

H.E. Anders Fogh Rasmussen
NATO Secretary General
Boulevard Leopold III
1110 Brussels - Belgium

Brussels, October 15, 2013

Dear Secretary General,

With the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan coming to an end soon, **ENNA, the European network of more than 30 humanitarian and development organizations active in Afghanistan**, wishes to acknowledge the positive developments in Afghanistan but also wishes to highlight areas of concern and to make recommendations to improve the security and welfare of Afghan men, women and children. We trust that our comments will be considered during the next NATO Defence Ministers' Meeting on the 22-23 October 2013, where the future of Afghanistan is on the agenda.

Afghanistan is facing a pivotal year, with an array of security, political and economic challenges. In 2014, NATO troops are set to depart, since the transition to full Afghan security responsibility is due to be completed by the end of the year. Meanwhile Afghans are preparing for Presidential and Provincial Elections which bring particular security challenges.

ENNA acknowledges the decision by NATO, made at the Chicago-summit in 2012, to continue to support Afghanistan, with a new mission from 2015: "Resolute Support", to train, advise and assist the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

ENNA members urge that this renewed commitment be enshrined in a UN Security Council Resolution endorsed by the international community, following as the previous ISAF mandate was.

ENNA welcomes the assistance from the international community to provide training and support which has done much to professionalize the ANSF to ensure they can protect Afghan civilians. Efforts to improve the training of Afghan police officers in human and women's rights and specific measures to increase the recruitment of women in to the police force are appreciated.

However, only 1 per cent of the Afghan National Police (ANP) is female. Although female police officers are vital for Afghan women to be able to report crimes and access desperately-needed justice, few women in Afghanistan will ever encounter one. ENNA members are reporting that women's security is rapidly deteriorating in several parts of Afghanistan and freedom of movement for women has become increasingly threatened. High profile women in public life, including policewomen continue to be targeted and assassinated.

Ahead of the upcoming Presidential Elections, the Afghan Ministry of Interior is searching for 12,000 female searchers, needed to provide security at polling stations to allow women's participation in the elections. Today, barely 2000 female police officers are available. And yet they are essential for Afghan women's right to vote, subsequently for the legitimization of the elections.



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ENNA calls on NATO to support the Afghan Government to address the structural barriers to Afghan women's participation in the ANP and develop and implement a national strategy to recruit and retain female police. This will enable the ANP to provide better security at the elections and to contribute to the 10% female participation rates in the ANP by 2024. In addition, NATO should put more resources into strengthening the ANP's capacity to increase their response and sensitivity to violence against women. This is critical for upholding the rights of Afghan women and girls, as is demanded in UNSCR 1325.

Major steps have been taken to build a professional Afghan National Security Force (ANSF), but it is essential for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan that this force is held accountable for its actions. NATO should ensure that the institutional reforms necessary for accountability, rule of law and justice are prioritised and enacted.

In light of the above, we urge NATO to step up efforts with the Afghan Government and the ANSF to ensure that:

- All elements of the ANSF receive practical, quality training on civilian protection and mentoring in international human rights, humanitarian law, rule of law, gender awareness and literacy training as appropriate to their rank and duties and as part of a clear framework of operations;
- The ANP are supported to address internal issues regarding the safety of policewomen at work, such as sexual harassment and the provision of separate facilities, and to recruit more women as a priority to ensure women's participation at the elections and to reach the 10% goal by 2024. Attracting the right women into the ANP will ensure female police can meaningfully participate at decision-making levels and earn promotion;
- Adequate oversight and accountability mechanisms for the ANSF are improved; particularly including accelerating efforts to assist the Afghan government to create an independent and effective mechanism to monitor and investigate civilian deaths and injuries proactively and provide full reparations;
- A well-publicized, easily accessible, transparent and independent complaints review mechanism for the ANSF is established; supporting the Police Ombudsman's Office; ensuring that complaints made by female police officers against male colleagues are dealt with in a timely manner where justice is delivered.

We appreciate this opportunity to bring these matters to your attention, and trust that they will be actively considered in your plans for security assistance and operations in Afghanistan under the new mandate.

Yours sincerely

Fabio Pompetti
Director of **ENNA - European Network of NGO's in Afghanistan**

cc

Mari Skåre, NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security

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