



**Dear Readers,**

Afghanistan has entered a new and important phase in the path of stability. The start of direct peace talks with the Taliban marks a key development in Afghanistan's longstanding efforts to start negotiations leading to a dignified and sustainable peace. Achieving peace has been and remains a fundamental demand of all Afghans. They expect an outcome that corresponds with their expectations for peace: a durable end of violence in which all Afghans are able to exercise their fundamental rights and freedoms, including determining their own political destiny in a democratic and pluralistic society. To that end, the outcome of the Consultative Peace Jirgah is reflective of their will and expectations for the end-state. At this moment, the people of Afghanistan expects an immediate ceasefire, which is of crucial importance for the talks to progress in the right direction. The strong role of Afghan women in the negotiations is reflective of today's new Afghanistan, which has emerged due to the partnership and joint sacrifices of the Afghan people and the international community. Hence, upholding the constitutional democracy will be a tribute to all Afghans and to the international civilian, military and humanitarian personnel who gave their precious lives for peace, democracy and freedom. Moreover, the Afghanistan Geneva Conference is approaching fast. It will be a milestone in defining our partnership with the international community in the next years. The new national strategy will seek to achieve prosperity, security and peace through a self-reliance strategy, based on key measures to strengthen governance, increase economic growth and consolidate trust in more effective state institutions. In the spirit of continued partnership with the international community, this endeavor is by all means possible.

**Youssof Ghafoorzai**  
**Ambassador**

**Acting Foreign Minister  
Mohammad Haneef Atmar Speaks  
with Norway's Foreign Minister  
Ine Eriksen Søreide**

On September 15<sup>th</sup> the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, H.E. Mohammad Haneef Atmar had a phone conversation with Norway's Foreign Minister, H.E. Ine Eriksen Søreide. Minister Atmar thanked Minister Eriksen Søreide for her substantive remarks at the opening ceremony of the peace talks in Doha and for Norway's overall support for Afghan-led and owned peace efforts, aimed at achieving a lasting and dignified peace. He also underscored that the immediate reduction of violence and a ceasefire is of great importance to move the process forward.



Minister Atmar underscored the role of the international community in helping achieve the end-state called for by the people of Afghanistan. Minister Eriksen Søreide expressed her satisfaction with the start of talks between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban in Doha, assuring Minister Atmar of Norway's continued support for the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process. She also condemned the recent terrorist attack on Afghanistan's First Vice President, Mr. Amrullah Saleh and expressed her condolences to the families of the victims of the attack. The Foreign Ministers then discussed the continuation of the talks in its next round, the role of regional and global consensus in the success of the peace process, regional and international support for the Geneva Conference on Afghanistan and its impact on the success of peace talks.

**President Ashraf Ghani addressed  
the 75<sup>th</sup> Session of the United  
Nations Assembly**



On September 21<sup>st</sup> President Ashraf Ghani participated in a high-level meeting to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations. President Ghani stated that Afghanistan was at the center of a region of both opportunity and afflicted by global challenges. Afghanistan's geographical position makes it a critical connector that should regain its position as a hub for regional and international cooperation. "We are right at the heart of the untapped potential that could bring prosperity and peace to our region.", he said.

President Ghani also identified five challenges that have had an impact in Afghanistan's current situation: the coronavirus pandemic, economic development, violence, climate change and inequality. He highlighted the measures being taken by Afghanistan to tackle these issues. In the broader context, overcoming pressing global challenges requires that the international community upholds the founding principles and values of the UN Charter. Regarding ongoing efforts for peace in the country, President Ghani reaffirmed Afghanistan's longstanding commitment to engage the Taliban in direct peace talks. Moreover, at this juncture, all Afghans desire an immediate ceasefire. He also emphasized the important role of the UN in standing for shared values throughout the peace process, thanked the world body for its support and called for a global ceasefire. He also highlighted the important role of the UN in the Afghan peace talks and called on all member-states of the UN to help Afghanistan achieve the "end state of a sovereign, united and democratic Afghanistan at peace with itself and region, capable of preserving and expanding the gains of the last 19 years."

### Afghan women, a Strong Voice and Presence in the Afghan Peace Delegation



Women are taking a dominant role in the peace negotiations in Doha, bringing forward their expectations and demands for a successful outcome. The Afghan Peace delegation to Doha includes the presence of four women: Fawzia Koofi, lawmaker and former Deputy Speaker of the Parliament; Habiba Sohrabi, former Minister of Women's Affairs and former Governor of Bamyan; Sharifa Zurmati, journalist and former Member of the Parliament; and Fatima Gailani, Board Member of the Afghan Red Crescent. All four members of the team have been at the forefront of women's rights activism for decades, including during Taliban rule. "We have to preserve what we achieved in the past two decades" – said Sharifa Zurmati – "Our dream is a durable ceasefire, and dignified and sustainable peace in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, which is about its people". Mrs. Koofi highlighted that women's rights and issues would have fully protected and promoted. The women of the Afghan delegation are participating in a joint initiative between the Embassy of Afghanistan in Oslo and the Nordic Women Mediators Network (NWM) on the role of Afghan women in the peace process. This initiative aims at exchange of expertise and experience of the Nordic Women Mediators in the areas of peace and conflict resolution, providing practical assistance during the peace negotiations. Mrs. Koofi is also scheduled to participate in Oslo Pax, a yearly conference on peace, hosted by the Nobel Peace Center. The topic of this year's conference is diversity and inclusion in peace and war. Mrs. Koofi will share her experience and expertise regarding the importance of gender equality for peace.

### Ambassador Ghafoorzai Visits Oslo Metropolitan University

On 18 September 2020, Ambassador Ghafoorzai visited OsloMet University at the invitation of its Rector, Mr. Curt Rice. The purpose of the visit was to discuss several collaboration initiatives between OsloMet and relevant health and high education institutions of Afghanistan in the areas of occupational therapy, prosthetics, health sciences and orthotics.



Ambassador Ghafoorzai was welcomed by Mr. Curt Rice and visited the Orthopedic Engineering laboratories and the Motion Analysis Laboratory. He also met with Ms. Gro Jamtvedt, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences; Ms. Mona Dahl, Head of the Department of Occupational Therapy, Prosthetics and Orthotics; and Associates Professors Mr. Sadeeq Ali and Mr. Terje Gjøvåg. Both sides discussed different areas of collaboration, including virtual training and research programs between health and medical professionals from Afghanistan and the Faculty of Health-Science of OsloMet University, periodic visits by Afghan health professionals for on-site training at faculties of OsloMet, joint research programs and other educational activities. Ambassador Ghafoorzai gave an overview of the current challenges faced by Afghans with physical disabilities, resulting from landmines, other explosive devices, terrorist attacks in the country and disease. He commended the extensive work done by the Orthopedic Program of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which has helped more than 90.000 Afghan men and women since the start of its activity in 1988.

Ambassador Ghafoorzai also underscored the importance of partnering with relevant institutions such as OsloMet to develop and strengthen Afghan capacity in these areas, with the goal of becoming self-reliant in supporting the needs of the Afghans with disabilities and the victims of war. Both sides agreed upon continuing collaborating with more activities in the near future.

### Ambassador Youssof Ghafoorzai meets Steven Hamilton, Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

On 25 September 2020, Ambassador Youssof Ghafoorzai met with Steven Hamilton, Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss different areas of collaboration between IOM and the Embassy of Afghanistan in Oslo in various upcoming discussions on regarding migration. During the meeting, Ambassador Ghafoorzai appreciated the commitment and readiness of IOM to collaborate with the Embassy of Afghanistan in Oslo, spoke about the situation of Afghan immigrants and asylum seekers and highlighted Afghanistan's policy regarding dignified return and repatriation to Afghanistan.



Ambassador Ghafoorzai also underscored the importance of integrating back the Taliban into society in the post-peace Afghanistan, which will require the support of the international community. Mr. Hamilton affirmed the IOM's continued support for Afghanistan and commitment to continued collaboration with the Embassy of Afghanistan in Oslo on various initiatives.



### Ambassador Ghafoorzai meets with the newly appointed Ambassador of Norway to Afghanistan



On September 1<sup>st</sup> Ambassador Ghafoorzai met with the newly appointed Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, H.E. Mr. Ole Andreas Lindeman. The Ambassadors discussed different aspects of Norway-Afghanistan's bilateral relations and cooperation, including Norway's current and future contributions in the areas of governance, development and peace, among other issues. Ambassador Ghafoorzai congratulated Ambassador Lindeman on his appointment and noted that he will be taking up his position at an important juncture, in which efforts for a lasting and dignified peace have reached a new phase and the collaboration between Afghanistan and all international partners is focusing on laying the foundation of a continued partnership in the coming years. To that end, it was highlighted that a successful outcome of peace efforts, one that meets the expectations of the people, would go a long way in advancing not only security, but also development and prosperity. Ambassador Ghafoorzai expressed his gratitude to Norway for its multi-sectoral contributions, which are highly valued by the Government and the people of Afghanistan and constitute a significant part of the many gains of the past. He also underscored the importance of a sustained partnership in the years ahead, based on common principles and values, and expressed his willingness to continue the close collaboration between the Embassy of Afghanistan in Oslo and the Embassy-

of Norway in Kabul on different initiatives concerning the embassies' activities. Ambassador Lindeman reaffirmed Norway's continued support to Afghanistan, not only during the peace process but also in the post-peace development of the country. He stressed that Norway will remain engaged in Afghanistan in different sectors, including development, governance and security.

### Ambassador Ghafoorzai held a VTC meeting with Denmark's Special Representative for Afghanistan



On 17 September 2020 Ambassador Ghafoorzai met via videocall with Ambassador Thomas Lehmann, Denmark's Special Representative for Afghanistan. Ambassador Ghafoorzai started by congratulating Amb. Lehmann on the appointment of Ambassador Mette Knudsen as Ambassador of Denmark to Kabul and reiterated that he looks forward to continue working closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Copenhagen and the Danish Embassy in Kabul, to strengthen the bilateral relations and cooperation between their two countries. In that regard, Ambassador Ghafoorzai gave an overview of the current situation of the peace process, stressed the key importance of international support and the contributions of Denmark as a country that has always been committed to peace, democracy and human rights in Afghanistan. On this issue, Ambassador Ghafoorzai thanked Amb. Lehmann for the important contributions of Denmark on the areas of political dialogue, security, development and humanitarian aid under their current 3-year program (2017-2020) and based on the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) between Afghanistan and Denmark, that had played a pivotal role in achieving the gains of the last two decades. Ambassador-

Lehman confirmed Denmark's continued support for Afghanistan and the Afghan people in the long term, including during the post-peace phase. Ambassador Ghafoorzai and Amb. Lehmann also discussed the renewal of the Strategic Partnership Agreement between the two countries in the near future. Ambassador Ghafoorzai emphasized the significance of Denmark's position during the peace process, alongside other international partners engaged in Afghanistan. Denmark remains a country committed to democracy, women's rights, human rights and pluralism. To that end, Danish support was highlighted in the context of achieving an outcome that meets the expectations of the Afghan people. Amb. Lehman reiterated Denmark's long-term commitment for a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan in which democratic values and principles are not only preserved but also advanced.



Lehmann stated that the Government of Denmark is looking forward to taking part in the upcoming Geneva Conference on Afghanistan which will define the scope and nature of the new era of partnership between Afghanistan and the international community.



Ambassador Ghafoorzai and Ambassador Lehmann agreed on continuing discussions on various issues, including cooperation on peace and development among other issues, via videocall for now and in person as soon as the travel restrictions due to Covid-19 are lifted.

## Afghan Embassy in Oslo Commemorates Martyrs Week



The Embassy of Afghanistan in Oslo held a gathering with the participation of the diaspora, including representatives of several associations, on the occasion of Martyrs' Week to pay tribute to the memory of those who sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom, liberty, peace and prosperity in Afghanistan. Ambassador Ghafoorzai highlighted that Martyrs' Week is an occasion to recall and remember all who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country and people during the most difficult stages in the country's history. He also noted



that paying tribute to their memory is an important factor and highlighting the importance of public service and love of country and the nation to Afghanistan's younger generations. Furthermore, Ambassador Ghafoorzai remarked that today's Afghanistan and its various achievements were made possible by the historic sacrifices of the people of Afghanistan. In the context of upcoming peace talks between the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban, he noted that preserving and advancing these gains would be a tribute to the memory and sacrifices of all martyrs of the nation. At the end, the participants paid their tribute to all martyrs who sacrificed their lives for their country and people.

## Helmand Province's Department of Agriculture expects around 28,000 Metric Tons of Pomegranates to be Harvested this year

Helmand's Department of Agriculture informed last Sunday that due to the good weather in Helmand last season, the orchards in the province will produce sooner than in other provinces. Helmand's pomegranates are known for their quality and exported to most provinces of Afghanistan and the region, providing a wide market for the producers. Most of the pomegranates are sent to Kandahar and Kabul after packaging.



Pomegranate producers expect that the good yield, paired with the earlier harvest will provide a beneficial advantage of Helmand's product in the market. "This year, we will have an estimated 28,106 metric tons of pomegranates in the province, which is an increase of 16.6 percent compared to last year," said Zalmay Alako, head of Helmand's Agriculture Directorate.



In Helmand there are up to 12,000 hectares of pomegranate orchards and their pricing being based on their quality. Previous years have seen agricultural production diversity, with new fruits being added to Helmand's agricultural production.

## Afghanistan's Peace talks Start in Doha - Qatar



The Afghan-led and Afghan owned peace negotiations started in Doha on Saturday, September 19th, aiming to end the conflict and provide a durable, dignified and sustained peace in Afghanistan. At the opening ceremony, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation called for an immediate reduction of violence and a ceasefire. In her remarks at the opening ceremony, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ine Eriksen Søreide, highlighted Norway's long-term and



historical support for Afghanistan and the Afghan people, which shall continue in the way forward. She also underscored the need for an end to violence and an outcome that would have to protect the rights of all Afghans, including women, and build on the gains achieved in the past two decades.



The Embassy of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Oslo  
Accredited to Norway, Denmark and Iceland

**NYHETSREVY**

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