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SIDE EVENT 1: SUSTAINABLE PEACE BUILDING

Segment A: *Safeguarding and strengthening human rights and women's participation*

Segment B: *Reintegrating refugees and returnees*

CONCEPT NOTE

23 November 2020, 10:00 – 12:00 (Geneva Time)

BACKGROUND

The Afghanistan peace negotiations that started two months ago offer new perspectives for peaceful development, after nearly four decades of conflict. While the start of talks is an achievement, in order to ensure a just and lasting peace, the process must be inclusive and participatory, at all stages and all levels of discussion.

The 'Sustainable Peace Building' side event, co-hosted by the Government of Afghanistan, European Union and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, will bring together key decision-makers from the Afghan government, the international community and civil society to discuss and promote inclusive and participatory approaches to peace building. The event will be divided into two segments, the first on safeguarding and strengthening human rights and women's participation and the second on reintegrating refugees and returnees. Both segments address key prerequisites for a successful peace process.

The first segment of the event, on human rights and women's participation, will aim to highlight the role of human rights defenders and civil society, including victims' groups, as agents of positive change and enablers to accountable, inclusive results of the peace process, as it moves along. Moreover, it will stress the unique opportunity to make a future peace

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agreement transformative and include women's human rights at its core – where it rightfully should be.

The second segment of the event, on reintegrating refugees and returnees, will aim to highlight the importance of a participatory approach to return and reintegration, promoting refugees and IDP's self-reliance, resilience and dignity. For return to be sustainable and contribute to peace, a distinct, whole-of-government effort will need to be made to ensure equity in access to government services, employment opportunities as well as access to justice – especially in the area of housing, land and property.

CO-CHAIRS AND MODERATORS

- H.E. Mohammad Haneef Atmar, Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Janez Lenarčič, European Commissioner for Crisis Management

KEY NOTE SPEAKERS

- H.E. Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation
- Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

Promote inclusive and participatory peace building, expressing strong support for the voice and leadership of women, victims and human rights defenders, returning refugees and internally displaced persons in setting the sustaining peace priorities for Afghanistan.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Segment A: Safeguarding and strengthening human rights and women's participation

- Assert the rights of victims as paramount to sustainable peace in Afghanistan, and the need to develop and sustain an inclusive national dialogue on **victim-centered justice** in the country to that effect.
- Express steadfast solidarity to the work of **civil society** and **human rights defenders**, particularly noting the distinct role and challenges faced by women's civil society, women peacebuilders and rights defenders. Promote a stronger government institutional response to protect human rights defenders and to promote an enabling civic environment. More specifically, express the need to strengthen the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and support civil society initiatives such as the Human Rights Defenders Committee. This includes identifying concrete measures to promote an enabling environment allowing them to safely and effectively contribute to sustainable peace.
- Reiterate the centrality of **women's participation** and **leadership** as a political imperative and a benchmark for meaningful inclusion in the ongoing intra- Afghan peace talks, and longer-term political process. More concretely, promote **accountability systems** to ensure tangible inclusion and meaningful participation of

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women and strengthen national and sub-national mechanisms for implementation National Action Plan on UNCSR 1325 (Women, Peace and Security).

Segment B: Reintegrating refugees and returnees

- Promote **participatory and sustainable** approaches to support safe, voluntary and dignified **refugee and IDP return**, sustainable reintegration of returnees, in line with ANPDF II commitments, Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), Global Compact for Refugees and SDG 10.7.
- Promote refugee and IDP participation in discussion on (assisted) voluntary repatriation processes and voluntary return, share lessons learned of large, successful refugee and IDPs return cases and draw out best practices.
- Improve **sustainable return and reintegration**, through whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, to (1) ensure access to rights, essential services and inclusion in government-provided integration schemes, (2) proactively reducing barriers to address the needs of the most vulnerable IDPs, returnees and refugees.
- Broaden return and reintegration dialogue to include **regularizing labour migration** in the region, as outlined in ANPDF II.

PROPOSED AGENDA

Co-chairs of the event: *H.E. Mohammad Haneef Atmar, Minister of Foreign Affairs and H.E. Janez Lenarčič, European Commissioner for Crisis Management*

(The co-chairs will moderate the event. H.E. Foreign Minister Atmar will call on the Afghan speakers and the EU Commissioner will call on the international speakers)

Time	Agenda	Speaker
10:00	Welcome and opening remarks by co-chairs	AFG: Mohammad Haneef Atmar, Minister of Foreign Affairs EU: Janez Lenarčič, European Commissioner for Crisis Management
10:05	Keynote address	AFG: Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation UN: Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
SEGMENT A: Safeguarding and strengthening human rights and women's participation		
10:15	Opening remarks	AFG: Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai, Chief Negotiator, Afghanistan Peace Negotiation Team

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10:20	Panel discussion	UN: Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women NO: Ine Eriksen Søreide, Minister of Foreign Affairs SE: Robert Rydberg, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs DE: Martin Jäger, State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development AFG: Shaharзад Akbar, Chairperson Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission AFG: Dr. Habiba Sarabi or Fawzia Koofi (tbd.), Islamic Republic Negotiation Team CSO: Mary Akrami, Executive Director, Afghan Women's Network (tbc.)
11:00	Concluding remarks	AFG: H. E. Hasina Safi, Minister of Women's Affairs
SEGMENT B: Reintegrating refugees and returnees		
11:05	Opening remarks	UN: Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees
11:10	Panel discussion	AFG: Minister for Refugees and Repatriation UK: (tbd.) World Bank: Hartwig Schafer, Vice-President South Asia (tbc.) CSO: Charlotte Slenten, Danish Refugee Council, (tbc.)
11:35	Concluding remarks	UN: Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees
11:40	Open discussion (covering segment A+B)	
11:55	Closing of the event	EU: Mr. Janez Lenarčič, European Commissioner for Crisis Management AFG: H.E. Mohammad Haneef Atmar, Minister of Foreign Affairs