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Major General Karl Engelbrektson, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please allow me to start by expressing my sincere greeting on behalf of women of Afghanistan. It is an honor and pleasure to be among you discussing one of many crucial topics women, peace and security- Afghan women's experiences, recommendations for conflict prevention, resolution and post conflict stabilization.

I am particularly thrilled to speak to you all at a time that we just launched our Position Paper after months of consultation with so many women from different parts of Afghanistan on how are they envisioning their future in Afghanistan during and post transition. I am glad to share the copies of the Position Paper of Afghan women during this Conference.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The realities of Afghan women are the story of survival. I am here to share our experiences as fighters and those struggling to bring peace and stability with women's inclusion in Afghanistan. A fight that is not being fought because of the international presence but a fight that we believe in. While we survived the Taliban era oppression, we have come a long way in the past ten years.

You are aware that Afghan women are the half of the population of Afghanistan. Thus their involvement and participation in discussions and platforms for planning peace and stability for Afghanistan is equally important as to the men and as the women of our Network say "You can't build a country leaving half of its population intimidated and poor".

We are playing a critical role in being part of solutions but not problems starting from our homes. We are the important actors for bringing up the children with an ideology of No War and Conflict but Peace and stability. Women's groups and movements can also play a critical role in passing the message of peace and security within the communities for both conflict prevention and resolution. Looking at the context of Afghanistan, women can play a vital role to raise awareness at the community level on importance of maintaining peaceful societies. Women groups specifically can work with influential figures such as religious leaders, councils and committee leaders for developing and planning peace and stability plans within their districts/ villages/ provinces and finally throughout the country. In Afghanistan as we are half of the population of the country, our equal participation is a must. We can pass on the peace and stability plans at the local community level within the women's groups where access to these women are challenging and impossible by a man. The issue of Conflict prevention and resolution is also strongly linked with the security sector within the country. In order to reach to the needs of women citizens, focus should be given to the both recruitment and authority provision to the women who can assure the citizens especially the women that they are protected.

For prevention of increased conflict, women's inclusion in peace processes and discussions are vital where peace stability can be seen. Women's inclusions have two direct dimensions which are a democratically sensitive step towards realizing women's rights and influence in the agreements for rebuilding a society ravaged by armed conflict a strategically smart investment for the prevention of further violence and for the sustainability of the peace agreement reached. An inclusive peace will simply not be realized without women's presence and perspective at the peace table for action and are only meaningful if they are applied and adapted to concrete situations, and include accountability mechanisms.

For anyone adopting an inclusive approach to working on peace and security, the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security form the key policy documents at global level. Resolution 1325 can be seen as the basis of all the other interrelated resolutions. It explicitly refers to the adoption of a gender perspective in peace negotiations and peace agreements, including measures that support local women's peace initiatives and that involve women in all the implementation mechanisms of peace agreements. For this purpose this resolution implementation is one of the important needs for the Afghan government and international actors associated with it where Afghan women can bring the monitoring role on implementation of this resolution through a women monitoring oversight committee where they ensure the accountability on inclusion of women as decision makers in the security sectors, processes such as peace process and their inclusion as mediators on peace tables and peace negotiations. Women must sit in peace tables to discuss their future and the country's future.

'You can't build peace leaving half of the people out'

Women organization should be included in designing, evaluation and monitoring of security indicators based on which transition takes place.

The recruitment process of Afghan National Security Forces should go through an external community based process in which women groups and women from communities can report on the background of the newly enrolled security forces.

The recruitment of Afghan Local Police (ALP) and other security alternative needs to go through a transparent and vetting process so that former and current warlords with previous record of human rights violations do not automatically become part of the national forces.

Afghan women recommend creation of a joint International Afghanistan War Memory Commission so that the past 30 years of war violations are identified and there is a documentation process as a matter of conflict prevention. Such an investigation does not have to conclude in a legal trial but a memory of war and the beginning of a healing process. Otherwise, the practice of impunity will not unite afghans towards a rule of law culture.

While we, as Afghan women believe that transition should happen and Afghanistan should stand on its own feet. However, the process should include the voices and concerns of all Afghans and should be built on effective planning and adequate resources. Women have the following recommendations on the transition for it to succeed.

In order to be part of peace talks / discussions for post conflict stabilization where women must be given roles as decision makers there is a strong need to:

Support links between grassroots actors, medium-sized women's peace organizations and women's representatives in government, parliament and other national decision-making institutions,

Provide training in negotiating skills and advocacy tools for women peace activists in conflict regions

Supporting systematic documentation and analysis of best practice in civil society contributions to peace and security, including those of women's organizations.

Establish mechanisms for monitoring the impact of peace agreements in connection with the design of Peace negotiations with respect to gender.

Review progress on the implementation of signed peace agreements on a regular basis and share it widely with decision-makers and the civil society concerned.