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UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS MIROSLAV JENČA VISITED KABUL TO UNDERSCORE UN COMMITMENT TO AFGHANISTAN

KABUL, 27 January 2017 – The United Nations remains firmly committed to Afghanistan and its people, said Miroslav Jenča, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, following a four-day visit to Afghanistan that concluded Friday.

Mr Jenča met with President Ashraf Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani, the recently appointed electoral commissioners, government officials, women leaders, and the diplomatic community.

During his meetings in Kabul, Mr Jenča discussed the complex security situation in Afghanistan and its broader regional context. He stressed the imperative need to use peaceful negotiations to resolve the conflict through political processes. He echoed the call by Secretary-General António Guterres to make 2017 a year for peace and make full use of preventive diplomacy.

Mr Jenča further discussed the Government's commitment to unity and reform, which has secured long-term support from international partners in the areas of security and development. "This support provides important opportunities for ensuring that Afghanistan can move toward stability, accountability and greater self-reliance," he said.

On the topic of elections, Mr Jenča welcomed the reconstitution of the electoral management bodies as the impetus for moving forward with electoral reform and preparations for holding elections. He said the United Nations is ready to provide continued electoral assistance on the basis of the Government's request.

Speaking about the prospect of peace in Afghanistan, the Assistant Secretary-General said the United Nations stands ready to assist in any efforts to support an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process. He underlined the importance of regional cooperation to achieve durable peace and prosperity. "The UN shares the hope for a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan, and remains committed to supporting the Government's progress to reduce poverty and improve the still vulnerable situation of Afghan women," he said.

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The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is a special political mission that works under the auspices of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs.

UNAMA is mandated to support the Afghan Government and the people of Afghanistan as a political mission that provides 'good offices' among other key services. 'Good offices' are diplomatic steps the UN takes publicly and in private, drawing on its independence, impartiality and integrity, to prevent international disputes from arising, escalating or spreading. UNAMA assists the process of peace and reconciliation; monitors and promotes human rights, including the protection of civilians in armed conflict; promotes good governance; and encourages regional cooperation. The Mission also promotes coherent development support by the international community.