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Forum for 21st century on International Assistance to Afghanistan

*The Forum for the 21st Century is gathering the representatives of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, of the European Union and of the United States of America to discuss the Global Security Issue concerning the **Development Aid for Afghanistan**. This topic is of big importance to all the parties involved. As has been stated in the 1st Draft of this Section, fears remain about the withdrawal of foreign troops and the termination of the ISAF Mission.*

As has been stated in the previous draft many other forms of assistance will remain in the country both to help the country rebuild and to prevent it from sliding into another civil war and thus destabilizing the entire region and disrupt the Global Security.

In the 1st Draft the situation in Afghanistan has been identified and described and the delegates from the parties involved in the Forum for the 21st Century have replied to this Draft and have stated their positions and proposed steps and other relevant suggestions.

This Draft is a reaction to those replies and tries to identify the position of the delegations and facilitate an arrival to a mutual understanding and agreement on comprehensive and concrete steps.

The Forum for the 21st century appreciates the inputs of all the parties involved and once again invites the delegates to study the following draft and make replies to it.

Notes

Afghanistan needs to be stabilized in multiple ways and each of the parties represented by delegates at this Forum has different ideas and approaches. While some of them converge, some are diverging or at least seem to do so due to being non-specific.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations has emphasized the **principle that no foreign ideas should be imposed on Afghanistan**. The **Afghan** Government **repeated** this concern. The ASEAN proposed more assistance in **education** and opening up the trade with Afghanistan to help its **economic development**. **These ideas were share by all the other parties involved.**

The European Union specified a plan in helping the civilian stability in Afghanistan while putting a lot of emphasis on civil rights, fair elections and tackling corruption. The United States of America has shared some of these ideas but also put emphasis on the status of women in the Afghan society. **The USA has proposed an idea of setting up separate gender schools** for boys and for girls that would reflect the reality of orthodox religious beliefs in Afghanistan. The US delegates have equally addressed the importance of **separating religious practices and beliefs from political governance**.



The plan of the EU for more direct and more efficient and transparent aid involved a creation of a database for all projects allocated and directed to Afghanistan. The EU also proposed that half of the aid should be through Afghanistan's national budget. The **European Union** equally specified a possible participation by and cooperation between **EUPOL and Afghan bodies** specifically in the field of drug trafficking.

The USA plans to **further aid the Afghan National Army (ANA)** after 2014 with military aid and training. All the parties agreed to the need of military aid to Afghanistan after the end of the ISAF mission. The ASEAN proposed a **sharing of intelligence and of best practices**, which was a specific plan from their part.

The Overall Situation and the Urgent Need for Cooperation:

Afghanistan's main problem is ineffective governance, which is worsened by corruption. Ineffective government hinders the progress of the military training and its ability to provide security for the Afghan population.

In a non-secure, corrupt and badly governed environment there can be no proper economic development. This prevents **economic alternative for most of the Afghan men** who then decide to join the Taliban. Corruption and a lacking rule of law hinders the guarantee of **fairness and equal rights** for all the population which **prevents women** from being educated or being more empowered, prevents proper **religious freedom that would oppose radical Islamic ideologies** and also **prevents education which is linked to all** the aspects already mentioned.

All these problems create a vicious circle. Tackling all the issues one by one and very specifically is crucial. That is why the delegates of this forum need to find specific ways to help that will be convergent. The presence at the Forum of representatives of Afghanistan's Government will make the achievement of these goals easier.

Proposals

Due to the difficulty of not always being able to separate individual areas of development aid (*Education, Internal Security, Civilian Stability, and Economic Development*) some of the proposals will likely overlap and will likely be repeated.

In replying to this Draft, new proposals might be suggested by all the parties. Changes to some proposals, disagreements with some of the points as well as suggesting to eliminate some proposals entirely will be accepted from all the parties.

The principle that foreign ideas and ways of running a country should not be imposed on Afghanistan needs to be taken into account while considering all the proposals in the following section.

Education:

- × The representatives of Afghanistan have mostly emphasized the need for educating the population of their country. They have also appreciated all previous efforts in this regard.



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- × Governments of the parties involved ought to **sign specific agreements that would allow talented Afghan students to receive scholarships at universities in the European Union, Southeast Asia and in the United State of America**. These agreements could be signed **together** between all the parties and Afghanistan **or separately** between Afghanistan and each of the parties. **The latter way could more easily take into account the cultural and economic specifics of each party involved and could tackle the challenges and use the opportunities more directly and efficiently.**
- × A similar agreement but one that ought to be signed separately from the previous one(s) is an agreement concerning **Afghan students studying medicine**. As any country Afghanistan needs doctors to improve the critical infrastructure and help the stability of the country. This kind of an agreement could again be signed between all the parties (Afghanistan, ASEAN, EU, USA) or separately as multiple bilateral agreements.
- × Another separate agreement could concern **students who are studying to become teachers themselves**.
- × A special emphasis needs to be put on **educating girls and women** in Afghanistan. **International NGOs** involved in women equality and education affairs and **UN bodies** (e.g. *UNESCO* and *UNICEF*) could **better coordinate** appropriate projects. **The parties of this Forum need to facilitate such coordination.**
- × Young Afghans who live abroad and are studying or have recently graduated need to be attracted back to Afghanistan. This could be achieved with other measure in the field of Economic Development, Civilian Stability and Internal Security.

Economic Development:

- × **Free Trade Agreements between Afghanistan the parties involved** at this Forum need to be **signed soon or need to enter into the phase of negotiations**. All the parties agreed on the need to open the markets for Afghanistan, as this would enable economic development and inflow of FDI. This would also **initiate a trend in the world economy** where more and more countries would sign such agreements with Afghanistan.
- × A **Memorandum on progressing the negotiations** for Afghanistan to become a full pledged **member of the WTO** ought to be signed. Concrete steps in this regard need to be taken too. This would further deepen the integration of Afghanistan into the international community.
- × The government of Afghanistan could be advised and assisted in helping to **set up economic zones in the country** with low taxes, flexible labor laws and stable and secure environment. **This would also attract educated Afghans back to the country. Lowered bureaucracy** would also help make the economy more dynamic and would further attract FDI. **Less bureaucracy also decreases the potential for corruption.**
- × Afghanistan used to be **self sufficient in agriculture**. The Development Aid in the agricultural sector could focus on improving technologies and productivity in this sector. **The representatives at this Forum need to present concrete ideas on how best achieve this goal.**
- × Development aid overall is very crucial. Other countries could also adopt a system of more direct and efficient aid along with a centralized database that was proposed by the EU. The other



representatives could propose their views. **A more direct and transparent aid would prevent corruption and help stability and security.**

Internal Security:

- × **The ASEAN has proposed to further share intelligence** with the ANA and also **share best practices** with the Afghan government concerning the internal security of the country that also affects the civilian stability.

The other delegates could propose similar measures of sharing intelligence and best practices with the ANA and the Afghan Government. An **agreement of sharing intelligence** between the governments of Afghanistan and the parties of the Forum ought to be signed and be as specific as possible. **Again a single multilateral or various bilateral agreements are possible.** The same principle could be used in signing an agreement on the **sharing of best practices.**

- × After 2014 when the combat troops of the ISAF withdraw troops that are going to help train the ANA will stay in the country. **The European Union and the United States could specify the nature of military aid within their NATO alliance.** They could sign an **agreement with ASEAN to specify the military aid.** ASEAN is free to sign its own deal with the ANA.
- × A specific plan where all the parties and the Afghan government specify **how to tackle Taliban and Al-Qaeda and prevent them from ever taking hold in Afghanistan** should be created. This strongly correlates with economic development and civilian stability.

Civilian Stability:

- × The European Union has specified its plan for development aid and also its plan for **cooperation between EUPOL and other Afghan organizations.** It has also specified the areas where it can help most. The other representatives (ASEAN, USA) **should specify their areas** where they can be most effective.
- × The proposed **international aid and donors' database** proposed by the European Union should be extended to all the aid directed to Afghanistan from all the parties of the Forum. Another or an attached **agreement that would prevent the doubling or even the tripling** of the same sort of **aid to the Afghan** population needs to be signed and implemented **as soon as possible.**
- × Civilian stability could be achieved by separating the religious views from political governance, in other words by assuring **"secular governance with religious freedom"**. The delegates **need to propose steps that would help this goal with keeping the principle of not imposing foreign ideas on the Afghans.**
- × The status of **women and girls needs to be addressed specifically.** Again the delegates need to implement ways that would not break the principle of non-imposing. The idea proposed by the USA of creating **separate gender schools** needs to be discussed among all the parties including the Afghan government.
- × Including international NGOs (i.e. *Transparency International*) to help assure fair elections, reducing corruption and respecting human and civil rights of the population **would address the concerns that all parties involved in this regard.**



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