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NATO

Wales Summit Declaration on Afghanistan

Issued by Heads of State and Government of Allies and their International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troop contributing partners

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English French

Today we honoured Afghan and international personnel who have lost their lives or been injured while serving in the largest military coalition in recent history. We also pay tribute to the hundreds of thousands of military and civilian personnel who have served with ISAF and the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) over the past thirteen years. Their sacrifices and efforts have made all of our nations safer and improved global security. For that, we are grateful.

ISAF has assisted the Afghan people to regain control over their nation's destiny. It has enabled Afghanistan to develop its security capabilities. It has helped Afghanistan make significant advances in education, health, economic development, human rights and fundamental freedoms, notably for women. Moreover, ISAF has demonstrated political solidarity among our nations and improved our ability to act and operate together.

ISAF will conclude at the end of 2014 as planned. For over a year, the ANSF have been in the lead for combat operations throughout the country. Although many challenges remain, they have demonstrated that they are an effective force, gaining the respect and confidence of the Afghan people and able to prevent insurgents from achieving their objectives. When ISAF operations end, the Afghan authorities will assume full responsibility for security. However, our commitment to Afghanistan will endure beyond ISAF along with our determination to ensure that we are never again threatened by terrorists from within Afghanistan.

With the end of ISAF, the nature and scope of our engagement with Afghanistan will change. We envisage three parallel, mutually reinforcing, strands of activity:

In the short term, the Resolute Support Mission. As decided at the Chicago Summit in 2012, at the invitation of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and in the context of the broader international effort to help Afghanistan, NATO Allies and partner nations stand ready to continue to train, advise and assist the ANSF after 2014. This will be done through a new, non-combat mission with a sound legal basis. The mission's establishment is contingent on the signing of the U.S.-Afghanistan Bilateral Security Agreement and NATO-Afghanistan Status of Forces Agreement. The Resolute Support Mission should ideally, in consultation with the Government of Afghanistan, be supported by a United Nations Security Council Resolution.

In the medium term, our contribution to the financial sustainment of the ANSF. At Chicago, NATO allies and ISAF partners decided to provide support to the ANSF, as appropriate, through the Transformation Decade, on the understanding that the Afghan Government will make an increasing financial contribution to this endeavour. Today, nations renewed their financial commitments to support the sustainment of the ANSF, including to the end of 2017. We also urge the wider international community to remain engaged in the financial sustainment of the ANSF. We will maintain and strengthen the transparent, accountable and cost-effective funding mechanisms we have established since Chicago, including the Oversight and Coordination Body, which will ensure donors can confidently commit this support. Realising the full promise of the pledges made at Chicago on the financial sustainment of the ANSF, which we have reaffirmed today, will require transparency, accountability, and cost-effectiveness of the relevant international funding mechanisms. We encourage the Afghan Government to continue and strengthen efforts to fight corruption. We look forward to working with the Afghan authorities to review the force structure and capabilities of the ANSF to achieve a sufficient and sustainable force. We restate the aim, agreed at Chicago, that Afghanistan should assume, no later than 2024, full financial responsibility for its own security forces.

In the long term, NATO-Afghanistan Enduring Partnership. NATO Allies remain committed to the NATO-Afghanistan Enduring Partnership, agreed at the Lisbon Summit in 2010. The strengthening of this partnership will reflect the changing nature of NATO's relationship with Afghanistan whilst complementing the Resolute Support Mission and continuing beyond it. Both the political and practical elements of this partnership should be jointly owned and strengthened through regular consultation on issues of strategic concern. NATO is ready to work with Afghanistan to develop this partnership in line with NATO's Partnership Policy, possibly including the development of an Individual Partnership Cooperation Programme at an appropriate time.

We will continue to support an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and inclusive peace process, as stated at the 2011 Bonn Conference and at the Chicago Summit in 2012. We welcome efforts by all parties that further this process.

Good neighbourly relations, as well as regional support and cooperation will remain essential. This has been strengthened notably by the Istanbul Process in the Heart of Asia region.

A stable Afghanistan will be able to make a positive contribution to the wider region including through delivering progress in the fight against narcotics trafficking, illegal migration, terrorism and crime.

We are resolved to support Afghanistan in making further progress towards becoming a stable, sovereign, democratic and united country, where rule of law and good governance prevail and in which human rights, and notably those of children, are fully protected. We emphasize the particular importance of strengthening efforts to implement the rights of women and the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, and to include women fully in political, peace and reconciliation processes. We further recognize the need for the protection of children from the damaging effects of armed conflict as required in relevant United Nations Resolutions. We also welcome continued work to strengthen the protection of civilians by all parties concerned. Thus, we are committed to continue working with Afghanistan to further strengthen these values and principles.

Today we have extended significant offers of support and partnership to Afghanistan as it determines its own future. We remain steadfast and resolute in our commitment to the Afghan people.