

JOINT DECLARATION OF AN ENDURING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UK AND AFGHANISTAN

1. The Governments of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United Kingdom are committed to a secure, stable and democratic Afghanistan, playing its full part in the community of nations. Both Governments recognize that considerable and enduring support and commitment by the international community is required to assist the efforts being made by the people of Afghanistan to build their future. The UK has already demonstrated its commitment to the reconstruction task, including through a substantial development assistance programme and also through its military deployments. Our shared interests and strong ties of friendship form a sure foundation for an Enduring Relationship which will strengthen our cooperation over the next ten years.

2. The UK admires the courage shown by the Afghan government and people in tackling the tasks of reconstruction and reconciliation, and the determination of the Government of Afghanistan to ensure that their country will never again be a safe haven for terrorism and organized crime. Both Governments intend to work closely together with partners in the international community to advance the security and prosperity of Afghanistan and the region.

3. The Government of Afghanistan reaffirms its commitment to a democratic political system, to establishing the rule of law and safeguarding human rights, to fighting corruption and to ending drugs cultivation and supporting sustainable alternative livelihoods. The UK pledges its continuing support to the Government of Afghanistan in its efforts to meet these objectives, both bilaterally and through its membership of international organisations. The UK intends to use its influence within the international community, including as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and as a leading member of the EU, NATO and the G8, to support continued international cooperation with Afghanistan.

Political and economic

4. Both Governments will work to achieve international agreement on further nation-building activities with clear timelines, to extend the achievements of the Bonn Process. The UK will assist the Government of Afghanistan to build robust and sustainable institutions at national and provincial level, capable of implementing the Government's policies, including the development of a professional merit-based civil service and measures to combat corruption. The UK will also play a role in supporting the development of the new National Assembly.

5. Afghanistan will put in place policies to encourage economic growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction, including sound, accountable and transparent institutions and increased fiscal transparency essential to tackle corruption, boost private sector development, and attract investment; a credible legal framework; and the elimination of impediments to private investment, both domestic and foreign. The UK recognises that Afghanistan requires the flexibility to decide, plan and sequence reforms to its trade policies to fit with its National Development Strategy, which aims to generate

the economic growth and social progress needed to secure Afghanistan's future and to make a sustainable reduction in poverty. Both Governments will actively promote regional economic cooperation as a means of building stability and prosperity in Central and South Asia. The UK will use its position within international institutions, in particular the European Union and as a member of the G8, to help advance this economic agenda, and to improve trade cooperation with Afghanistan.

Security

6. The UK fully supports Afghanistan's national sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-interference by others in its internal affairs, in accordance with international law. Both Governments recognize the importance of Afghanistan's stability to achieving security in Central and South Asia, and to wider international security. Both Afghanistan and the UK believe in the peaceful resolution of disputes between States, and in fostering regional security through constructive and cooperative relations. Our Governments recognize and endorse the principles of the Good Neighbourly Relations Declaration signed in Kabul on 22 December 2002 between Afghanistan and its neighbours. Both Governments recognize the threat posed by terrorism and extremism and will strive unceasingly to ensure that Afghanistan never again becomes a safe haven for either.

7. We will cooperate closely in military and security operations conducted within Afghanistan to strengthen the government. Both Governments recognise the importance of Afghanistan creating effective, accountable and professional armed forces to provide for its own security. Acknowledging the need for international community assistance to achieve this, the UK will continue to offer support for the reform of the security sector in Afghanistan. The UK will support the Afghan Government in its determination to play a full role in the international community, including developing a long-term relationship with NATO. Afghanistan applauds the role played by the UK armed forces in Afghanistan as part of wider Coalition/NATO deployments which seek to ensure Afghanistan's security and stability.

Counter-narcotics

8. The UK and Afghanistan are working closely together to root out the production and trafficking of narcotics in Afghanistan. As G8 lead nation for the counter-narcotics campaign, the UK will continue assisting Afghanistan in mobilising and coordinating international efforts to end the drugs trade. The UK will in particular support well-targeted interdiction of traffickers and their organisations by the Afghan authorities; the strengthening of the criminal justice system; efforts to reduce poppy cultivation; and sustainable alternative livelihoods for those dependent on poppy cultivation. Our shared objective is to enable the people of Afghanistan to pursue secure, prosperous and legal livelihoods.

Development

9. Both Governments agree to work together for the reduction of poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Afghanistan. We are both committed to Afghan economic growth which will gradually reduce dependence on international assistance for the essential functions of government and provision of services. To that end the UK will continue to commit an appropriate level of development assistance to the Afghan Government's budget, and will improve predictability of the resources available, subject to progress with agreed reforms.

Education and media

10. Both Governments recognise the value of strong academic and research institutions. Both will work to expand the capacity of the higher education sector and research institutions in Afghanistan, by developing links between UK and Afghan institutions, providing scholarships, and through English language support.

11. The UK will continue to support the development of professional and independent news media in Afghanistan.

Annual review

12. The Governments of Afghanistan and the UK will review the substantive action they have taken to meet these goals at a senior level each year, and agree priorities for the next period. Both Governments also agree to a full strategic review of their future cooperation in ten years time.

The foregoing record represents the understandings reached between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan upon the matters referred to therein.

Signed in duplicate at London on 19 July 2005 in the English and Pashto languages, both texts having equal validity.

The Right Honourable Tony Blair MP,
Prime Minister

For the Government of the

United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland:

His Excellency Hamid Karzai,
President

For the Government of the

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan: