Note to Mr. Namibar

Draft Report of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan

1. Please find attached, for Secretary-General’s approval, the draft report to the Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan. The report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1868 (2009) of 23 March 2009, in which the Council decided to extend the mandate of UNAMA until 23 March 2010 and requested the Secretary-General to report on developments in Afghanistan every three months. The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a set of benchmarks to measure progress in the implementation of UNAMA’s mandate.

2. The report provides an update on the situation in Afghanistan since the last report of the Secretary-General, dated 23 June 2009, and is focused on the electoral process in particular. In this regard, the report describes the electoral campaigning period, Election Day and the post-election period, including recent developments in the tallying of votes. As of today, the official final certified results have not been issued.

3. The report highlights the importance of institution-building in key sectors of the Afghan administration, at both central and local levels, and the responsibilities of the next Government in this respect. The section on security notes the ISAF’s new focus on protection of the civilian population; other sections of the report underscore that progress made in counter-narcotics and donor-coordination. The section on mission support notes that the expansion in offices and strengthening of UNAMA’s donor-coordination capacity require additional resources for 2010, amounting to an approximate 70 percent increase over the 2009 budget.

4. The final section of the report contains a series of observations on the electoral process and notes that electoral operations were largely successful; that predictions of public apathy proved to be wrong; and that anti-fraud measures were able to detect irregularities and address them. This section also examines what the future relationship between the international community and the Afghan Government should be; noting that the Afghan Government must gradually assume all the responsibilities belonging to a sovereign state, with the international community playing a role that is increasingly one of support.

5. Annex I to the report presents a set of benchmarks (covering institution-building, security, economic and social development, human rights and counter-narcotics). During the consultation process in Kabul, international community representatives expressed a preference for benchmarks measuring progress towards self-sustaining security and development in Afghanistan. At the working level, Permanent Missions in New York, favoured benchmarks more focused on UNAMA’s mandate. Future Secretary-General reports on Afghanistan will therefore outline UNAMA’s contribution in achieving progress towards the benchmarks.

5. The Security Council is scheduled to hold a debate on Afghanistan on 29 September. The Security Council presidency (United States) has requested that the report be published on 22 September. As per standard practice, the text has been submitted for advance translation. We would be grateful for its early approval.

Alain Le Roy
16 September 2009

cc: Mr. Pascoe
To: Mr. Nambiar,

Please find attached, for your approval, the draft report of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan.

The report provides an update on the situation over the past three months, focusing particularly on the electoral process. It notes that electoral operations were largely successful and that anti-fraud measures were able to detect irregularities and address them. Looking beyond the elections, it stresses the importance of a decisive shift in relationships between the Afghan Government and the international community, reinforcing the Afghan leadership and requiring it to gradually assume all the responsibilities belonging to a sovereign state. At this critical stage in Afghanistan, the report underscores the importance of the international community's long-term commitment. It requests support for greater resources required for UNAMA for 2010 (70% more than in 2009).

The report is due for publication on 22 September, in time for the SC debate scheduled for 29 September.

Nicholas Haysom
18 September 2009

Cc: KWS
29-09690
The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

I. Introduction and Overview

1. This report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 63/18 as well as Security Council resolution 1868 (2009), in which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). In that resolution, the Council requested a report on developments in Afghanistan every three months. This report reviews the situation in Afghanistan and the activities of UNAMA since my report of 23 June 2009 (A/63/892-S/2009/323).

2. Presidential and Provincial Council Elections were held on 20 August 2009. At the time of publication of this report, the final results have not been certified. The campaign focused on political agendas, and the preliminary results demonstrate real competition between candidates. The public engagement in the election campaign was beyond expectations. These were the first elections run entirely by the Afghan Independent Election Commission (IEC) with support from the United Nations Development Programme’s Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (UNDP-ELECT) project. The success of the IEC in opening, equipping and staffing thousands of polling centres across the country was an achievement in itself. Voting, however, was unquestionably marred by irregularities. A campaign of intimidation by the Taliban stifled voter turnout, particularly in the south.

3. The level of alleged electoral irregularities have generated significant political turbulence leading to fears of a return to violence when election results are announced. Institutional processes are in place to resolve allegations about fraud, including the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC), three of whose five members have been appointed by my Special Representative. The ECC has the final authority in adjudicating complaints. The IEC began issuing uncertified partial preliminary results as of 25 August. On 8 September, the ECC ordered the IEC to conduct an audit and recount at polling stations where there were indicators of serious electoral irregularities. It is important to allow time and space for these processes to work according to the law.

4. The formation of a new Afghan Government will provide an opportunity to frame a new agenda for Afghanistan and the international community building on the mutual commitments undertaken in London, Paris and The Hague. This report describes a number of areas of progress with regard to institution-building and aid coordination that the new Government must expand upon.

5. Insecurity will continue to challenge these efforts and will remain a priority for the new Government. Efforts undertaken thus far to increase the number of national and international security forces have, over the past several years, failed to stem the insurgency. The recently-appointed Commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has begun to implement a new approach that places the protection of the Afghan population as the highest priority and includes closer operational partnership with Afghan national security forces.
6. Human rights issues, and especially the rights of women, remain high on the agenda of concerns. The Shia Personal Status law, signed by the President in March 2009, and reviewed following national and international criticism, was amended and entered into force in July 2009. The amended version addressed some concerns but still appears to legalize certain forms of discrimination. This report, finally, describes the humanitarian situation in the country and the response of the United Nations and the international community.

II. Political developments and elections

7. The election campaign began on 16 June, with posters and billboards of the major candidates appearing in cities across the country. Presidential candidates, including the incumbent, took part in live TV debates on a number of Afghan television stations, reaching millions of prospective voters. Each of the 41 candidates was given time to participate in televised roundtables which were designed to highlight their respective platforms. Arrangements were made for the Ministry of Interior to provide police protection and for the Ministry of Defence, within its capacity and where commercial flights were not available, to provide helicopter flights to candidates for campaigning. Several candidates travelled to different parts of the country, holding rallies attended by tens-of-thousands.

8. The degree to which the campaigns were based on political programmes was encouraging. Abdullah Abdullah, for example, proposed a replacement of the current presidential system with a parliamentary system and decentralized regional governance. President Karzai announced a five-point plan to improve security and increase economic growth. Others focused on the need to combat corruption, manage aid better, create jobs and housing, stimulate trade, and establish a cease-fire with the Taliban.

9. The generally substantive tenor of the political debate during the campaign period was in large part due to the flourishing of national, private sector media since the last election. Broadcast media was particularly important, given Afghanistan’s high illiteracy rate, with radio broadcast being still the main source of news in Afghanistan, and television growing in importance.

10. The five-member Media Commission established in May 2009 to monitor reporting of the electoral campaign and address complaints of media influence issued a series of monitoring reports during the campaign period. It asserted that the state-run media Radio Television Afghanistan failed to meet its obligations of neutral and unbiased coverage required by the Electoral Law. The Ministry of Culture and Information contested these findings. Private-sector news and election reports were in general more balanced and provided much of the coverage of the main opposition candidates.

11. A number of presidential nominees publicly withdrew their candidature, many asking their supporters to vote for a specific other candidate. The campaign period also featured numerous rumours of political “deals” - promises of support in exchange for positions in a future Government.
12. The United Nations and the international community stressed the need for a level playing field. My Special Representative reiterated that Government institutions and officials must not interfere in the electoral process. Nonetheless, UNAMA received a number of complaints alleging state interference, in most cases in favour of the incumbent. The most widely reported allegations related to open campaigning by governors on behalf of specific candidates; intimidation of opposition candidates and their supporters; attempts to pay for support; and the use of Government resources for partisan electoral purposes.

13. The ECC received 433 complaints during the campaign period, which ended on 18 August. One quarter of the complaints related to the Presidential election, about one-third concerned Provincial Council candidates, and the remainder were filed against other organizations or individuals involved in the electoral process, including the IEC. The ECC issued 23 fines, including 17 to Presidential candidates who did not produce financial disclosures in accordance with IEC regulations.

14. UNAMA and the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) issued two Political Rights Monitoring reports, covering the candidates' nomination period and the campaign period respectively. Overall, and despite the difficult security situation, the nomination and the challenge process was conducted in accordance with electoral laws and regulations and the number of candidates increased when compared with the previous election, particularly in relation to women. The rights of candidates and their supporters during the campaign were respected, despite isolated incidents of documented violations. Nonetheless, women were significantly disadvantaged due to cultural obstacles that inhibit their participation in public life, and were disproportionately impacted by the intimidation tactics of anti-government elements (AGEs). The electoral process clearly demonstrated the need to strengthen the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups process and to implement the measures set out in the 2005 Action Plan on Peace, Justice and Reconciliation, and the need to build confidence in the judicial system. The weaknesses of the judicial system resulted in individuals allegedly responsible for serious human rights violations standing for public office.

15. A major concern during the final preparations for the election was the need to establish adequate security for the polling. To do so, a Joint Security Planning Group (JSPG) was established in March. The JSPG streamlined security planning between the Afghan national security forces, the IEC, international security forces and UNAMA. During the last month before Election Day, a series of meetings were hosted by my Special Representative, which included the Ministers of Defense, Interior, National Security Directorate, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the IEC, and members of the international community to address the increasingly problematic issue of securing the polling centres on the basis of a provisional IEC planning figure of 6,969 polling centres. The IEC insisted that all polling stations must have Afghan National Police (ANP) and Afghan National Army (ANA) personnel present, even if their presence was, in some cases, to be supported by “community protection forces”. As polling day approached, it was clear that not all sites could be secured. On 18 August, the IEC announced that it intended to open 6,519 polling centres on Election Day. After the elections, the IEC announced that it had opened 6,199 centres. Some of these were relocated from where they had originally been planned for security reasons.
16. The intensity of insurgency operations increased in the week before the election. On 15 August, a vehicle-borne suicide bomb exploded near the ISAF base in Kabul city, killing at least seven people and wounding another 70. Another vehicle-borne suicide bomber careened into an international military convoy on 18 August, killing two ISAF soldiers and seven civilians, and injuring at least another 50. Two UNAMA national staff members who were nearby were killed and one wounded in the attack. These incidents were the first suicide attacks in Kabul City since March 2009. Night letters and direct threats were reported countrywide, including the threat to cut off fingers marked with the indelible ink used to identify voters who had cast their ballot. There were also increased reports of factionally-inspired intimidation incidents.

17. This prelude, along with threat warnings received by the United Nations, contributed to fears that anti-government elements would conduct a series of spectacular attacks on 20 August. In fact, Election Day saw a high number of stand-off attacks, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and small scale armed clashes. In total, some 300 incidents were recorded. Eighteen Afghan police were killed and 27 wounded on polling day; at least 30 civilians were killed and 31 wounded.

18. Incidents of electoral fraud, irregularities and other problems were reported. Alleged irregularities included ballot box stuffing, premature closing of centres, opening of unauthorized centres, underage voting, multiple voting, proxy voting, campaigning by candidate agents inside polling centres, and complaints by candidates that their agents were not permitted to enter and observe the voting. The ECC has received 2,842 complaints, of which 726, if determined valid, could have a material effect on the final results.

19. On 8 September, the IEC, which had begun releasing uncertified partial results as of 25 August, issued uncertified partial results covering 92.8 percent of the polling stations. The same day, the ECC ordered the IEC to conduct an audit and recount at polling stations where preliminary results indicated either that the total number of votes cast was greater than 600 (the number of ballots provided for each station), or that any one Presidential candidate received 95 percent or more valid votes, provided that the total number of votes exceeded 100. The results of the elections cannot be certified by the IEC until all complaints are adjudicated by the ECC.

20. One safeguard of the electoral process was the presence of observers and candidate agents in polling centres. The IEC accredited 169,709 candidate agents for Provincial Council candidates and 92,897 agents for presidential candidates. In addition, it accredited 1,106 international observers and 9,228 domestic observers. International observers were unable to reach the most insecure areas of the country. The Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA), however, reported that it deployed over 7,000 domestic observers in all 34 provinces across the country.

21. The electoral process crowded out almost all other political activity during the reporting period. It is significant, however, that every presidential candidate referred to the need for a reconciliation process to end the insurgency. My Special Representative spoke publicly on several occasions regarding the need for such a process to take place, and for it to be inclusive. For the level and shape of such a process to be determined, establishing a coherent national strategy must be a priority of the new Government.
III. Institution-building, governance and rule of law

22. The future Afghan state must be founded on solid institutions staffed with competent officials selected and promoted on the basis of merit. These are the minimum conditions for exercising the basic functions of Government at the central and provincial level. Many efforts have been made over the past eight years to create these institutions. These efforts have been insufficient, despite significant investment. Frequently, they have undermined each other. Institution-building has also been undermined by the insufficient number of trained and qualified Afghans, a tolerance of patronage and corruption, lack of an administrative culture, and a tendency of Afghan politicians to perpetuate old rivalries rather than to focus on the needs of state-building. The deteriorating security situation has also significantly hampered attempts to build law-based institutions. The insurgency has deliberately targeted institutions at their weakest points in order to prevent their consolidation.

23. Two main non-security-related factors drive qualified Afghans away from Government service: low pay, in particular compared to non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and international organizations which continue to have a high demand for competent Afghans; and patronage-based promotion systems. The main effort to address these problems has been the pay and grading reform process, which is at the centre of the overall public administrative reform and entails an evaluation of existing staff, salary increases and merit-based career development for those whose capacities and skills match the needs of the Afghan Government service. Approximately 230,000 civil servants, including teachers, will be assessed and then subject to the compensation and benefits of this new mechanism over the next four years. The reforms have so far been completed in the Ministries of Justice, Finance, Education, Communication, Agriculture, and Rural Rehabilitation and Development. A similar process is being undertaken for judges, even though they are not considered civil servants.

24. Training Afghans who serve or wish to serve in Government is as important as retaining qualified staff. UNAMA has supported the Civil Service Commission in developing a Standard Curriculum across five common functions within the Civil Service: accounting, procurement, human resources, project management and policy development. Previously, different donors offered different curricula, often based on their own national institutions rather than on Afghan needs. The establishment of a single Afghan curriculum will ensure a much more coordinated and Afghan-centric approach to capacity-building. Over 15,000 members of the Civil Service will be trained on the curriculum over the next two years. In addition, my Special Representative, with strong support from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), has encouraged the Ministers of Education, Higher Education, and Labour, to work together to ensure that young Afghans are provided basic education, and that those with aptitude are provided opportunities to advance their education and develop their skills.

25. The lack of institutionalized structures and administration in Afghanistan accentuates the importance of sound leadership in these structures and in the administration. When competent ministers have been appointed to under-performing ministries, these ministries have dramatically improved. The same is true for Governors. Currently, there is no mechanism to ensure that this type of leadership is in place. The Advisory Panel for Senior Appointments, whose establishment
was among the benchmarks of the 2006 Afghanistan Compact, is mandated to play this role but is only sporadically consulted and has been less effective than hoped.

26. Administrative reform cannot be successful if the problem of corruption is not forcefully addressed. Progress has been made at a formal level: 27 ministries and Government institutions have provided anti-corruption action plans to the High Office of Oversight. The Ministries of Finance and Interior have begun implementing their plans while others are under review. Some 70 percent of cabinet ministers and 1,200 senior Government officials have made personal asset declarations. Nonetheless, the implementation of these initiatives has lacked urgency and enforcement, causing a general mistrust in their effectiveness. Polls prior to the elections revealed that corruption was a major concern among Afghans. The issue is not the aggravation of having to pay more for administrative processes or entitlements, but rather the resulting lack of confidence in the Government. This distrust has undermined the Government’s authority and legitimacy, playing into the hands of the insurgency. The next Afghan Government must understand the decisive importance of this issue, and take visible, convincing and sustained action to address it.

27. Administrative reform, police reform (addressed below) and anti-corruption efforts must take place within a strengthened framework of the rule of law. The blueprint for reforming the justice system is the National Justice Sector Strategy. The mechanism for implementing this strategy is the National Justice Programme. The Programme’s Oversight Committee meets regularly and, after a slow start in 2008, its advisory Board of Donors, co-chaired by UNAMA and, currently, the European Commission, now meets monthly. The main task of the Committee, with the assistance of the Board, must now be to reconcile the top-down, long-term programme of the National Justice Sector Strategy with the realities on the ground. This means that an overall analysis must be conducted of how many courts and prosecutor’s offices are required and how they should be staffed within realistic timeframes. Justice institutions must be built concurrently with the police. Establishing clarity on both the judicial and police structures required for Afghanistan in the short- to medium-term must be a priority for the next Government.

28. The focus of most institution-building has been at the central level. The reform of sub-national institutions has been hindered by a lack of clarity over their roles and their relationship to the central Government, as well as by their lack of capacity and resources. Government officials at the local level are also the most likely to be targeted by the insurgency, multiplying the problem of recruiting and retaining them. Furthermore, the lack of infrastructure for sub-national institutions undermines their authority and effectiveness. According to a recent survey conducted by the Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG), out of 364 districts in Afghanistan, 184 district governors lack offices, 288 have no official vehicle, and 318 district administrative centres have no electricity supply.

IV. Security and security sector reform

29. Insecurity continues to be the single greatest factor impeding progress in Afghanistan. This insecurity is caused by a politically-driven insurgency, but it has been exploited by criminal...
groups, drug traffickers and others. In many parts of the country it has overwhelmed the capacity of Afghanistan’s state institutions.

30. The tactics adopted by the insurgency since its resurgence in 2005 have remained unchanged in their essence. These are an avoidance of force-to-force encounters, a reliance on asymmetric tactics, deliberate targeting of representatives of state institutions and international organizations and a disregard for human lives. The implementation of these tactics has more recently evolved in complexity. The combination of simultaneous suicide and stand-off attacks has enabled insurgents to overcome increased security measures around Government installations in particular. Furthermore, the insurgency is increasingly able to act in areas where it previously could not, particularly in the northeast and northwest of the country.

31. There has been an average of 898 incidents in the first seven months of 2009, compared to 677 during the same timeframe in 2008. Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) incidents have risen dramatically to an average of more than eight per day, 60 percent higher than the average during the first seven months of 2008.

32. Complex attacks now average one per month compared to one per quarter in 2008. In the majority of these attacks, security forces responded professionally and quickly, effectively containing and limiting the impact of these attacks. The most recent such incidents include an attack against the Khost Police Headquarters building by multiple attackers on 25 July, and a suicide attack against the Gardez National Directorate for Security (NDS) Headquarters, Police Headquarters and Governor’s compound - one of them shared access with the United Nations Multi-Agency Compound - on 21 July.

33. The United Nations, while not directly targeted, has suffered from exposure to insurgent attacks targeting others. As mentioned above, on 18 September, two national staff members were killed and another was injured in a vehicle-borne suicide bomb attack on an international military convoy in Kabul.

34. Intimidation efforts by insurgents and the Taliban focused on discouraging participation in elections. Threats of violence were accompanied by publications in several languages questioning the legitimacy of the elections and the current Government. These publications also expressed highly negative views of the United Nations, using arguments previously espoused by al-Qaida. On Election Day itself, there were relatively few civilian casualties, but the day saw the highest number of security incidents since 2001. The most widely used tactic was stand-off attacks by rocket and mortar-fire. The geographical distribution of incidents was consistent with recent levels of violence. Kunduz in the northeast, Kandahar in the south, Khost in the southeast, Kunar and Nangarhar in the east recorded the majority of the incidents. The lack of spectacular attacks in Kabul and elsewhere on polling day can be attributed, at least in part, to effective operations by Afghan and international security forces.

35. The international military has responded to the insurgent threat over the past several years mainly by increasing the number of international and Afghan troops. The increase in insecurity described in this and previous reports suggests that this approach has been insufficient. The new ISAF Commander (COMISAF) has adopted a qualitatively different approach that
focuses on protecting the population rather than targeting insurgents. A tactical directive was issued restricting the use of air power and the conditions under which house searches and arrests are made. The new approach includes closer partnering between Afghan and international forces to make better use of existing Afghan capabilities and hasten their development.

36. The key to long-term stability in Afghanistan remains the training of Afghan National Security Forces, particularly the ANA and the ANP, as well as the reform of the ministries that they depend on. As part of the Ministry of Interior reform process, efforts are being made to establish the exact number of serving and active police personnel and to strengthen the human resource management mechanism. There remains a lack of clarity over the ideal size and composition of the police force. The JCMB agreed that any increase in the ANP strength must be based on the development of an Internal National Security Strategy which defines the roles and responsibilities of the various components of Afghanistan’s national security forces and thus provide the basis for decisions on the size and composition of the police, and hence its structures and training requirements. A committee to draft the strategy has been set up under the lead of the NDS, with international support.

37. The ANA continues to recruit and train faster than expected. Troop strength reached 93,000 in July 2009, 5,000 more than projected. The prospect of reaching the target strength of 134,000 by December 2011 remains therefore realistic. In accordance with the vision of ISAF’s new leadership, the ANA is expected to play a larger role in planning and carrying out operations.

V. Counter-Narcotics

38. Corruption, lawlessness, conflict and instability continue to have a negative impact on the drug situation in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, there have been significant positive trends. An overproduction of opium in recent years has led to a fall in prices while prices for alternative crops, wheat in particular, have risen. The loss of earnings is making the drug trade less attractive to farmers, with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) figures suggesting that some 800,000 people have turned away from opium production. This year, gross income per hectare of poppy shrunk by one quarter to US $3,562 per hectare, from US $4,662 per hectare in 2008. This market correction, which started in 2008, must be further stimulated if we want to consolidate the current downward trend and expand its coverage nationally.

39. Since the beginning of the year, opium cultivation in Afghanistan decreased by 22 percent, from 157,000 to 123,000 hectares and the country now has 20 opium free provinces compared to 18 in 2008 and none in 2004. The sharp reduction in Helmand province by one third is perhaps the most striking feature. This is a much welcomed trend as Helmand alone accounts for approximately 65 percent of Afghanistan’s total area under opium cultivation. Conversely, cultivated areas increased by 11,500 hectares over several provinces (Nangarhar, Badakshan, Kandahar, Dai Kundi, Badghis and Herat), indicating that stronger efforts must be made in order to maintain the progress previously made. Provinces and districts receiving lower levels of external support are vulnerable to a reversal in gains and prone to the insecurity and instability which feed on opium cultivation. UNODC, in conjunction with partner United Nations agencies, has initially focused on five districts in the western provinces, while other bilateral
partners are active in the south and east of the country. UNODC is also supporting the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics to take the lead in improving the coordination of the various existing alternative livelihood initiatives, and improving their impact. To sustain progress, a balance must be struck between addressing core producing zones and devoting resources to consolidate poppy free communities.

40. Renewed attention has been given to arresting high level operators in the opium economy, dismantling drug trafficking networks and interrupting the flow of precursor chemicals into the country. At the G-8 foreign ministers’ meeting in Trieste in June, the United States announced a revised counter-narcotics policy, which accentuates the provision of alternative livelihoods and de-emphasizes eradication. Increased North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and ISAF support to Afghan national counter-narcotic agencies has led to the seizure of 47 tons of opium, six tons of dry morphine, half a ton of heroin and 16 tons of hashish thus far in 2009. The Criminal Justice Task Force has been investigating, prosecuting and convicting leading drug cases nationally. In this context, the March-April presidential pardon extended to five convicted traffickers sends the wrong signal and de-motivates national actors who are working to convict high-level targets at great personal risk.

41. At the regional and international levels, under the Trilateral Initiative of the UNODC “Rainbow Strategy”, the first joint international counter-narcotics operation between Afghan and Iranian law enforcement agencies took place from 26-28 July along the northern Afghanistan-Iran border. The operation involved Afghan and Iranian Border Police and Counter Narcotics Police. Nearly half a ton of drugs were seized and several arrests made. Similar joint operations involving Pakistani and Iranian law enforcement agencies had taken place in March and again in August 2009. These initiatives should be integral part of the agendas of the regular trilateral meetings of the Presidents of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

VI. Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB)

42. The twelfth meeting of the JCMB, held on 9 July 2009, consolidated the role of the Board as a central platform for strategic coordination and joint policy formulation between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community. The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), however, needs to be further focused. The first year review of the strategy, released in July, concluded that an unambiguous set of priorities and programmes must be developed by the Afghan Government. The Government currently has a strong economic team which has begun to set the development agenda more vigorously by prioritizing the ANDS and focusing on linked strategies to unlock the potential of Afghanistan’s economic centres of growth - particularly agriculture, mineral resources, and human development. UNAMA could play a more effective coordination role as a result of these more coherent and focused Government programmes.

43. Afghan leadership has become increasingly effective not only in setting the development agenda but in implementing its components. Since the beginning of the year, it has become increasingly clear that donor alignment has occurred when the Government has produced initiatives, such as in agriculture, private sector licensing reform and capacity development. In
each case, programmes were presented by the Government to donors at a JCMB meeting. This model - Afghan Government leadership in setting policies and defining programmes, coupled with donor support - has become the template for aid coordination. Donors, however, often remain insufficiently flexible, preferring to plan future funding decisions rather than adjust their allocations quickly to priorities presented today. Immediate donor support for an Afghan initiative was, however, provided in the crucial area of technical assistance and capacity development to the Government. UNAMA supported the Ministry of Finance in developing a Civilian Technical Assistance Plan (CTAP). The plan is based on several clear principles: that technical assistance must be demand driven, that priority should be accorded to advisors from within the region, that advisers must remain long enough to have a real impact, and that the focus must be on mentoring Afghan staff. The first 55 of these positions, which reflect either the needs of those ministries devoted to aid effectiveness or ministries that oversee sectoral priorities, have been identified. The recruitment process is underway with the support of a number of donors.

44. In June, my Special Representative challenged the international community to increase by at least ten percent the amount of goods and services they procure locally. This would strengthen the private sector and generate increased Government revenue. Since then, Peace Dividend Trust, an NGO that tracks local procurement, has identified a clear upswing in the purchase of local goods and services by embassies and other organisations. The United Nations has led by example, increasing its overall procurement from local sources. This approach increases what Peace Dividend Trust defines as ‘spending the dollar twice’- when funding remains in the country, it creates jobs and opportunities within the Afghan market, increasing the impact of every dollar spent.

45. Progress has been made in tracking the flow of development funding. An increasing number of donors now contribute to the Development Assistance Database (DAD), managed by the Ministry of Finance. The refinement of the DAD, supported by UNAMA and UNDP, has increased the use of this tool and improved the visibility of development funding, particularly of funds not directed through the Government budget. Another positive development is that all Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are now regularly reporting their project activities to the Afghanistan Country Stability Picture database (an ISAF-led geographic database of reconstruction and development projects across the country, merging data from Afghan Government ministries, donors, NGOs and provincial reconstruction teams across the full spectrum of the Afghan National Development Strategy sectors). Work is currently ongoing so that eventually the two databases are merged. There is a critical need to monitor not only donor expenditures but the impact of assistance provided. UNAMA has been working with the Ministry of Economy to strengthen existing information management systems so that they may better evaluate improvements as well as provide lessons on which methods of project implementation yield better and more sustainable results.

46. Not all the news on donor coordination and aid effectiveness is positive. Pledges and contributions to the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) for the current fiscal year is almost US$50 million less than last year. Furthermore, according to the World Bank, donor preferencing of funds for projects they see as priorities has increased to over 50 percent. Often these donor priorities were established years earlier with minimal Afghan Government
involvement. The ARTF, a basket fund which finances core Government activities, is the Government’s primary mechanism to ensure that its priorities are financed and the only mechanism that allows the national budget to act as a strategic planning tool. The reduction in funding of the ARTF, and the increase in preferencing, reduce the Government’s flexibility and its ability to exert leadership. It prolongs its dependency on the international community at precisely the moment when this dependency should be demonstrably reduced.

47. As security has deteriorated in some areas, key donors have refocused assistance on programmes that are designed to provide stability in the wake of combat operations. The need for these programmes is understandable, but must not come at the expense of areas that are stable but increasingly vulnerable to the insurgency. There is a significant danger of backsliding in many areas of the country, if development resources are not leveraged to consolidate that stability. UNAMA has further recommended that stabilisation initiatives should focus on national programmes, not be restricted to post-combat areas only, and concentrate where possible on economic and employment generation and on linking communities with Government.

48. The relative importance of PRTs in assistance delivery has increased in unstable areas. PRT budgets have grown and access of civilian development actors has diminished. The immediate goal of PRT projects is to provide stability through aid, and this short-term imperative sometimes comes at the expense of aid effectiveness principles. In order to align the work of PRTs with Government priorities and proven aid effectiveness practices, the Executive Steering Committee was re-established in early 2009 under the leadership of IDLG.

49. Afghanistan’s economic growth also depends heavily on its relationship within the wider south and central Asian region. Building this relationship in a way that contributes to Afghanistan’s development, means developing transportation and energy networks as well as establishing the legal framework for such cooperation, including trade agreements and border management. The Government has increasingly begun to focus on the need for a dialogue with its northern neighbours on trans-border water management. The United Nations and the World Bank have agreed to help build the Government’s capacity to conduct negotiations on this issue.

VII. Human Rights

50. Much attention, both international and Afghan, was focused on the rights of women in Afghanistan and in particular the threat that rights secured so far may be eroded. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNAMA report “Silence is Violence: End the Abuse of Women in Afghanistan”, issued in July, examined factors contributing to a rising trend of threats and attacks against women in public life and sexual abuse of women and girls. A culture of impunity for rape partly accounts for the deeply-rooted nature of this problem and is entrenched in customs, attitudes and practices that dictate a subservient role for women in society. Other factors, including the role that conservative forces play in restricting women’s rights, as well as inadequate efforts by the Government and others to challenge discrimination forcefully, threaten to erode the gains made to improve the situation of Afghan women. The controversy surrounding the Shia Personal Status law exemplifies this problem.
51. An amended version of the Shia Personal Status Law was endorsed by Presidential
decree on 19 July and became enforceable on 27 July. Notwithstanding some improvements on
an earlier version of the law, the United Nations is concerned that this law may still legalize
discriminatory norms and traditional practices against women and contravene Constitutional
guarantees as well as international treaties to which Afghanistan is a State Party. It is of concern
that the law appears to permit under-age marriage under specific conditions, restrict a woman’s
freedom of movement and, in the event of divorce, allow guardianship of children only to fathers
and paternal grandfathers. On 19 July, President Karzai signed the law on the Elimination of
Violence against Women (EVAW). The new law criminalizes sexual violence, including rape,
forced and underage marriage, forced labour and prostitution. It represents a step forward in
responding to, and preventing violence against women and girls. It remains unclear whether
the EVAW law will take precedence over the Shia Personal Status law.

52. My Special Representative paid particular attention to the issue of detention centres and
visited several such centres in and around Kabul, including the detention facility at Bagram. The
intention of these visits was to see in person the conditions of the detention centres, to see that
the detainees were being provided with a means to be in touch with their families and that they
had access to due process. The United Nations is working with Afghan justice institutions to
strengthen their capacity to abide by national and international human rights norms regarding
detention and the conduct of trials.

53. The United Nations has supported the establishment of a Human Rights Support Unit in
the Ministry of Justice. This Unit is designed to assist all entities within the Government to
formulate policies and programmes that are compliant with Afghanistan’s international human
rights obligations.

54. UNAMA recorded 1,500 civilian casualties between January and August, with August
being the deadliest month since the beginning of the year. These figures reflect an increasing
trend in insecurity over recent months and elections-related violence. Almost three times as
many civilian deaths (68 percent) were attributed to AGE activities than to pro-government
forces (23 percent). As detailed in UNAMA’s Mid-Year Bulletin on the Protection of Civilians
in Armed Conflict, the most deadly tactics used and which accounted for the largest number of
civilian casualties in the conflict to date were IEDs planted and suicide attacks carried out by
AGEs (accounting for 39.5 percent of fatalities) and air-strikes by pro-Government forces
(accounting for 20 percent of fatalities).

55. Efforts were made to mobilize support for initiatives to protect mass graves and
safeguard evidence that will be vital for an eventual process of accountability. UNAMA
facilitated visits by the NGO Physicians for Human Rights to strengthen forensic capacity in
Afghanistan, in particular in relation to a grave uncovered in the premises of the Ministry of
Interior.

VIII. Humanitarian situation

56. Security incidents targeting humanitarian activities increased significantly. Humanitarian
workers continued to be subject to intimidation, robberies, abduction and assassination. The
Afghan National Safety Office reported 75 incidents in the first six months of 2009 alone. The worst incidents include attacks by armed groups on humanitarian convoys, abduction of humanitarian personnel, the destruction of a clinic, and the direct targeting of an International NGO vehicle by a roadside bomb, resulting in the death of two aid workers. During the last week of July and first weeks of August, attacks against humanitarian organizations decreased slightly, due in part to a decrease in programme activities in several regions in light of the elections.

57. Several incidents affected mine action workers. This notwithstanding, United Nations supported mine action activities in Afghanistan contributed to the removal of approximately 80,000 anti-personnel landmines, 900 anti-tank mines and 2.5 million explosive remnants of war during the last 12 months, and provided more than 750,000 men, women, girls and boys mine risk education. Casualties numbers dropped this year to under 50 victims per month - the lowest level in over 10 years. The concept of Community Based Demining has been developed as a means of enabling landmine clearance in the most insecure areas, and has been strongly supported by communities in the most volatile provinces of the east and south of the country. The initiative has been geared towards clearing villages and districts, bringing small salaries to deminers and cash to communities through local procurement of services and supplies.

58. The ongoing insecurity continues to adversely affect the humanitarian situation, causing temporary displacement and limiting access to those in need. In Helmand province, the launch of the international military operation “Khanjar” led to the temporary displacement of some 2,000 households. Short-term displacement of civilians has also been reported in the western region (Badghis and Farah provinces), as well as in the southeast and east (Khost, Pakitika, Nuristan, Nangarhar and Kunar provinces), also in relation to military operations in proximity of these areas. The security situation hinders independent verification of needs and the delivery of assistance in conflict-affected areas.

59. The Afghan population continues to be affected by natural hazards. In the aftermath of spring floods that affected 22,000 households in 13 provinces, and with winter approaching, the humanitarian community together with the Government is reviewing short- and long-term shelter needs.

60. In response to gaps in previous polio vaccination efforts, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund launched a vaccination campaign in Kandahar, Uruzgan, and Helmand provinces with the goal of eradicating polio by the end of 2009, with support from the Ministry of Public Health and ISAF. Access negotiations were largely successful and vaccination teams were able to reach many children for the first time. However, the effort hit a serious obstacle with the abduction of an immunization team. Although most of the team was released after the intervention of community elders, the whereabouts of the team leader are still unknown.

IX. Mission operations and support

61. The UNAMA field offices continued to support the Government and its international partners in their efforts to improve the delivery of services to the Afghan population as a whole. These offices monitored political and human rights development, and contributed to improving
aid-effectiveness and coordination at the sub-national level as well as to carry out the mandated good offices and outreach functions of the mission.

62. UNAMA’s field structure comprises eight fully integrated regional offices located in the provinces of Bamyan, Paktya, Herat, Nangarhar, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, Balkh and 12 provincial offices in the provinces of Badakhshan, Badghis, Baghlan, Dai Kundi, Faryab, Ghor, Khost, Kunar, Nimroz, Sari-Pul, Uruzgan and Zabul. Two of these, Sari-Pul and Uruzgan, were opened earlier this year. The provincial office in Farah, is scheduled to open by the end of the year. Completion of construction of the Ghazni office is planned for November 2009 with an opening in mid-December. Premises have been identified and negotiations are underway to open three additional provincial offices in 2009 (Jawzjan, Pansher, Takhar). These offices, with a planned opening date of mid-November, would bring the number of UNAMA’s provincial offices to 17 by year-end. The absence of suitable premises and the security situation in Lashkargah (Helmand province) are delaying the opening of an office in Helmand province. The Mission will continue to use its liaison offices in Islamabad and Teheran in all its activities with a regional dimension. The mission’s requirements for armoured vehicles for the field offices still remain high and are increasing in the face of continuing deterioration of the security situation around the country. Orders are in place for substantial deliveries in the coming months.

63. The expansion of the mission’s geographic coverage requires deployment of additional administrative and technical staff to provide on-site support, particularly in the areas of engineering, transportation, security, communication, information technology and finance. The expansion also resulted in an increased need for air assets, which were provided in the 2009 budget. Additional air assets were also required to compensate for the reduction in road missions as a result of decreased security and the need to access certain locations quickly in the event of medical evacuation or relocation of staff. These requirements apply to 2010 as well.

64. As a result of the planned future expansion and strengthening of UNAMA called for in Security Council Resolution 1868 (2009), the mission’s estimated budget for 2010 will increase overall by some 70 per cent over 2009. This includes a staffing increase of some 1,000 (of which approximately 170 internationals) and additional field offices to give UNAMA a presence in every province. The planned budget also reflects a significant increase in staffing for UNAMA’s donor coordination and aid-effectiveness capacities to meet the requirements of the mission to carry out its mandate effectively.

65. With the refocusing of UNAMA’s mandate to include significant roles in donor coordination and aid effectiveness, several Member States moved to support this initiative through the provision of gratis personnel with technical expertise in key areas of focus in response to the United Nations’ call for the provision of such expertise in December 2008. These resources have been vital to UNAMA in establishing its role, particularly in the areas of agriculture, energy and private sector development. However as the tenure of these staff with the mission draws to a close, there will remain a need for specific technical skills to be brought into UNAMA for the longer term. A diverse and experienced pool of candidates must be available for what is a new and unique role within United Nations missions. Finally, UNAMA is seeking a small increase in the size of the Military Adviser’s Unit, and its presence in field offices, to
better support UNAMA’s civil-military coordination mandate and liaise more effectively with Afghan and international military forces.

X. Observations

66. The election has dominated the period since my last report in July. While the process has not been brought to its conclusion, certain observations can be made with regard to its various components.

67. First, these elections have been among the most demanding ever to be organized. To hold elections in a country in deep conflict, with weak institutions, weak infrastructure, a high illiteracy rate and 41 presidential candidates has been tremendously challenging from many perspectives. Nevertheless, the timetable has been respected with the exception of the counting and complaints period, most of the planned polling stations were opened, and logistical operations were successful.

68. Second, the predictions of public apathy proved to be wrong. There was an engagement by the public during the campaign period and a debate between political alternatives which has rarely, if ever, been seen in Afghanistan before. The people wanted these elections to take place and wanted to see a consolidation of democratic processes, even under extraordinarily complex conditions. There are frustrations among the Afghan people that democratic institutions have not delivered enough, but there is no appetite to abandon these institutions.

69. Third, in spite of better safeguards than during previous elections, serious election fraud took place, made possible primarily—but not exclusively—by the lack of access to parts of the country that resulted from the ongoing conflict. This lack of access seriously hampered the transparency of the elections. On the other hand, anti-fraud mechanisms were able to detect much of the fraud that did occur, and institutions such as the ECC are able to address these problems.

70. Fourth, a number of lessons have been learned underlining the importance of starting the planning for the 2010 Parliamentary elections immediately. These lessons are being evaluated now, and planning for 2010 has begun.

71. Following a decision by the ECC to review results from a number of polling stations, a credible audit and recount process is now coming to its conclusion. When the entire electoral process is completed, it will be of critical importance that the results are accepted by all so that the election of Afghanistan’s future President can be certified and a new Government can be formed.

72. The international community must maintain a long-term commitment to Afghanistan. There must also be a decisive shift in the relationship between the Afghan Government and the international community. The Government must be enabled and determined to assume all the responsibilities that belong to a sovereign state. The international community, for its part, must play a role that is clearly one of support. A new
“contract” between the Afghan Government and its people will be a critical component in this shift of responsibilities. The Government’s ability to play this role more effectively and more convincingly will help consolidate the partnership between the Afghan Government and the international community.

73. The level of trust a future Afghan Government can build with its people will impact on the level of the support that Governments of donor and troop-contributing countries receive from their constituencies for continued support to the effort of the Afghan Government.

74. The formation of a new Afghan Government will be the first critical step in reshaping these relationships. The new Government should demonstrate that it is determined and able to address the main concerns of its people, including security, the rule of law, and the need for sustainable economic and social development. The Government must come closer to its people.

75. The new Government’s programme would have to include a comprehensive agenda to build Afghanistan’s institutions, in security as well as civilian areas, at the national as well as local levels. Furthermore, it should include an agenda for sustainable economic growth based increasingly on Afghanistan’s own resources. In both areas, the fight against corruption and the culture of impunity must be key components.

76. The international community should energetically embrace programmes that enable Afghanistan to assume fully its responsibilities as a sovereign state, facilitate an inclusive peace process and shape Afghanistan’s status in the region. For the international community to play this role effectively, donors must devote sufficient resources and attention to high-impact activities that can bring sustainable improvements in the quality of institutions and the prospects for economic development. This will require a clear political will to follow established priorities.

77. In my last report I underlined the need to maintain the positive momentum that has emerged in critical areas such as in the strengthening of security institutions and finance departments and in the agriculture sector. That momentum has been maintained in spite of the intense electoral process. This is in itself a remarkable achievement. When a new Government has been established, additional resources and attention must be devoted to accelerating and expanding these positive developments.

78. During the last months, donor coordination has also improved. There is a greater readiness to unite behind well-formulated national programmes and policies. However, much remains to be done in order to bring the Government and the international community together around a clear, priority-based strategy. UNAMA will continue to do its utmost to fulfil its mandate in this regard.

79. In order to do so, it will need greater resources as well as specialized personnel. I appeal for Member States to assist in providing these resources that will be critical to our overall success in Afghanistan.
80. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my Special Representative, Kai Eide, for his resolute efforts and commitment, and to all UNAMA staff for their unfaltering work, in particular in support of the electoral process, in difficult and dangerous circumstances. I also thank the Mission's partners, including the United Nations country team, Member States and the International Security Assistance Force, as well as humanitarian and other international partners, for their work and the support they continue to lend to UNAMA.
Annex I: Benchmarks and indicators of progress

The strategic benchmarks and indicators of progress provided below are drawn from UNAMA’s overall mandate as outlined in Security Council resolution 1868 (2009), and define the conditions required for self-sustaining security and development in Afghanistan. They are results-based and not tied to target dates, with the exception of election dates as set out in the Constitution. These benchmarks and corresponding indicators are meant to provide the Security Council with information relevant to determining the extent of progress toward fulfilling the objectives envisaged by the Council as well as areas that may require adjustment.

The first set of benchmarks addresses the main institution-building needs—improvements in the civil service at the national and sub-national level, establishment of a well-functioning, nationwide justice system, improvements in revenue collection, and the holding of credible elections in 2010.

The second set of benchmarks deals with improvements in security. The key actors are Afghan and international security forces (except the benchmark on civil-military coordination which is a specific element of UNAMA’s mandate), although UNAMA has the capacity to help monitor progress towards these benchmarks.

The third set of benchmarks concern economic and social development. While UNAMA has a mandate for donor coordination, progress in this area will depend on well-designed programmes in key sectors adopted and implemented by the Government of Afghanistan, and on the readiness of key donors to align behind these programmes.

Finally, there are two sets of benchmarks on Human Rights and on Counter-narcotics, cross-cutting issues that influence progress on other issues, but that are dealt with separately here.

The benchmarks do not include the question of a possible peace and reintegration process, which will require the elaboration of a plan by the Government of Afghanistan and well-orchestrated support from the international community.

These benchmarks may be refined in light of future agreements between the Afghan Government and the international community.
**I. Governance and Institution-building**

**Benchmark:** Extension of government authority throughout the country through the establishment of democratic, legitimate, accountable institutions, down to the local level, with capacity to implement policies and increasingly capable of sustaining themselves.

Requirements for progress include political will and funding for the building of national and sub-national institutions, including within the justice sector; commitment to combat corruption and enforce the rule of law; as well as the capacity of relevant Afghan institutions to organize elections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of progress</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
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| Holding credible national and sub-national elections.                                | - Assessment based on UNAMA’s monitoring of the electoral process  
- Assessments of national and international election observers  
- Acceptability of results by voters, candidates, and political parties |
| Improvements in civil service capacity at the central, provincial and district levels | - Assessment based on UNAMA’s tracking of merit-based appointments and training of civil servants  
- Assessment based on the monitoring of Public Administrative Reform (PAR) process  
- Assessment based on the monitoring of PRT activities in support to capacity-building |
| Decreasing corruption within government institutions                                   | - Transparency International ranking  
- Assessment based on UNAMA’s monitoring  
- Number of high level criminal corruption cases investigated, prosecuted and tried |
| Increase in state revenue collection (taxes and tariffs)                              | - State revenue figures  
- Assessment on the level of implementation of customs reform |
| Establishment of credible judicial and penal systems that respect and uphold human rights, and a judicial system accessible to all citizens | - Assessment of the number of trained judges and prosecutors working at the provincial level based on UNAMA’s monitoring  
- Assessment of the number of justice institutions, and facilities (court-houses, equipment, etc.), operating in each province based on UNAMA’s monitoring  
- Assessment on the number of criminal cases investigated, prosecuted and tried based on UNAMA’s monitoring |
| Provision of adequate infrastructure to enable the functioning of government institutions especially at the sub-national level | - Assessment of the number of provincial and district government offices equipped and able to carry out essential functions based on UNAMA monitoring |
II. Security

Benchmark: Development of a sustainable Afghan security structure that is capable of ensuring peace and stability and protecting the people of Afghanistan

Requirements for progress include increase in the quality and quantity of ANP/ANA personnel and gradual transfer of responsibility from international forces to ANSF; sustained reconciliation process developed and led by the Government of Afghanistan; combating corruption within the Afghanistan security forces at the local and national levels; funding and expertise for mentoring and training.

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<th>Indicators of progress</th>
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| Increase in police and army personnel mentored, trained and operational according to an agreed structure | • Establishment of NATO Training Mission  
• Number of ANA and ANP who have completed basic/officer level training  
• Number of Afghan trainers within the ANSF  
• Assessment of PRT support to CSTC-A/NTM-A and EUPOL-led police reform efforts  
• Number of ANA who are fully operational without international support  
• Percentage of districts covered by operational police stations  
• Percentage of districts exclusively secured by ANSF  
• Percentage of security operations conducted with Afghan lead |
| Improved level of secure access by Government, International Community and NGOs to districts across Afghanistan | • UNAMA field offices monitoring  
• Government monitoring  
• ISAF monitoring |
| Improvement in the public attitude towards the police and army and of public perceptions of the security situation | • Assessment based on opinion polls and surveys  
• Number of requests for intervention |

III. Economic and Social Development

Benchmark: Government policies backed by international support to promote sustainable economic growth that contributes to over-all stability

Requirements for progress include the adoption and implementation of strategies by the Government of Afghanistan for the sustainable development of Afghanistan; alignment of donors behind government-designed programmes; improved co-ordination and coherent support by the
international community to the Afghan Government and adherence to the principles of aid effectiveness; and long-term commitment on the part of the donors.

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<th>Indicators of progress</th>
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<tr>
<td>Well-designed national programmes, in particular in the priority areas of agriculture, capacity building, higher/vocational education, private sector development and infrastructure</td>
<td>• Assessment based on results and data from the Development Assistance Database</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased percentage of aid aligned behind the ANDS and Government priorities</td>
<td>• Assessment based on results and data from the Development Assistance Database</td>
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<tr>
<td>More equitable distribution of development aid and government expenditure throughout Afghanistan</td>
<td>• Assessment based on results and data from the Development Assistance Database</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased revenue collection and sustainable growth based on Afghan resources</td>
<td>• Assessment based on national economic statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased percentage of goods and services procured locally by international actors</td>
<td>• Assessment based on periodic studies and surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased foreign direct investment</td>
<td>• Assessment based on national economic statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased development at the sub-national level</td>
<td>• Provincial Development Plans (PDPs) are reflected in the central government budget and funds are allocated as appropriate</td>
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<td>Decrease in the percentage of households living below the poverty line</td>
<td>• Assessment based on polls and surveys</td>
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**IV. Human Rights**

**Benchmark:** Improved respect for the human rights of Afghans, in line with the Afghan Constitution and international law, with particular emphasis on the protection of civilians,
the situation of women and girls, freedom of expression, and accountability based on the rule of law

Requirements for progress include sustained willingness to adhere to international humanitarian law; an independent and effective police, judicial and penal system across the country; adherence by the central and sub-national governments to Afghan legal and constitutional norms; and appropriate allocation of funds for training, capacity building, and infrastructure, also of civil society.

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<tr>
<th>Indicators of progress</th>
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| Reduction in the number of incidents of unlawful use of force and related intimidation involving civilians and impact of the armed conflict on civilians, through compliance by relevant actors with international law, is mitigated | • Assessment based on NATO/ISAF monitoring  
• Assessment based on ANSF monitoring  
• Assessment based the application of COMISAF tactical directive  
• Assessment based on UNAMA and Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) monitoring |
| Improved awareness by Afghans of their rights and by the Government of its obligations | • Assessment based on UNAMA and AIHRC monitoring |
| Improved impact of, and support for, measures (including legal and policy reform) to combat violence against women and girls | • Assessment based on UNAMA and AIHRC monitoring  
• Assessment of the number of criminal cases related to violence against women and girls successfully investigated, prosecuted and tried based on UNAMA’s monitoring |
| Improved awareness of, and support for, measures (including legal and policy reform) in relation to impunity and the transitional justice agenda, as well as freedom of expression | • Assessment based on UNAMA and AIHRC monitoring  
• Implementation of the Peace, Reconciliation and Justice Action Plan |
| Government fulfillment of reporting requirements on international human rights covenants and conventions and implementation of recommendations from the Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review of Afghanistan | • Assessment based on UNAMA’s monitoring |
| Improved capacity of Afghans and international actors, and primarily the Government, to respect, protect and fulfill human rights, including with the support of the AIHRC, the media, and civil society | • Assessment based on UNAMA and AIHRC monitoring |
V. Counter-narcotics

**Benchmark:** Sustained trend in the reduction of poppy cultivation, narcotics production, and drug addiction

Requirements for progress include effective programmes for alternative livelihoods for combating crime, and narcotics-related corruption; improved coordination between the Government of Afghanistan and neighboring countries, including interdiction and counter-trafficking efforts; and improved coordination between the Government of Afghanistan and international military forces.

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<thead>
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<th>Indicators of progress</th>
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<tr>
<td>Decrease in poppy cultivation and narcotics production</td>
<td>• Assessment based on UNODC’s monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase in licit agriculture and related private capital investment in areas previously used for poppy cultivation</td>
<td>• Assessment based on UNODC’s monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Assessment based on the Government’s monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decrease in addiction rates</td>
<td>• Assessment based on UNODC’s monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in effective interdiction and counter-trafficking efforts, including through ISAF support to ANSF</td>
<td>• Assessment based on UNODC’s monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assessment based on ISAF’s monitoring</td>
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