a national electronic identification (called e-taskera) project by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, together with the Ministry of Interior, was favoured instead. Given the long-term nature of this endeavour, the Commission was directed to simultaneously review previously distributed voter cards, fraud mitigation measures and the possibilities for removing millions of duplicate cards as the basis of a voter list for the next round of polls. To better understand the necessary realignment of electoral planning and international support, amidst widely varying cost and time estimates for the e-taskera project, UNAMA facilitated a number of information-sharing sessions.

5. The law on the duties and structure of the Independent Election Commission was adopted by the lower house of the National Assembly on 24 September. This law specified a comprehensive consultative process for appointments to the Commission, rather than the President having sole discretion, as is currently the case. During last minute deliberations, the house included the Electoral Complaints Commission as the final dispute resolution body, reconstituted as a permanent institution with provision for two international members appointed by the United Nations. On 20 November the upper house passed the bill but removed the proposed appointments mechanism – leaving membership of electoral management bodies as the prerogative of the President – and rejected international membership of the Complaints Commission. A joint commission of the houses must now seek compromise between the two versions. On 20 October, the electoral law was brought to the Council of Ministers. Work continues with

public debate having focused on the role of political parties, the allocation of the seats constitutionally reserved for women, candidate eligibility, serial numbers on ballot papers, the role of security institutions and dispute resolution mechanisms.

6. On 31 October, the Independent Election Commission presented its timeline for simultaneous Presidential and Provincial Council elections. Polling day has been set for 5 April 2014. Some opposition figures and members of the National Assembly have expressed concern at the potential impact of winter weather on logistical preparations and voter turnout, particularly in northern and central areas. Based upon this timing, the Commission developed a draft concept of operations, currently with the President's Office, which includes an indicative budget as well as proposed strategies and activities to improve the poll's conduct. On 31 October, the Commission also formally requested United Nations support for the 2014-15 elections. This request triggered a two-phase needs assessment mission from United Nations headquarters, with an initial visit between 27 November and 5 December. Currently the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support project, ELECT II (Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, second phase), provides electoral technical assistance to the Commission. Support was also extended in this period for an independent expert to provide technical advice to the Ministry of Justice in its work on the draft electoral law.

7. Political party activity gathered pace with realignments within and between groups in a rapidly changing environment. On 4 October, the historically, predominantly Pashtun party, Afghan Milat, held its sixth party congress in Kabul, replacing its long-time leader, Minister of Commerce Anwar ul-Haq Ahady, with the party's general secretary, Astana Gul Sherzad. The registered political wing emerging from the mujahidin-era Hezb-e Islami (Afghanistan) held its congress on 3 and 4 October in the capital, with Minister of Economy Abdul Hadi Argandiwal retaining the leadership. Both groups, together with the two major opposition blocs, the National Front and the National Coalition of Afghanistan, were amongst 20 parties across the political spectrum which launched a Democracy Charter on 23 September. The Charter demanded, among other requests, that the Government ensures a greater role for political parties in the election and political processes. More detailed demands for electoral reform were endorsed by over 50 political parties and civil society organizations at a gathering organized by the major domestic observation body, the Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan, in Kabul on 17 October. On 3 November, President Karzai invited some 100 Afghan media managers and journalists for consultations on reporting in the lead-up to the elections. Participants welcomed the initiative amidst recent debate over press freedom. Concerns were expressed about weaknesses in the legal framework on media issues, the difficulty in obtaining information from officials, and threats against journalists.

Deleted: fluid

8. The National Assembly's lower house endorsed three of four nominees proposed for senior Government security posts on 15 September. Former Minister of Interior, Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, was confirmed as Minister of Defence; senior Ministry of Interior official, General Mujtaba Patang, was promoted to Minister of Interior; and the former Minister of Tribal Affairs, Assadullah Khaled, was approved as Director General of the National Directorate of Security. Former Kabul Governor, Haji Din Mohammad, did not garner the necessary majority for confirmation as Minister of Tribal Affairs. On 6 November, the national budget – with a shift to a new timeframe for the fiscal year, now to commence on 21 December – was submitted to the upper house. In his presentation, Minister of Finance Omar Zakhilwal stated that Afghanistan should not face an economic crisis post-2014, but emphasized the

Deleted: .

Deleted: .

urgency of ensuring greater self-sufficiency, including by increasing domestic revenue. On 27 November, the budget was passed to the lower house with the senators' advisory comments. The total proposed budget is USD 7 billion (USD 3.8 billion in the ordinary budget and USD 3.3 billion in the development budget). On 7 November, the lower house rejected the fundamental Government policy proposed by the President as required under Article 64 of the Constitution, citing a lack of clarity, and returned the submission with comments from the house's technical commissions.

9. Starting on 19 September, a week of Peace and National Unity was marked by the High Peace Council with 195 related events across the country. This included an international peace conference in Kabul on 22 September with representatives of 15 countries, together with diverse Afghan political, religious and civil society figures exchanging views on the reconciliation process. Between 12 and 14 November, Council Chairman Salahuddin Rabbani led a delegation on a visit to Islamabad at the invitation of Pakistan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar. Council representatives met with President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf and Chief of the Army Staff General Ashfaq Kayani and held positive exchanges on the need for long-term and consistent cooperation. A number of Taliban in detention in Pakistan were released and a joint statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and the High Peace Council agreed that requests for safe passage by potential negotiators would be considered "in a positive way", appealed to Taliban and armed opposition groups to sever ties with Al Qaeda, and announced that a conference of religious leaders would be convened to address the issue of rising militancy in the region. From 24 to 30 November, Chairman Rabbani visited Washington, DC and New York where he held meetings, including with the Security Council and interested Member States, to discuss prospects for the peace process and how the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) can contribute further to this end.

10. UNAMA continued to provide analytical, advisory and technical support to the High Peace Council, including facilitating air transport for the visit to Islamabad. The Mission is also planning a Track II dialogue encouraging diverse Afghan stakeholders to engage in an individual capacity, initially focusing on visions for the future. Together with UNDP, UNAMA also supports the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme focused on lower-level fighters. According to the programme's Joint Secretariat, a total of 5,814 former insurgents had joined by 14 November, 301 since September.

11. On 5 November, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) approved the listing of the Haqqani Network as an entity associated with the Taliban in constituting a threat to the peace, stability and security of Afghanistan. This follows the progressive listing of several of the group's top commanders and financial facilitators since 2007. The Committee cited the entity's involvement in a string of attacks on high-profile targets including the Serena Hotel in 2008, Intercontinental Hotel in June 2011, the United States Embassy and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) headquarters in September 2011, and multiple locations across Afghanistan in April 2012. On 21 November, Rahat Limited, a hawala, or informal money transfer mechanism outside traditional banking systems which leave no written record, was also listed together with its owner. The Security Council is increasingly focused on the logistical infrastructure supporting insurgent activity and cited Rahat Limited's participation in the financing and facilitation of the insurgency.

12. Phased transfer of security responsibility from international security forces to Afghan authorities continued, covering areas in which 75 per cent of the population resides. The distribution of districts in the final two tranches of the security transition is expected to be announced in early 2013. The President tasked a working group led by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance with developing a mechanism for 'transfer of authority' from Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The Directorate requested relevant member states to provide data on their activities to be presented to the Council of Ministers in January 2013. At the NATO Defence Ministers meeting in Brussels on 9 and 10 October, ISAF was directed to begin planning the post-2014 training mission. A North Atlantic Council visit to Kabul between 17 and 19 October reinforced commitments made at the May Chicago Summit that NATO forces will remain, albeit on a much reduced scale, to provide support, provided a legal status is agreed with the Afghan Government. On 15 November, the Governments of Afghanistan and the United States officially launched negotiations on their bilateral security agreement in line with the countries' Strategic Partnership Agreement.

B. Security developments

13. The United Nations continued to monitor security events related to the work, mobility and safety of civilian actors. Security incident levels during the reporting period remained considerably lower than 2011, comparable to 2010. Unusually, there was significant insurgent activity towards the end of the holy month of Ramadan, with a decline in line with seasonal trends thereafter. Between 1 August and 31 October, 4,801 security incidents were recorded, a 14 per cent decrease on the same period in 2011 (5,582 incidents). The reduction is partly the result of successful interdiction by Afghan and international security forces of insurgent personnel, arms shipments and funding; however, it has not necessarily resulted in public perceptions of improved security. The population suffers the actions of illegal armed groups, tribal clashes and disputes over natural resources while an insurgent campaign of intimidation and targeted killings of influential political, religious or tribal figures and community and women's activists continues unabated.

14. The ~~south and east of the country~~ continued to experience the vast majority of security incidents - 70 per cent between 1 August and 31 October - with an increasing insurgent focus seen on infiltration routes towards Kabul. Against the overall decrease, Kandahar, Kunar, Nangarhar, Logar and Wardak Provinces recorded notably higher security incident levels than 2011. Uncharacteristically, the northern province of Faryab also saw an increase, being the province with the sixth highest number of incidents recorded in this period. Armed clashes and improvised explosive devices constituted the majority of incidents. Suicide bombings, despite sustained insurgent efforts to conduct spectacular events, remained fewer than the previous year, with 22 recorded between 1 August and 31 October compared to 39 in the same quarter of 2011. Afghan security forces reported thwarting attacks in Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, Parwan and Baghlan Provinces with the arrest of at least 17 potential suicide attackers and large quantities of explosives seized. In a complex battlefield, reports continued of intra-insurgent clashes in Ghazni and Wardak Provinces as well as claims of localized popular "uprisings" against Taliban intimidation in Nuristan and Laghman Provinces.

Deleted: South

Deleted: East

15. Public demonstrations in September over French cartoons and an American film derogatory to Islam were mostly peaceful and contained by Afghan security institutions, with the exception of three instances. These included a protest in front of the UNAMA office in Bamyán, where a guard was injured

and a police vehicle damaged by stone throwing. The United Nations and implementing partners further came under direct and collateral threat through attacks on convoys in Faryab, Balkh, Herat, Ghor, Nimroz and Parwan Provinces, as well as abductions and threats to national staff in Balkh, Faryab, Herat, Farah, Badghis, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Kabul and Bamyan Provinces. On 18 October, a United Nations helicopter suffered damage from small arms fire when flying between Jalalabad and Gardez. Replacement of private security companies by the Afghan Public Protection Force has seen slow progress. On 31 October, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that the United Nations, foreign missions and other international organisations enjoy diplomatic immunity with the authority to maintain the internal security of their premises.

16. As of 31 October, Afghan National Police personnel stood at 147,000 and the Afghan National Army at 188,000. While surge targets for the end of 2012 - 157,000 and 195,000, respectively - have largely been met, attrition remained high. Insider attacks targeting international and national personnel have also taken a toll on a strategy which is based on fast-paced, large-scale recruitment and dependent on mutual trust. A re-vetting exercise saw a few hundred personnel from all services dismissed. In ensuring a sustainable military force, concern has also been raised by Afghan and international stakeholders, alike, about the preparedness of enablers required for operations and maintenance, such as air assets, engineers, counter-explosive expertise and casualty evacuation. Civil society continued to emphasise the need for transparent accountability mechanisms.

17. On 16 and 17 October, the new Minister of Interior outlined his ten priorities at a meeting of senior police personnel. These included community-based policing, support for forces in areas which have undergone security transition, reducing casualties and attrition, anti-corruption efforts, and ensuring a sound organisational structure. On 10 November, a major reshuffle of 32 senior police officials was announced. Concerns over wrongdoings relating to the UNDP-administered Law and Order Trust Fund in Afghanistan (LOTFA), which acts as a basket-fund for police salaries, are being addressed through an active dialogue between UNDP and donors. UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations is involved and a management review by independent consultants is underway to be finalized mid-December. Remedial measures already put in place include new oversight and compliance mechanisms and new standard operating procedures. UNAMA continued to facilitate the coordination of international resources to assist Afghan authorities in strengthening the recruitment and capacity of female police, and to raise awareness among their male counterparts of the importance of integrating women into the police force as equal members. On 15 October, the Ministry of Interior, together with LOTFA, UNAMA and a consortium of women's non-Government organisations, launched the Police Women Mentoring Programme aiming at strengthening the capacity of female police officers, addressing violence against women and raising awareness among their male counterparts on the importance of integrating women as equal members of the force.

18. Expansion of the Afghan Local Police has continued amidst a re-vetting process with 17,850 personnel at 86 validated sites as of 14 November. Afghan security institutions have been seen taking an increasing role in the training and oversight previously undertaken by international forces. While Afghan Local Police have contributed to security in some areas, major concerns remain over vetting, command and control, impunity and the potential re-emergence of ethnically or politically biased militias. On 31 October, at a gathering of hundreds of former mujahidin in Herat Province, the Minister of Water and

Energy, Mohammad Ismail Khan, promoted the creation of a national “mujahidin council” with “units” of former fighters to assist the country’s security forces after 2014. The Provincial Governor’s spokesperson later expressed concern emphasizing that control of security is a State function. In both houses of the legislature, there was also strong criticism of what was perceived as a potentially destabilizing attempt to create parallel structures.

Deleted: post-

Deleted: some

C. Regional cooperation

19. Implementation of confidence-building measures outlined in the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan continued. On 24 September, the Deputy Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan and Kazakhstan co-chaired a meeting of senior officials in New York, which reviewed progress toward implementation plans on three of the seven agreed measures: counter-terrorism, disaster management, and cooperation between chambers of commerce. A second meeting of senior officials in Ankara on 18 October agreed that all confidence-building measures would have implementation plans prepared by the next gathering scheduled for January 2013 in Baku – with those attending empowered to endorse them.

Deleted: Operationalization

Deleted: the

Deleted: of

Deleted: meeting

Deleted: opened by Afghan Foreign Minister Zalmay Rassoul,

Deleted: meeting

20. On 25 September, Foreign Minister Zalmay Rassoul and his Pakistani counterpart Rabbani Khar met in New York to discuss progress on the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement and the issue of cross-border infiltration and shelling. A trilateral meeting the following day between President Karzai, Pakistani President Zardari and British Prime Minister David Cameron agreed to finalize a draft strategic cooperation agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan by the end of 2013. On 20 November, the Pakistani Chief of Army Staff, General Kayani, made a one-day visit to Kabul, meeting with President Karzai as well as national and international military counterparts.

21. On 22 September, President Karzai met with China’s top security official Zhou Yongkang, the republic’s highest level representative to visit Afghanistan since 1966. Further extending Afghanistan’s engagement in the region, on 16 October, President Karzai participated in the 20th Economic Cooperation Organization Summit in Baku and the next day took part in the Asia Cooperation Dialogue, inaugurated in 2002 to help integrate regional cooperation organizations. On 8 November, the President addressed the 5th Bali Democracy Forum. Subsequently, on 9 November, the President and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono signed a number of friendship documents enhancing trade and cultural cooperation. Between 9 and 13 November, President Karzai undertook an official visit to India, meeting with President Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Four pacts were signed to increase cooperation on local government and community organizations, agriculture, youth affairs and the development of coal and mineral resources.

Deleted:

22. On 19 September, Lithuania hosted an international conference “Afghanistan and the region: practical approach for sustainable development”, attended by Foreign Minister Rassoul and Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Azubalis. On 18 October, the fourth annual Meeting of Central Asian Deputy Foreign Ministers took place in Bishkek under the auspices of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. On 19 October, the International Contact Group on Afghanistan met in Ankara. Discussion focused on implementation of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, the Istanbul Process, counter-narcotics, and support for electoral and reconciliation processes. Afghanistan’s Deputy Foreign Minister strongly linked the latter two in his address. On 14 and 15

Deleted: Preventative

Deleted: in

November, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific held a conference in Mazar-e Sharif on strengthening economic ties between Afghanistan and Central Asia. The Governor of Balkh Province, local officials, business representatives and members of parliament attended together with the United Nations Resident Coordinator for Tajikistan, Tajikistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan and participants from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and UNAMA. This was followed on 27 and 28 November by the 2012 United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia Economic Forum in Bangkok, which included a side event reviewing its work on Afghanistan.

23. My Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, continued to focus on regional engagement with official travel to the United Arab Emirates, Turkmenistan, Turkey and the Russian Federation. In Moscow on 14 November, he participated in a consultation on regional security with member states and observers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). It was agreed that the SCO and UNAMA would deepen contacts and help ensure Afghanistan's peaceful and stable development. On 9 and 10 October, UNAMA Deputy Special Representative Haysom visited Tehran, where he met with senior Iranian officials and discussed the need for robust regional engagement, including on national security, immigration, refugees and drug control.

III. Human rights

24. Between 1 August and 31 October, an increase of 28 per cent in civilian casualties was recorded compared to the same quarter in 2011, in contrast to the downward trend of the first six months of the year. Overall, in the first 10 months of 2012, a four per cent decline in civilian deaths and injuries was recorded compared with the same period in 2011. UNAMA documented 2,557 civilian casualties (967 killed and 1,590 injured) between 1 August and 31 October. The vast majority were attributed to anti-Government elements - 84 per cent, up from 70 per cent for the same period in 2011. Pro-Government forces bore responsibility for six per cent of civilian casualties, down from ten per cent the previous year. Ten per cent of casualties could not be attributed to any party.

Deleted: 28 per cent

25. Improvised explosive devices continued to be the leading cause of civilian casualties, which, together with suicide attacks, accounted for 56 per cent of deaths and injuries between 1 August and 31 October. In a mass casualty incident on 19 October, a civilian bus hit a pressure-plate-activated device killing 18 women in Balkh Province. A statement purportedly from Taliban leader Mullah Omar on the occasion of Eid-al-Adha, released on 24 October, emphasized the need to protect non-combatants. Civilians, however, continued to be deliberately targeted and public locations used as the site of insurgent attacks. Civilian casualties as a result of targeted killings by anti-Government elements increased by 93 per cent compared to the same quarter in 2011, with 256 civilians killed and 145 injured. On 26 October, a suicide bomber detonated in a mosque during Eid prayers killing 41 persons including civilians in Maymana, Faryab Province.

Deleted: 19 October

26. More than 355 children (including at least 67 girls) were killed or injured in the armed conflict from 1 August to 31 October, the majority in the South and East. This included an incident on 4 October in which an explosive device detonated at the gate of a high school in Chaghcharan, Ghor Province, wounding one pupil as staff and students celebrated Teachers' Day. Other grave violations of child rights recorded included attacks against education and health facilities (27 incidents), abductions (five

Deleted: UNAMA immediately condemned this atrocity and my Special Representative visited the city on 8 November to express his condolences and outrage at such tactics.

incidents), underage recruitment (four incidents) and denial of humanitarian assistance (11 incidents). Arson attacks on girls' schools were reported in Badakhshan, Khost, Nangarhar and Bamiyan Provinces.

27. Reports of serious violence against women and harmful traditional practices continued. Tasked by President Karzai, the Ministry of Women's Affairs has undertaken an awareness campaign to reduce violence against women, with UN Women and UNAMA support. UN Women also provided support to the Ministry of Women Affairs to run the shelter programme for women survivors of violence and to develop standard operating procedures for shelter management so as to ensure quality services and protocols to protect those seeking assistance. The aim is to establish 29 shelters by the end of 2013. At a 16 September meeting of the Women's Commission of the lower house of the National Assembly, the Ministers of Justice and Women's Affairs as well as the Deputy Minister of Interior made strong statements condemning the imprisonment of women and girls on charges of "running away", given that no such crime exists under Afghan law. Concrete legal and policy actions have yet to ensure that this practice is prevented. On 11 October, the International Day of the Girl Child focused attention on raising awareness of the continuing practice of early marriage in Afghanistan. According to the Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2010/11 launched in June 2012, more than 46 per cent of women are married before the age of 18 and over 15 per cent before age 15, despite the legal minimum age in Afghanistan of 16.

Deleted: other

28. ISAF has been reviewing certification allowing the transfer of detainees from international forces to several facilities run by the National Directorate of Security and Afghan National Police. This action was taken as the result of new information they have received on the use of torture in some Afghan-run detention facilities where ISAF detainees have been transferred. As part of an earlier review of the Directorate's facility in Takhar, and following renewed reports of torture, ISAF revoked certification. UNAMA continued its own efforts to observe the treatment of conflict-related detainees, visiting 36 facilities managed by the National Directorate of Security, Ministry of Interior, Afghan National Police and Ministry of Justice in 16 provinces.

29. President Karzai stated that decisions on the membership of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, awaited since December 2011, are forthcoming. Members of civil society have expressed concern at a lack of transparency in decision-making. UNAMA has advocated for a robust, inclusive process and well qualified appointees.

Deleted: Civil

Deleted: has

IV. Implementation of the Kabul process and aid coherence

30. In order to operationalize the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, the Government took the lead in preparing detailed action plans for indicators, finalizing the Aid Management Policy, and clarifying the necessary aid architecture to rationalize engagement with the international community. On 3 September, the Council of Ministers approved a structure proposed by the Ministry of Finance. The Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, co-chaired by the Afghan Government and UNAMA, remains the umbrella for broad based engagement between the Government and the international community. More specifically focused on the Tokyo Framework, a new Steering Committee chaired by the Minister of Finance will convene at the Ministerial and Ambassadorial level to promote mutual dialogue at strategic level. This will be supported by a Technical Committee of Deputy Ministers and heads of donor agencies, focused on progress toward individual benchmarks.

Deleted: 's

31. Intense engagement by UNAMA in defining the new structures facilitated agreement on international community representation on the two committees. The top five contributing donors - on the basis of Ministry of Finance data reviewed yearly - will have seats. For 2012, these are the United States, Japan, the European Union, the United Kingdom and Germany. In addition, up to four donor representatives will be selected *ad hoc* on the basis of the agenda, policy capacity to contribute and the principle of representation. For the first round of meetings, these are Australia, Canada and a representative of the Nordic group.

32. On 15 October, the Government provided the first iteration of action plans for two of the five Tokyo Framework areas: Representational Democracy and Equitable Elections; and Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights. These action plans were the focus of the first Technical Committee meeting on 21 November and Steering Committee on 4/5 December. International commitments to alignment against national priority programmes (80 per cent of funding) and on-budget execution (50 per cent of funding) together with implementation of the Aid Management Policy have been the subject of complex discussions. Consultation also continued on the six national priority programmes (of 22) still to be endorsed: Transparency and Accountability; Law and Justice for All; Water and Natural Resources; Efficient and Effective Governance; Comprehensive Agriculture Production; and National Energy Supply. The latter four are in final stages of consultation.

33. On 17 October, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator that a one-year extension of the current United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2010 – 2013 had been approved. The timeframe of the next Development Assistance Framework will start in 2015, in line with the Afghan Government's transformation decade, 2015–2024. On 14 and 15 November, UNDP Associate Administrator Rebeca Grynspan was in Kabul and engaged with Government counterparts, the United Nations Country Team and the donor community on current efforts and the post-2014 agenda. While in Kabul, Ms. Grynspan signed an agreement with the Ministry of Women's Affairs for UNDP to undertake a major project focusing on the Ministry's capacity development and Afghan women's legal and economic empowerment.

Deleted: United Nations Under-Secretary General and

V. Governance and rule of law

34. On 20 September, President Karzai announced a large-scale reshuffle of provincial leadership following an assessment by the Independent Directorate for Local Governance. The Governors of Takhar, Helmand, Baghlan, Faryab, Wardak, Logar, Badghis, Nimroz and Laghman Provinces were replaced.

35. On 28 November, the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee released the findings of its public inquiry into the failure of Kabul Bank. The report concluded that individuals capitalized on a policy vacuum to divert nearly USD 1 billion. Recommendations included greater coordination between regulatory bodies in the financial sector and tackling systemic issues such as abuse of power, political interference and impunity. This inquiry, undertaken at the request of the Ministry of Finance, is not part of a criminal investigation.

36. On 13 October, the lower house of the National Assembly adopted the law on the structure, duties and authority of the Office of the Attorney General. Discussion on the draft Criminal Procedure Code also

began in the lower house's judicial affairs commission. Donor dissatisfaction over the continued failure to finalize the national priority programme Law and Justice for All has seen the European Union publicly indicate that it will put on hold its future funding to the sector until the programme's endorsement. The complexity and scope of the programme present challenges and UNAMA has been coordinating between the Government and donors with the goal of endorsement in early 2013.

37. UNAMA and UNDP have continued close collaboration as the UN Global Focal Points on rule of law. They have assisted the Government to identify priority rule of law and gender issues and to coordinate policy and programming to better empower women as active participants in civil society and Government. There has also been engagement at the provincial level to assist authorities in coordinating alternate donor funding for corrections and rule of law-related activities.

VI. Development and humanitarian assistance

38. Recent data indicates that food security improved considerably in most provinces with increased rainfall contributing to high cereal production - forecast to reach 6.3 million tons for the year. Yet food insecurity and malnutrition remained high for some 650,000 persons, particularly in Nuristan and Badakhshan, where significant food consumption gaps coupled with high malnutrition have been reported. The onset of winter is likely to further compound the food insecurity and malnutrition figures, with populations in 13 provinces projected to face extreme winter risk in informal urban settlements and remote rural locations. The Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority, with United Nations agencies and other humanitarian actors, has been working to ensure adequate preparedness with a particular focus on preventing the avoidable deaths of children. Mapping of the most vulnerable populations is underway and the World Food Programme (WFP) has pre-positioned 10,000 metric tonnes of food at the household level to help ensure vulnerable families have adequate stocks.

Deleted: good

39. As of 31 October, a total of 459,200 people (71,800 families) were assessed as internally displaced by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The impact of displacement is experienced across the country: 30 per cent of those displaced are hosted in the South, 26 per cent in the West and 21 per cent in the East. Conflict continues to be a significant driver with 35 per cent of those newly displaced in 2012 (a total of 58,600 people) citing conflict as the primary direct motivation for their flight. Many were displaced within the western areas, which saw the highest increase in internal displacement (14,110 persons). At least 5,000 Afghans (800 families) were displaced and in need of humanitarian assistance in Kunar Province during 2012.

40. On 3 October in Geneva, the Quadripartite Steering Committee for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees was convened for the first time. The governments of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, together with UNHCR, discussed ways to ensure effective implementation of the three pillars of the Solutions Strategy, notably, continued support to voluntary repatriation, investment in sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan and assistance to host countries. Related consultations in Geneva involving key stakeholders resulted in expressions of strong support for the multi-dimensional approach of the Solutions Strategy which seeks to improve the lives of returnees, almost a quarter of the overall population of Afghanistan, while simultaneously providing appropriate support to the neighbouring countries who continue to extend protection to a significant number of Afghan refugees. In addition, UNHCR facilitated meetings of the Tripartite Commissions – in September with Afghanistan and

Pakistan, and in December with Afghanistan and Iran – addressing the strategic and operational aspects of voluntary return and the continuing status of refugees in Pakistan and Iran.

41. On 27 September at a high-level event in New York, “Our commitment to the Next Generation: The Legacy of a Polio-free World”, President Karzai stated that his Government would make every effort possible with the resources available to eradicate polio from Afghanistan. The event brought together leaders of the remaining endemic countries, donors, development partners and the media to draw attention to the need to eliminate the outstanding polio cases worldwide. On 29 September, the Ministry of Public Health, together with the World Health Organization (WHO), launched the National Health and Nutrition Policy 2012 – 2020, setting out priorities to better ensure long-term sustainability of services provision. As part of my Every Woman Every Child Initiative, on 31 October, a report on Afghan midwifery was finalised. The report will be used to plan training and deployment of resources and details the current status of midwifery knowledge around the country. On 12 November, the Afghan Government and its development partners endorsed the country’s first Education Joint Sector Review. The Human Resource Development Board, an inter-ministerial coordination body for the education sector, was supported by the United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization in conducting the exercise. It found that technical capacity and possibilities for domestic resource mobilisation to meet the challenges are still fragile.

41 bis. New data from WHO revealed that, during the first ten months of 2012, 540 health facilities were forced to suspend activities due to insecurity or lack of funding, an increase of 40 per cent from the same period in 2011. This equates to over 20 per cent of the 2,600 facilities providing various types of health care in the country, with the largest number of inactive facilities located in the South, where 50 to 60 per cent of the population has very limited or no access to basic health care services.

42. An extension for Afghanistan to meet its obligations under the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty was endorsed on 7 December, during the 12th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. Currently, 670,000 Afghans live within 500 metres of a minefield, impacting over 1,800 communities. The goal is for Afghanistan to be declared mine-impact free by 2023 – a significant achievement for what has been one of the world’s most heavily mine-contaminated countries.

43. Risks associated with the delivery of humanitarian services remained high. Ongoing military operations, remnants of war and sporadic clashes continued to negatively affect the protection of civilians and the ability of humanitarians to safely access and provide assistance to vulnerable populations.

Deleted: raise concerns

Deleted: for

VII. Counter-narcotics

44. The 2011 Cannabis Survey, released on 24 October, estimated that the total area under cannabis cultivation in Afghanistan last year was 12,000 hectares with a potential yield of 1,300 tons. An estimated 65,000 households grew cannabis, up from 47,000 in 2010. Joint research by the Ministry of Counter Narcotics and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) indicated a clear geographical association between opium and cannabis cultivation, with almost two-thirds of cannabis-growing households (58 per cent) reporting poppy cultivation in the preceding season. Three-quarters of farmers stated that they grew cannabis because of high sales prices as the value of the highest quality resin nearly tripled, from USD 35 per kilogram in 2009 to USD 95 in 2011.

Deleted: The j

Deleted: research

45. Opium cultivation increased by 18 per cent in 2012 – although plant disease led to a decrease in final production. The joint Ministry of Counter Narcotics and UNODC 2012 Opium Survey, released on 20 November, recorded a jump in cultivation from 131,000 hectares in 2011 to around 153,000 in 2012. The number of poppy-free provinces remained stable year-on-year at 17. A disease which affected poppy plants mitigated the increase in cultivation. Final figures assessed a 38 per cent decrease in production on 2011 from 5,800 tons to 3,600 tons. The gross average income produced per hectare was assessed at USD 4,600 with an overall total farm-gate value of USD 700 million, or four per cent of Afghanistan's Gross Domestic Product.

46. Under the auspices of UNODC's Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, the first border liaison office meeting between Iran and Afghanistan was held in Tayabad, Iran on 24 September. On 27 and 28 September, a workshop on strengthening the coordination and quality of counter-narcotics training programmes took place in Ashgabat. Another was held in Almaty on 3 and 4 October. In Tehran, on 10 and 11 October, the first regional workshop on international cooperation in asset recovery for countries in West and Central Asia was co-organized with the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO). On 17 October in Bishkek, the second Tripartite meeting of senior officials from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan saw agreement on improving legal frameworks, supporting the establishment of border liaison offices, conducting joint operations, and employing the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre as a communications hub.

47. A regional ministerial conference aimed at strengthening cooperation on counter-narcotics efforts was held in Islamabad on 12 and 13 November. New measures proposed included a hotline between national narcotics agencies and a regional contact group to meet annually at senior official level.

VIII. Mission support

48. UNAMA made progress in reconfiguring the Mission to best meet its mandate in the current and anticipated political, security and financial environment. This effort has been guided by the outcomes of the comprehensive review conducted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1974 (2011), the subsequent renewal of the mandate by the Council in its resolution 2041 (2012) and funding levels approved for special political missions by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/248.

Deleted: ed

49. The final five of the nine UNAMA provincial offices slated for closure - Daykundi, Uruzgan, Takhar, Saripul and Kunar - ceased operations. The premise in Uruzgan was transferred to the United Nations Office for Project Services, while in Kunar the office was returned to Afghan authorities for use by the local university. National outreach and regular travel throughout the country has been the focus of renewed emphasis, given the lighter provincial footprint, with my Special Representative visiting Nangarhar, Bamyan, Herat and Faryab Provinces. The closure of offices, with the resulting termination of contracts, and a restriction on recruitment prior to a foreseen reduction in posts for 2013 has led to an exceptionally high vacancy rate.

Deleted: closure of offices, with the resulting termination of contracts, and a restriction on recruitment prior to a foreseen reduction in posts for 2013 have

50. Progress has continued on ensuring that all United Nations facilities meet required safety standards. Construction of new premises in Balkh and Bamyan Provinces are now complete and relocation from older sites in progress. Delays in clearing protective security equipment through customs and charges by the Ministry of Communications to process communications equipment continued to impact the Mission's ability to undertake activities in a timely manner. Flight capacity has been disrupted

due to the small arms fire against a United Nations aircraft, as well as a hard landing by a helicopter in Bamyán on 14 October, which resulted in severe damage to the aircraft. A 10 October Presidential decree that UNDP relocate its long-time headquarters in Kabul has led to the need to identify and secure appropriate new premises.

IX. Observations

51. I welcome the seriousness with which the Government of Afghanistan and the international community have approached the operationalization of Tokyo Conference commitments, which are critical to maintaining necessary levels of civilian assistance to the country. Extensive follow-up in Kabul is ensuring that the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework is at the heart of future engagement, promoting greater development coherence and consistency in expectations and priorities. I congratulate the Government on its leadership in re-aligning the necessary aid architecture and am pleased that UNAMA has continued to demonstrate its value as a facilitating partner.

52. Donors have emphasized that consolidating and extending the gains made in the promotion of human rights over the last decade – notably the rights of women and girls is central to their sustained engagement. Mainstreaming gender issues across the Framework's action plans and national priority programmes, as well as ensuring appropriate attention to another cross-cutting issue, counter-narcotics, remain key to underpinning the sustainability of development and governance reforms. Donors have also strongly emphasized the need for demonstrable progress on agreed governance measures. It is important to bear in mind that the concept of mutual accountability demands that the international community, in turn, needs to ensure greater progress on its long-standing commitments to alignment and on-budget financing.

53. I welcome the promulgation of a comprehensive elections timeline for the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council polls as a positive step. Tokyo indicators now require a robust electoral architecture, developed in a transparent manner. This should include passage of the two outstanding electoral laws, with debate leading to consensus on processes which enhance the credibility, inclusiveness and sustainability of elections. Strong Afghan leadership will also be required to coordinate and drive the e-taskera effort across the many relevant institutions, if this important national project is to contribute to the 2014-15 electoral cycle. I welcome the constructive participation of political parties and civil society. Realistic recommendations on electoral reforms and well-informed discussion promote transparency and inclusiveness and must inform decision-making. The media also has an important role in facilitating wider dialogue and reflecting the issues of the day.

54. The increasingly practical focus of the Istanbul Process, especially progress in translating confidence-building measures into implementation plans, is welcome and should yield tangible results. I commend the active engagement of the Member States participating in the Heart of Asia/Istanbul process, supporter countries and regional organizations in this important work and pledge the continued cooperation and support of the United Nations. The proliferation of bilateral and multilateral engagement by regional actors on common concerns is also a positive development.

Deleted: nations

Deleted: organisations

55. The High Peace Council visit to Islamabad in November brought renewed momentum to strengthening relations between the neighbours. Long-term, consistent engagement is vital to building a

shared understanding and, ultimately, mutual solutions. As recognised in the joint statement by the High Peace Council and the Government of Pakistan, engagement with the religious establishment can help tackle a rising tide of militancy. The Council has an important role in Afghan-led efforts to build the conditions and confidence conducive to peace and reconciliation, and the United Nations is prepared to offer assistance, as requested. I am pleased that the Government has indicated its support for UNAMA's intention to structure a complementary Track II national dialogue.

Deleted: i Government

56. A rise in civilian casualties during the reporting period is a matter of great concern, as the conflict continues to take an unacceptable toll on the Afghan people. Insurgents are using intimidation of communities and individuals as a deliberate tactic to extend influence and control, targeting those who challenge their authority or ideas. Targeting of civilians violates both religious strictures and international law. In particular, pressure-plate activated improvised explosive devices, acting as massive anti-personnel landmines, are a prohibited weapon under international law. I reiterate demands for an immediate halt to their use and call upon insurgent leaders to publicly repudiate such tactics. Public statements linked to the Taliban have challenged United Nations data on these issues. I stand by our information and our use of clear legal definitions of civilians. However, I also welcome continued engagement with all parties to build understanding and identify solutions to combat this continuing human tragedy.

Deleted: this

57. As international military forces reduce their presence, there will be economic consequences. Therefore, it will be vital that efforts to create sustainable employment and livelihood opportunities be redoubled. Increasing Government leadership in helping to ensure an orderly transfer is critical. The United Nations will, where requested, support the smooth transition of tasks to national authorities to minimize potentially negative impacts. While challenges should not be downplayed, transition may also provide an opportunity to re-balance assistance, ensuring that it is focused on needs and aligned with agreed national objectives.

Deleted: Going forward

58. Overall humanitarian funding has decreased by nearly 50 per cent from USD 900 million in 2011 to USD 484 million in 2012, while overall development assistance has grown from USD 4 billion in 2010 to USD 6.3 billion in 2012. I support the call from the Afghanistan Humanitarian Country Team for donors to earmark at least ten per cent of their Official Development Assistance for humanitarian assistance. A 2013 Common Humanitarian Action Plan for Afghanistan, outlining the most acute humanitarian needs and priority life-saving interventions, is expected to be launched in December. It will provide an opportunity to address this imbalance and to support the overarching humanitarian objective for 2013: to reinforce the protection of civilians by responding more effectively to conflict-related needs.

59. My Deputy Special Representative, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, and UNDP Resident Representative, Michael Keating, completed his assignment on 10 November. I thank him for his drive and diplomacy in facilitating the work of UNAMA and the United Nations Country Team, particularly around the successful Tokyo Process negotiations. His replacement, Mark Bowden, arrived in Kabul on 15 November. I wish him well in this new and challenging assignment. In addition, I should like, once again, to express my gratitude to all national and international United Nations staff members in Afghanistan and to my Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, for their continued dedication to supporting the people of Afghanistan.

Deleted: In a seamless transition, h

Deleted: 1

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to **General Assembly resolution 67/16** and Security Council resolution 2041 (2012), in which the Council requested me to report on developments in Afghanistan every three months.
2. This report provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including significant humanitarian, development and human rights efforts, since my previous report issued on 13 September 2012 (A/67/354-S/2012/703). It also provides a summary of key political and security developments and regional and international events related to Afghanistan

II. Relevant developments

A. Political developments

3. During the reporting period, much attention was focused on agreeing^{on} the systems and structures to implement and monitor mutual commitments made at the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan. Afghan and international stakeholders demonstrated a seriousness of intent to ensure momentum through the transition period and a solid foundation for the transformation decade, 2015-2024.
4. Elections, as the cornerstone of Afghanistan's political transition, continued to garner intense interest among Afghan stakeholders. The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework reiterated the Government's commitment to credible and inclusive Afghan-led and managed elections in accordance with the Constitution. How this is best achieved has been the subject of wide-ranging debate. On 17 September, the Council of Ministers rejected the Independent Election Commission's proposal for a new voter registration exercise to create polling centre-specific voters' lists. An approach based on a national electronic identification (called e-taskera) project by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, together with the Ministry of Interior, was favoured instead. Given the long-term nature of this endeavour, the Commission was directed to simultaneously review previously distributed voter cards, fraud mitigation measures and the possibilities for removing millions of duplicate cards as the basis of a voter list for the next round of polls. To better understand the necessary realignment of electoral planning and international support, amidst widely varying cost and time estimates for the e-taskera project, UNAMA facilitated a number of information-sharing sessions.
5. The law on the duties and structure of the Independent Election Commission was adopted by the lower house of the National Assembly on 24 September. This law specified a comprehensive consultative process for appointments to the Commission, rather than the President having sole discretion, as is currently the case. During last minute deliberations, the house included the Electoral Complaints Commission as the final dispute resolution body, reconstituted as a permanent institution with provision for two international members appointed by the United Nations. On 20 November the upper house passed the bill but removed the proposed appointments mechanism – leaving membership of electoral management bodies as the prerogative of the President – and rejected international membership of the Complaints Commission. A joint commission of the houses must now seek compromise between the two versions. On 20 October, the electoral law was brought to the Council of Ministers. Work continues with

public debate having focused on the role of political parties, the allocation of the seats constitutionally reserved for women, candidate eligibility, serial numbers on ballot papers, the role of security institutions and dispute resolution mechanisms.

6. On 31 October, the Independent Election Commission presented its timeline for simultaneous Presidential and Provincial Council elections. Polling day has been set for 5 April 2014. Some opposition figures and members of the National Assembly have expressed concern at the potential impact of winter weather on logistical preparations and voter turnout, particularly in northern and central areas. Based upon this timing, the Commission developed a draft concept of operations, currently with the President's Office, which includes an indicative budget as well as proposed strategies and activities to improve the poll's conduct. On 31 October, the Commission also formally requested United Nations support for the 2014-15 elections. This request triggered a two-phase needs assessment mission from United Nations headquarters, with an initial visit between 27 November and 5 December. Currently the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support project, ELECT II (Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, second phase), provides electoral technical assistance to the Commission. Support was also extended in this period for an independent expert to provide technical advice to the Ministry of Justice in its work on the draft electoral law.

7. Political party activity gathered pace with realignments within and between groups ~~in a fluid environment~~. On 4 October, the historically predominantly Pashtun party, Afghan Milat, held its sixth party congress in Kabul, replacing its long-time leader, Minister of Commerce Anwar ul-Haq Ahady, with the party's general secretary, Astana Gul Sherzad. The registered political wing emerging from the mujahidin-era Hezb-e Islami (Afghanistan) held its congress on 3 and 4 October in the capital, with Minister of Economy Abdul Hadi Argandiwal retaining the leadership. Both groups, together with the two major opposition blocs, the National Front and the National Coalition of Afghanistan, were amongst 20 parties across the political spectrum which launched a Democracy Charter on 23 September. The Charter demanded, among other requests, that the Government ensures a greater role for political parties in the election and political processes. More detailed demands for electoral reform were endorsed by over 50 political parties and civil society organizations at a gathering organized by the major domestic observation body, the Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan, in Kabul on 17 October. On 3 November, President Karzai invited some 100 Afghan media managers and journalists for consultations on reporting in the lead-up to the elections. Participants welcomed the initiative amidst recent debate over press freedom. Concerns were expressed about weaknesses in the legal framework on media issues, the difficulty in obtaining information from officials, and threats against journalists.

8. The National Assembly's lower house endorsed three of four nominees proposed for senior Government security posts on 15 September. Former Minister of Interior, Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, was confirmed as Minister of Defence, senior Ministry of Interior official, General Mujtaba Patang, was promoted to Minister, and the former Minister of Tribal Affairs, Assadullah Khaled, was approved as Director General of the National Directorate of Security. Former Kabul Governor, Haji Din Mohammad, did not garner the necessary majority for confirmation as Minister of Tribal Affairs. On 6 November, the national budget – with a shift to a new timeframe for the fiscal year, now to commence on 21 December – was submitted to the upper house. In his presentation, Minister of Finance Omar Zakhilwal stated that Afghanistan should not face an economic crisis post-2014, but emphasized the urgency of ensuring

in
which
Ministry

greater self-sufficiency, including by increasing domestic revenue. On 27 November, the budget was passed to the lower house with the senators' advisory comments. The total proposed budget is USD 7 billion (USD 3.8 billion in the ordinary budget and USD 3.3 billion in the development budget). On 7 November, the lower house rejected the fundamental Government policy proposed by the President as required under Article 64 of the Constitution, citing a lack of clarity, and returned the submission with comments from the house's technical commissions.

9. Starting on 19 September, a week of Peace and National Unity was marked by the High Peace Council with 195 related events across the country. This included an international peace conference in Kabul on 22 September with representatives of 15 countries, together with diverse Afghan political, religious and civil society figures exchanging views on the reconciliation process. Between 12 and 14 November, Council Chairman Salahuddin Rabbani led a delegation on a visit to Islamabad at the invitation of Pakistan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar. Council representatives met with President Asif Ali Zadari, Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf and Chief of the Army Staff General Ashfaq Kayani and held positive exchanges on the need for long-term and consistent cooperation. A number of Taliban in detention in Pakistan were released and a joint statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and the High Peace Council agreed that requests for safe passage by potential negotiators would be considered "in a positive way", appealed to Taliban and armed opposition groups to sever ties with Al Qaeda, and announced that a conference of religious leaders would be convened to address the issue of rising militancy in the region. From 24 to 30 November, Chairman Rabbani visited Washington, DC and New York where he held meetings, including with the Security Council and interested Member States, to discuss prospects for the peace process and how the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) can contribute further to this end.

10. UNAMA continued to provide analytical, advisory and technical support to the High Peace Council, including facilitating air transport for the visit to Islamabad. The Mission is also planning a Track II dialogue encouraging diverse Afghan stakeholders to engage in an individual capacity, initially focusing on visions for the future. Together with UNDP, UNAMA also supports the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme focused on lower-level fighters. According to the programme's Joint Secretariat, a total of 5,814 former insurgents had joined by 14 November, 301 since September.

11. On 5 November, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) approved the listing of the Haqqani Network as an entity associated with the Taliban in constituting a threat to the peace, stability and security of Afghanistan. This follows the progressive listing of several of the group's top commanders and financial facilitators since 2007. The Committee cited the entity's involvement in a string of attacks on high-profile targets including the Serena Hotel in 2008, Intercontinental Hotel in June 2011, the United States Embassy and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) headquarters in September 2011, and multiple locations across Afghanistan in April 2012. On 21 November, Rahat Limited, a hawala, or informal money transfer mechanism outside traditional banking systems which leave no written record, was also listed together with its owner. The Security Council is increasingly focused on the logistical infrastructure supporting insurgent activity and cited Rahat Limited's participation in the financing and facilitation of the insurgency.

from 2011 international security forces

12. Phased transfer of security responsibility to Afghan authorities continued, covering areas in which 75 per cent of the population resides. The distribution of districts in the final two tranches of the security transition is expected to be announced in early 2013. The President tasked a working group led by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance with developing a mechanism for 'transfer of authority' from Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The Directorate requested relevant member states to provide data on their activities to be presented to the Council of Ministers in January 2013. At the NATO Defence Ministers meeting in Brussels on 9 and 10 October, ISAF was directed to begin planning the post-2014 training mission. A North Atlantic Council visit to Kabul between 17 and 19 October reinforced commitments made at the May Chicago Summit that NATO forces will remain, albeit on a much reduced scale, to provide support, provided a legal status is agreed with the Afghan Government. On 15 November, the Governments of Afghanistan and the United States officially launched negotiations on their bilateral security agreement in line with the countries' Strategic Partnership Agreement.

B. Security developments

13. The United Nations continued to monitor security events related to the work, mobility and safety of civilian actors. Security incident levels during the reporting period remained considerably lower than 2011, comparable to 2010. Unusually, there was significant insurgent activity towards the end of the holy month of Ramadan, with a decline in line with seasonal trends thereafter. Between 1 August and 31 October, 4,801 security incidents were recorded, a 14 per cent decrease on the same period in 2011 (5,582 incidents). The reduction is partly the result of successful interdiction by Afghan and international security forces of insurgent personnel, arms shipments and funding; however, it has not necessarily resulted in public perceptions of improved security. The population suffers the actions of illegal armed groups, tribal clashes and disputes over natural resources while an insurgent campaign of intimidation and targeted killings of influential political, religious or tribal figures and community and women's activists continues unabated.

of the country

14. The ~~South and East~~ continued to experience the vast majority of security incidents - 70 per cent between 1 August and 31 October - with an increasing insurgent focus seen on infiltration routes towards Kabul. Against the overall decrease, Kandahar, Kunar, Nangarhar, Logar and Wardak Provinces recorded notably higher security incident levels than 2011. Uncharacteristically, the northern province of Faryab also saw an increase, being the province with the sixth highest number of incidents recorded in this period. Armed clashes and improvised explosive devices constituted the majority of incidents. Suicide bombings, despite sustained insurgent efforts to conduct spectacular events, remained fewer than the previous year, with 22 recorded between 1 August and 31 October compared to 39 in the same quarter of 2011. Afghan security forces reported thwarting attacks in Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, Parwan and Baghlan Provinces with the arrest of at least 17 potential suicide attackers and large quantities of explosives seized. In a complex battlefield, reports continued of intra-insurgent clashes in Ghazni and Wardak Provinces as well as claims of localized popular "uprisings" against Taliban intimidation in Nuristan and Laghman Provinces.

15. Public demonstrations in September over French cartoons and an American film derogatory to Islam were mostly peaceful and contained by Afghan security institutions, with the exception of three instances. These included a protest in front of the UNAMA office in Bamyán, where a guard was injured and a police vehicle damaged by stone throwing. The United Nations and implementing partners further

came under direct and collateral threat through attacks on convoys in Faryab, Balkh, Herat, Ghor, Nimroz and Parwan Provinces, as well as abductions and threats to national staff in Balkh, Faryab, Herat, Farah, Badghis, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Kabul and Bamyan Provinces. On 18 October, a United Nations helicopter suffered damage from small arms fire when flying between Jalalabad and Gardez. Replacement of private security companies by the Afghan Public Protection Force has seen slow progress. On 31 October, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that the United Nations, foreign missions and other international organisations enjoy diplomatic immunity with the authority to maintain the internal security of their premises.

16. As of 31 October, Afghan National Police personnel stood at 147,000 and the Afghan National Army at 188,000. While surge targets for the end of 2012 - 157,000 and 195,000, respectively - have largely been met, attrition remained high. Insider attacks targeting international and national personnel have also taken a toll on a strategy which is based on fast-paced, large-scale recruitment and dependent on mutual trust. A re-vetting exercise saw a few hundred personnel from all services dismissed. In ensuring a sustainable military force, concern has also been raised by Afghan and international stakeholders, alike, about the preparedness of enablers required for operations and maintenance, such as air assets, engineers, counter-explosive expertise and casualty evacuation. Civil society continued to emphasise the need for transparent accountability mechanisms.

17. On 16 and 17 October, the new Minister of Interior outlined his ten priorities at a meeting of senior police personnel. These included community-based policing, support for forces in areas which have undergone security transition, reducing casualties and attrition, anti-corruption efforts, and ensuring a sound organisational structure. On 10 November, a major reshuffle of 32 senior police officials was announced. Concerns over wrongdoings relating to the UNDP-administered Law and Order Trust Fund in Afghanistan (LOTFA), which acts as a basket-fund for police salaries, are being addressed through an active dialogue between UNDP and donors. UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations is involved and a management review by independent consultants is underway to be finalized mid-December. Remedial measures already put in place include new oversight and compliance mechanisms and new standard operating procedures. UNAMA continued to facilitate the coordination of international resources to assist Afghan authorities in strengthening the recruitment and capacity of female police, and to raise awareness among their male counterparts of the importance of integrating women into the police force as equal members. On 15 October, the Ministry of Interior, together with LOTFA, UNAMA and a consortium of women's non-Government organisations, launched the Police Women Mentoring Programme aiming at strengthening the capacity of female police officers, addressing violence against women and raising awareness among their male counterparts on the importance of integrating women as equal members of the force.

18. Expansion of the Afghan Local Police has continued amidst a re-vetting process with 17,850 personnel at 86 validated sites as of 14 November. Afghan security institutions have been seen taking an increasing role in the training and oversight previously undertaken by international forces. While Afghan Local Police have contributed to security in some areas, major concerns remain over vetting, command and control, impunity and the potential re-emergence of ethnically or politically biased militias. On 31 October, at a gathering of hundreds of former mujahidin in Herat Province, the Minister of Water and Energy, Mohammad Ismail Khan, promoted the creation of a national "mujahidin council" with "units" of

former fighters to assist the country's security forces post-2014. The Provincial Governor's spokesperson later expressed some concern emphasizing that control of security is a State function. In both houses of the legislature there was also strong criticism of what was perceived as a potentially destabilizing attempt to create parallel structures.

C. Regional cooperation

19. Operationalization of the confidence-building measures of the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan continued. On 24 September, the Deputy Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan and Kazakhstan co-chaired a senior officials meeting in New York, opened by Afghan Foreign Minister Zalmay Rassoul, which reviewed progress toward implementation plans on three of the seven agreed measures: counter-terrorism, disaster management, and cooperation between chambers of commerce. A second [senior officials] meeting in Ankara on 18 October agreed that all confidence-building measures would have implementation plans prepared by the next gathering scheduled for January 2013 in Baku – with those attending empowered to endorse them.

20. On 25 September, Foreign Minister Rassoul and his Pakistani counterpart Rabbani Khar met in New York to discuss progress on the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement and the issue of cross-border infiltration and shelling. A trilateral meeting the following day between President Karzai, Pakistani President Zardari and British Prime Minister David Cameron agreed to finalize a draft strategic cooperation agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan by the end of 2013. On 20 November, the Pakistani Chief of Army Staff, General Kayani, made a one-day visit to Kabul, meeting with President Karzai as well as national and international military counterparts.

21. On 22 September, President Karzai met with China's top security official Zhou Yongkang, the republic's highest level representative to visit Afghanistan since 1966. Further extending Afghanistan's engagement in the region, on 16 October, President Karzai participated in the 20th Economic Cooperation Organization Summit in Baku and the next day took part in the Asia Cooperation Dialogue, inaugurated in 2002 to help integrate regional cooperation organizations. On 8 November, the President addressed the 5th Bali Democracy Forum. Subsequently, on 9 November, the President and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono signed a number of friendship documents enhancing trade and cultural cooperation. Between 9 and 13 November, President Karzai undertook an official visit to India, meeting with President Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Four pacts were signed to increase cooperation on local government and community organizations, agriculture, youth affairs and the development of coal and mineral resources.

22. On 19 September, Lithuania hosted an international conference "Afghanistan and the region: practical approach for sustainable development", attended by Foreign Minister Rassoul and Lithuanian Foreign Minister Ažubalis. On 18 October, the fourth annual Meeting of Central Asian Deputy Foreign Ministers took place in Bishkek under the auspices of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventative Diplomacy in Central Asia. On 19 October, the International Contact Group on Afghanistan met in Ankara. Discussion focused on implementation of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, the Istanbul Process, counter-narcotics, and support for electoral and reconciliation processes. Afghanistan's Deputy Foreign Minister strongly linked the latter two in his address. On 14 and 15 November, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific held a

first name?

conference in Mazar-e Sharif on strengthening economic ties between Afghanistan and Central Asia. The Governor of Balkh Province, local officials, business representatives and members of parliament attended together with the United Nations Resident Coordinator for Tajikistan, Tajikistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan and participants from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and UNAMA. This was followed on 27 and 28 November by the 2012 United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia Economic Forum in Bangkok, which included a side event reviewing its work on Afghanistan.

23. My Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, continued to focus on regional engagement with official travel to the United Arab Emirates, Turkmenistan, Turkey and the Russian Federation. In Moscow on 14 November, he participated in a consultation on regional security with member states and observers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). It was agreed that the SCO and UNAMA would deepen contacts and help ensure Afghanistan's peaceful and stable development. On 9 and 10 October, UNAMA Deputy Special Representative Haysom visited Tehran, where he met with senior Iranian officials and discussed the need for robust regional engagement, including on national security, immigration, refugees and drug control.

III. Human rights

→ 24. Between 1 August and 31 October, a [28 per cent] increase in civilian casualties was recorded compared to the same quarter in 2011, in contrast to the downward trend of the first six months of the year. Overall, in the first 10 months of 2012, a four per cent decline in civilian deaths and injuries was recorded compared with the same period in 2011. UNAMA documented 2,557 civilian casualties (967 killed and 1,590 injured) between 1 August and 31 October. The vast majority were attributed to anti-Government elements - 84 per cent, up from 70 per cent for the same period in 2011. Pro-Government forces bore responsibility for six per cent of civilian casualties, down from ten per cent the previous year. → Ten per cent could not be attributed to any party.

25. Improvised explosive devices continued to be the leading cause of civilian casualties, which, together with suicide attacks, accounted for 56 per cent of deaths and injuries between 1 August and 31 October. In a 19 October mass casualty incident, a civilian bus hit a pressure-plate-activated device killing 18 women in Balkh Province. A statement purportedly from Taliban leader Mullah Omar on the occasion of Eid-al-Adha, released on 24 October, emphasized the need to protect non-combatants. Civilians, however, continued to be deliberately targeted and public locations used as the site of insurgent attacks. Civilian casualties as a result of targeted killings by anti-Government elements increased by 93 per cent compared to the same quarter in 2011, with 256 civilians killed and 145 injured. On 26 October, a suicide bomber detonated in a mosque during Eid prayers killing 41 persons including civilians in Maymana, Faryab Province. UNAMA immediately condemned this atrocity and my Special Representative visited the city on 8 November to express his condolences and outrage at such tactics.

26. More than 355 children (including at least 67 girls) were killed or injured in the armed conflict from 1 August to 31 October, the majority in the South and East. This included an incident on 4 October in which an explosive device detonated at the gate of a high school in Chaghcharan, Ghor Province, wounding one pupil as staff and students celebrated Teachers' Day. Other grave violations of child rights recorded included attacks against education and health facilities (27 incidents), abductions (five

incidents), underage recruitment (four incidents) and denial of humanitarian assistance (11 incidents). Arson attacks on girls' schools were reported in Badakhshan, Khost, Nangarhar and Bamiyan Provinces.

27. Reports of serious violence against women and ~~other~~ harmful traditional practices continued. Tasked by President Karzai, the Ministry of Women's Affairs has undertaken an awareness campaign to reduce violence against women, with UN Women and UNAMA support. UN Women also provided support to the Ministry of Women Affairs to run the shelter programme for women survivors of violence and to develop standard operating procedures for shelter management so as to ensure quality services and protocols to protect those seeking assistance. The aim is to establish 29 shelters by the end of 2013. At a 16 September meeting of the Women's Commission of the lower house of the National Assembly, the Ministers of Justice and Women's Affairs as well as the Deputy Minister of Interior made strong statements condemning the imprisonment of women and girls on charges of "running away", given that no such crime exists under Afghan law. Concrete legal and policy actions have yet to ensure that this practice is prevented. On 11 October, the International Day of the Girl Child focused attention on raising awareness of the continuing practice of early marriage in Afghanistan. According to the Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2010/11 launched in June 2012, more than 46 per cent of women are married before the age of 18 and over 15 per cent before age 15, despite the legal minimum age in Afghanistan of 16.

28. ISAF has been reviewing certification allowing the transfer of detainees from international forces to several facilities run by the National Directorate of Security and Afghan National Police. This action was taken as the result of new information they have received on the use of torture in some Afghan-run detention facilities where ISAF detainees have been transferred. As part of an earlier review of the Directorate's facility in Takhar, and following renewed reports of torture, ISAF revoked certification. UNAMA continued its own efforts to observe the treatment of conflict-related detainees, visiting 36 facilities managed by the National Directorate of Security, Ministry of Interior, Afghan National Police and Ministry of Justice in 16 provinces.

29. President Karzai stated that decisions on the membership of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, awaited since December 2011, are forthcoming. Civil society has expressed concern at a lack of transparency in decision-making. UNAMA has advocated for a robust, inclusive process and well-qualified appointees.

IV. Implementation of the Kabul process and aid coherence

30. In order to operationalize the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, the Government took the lead in preparing detailed action plans for indicators, finalizing the Aid Management Policy, and clarifying the necessary aid architecture to rationalize engagement with the international community. On 3 September, the Council of Ministers approved a structure proposed by the Ministry of Finance. The Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, co-chaired by the Afghan Government and UNAMA, remains the umbrella for broad based engagement between the Government and the international community. More specifically focused on the Tokyo Framework, a new Steering Committee chaired by the Minister of Finance will convene at the Ministerial and Ambassadorial level to promote mutual dialogue at strategic level. This will be supported by a Technical Committee of Deputy Ministers and heads of donor's agencies, focused on progress toward individual benchmarks.

31. Intense engagement by UNAMA in defining the new structures facilitated agreement on international community representation on the two committees. The top five contributing donors - on the basis of Ministry of Finance data reviewed yearly - will have seats. For 2012, these are the United States, Japan, the European Union, the United Kingdom and Germany. In addition, up to four donor representatives will be selected *ad hoc* on the basis of the agenda, policy capacity to contribute and the principle of representation. For the first round of meetings, these are Australia, Canada and a representative of the Nordic group.
32. On 15 October, the Government provided the first iteration of action plans for two of the five Tokyo Framework areas: Representational Democracy and Equitable Elections; and Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights. These action plans were the focus of the first Technical Committee meeting on 21 November and Steering Committee on 5 December. International commitments to alignment against national priority programmes (80 per cent of funding) and on-budget execution (50 per cent of funding), together with implementation of the Aid Management Policy, have been the subject of complex discussions. Consultation also continued on the six national priority programmes (of 22) still to be endorsed: Transparency and Accountability; Law and Justice for All; Water and Natural Resources; Efficient and Effective Governance; Comprehensive Agriculture Production; and National Energy Supply. The latter four are in final stages of consultation.
33. On 17 October, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator that a one-year extension of the current United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2010 – 2013 had been approved. The timeframe of the next Development Assistance Framework will start in 2015, in line with the Afghan Government's transformation decade, 2015–2024. On 14 and 15 November, United Nations Under-Secretary General and UNDP Associate Administrator Rebeca Grynspan was in Kabul and engaged with Government counterparts, the United Nations Country Team and the donor community on current efforts and the post-2014 agenda. While in Kabul, Ms. Grynspan signed an agreement with the Ministry of Women's Affairs for UNDP to undertake a major project focusing on the Ministry's capacity development and Afghan women's legal and economic empowerment.

V. Governance and rule of law

34. On 20 September, President Karzai announced a large-scale reshuffle of provincial leadership following an assessment by the Independent Directorate for Local Governance. The Governors of Takhar, Helmand, Baghlan, Faryab, Wardak, Logar, Badghis, Nimroz and Laghman Provinces were replaced.
35. On 28 November, the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee released the findings of its public inquiry into the failure of Kabul Bank. The report concluded that individuals capitalized on a policy vacuum to divert nearly USD 1 billion. Recommendations included greater coordination between regulatory bodies in the financial sector and tackling systemic issues such as abuse of power, political interference and impunity. This inquiry, undertaken at the request of the Ministry of Finance, is not part of a criminal investigation.

36. On 13 October, the lower house of the National Assembly adopted the law on the structure, duties and authority of the Office of the Attorney General. Discussion on the draft Criminal Procedure Code also began in the lower house's judicial affairs commission. Donor dissatisfaction over the continued failure to finalize the national priority programme Law and Justice for All has seen the European Union publicly indicate that it will put on hold its future funding to the sector until the programme's endorsement. The complexity and scope of the programme present challenges and UNAMA has been coordinating between the Government and donors with the goal of endorsement in early 2013.

37. UNAMA and UNDP have continued close collaboration as the UN Global Focal Points on rule of law. They have assisted the Government to identify priority rule of law and gender issues and to coordinate policy and programming to better empower women as active participants in civil society and Government. There has also been engagement at the provincial level to assist authorities in coordinating alternate donor funding for corrections and rule of law-related activities.

VI. Development and humanitarian assistance

38. Recent data indicates that food security improved considerably in most provinces with ^{be better?} good rainfall contributing to high cereal production - forecast to reach 6.3 million tons for the year. Yet food insecurity and malnutrition remained high for some 650,000 persons, particularly in Nuristan and Badakhshan, where significant food consumption gaps coupled with high malnutrition have been reported. The onset of winter is likely to further compound the food insecurity and malnutrition figures, with populations in 13 provinces projected to face extreme winter risk in informal urban settlements and remote rural locations. The Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority, with United Nations agencies and other humanitarian actors, has been working to ensure adequate preparedness with a particular focus on preventing the avoidable deaths of children. Mapping of the most vulnerable populations is underway and the World Food Programme (WFP) has pre-positioned 10,000 metric tons of food at the household level to help ensure vulnerable families have adequate stocks. ←

39. As of 31 October, a total of 459,200 people (71,800 families) were assessed as internally displaced by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The impact of displacement is experienced across the country: 30 per cent of those displaced are hosted in the South, 26 per cent in the West and 21 per cent in the East. Conflict continues to be a significant driver with 35 per cent of those newly displaced in 2012 (a total of 58,600 people) citing conflict as the primary direct motivation for their flight. Many were displaced within the western areas, which saw the highest increase in internal displacement (14,110 persons). At least 5,000 Afghans (800 families) were displaced and in need of humanitarian assistance in Kunar Province during 2012.

40. On 3 October in Geneva, the Quadripartite Steering Committee for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees was convened for the first time. The governments of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, together with UNHCR, discussed ways to ensure effective implementation of the three pillars of the Solutions Strategy, notably, continued support to voluntary repatriation, investment in sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan and assistance to host countries. Related consultations in Geneva involving key stakeholders resulted in expressions of strong support for the multi-dimensional approach of the Solutions Strategy which seeks to improve the lives of returnees, almost a quarter of the overall population of Afghanistan, while simultaneously providing appropriate support to the neighbouring

countries who continue to extend protection to a significant number of Afghan refugees. In addition, UNHCR facilitated meetings of the Tripartite Commissions – in September with Afghanistan and Pakistan, and in December with Afghanistan and Iran – addressing the strategic and operational aspects of voluntary return and the continuing status of refugees in Pakistan and Iran.

41. On 27 September at a high-level event in New York, “Our commitment to the Next Generation: The Legacy of a Polio-free World”, President Karzai stated that his Government would make every effort possible with the resources available to eradicate polio from Afghanistan. The event brought together leaders of the remaining endemic countries, donors, development partners and the media to draw attention to the need to eliminate the outstanding polio cases worldwide. On 29 September, the Ministry of Public Health, together with the World Health Organization (WHO), launched the National Health and Nutrition Policy 2012 – 2020, setting out priorities to better ensure long-term sustainability of services provision. As part of my Every Woman Every Child Initiative, on 31 October, a report on Afghan midwifery was finalised. The report will be used to plan training and deployment of resources and details the current status of midwifery knowledge around the country. On 12 November, the Afghan Government and its development partners endorsed the country’s first Education Joint Sector Review. The Human Resource Development Board, an inter-ministerial coordination body for the education sector, was supported by the United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization in conducting the exercise. It found that technical capacity and possibilities for domestic resource mobilisation to meet the challenges are still fragile.

41 bis. New data from WHO revealed that, during the first ten months of 2012, 540 health facilities were forced to suspend activities due to insecurity or lack of funding, an increase of 40 per cent from the same period in 2011. This equates to over 20 per cent of the 2,600 facilities providing various types of health care in the country, with the largest number of inactive facilities located in the South, where 50 to 60 per cent of the population has very limited or no access to basic health care services.

42. An extension for Afghanistan to meet its obligations under the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty was endorsed on 7 December, during the 12th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. Currently, 670,000 Afghans live within 500 metres of a minefield, impacting over 1,800 communities. The goal is for Afghanistan to be declared mine-impact free by 2023 – a significant achievement for what has been one of the world’s most heavily mine-contaminated countries.

43. Risks associated with the delivery of humanitarian services remained high. Ongoing military operations, remnants of war and sporadic clashes continued to ^{negatively impact} ~~raise concerns~~ for the protection of civilians and the ability of humanitarians to safely access and provide assistance to vulnerable populations.

VII. Counter-narcotics

44. The 2011 Cannabis Survey, released on 24 October, estimated that the total area under cannabis cultivation in Afghanistan last year was 12,000 hectares with a potential yield of 1,300 tons. An estimated 65,000 households grew cannabis, up from 47,000 in 2010. ^{research by the} ~~The Joint~~ Ministry of Counter Narcotics and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) ~~research~~ indicated a clear geographical association between opium and cannabis cultivation, with almost two-thirds of cannabis-growing households (58 per

cent) reporting poppy cultivation in the preceding season. Three-quarters of farmers stated that they grew cannabis because of high sales prices as the value of the highest quality resin nearly tripled, from USD 35 per kilogram in 2009 to USD 95 in 2011.

45. Opium cultivation increased by 18 per cent in 2012 – although plant disease led to a decrease in final production. The joint Ministry of Counter Narcotics and UNODC 2012 Opium Survey, released on 20 November, recorded a jump in cultivation from 131,000 hectares in 2011 to around 153,000 in 2012. The number of poppy-free provinces remained stable year-on-year at 17. A disease which affected poppy plants mitigated the increase in cultivation. Final figures assessed a 38 per cent decrease in production on 2011 from 5,800 tons to 3,600 tons. The gross average income produced per hectare was assessed at USD 4,600 with an overall total farm-gate value of USD 700 million, or four per cent of Afghanistan's Gross Domestic Product.

46. Under the auspices of UNODC's Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, the first border liaison office meeting between Iran and Afghanistan was held in Tayabad, Iran on 24 September. On 27 and 28 September, a workshop on strengthening the coordination and quality of counter-narcotics training programmes took place in Ashgabat. Another was held in Almaty on 3 and 4 October. In Tehran, on 10 and 11 October, the first regional workshop on international cooperation in asset recovery for countries in West and Central Asia was co-organized with the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO). On 17 October in Bishkek, the second Tripartite meeting of senior officials from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan saw agreement on improving legal frameworks, supporting the establishment of border liaison offices, conducting joint operations, and employing the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre as a communications hub.

47. A regional ministerial conference aimed at strengthening cooperation on counter-narcotics efforts was held in Islamabad on 12 and 13 November. New measures proposed included a hotline between national narcotics agencies and a regional contact group to meet annually at senior official level.

VIII. Mission support

48. UNAMA progressed in reconfiguring the Mission to best meet its mandate in the current and anticipated political, security and financial environment. This effort has been guided by the outcomes of the comprehensive review conducted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1974 (2011), the subsequent renewal of the mandate by the Council in its resolution 2041 (2012) and funding levels approved for special political missions by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/248.

49. The final five of the nine UNAMA provincial offices slated for closure - Daykundi, Uruzgan, Takhar, Saripul and Kunar - ceased operations. The premise in Uruzgan was transferred to the United Nations Office for Project Services, while in Kunar the office was returned to Afghan authorities for use by the local university. National outreach and regular travel throughout the country has been the focus of renewed emphasis, given the lighter provincial footprint, with my Special Representative visiting Nangarhar, Bamyan, Herat and Faryab Provinces. The closure of offices, with the resulting termination of contracts, and a restriction on recruitment prior to a foreseen reduction in posts for 2013 have led to an exceptionally high vacancy rate.

50. Progress has continued on ensuring that all United Nations facilities meet required safety standards. Construction of new premises in Balkh and Bamyán Provinces are now complete and relocation from older sites in progress. Delays in clearing protective security equipment through customs and charges by the Ministry of Communications to process communications equipment continued to impact the Mission's ability to undertake activities in a timely manner. Flight capacity has been disrupted due to the small arms fire against a United Nations aircraft, as well as a hard landing by a helicopter in Bamyán on 14 October, which resulted in severe damage to the aircraft. A 10 October Presidential decree that UNDP relocate its long-time headquarters in Kabul has led to the need to identify and secure appropriate new premises.

IX. Observations

51. I welcome the seriousness with which the Government of Afghanistan and the international community have approached the operationalization of Tokyo Conference commitments, which are critical to maintaining necessary levels of civilian assistance to the country. Extensive follow-up in Kabul is ensuring that the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework is at the heart of future engagement, promoting greater development coherence and consistency in expectations and priorities. I congratulate the Government on its leadership in re-aligning the necessary aid architecture and am pleased that UNAMA has continued to demonstrate its value as a facilitating partner.

52. Donors have emphasized that consolidating and extending the gains made in the promotion of human rights over the last decade – notably the rights of women and girls is central to their sustained engagement. Mainstreaming gender issues across the Framework's action plans and national priority programmes, as well as ensuring appropriate attention to another cross-cutting issue, counter-narcotics, remain key to underpinning the sustainability of development and governance reforms. Donors have also strongly emphasized the need for demonstrable progress on agreed governance measures. It is important to bear in mind that the concept of mutual accountability demands that the international community, in turn, needs to ensure greater progress on its long-standing commitments to alignment and on-budget financing.

53. I welcome the promulgation of a comprehensive elections timeline for the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council polls as a positive step. Tokyo indicators now require a robust electoral architecture, developed in a transparent manner. This should include passage of the two outstanding electoral laws, with debate leading to consensus on processes which enhance the credibility, inclusiveness and sustainability of elections. Strong Afghan leadership will also be required to coordinate and drive the e-taskera effort across the many relevant institutions, if this important national project is to contribute to the 2014-15 electoral cycle. I welcome the constructive participation of political parties and civil society. Realistic recommendations on electoral reforms and well-informed discussion promote transparency and inclusiveness and must inform decision-making. The media also has an important role in facilitating wider dialogue and reflecting the issues of the day.

54. The increasingly practical focus of the Istanbul Process, especially progress in translating confidence-building measures into implementation plans, is welcome and should yield tangible results. I commend the active engagement of Heart of Asia nations, supporter countries and regional organisations in this important work and pledge the continued cooperation and support of the United Nations. The

nations participating in the

process

proliferation of bilateral and multilateral engagement by regional actors on common concerns is also a positive development.

55. The High Peace Council visit to Islamabad in November brought renewed momentum to strengthening relations between the neighbours. Long-term, consistent engagement is vital to building a shared understanding and, ultimately, mutual solutions. As recognised in the joint statement by the High Peace Council and Pakistani Government, engagement with the religious establishment can help tackle a rising tide of militancy. The Council has an important role in Afghan-led efforts to build the conditions and confidence conducive to peace and reconciliation, and the United Nations is prepared to offer assistance, as requested. I am pleased that the Government has indicated its support for UNAMA's intention to structure a complementary Track II national dialogue.

56. A rise in civilian casualties during ^{the} this reporting period is a matter of great concern, as the conflict continues to take an unacceptable toll on the Afghan people. Insurgents are using intimidation of communities and individuals as a deliberate tactic to extend influence and control, targeting those who challenge their authority or ideas. Targeting of civilians violates both religious strictures and international law. In particular, pressure-plate activated improvised explosive devices, acting as massive anti-personnel landmines, are a prohibited weapon under international law. I reiterate demands for an immediate halt to their use and call upon insurgent leaders to publicly repudiate such tactics. Public statements linked to the Taliban have challenged United Nations data on these issues. I stand by our information and our use of clear legal definitions of civilians. However, I also welcome continued engagement with all parties to build understanding and identify solutions to combat this human tragedy.

57. As international military forces reduce their presence, there will be economic consequences. ^{Therefore} ~~Going forward~~, it will be vital that efforts to create sustainable employment and livelihood opportunities be redoubled. Increasing Government leadership in helping to ensure an orderly transfer is critical. The United Nations will, where requested, support the smooth transition of tasks to national authorities to minimize potentially negative impacts. While challenges should not be downplayed, transition may also provide an opportunity to re-balance assistance, ensuring that it is focused on needs and aligned with agreed national objectives.

58. Overall humanitarian funding has decreased by nearly 50 percent from USD 900 million in 2011 to USD 484 million in 2012, while overall development assistance has grown from USD 4 billion in 2010 to USD 6.3 billion in 2012. I support the call from the Afghanistan Humanitarian Country Team for donors to earmark at least ten per cent of their Official Development Assistance for humanitarian assistance. A 2013 Common Humanitarian Action Plan for Afghanistan, outlining the most acute humanitarian needs and priority lifesaving interventions, is expected to be launched in December. It will provide an opportunity to address this imbalance and to support the overarching humanitarian objective for 2013: to reinforce the protection of civilians by responding more effectively to conflict-related needs.

59. My Deputy Special Representative, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, and UNDP Resident Representative, Michael Keating, completed his assignment on 10 November. I thank him for his drive and diplomacy in facilitating the work of UNAMA and the United Nations Country Team, particularly around the successful Tokyo Process negotiations. ~~In a seamless transition,~~ ^{his} replacement, Mark

Bowden, arrived in Kabul on 15 November. I wish him well in this new and challenging assignment. In addition, I should like, once again, to express my gratitude to all national and international United Nations staff members in Afghanistan and to my Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, for their continued dedication to supporting the people of Afghanistan.