

Afghanistan and NATO's Enduring Partnership

On 20 November 2010, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan signed a Declaration on an Enduring Partnership at the NATO Summit in Lisbon.

The Enduring Partnership is the framework on which NATO will build its long-term engagement with Afghanistan, designed to continue after the ISAF mission.

In the Declaration, NATO re-affirmed its long-term commitment to a sovereign, independent, democratic, secure and stable Afghanistan that will never again be a safe haven for terrorists and terrorism, and to a better future for the Afghan people. The Afghan government also reaffirmed its commitment to actively carry out its security, governance and development responsibilities in line with commitments made at the January 2010 London Conference and July 2010 Kabul Conference.

The Enduring Partnership is intended to provide long-term political and practical support to Afghanistan as it rebuilds its security institutions and assumes full responsibility for its own security through the Transition process. It includes a series of agreed programmes and activities undertaken as part of the ongoing cooperation between NATO and Afghanistan.

Since the Lisbon Summit, NATO has been consulting the Afghan government on the first set of these activities to cover the period 2011-2012. Foreign Ministers at their meeting in Berlin on 14 April 2011 endorsed this initial list of activities. They also agreed to pursue a partnership dialogue in Kabul and Brussels which will determine the scope and content of co-operation beyond 2012.

The initial set of Enduring Partnership activities brings together a number of previously separate initiatives. Activities foreseen include capacity building efforts, such as professional military education programmes, previously undertaken through the Afghan Cooperation Programme. The 'Afghan First' programme will continue to identify Afghan companies eligible for NATO-ISAF contracts, while 'Building Integrity' courses will enhance knowledge of the impact of corruption and identify good governance initiatives.

The Enduring Partnership will support the process of normalisation of the aviation system sector, with the aim of establishing an independent Civil Aviation Authority. Other activities include training in civil emergency planning and disaster preparedness, as well as enhanced public diplomacy efforts.

As outlined in the Declaration, NATO remains committed to a long-term supporting and political role beyond the current ISAF mission. The agreement in Berlin represents another step in the development of a robust partnership between Afghanistan and NATO.

As time goes on, the Enduring Partnership will evolve to reflect the changing nature of NATO's mission and its relationship with Afghanistan. Various activities can be added or removed from the programme from year to year in keeping with the gradual development of Afghan institutions and following consultations between NATO and Afghanistan. This recognises the strategic importance of our engagement in Afghanistan and further underscores the commitment to global partnerships outlined in the 2010 Strategic Concept.



President Karzai and NATO Secretary General Rasmussen sign the Declaration on an Enduring Partnership at the NATO Summit in Lisbon



As part of the Afghan First programme, Afghan women sew uniforms for the Afghan National Police

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