



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Statement by

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Regarding

**“Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security  
Agenda in Afghanistan”**

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*In the name of God, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful  
Honorable Ministers and Members of the Diplomatic Corps;  
Representatives of Ministries and Departments of the Governments;  
Representatives of Development partners and Civil Societies;  
Ladies and Gentlemen*

Salam and greetings to all;

It gives me great pleasure to be present at this important meeting on UNSCR 1325 on the role of women in inclusive peace building, and security. I would like to convey the greetings and best wishes of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for fruitful deliberations and concrete outcomes that would foster peace and stability for our region. A Region that is stable and peaceful is beneficial to the prosperity of our nations and her people.

More than a decade long Afghanistan began an era characterized by respect to democratic values and human rights - a truly unique chapter in the history of our country, when the government committed for the realization, implementation, promotion and protection of human rights and in particular women's rights principals. This commitment is evident on national level in the provisions of the democratically adopted Constitution, various laws, policies and plans that have been implemented in accordance with our constitution and international obligations; and on international level in the international cooperation of Afghanistan on human rights, and women, peace and security agenda, being a responsible member of the United Nations.

The Government of Afghanistan has established a number of key institutions, including, Ministry of Women affairs, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Elimination of Violence Against Women Commission, Elimination of Violence Against Women Prosecution Office, Family Courts, Human Rights Support Unit in Ministry of Justice, Gender Units in many ministries, and inter-ministerial committees for reporting on the implementation of the human rights conventions and adopted a number of policy documents, legislations and action plans, including Afghanistan National Development Strategy, Afghanistan Compact, National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan, National Priority Programs, Elimination of Violence Against Women Law, Shelter Regulations and other, in order to directly or indirectly contribute to the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Afghanistan.

With such institutional, legislative and policy making efforts, Afghanistan has marked historic achievements in helping Afghan women realize their god-given rights and access opportunities in all walks

of life: today Afghan women make up 27 percent of legislators in the Afghan Parliament. Women occupy one-fourth of government jobs, including nine percent at decision-making levels - ministers, deputy ministers, directors, a governor, a mayor, a district governor, an ambassador and other senior diplomats.

Girls make up about 40 percent of the more than 8 million children going to schools in Afghanistan today, a figure that was fewer than 1 million in 2001 - with no girls prior to the democratic administration. Afghan women and girls today make up 24 percent of the health sector, 5 percent of the security sector, and 30 percent of the agriculture sector. Women made up 40 percent of voters in our last presidential elections in 2009. We have female pilots, army and police officers and professional martial artists. Women have been part of the negotiations from the very beginning, as 9 out of 70 members of the High Peace Council are female. Women are at least a fifty percent force behind Afghanistan's vibrant independent media and active civil society groups - both of which are among the most visible and concrete achievements of the past decade.

I mentioned these figures, in order to remember that we have moved a long way, and we still have a challenging road ahead of us. Mindful of that, these figures definitely encourage the government to foster the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and move in a more strategic and coordinated way ahead, with the support from the rampant Afghan Civil Society and International Community.

Afghanistan has recently embarked on the process of drafting of its National Action Plan for Women Peace and Security, affectively referred to as 1325 NAP. The Afghan 1325 NAP will strengthen the meaningful participation of women into the peace building process, security sector, and will ensure that women's voices are represented in all development efforts in post-conflict reconstruction.

At the outset, I wish to highlight that our efforts in the Afghan 1325 NAP complements and is in sync with other national and regional initiatives such as the splendid effort of the High Peace Council; as well as other regional agreements fostered by the international community, in trying to forge a holding environment for the people of Afghanistan that would foster peace and stability.

Towards this end, the 1325 NAP dovetails perfectly into the peace efforts of the Government of Afghanistan. To guide the development of the process of the drafting of the Afghan 1325 NAP, our efforts are guided by the following key principles:

1: That the underlying foundation for the development of the Afghan 1325 NAP must be built on the freedoms afforded to women, as enshrined in the Constitution of Afghanistan. This includes, role of women in promoting tolerance and peace in all facets of public and private life in addressing our development challenges of life expectancy amongst women, of quality of life, of literacy rates for a country of 26 million people, of which women account for almost half the population.

2: Second, the Afghan 1325 NAP process will be developed using the world's best practice. Currently, at least forty-three (43) countries have NAPs in place, in addition to six (6) Regional NAPs. Of these, we noted that eleven (11) are from the African continent; twenty-five (25) from the European block; four (4) from the Asia Pacific region; and three (3) from the Americas. Additionally, 6 regions have NAP frameworks which include: the African Union, the European Union, ICGLR<sup>1</sup>, NATO<sup>2</sup>/EAPC<sup>3</sup>, Pacific and SADC<sup>4</sup>. Additionally, we also noted that other countries, like Japan, have embarked on their 1325 NAP journey. We look to leverage this pool of knowledge, in the drafting of the Afghan NAP that will be specifically tailor made to suit the specification of the needs of Afghanistan, given its historical journey, its population size, its position in regional politics, as well as its model as an Islamic State. Further, we will look specifically to the process of drafting of the three countries that are closest to us by geographic location and economic development, mainly: Nepal, the Philippines, and Kyrgyzstan.

3: Thirdly, partnerships will form the key foundations in the drafting of the Afghan NAP 1325. This will include internal partnerships with key stakeholders, partnerships between women's groups in the community, partnerships between the international community and the Government and the people of Afghanistan, partnership between civil society and religious leaders, as well as partnerships between regional countries and players for peace in Afghanistan. At this juncture, I wish to sincerely acknowledge our partners in the Afghan NAP 1325 process, mainly the Government of Finland and UN Women.

Let me now turn to the drafting of the Afghan NAP process. Followings are a few broad ideas we hope to explore:

**A) Participation:** from the village Shura's, to Provincial Governments, to the halls of Parliament, to the security sector,

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<sup>1</sup> ICGLR - International Conference of the Great Lakes Region

<sup>2</sup> NATO – North-Atlantic Treaty Organization

<sup>3</sup> EAPC - Europe-Atlantic Partnership Council

<sup>4</sup> SADC – South African Development Community

to regional peace negotiations, we hope to capture the various initiatives currently undertaken in the community by various stakeholders and civil society, at large. Mindful that at least 70% of our population, live in rural areas, a sizeable portion of our population are considered returnee-refugees and internally displaced, another sector consists of Afghan diaspora; we hope to capture their individual efforts, as the sum of the whole, in our quest for peace-building in our country.

**B) Protection:** the protection of women and children remain at the forefront of our work. We acknowledge the brave efforts of women, past and present, in the peace process and the security sector: those in the community and those that have taken on a key role in Government, those that stand in the forefront of leadership, as well as those that silently go about their tasks in the community; those engaged in the business community and those that work in civil society; as well as those that provide the protection, as well as those that risk their lives without protection. Strengthening of the security sector and strengthening of the Rule of Law, are areas that we will explore, in this segment of the drafting of Afghan NAP 1325.

**C) Prevention:** given the historical context of Afghanistan, we will explore preventive measures that will lead to the creation of a strong holding environment for lasting peace where women and children can enjoy a better quality of life and freedom. We will support national efforts by Government on their political dialogue process with key stakeholders and regional partners, ensuring that women's concerns and issues are kept at the forefront of all deliberations. We will support both formal and informal preventative measures toward our efforts in peace building.

**D) Restoration & Recovery:** through continued partnerships, we hope to capture the various initiatives taken by regional players, donors, development partners, in assisting the Government and the people of Afghanistan in restorative and recovery efforts in the long and the short term.

In short, the process of the drafting of the Afghan 1325 NAP had been planned in a two phase process. The first phase commenced on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2011 between the Government of Afghanistan and the Government of Finland in support of NAP 1325 process, which concentrated on capacity building, preparations and mechanism establishment. The second phase has commenced in 2013 and will be completed in 2014, and it has been the substantive development of the 1325 NAP itself. The second phase

has concentrated on the thematic development and drafting of the national action plan, where the focus has been on the thematic review, assessment, and overview of UNSCR 1325 and global best practices, creating of communication and advocacy materials, public awareness of the 1325 process, continued sensitization of different parts of the NAP, development of the Implementation Plan for NAP 1325, consultation of the draft NAP 1325 and publication and advocacy of the NAP process.

The development of the Afghan 1325 NAP has been driven by three main committees, supported by a 1325 Project Coordination Team in the Directorate of Human Rights and Women's International Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The three main committees include the Steering Committee consisting of Deputy Ministers and Heads of Departments; the Technical Working Groups which consists of Directors of key Government Ministries; and the Technical Advisory Group which consists of donor/development partners. We envisage that the Afghan NAP 1325 will be ready for circulation to the community by the end of 2014 and finalized, for distribution, by early 2015.

We thank the current efforts of the international community for human rights and women rights in Afghanistan and once Afghanistan's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security is launched, we will need further support of the international community in its implementation.

Implementation of the National Action Plan will be the top priority of the Afghan Government and it will make sure the activities listed in the NAP are realistic and simple, implementable and the responsible institutions and support from civil society and international community are identified and the budget is available. We would also make sure that monitoring reports on the implementation of the national action are prepared and released.

In the conclusion, I would like to reiterate that both the Afghan Government and the Afghan People have the will, the courage and the determination to the UNSCR NAP 1325 process and the role of women in peace-building and the restorative process, as we take forward our nation's difficult but clear and exciting journey towards stronger democracy, better security, development and prosperity. Towards this end, we look forward to the outcome of this meeting and to renewed and strengthened partnerships.

Thank you.