



United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

Strategic Communication and Spokespersons Unit, Kabul, Afghanistan

## Press Statement

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### INAUGURATION OF UNAMA OFFICE IN SHEBERGHAN

#### SPEECH BY JÁN KUBIŠ, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN

**SHEBERGHAN, 1 APRIL 2012** – It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be here. This is a unique day because we are coming here still very close to Nowruz with an opening of a new chapter, a new life and work of the United Nations here in Jawzjan province, in Sheberghan.

We have been, as the United Nations, working in support of the people of Jawzjan province in close partnership with the authorities of the province for quite a while. But now with the opening of the new office we can strengthen this partnership and cooperation.

I am very happy that so soon after I have assumed my responsibilities as the head of UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan) and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, the opening of the office brought me here to Sheberghan and gave me the opportunity to meet with you, to meet His Excellency the Governor, to meet with the top representatives of the people, of the religious authorities, of all authorities and of the people of the province.

Although perhaps you don't have the sufficient attention and support that you should have and that the people of the province deserve, you are making progress. People of the province live together, work together. This is a good sign because in many other parts of the country you don't see this kind of good relations between different people, different ethnicities. Here, this is very well present.

Although you don't have the necessary degree of attention and resources from the central authorities of the country or indeed from the international community, you managed to work for progress and development. You managed to do it also because of good cooperation between the authorities, the businesses and the people of the country.

You saw how it is possible to use the traditional strength of the province, local industries but also how to develop new potential areas in developing the natural resources of the province for the benefit of the people. And you managed to provide a necessary degree of security for this. This is also laudable.

I came here to pledge the support of the United Nations and the support of UNAMA. We will work with you, we will accompany you, we will help you as much as possible both directly but also through mobilizing the support of the international community.

Only last week, we as UNAMA and the whole UN family in Afghanistan received a new mandate from the Security Council of the United Nations in New York. One of the main instructions of the new mandate is to support the country, the authorities, the people of the country. Another main instruction of this mandate is to work and provide better coordination of the international community and to link this coordinated action of the international community with the national development plans all over the country, also at the level of provinces and districts.

Another purpose of our activities is to provide the necessary support for the country to implement what is guaranteed by the Constitution of Afghanistan, the whole area of rights and fundamental freedoms of the people, notably the rights of women and children. Development in all these areas can be made only under the condition of good governance when the whole system provides for justice, when you can rely that the authorities and institutions have the necessary capacity to deliver the necessary services to the people. This is another area where we as the United Nations will provide support.

Of course, development in the province can't be supported only when looking at the separation from the perspective of the province. We will support the necessary processes and trends, political reconciliation and the political processes, development according to the national development strategy of the country also from the perspective of the country at the central level. And the last part of many other parts that I would like to mention and you will understand it very well: we will work with the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan. We will try to create conditions and help them to support Afghanistan, to work together with you in again providing the necessary conditions for economic cooperation, for better trade, for contacts among the people.

I have been already engaged in discussions with at least two countries: your northern neighbours – Turkmenistan and Tajikistan – and I will continue in this kind of effort that should bring concrete benefits of extended cooperation between your province and your neighbours in the north.

But we can't achieve all of these, and notably here in the province without having a good presence and that's why I am very grateful that we can now open this new premise of ours that will serve the purposes not only of UNAMA, but also the extended UN family.

I would like to finish my brief statement by thanking very sincerely you Mr. Governor, the authorities and the people of the province for this kind of support.

Thank you very much.