



Comprehensive Long-term Partnership Between Australia and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

1. The Government of Australia and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, hereinafter known as Australia and Afghanistan respectively and collectively as “Governments”, share a commitment to peace, democracy and development, and reaffirm their common respect for sovereignty, human rights and the rule of law.
2. The Governments recognise their shared interests in a secure, stable and democratic Afghanistan, able to defend itself against international terrorism, a partner in peace with its surrounding region, and a valued contributor to the broader community of nations.
3. The Governments reaffirm their commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes between states and to the principle of territorial integrity.
4. The Governments recall the various undertakings made at the London, Kabul, Lisbon and Bonn conferences, as well as existing bilateral undertakings, and, building on their existing strong friendship and the historical ties between the two countries, commit to a long-term partnership for cooperation, based on shared strategic interests, in the following areas.

Political

5. The Governments reaffirm their respect for the principles of national sovereignty, independence and non-interference in internal affairs, in accordance with international law. They note Afghanistan’s position in the heart of Asia and their shared support for regional stability and peaceful regional relations.
6. The Governments will cooperate to support shared interests in international, regional and multilateral fora and respect for obligations under applicable international treaties and conventions, including through regular political consultations on bilateral, regional and international issues.
7. Australia welcomes the continued efforts of the Afghan people to build a stable, democratic society, based on the rule of law, where human rights, including the equality of all men and women, are guaranteed under the Afghan Constitution. In particular, the governments reaffirm their commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan. In support of these efforts, Australia will work with the Government of Afghanistan to build the capacity of government and national institutions to promote and protect human rights.

8. The Governments recognise the importance of a political solution to achieving peace and security in Afghanistan and the region. The Governments recognise that the reconciliation process must be Afghan led and Afghan-owned and be based on the renunciation of violence, severing ties to international terrorism and respect for the Afghan Constitution. The Governments reaffirm the importance of regional support for reconciliation. The Government of Australia will continue to provide support to Afghan institutions and processes, including the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme, in pursuit of peace and reconciliation.

Security

9. The Governments reaffirm their commitment to addressing long-term transnational threats, including terrorism, narcotics, people smuggling and organised crime.
10. The Governments will work together and with other members of the international community to assist the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in countering the threat of international terrorist groups, and to promote the national security of Afghanistan during the transition of lead responsibility for security to the Government of Afghanistan as well as after 2014 as mutually determined.
11. To this end, the Governments will develop long-term cooperation on shared national security challenges and continue to work together to build the capacity of the ANSF and to promote international support for the ANSF. Specific defence cooperation arrangements will be reviewed on a regular basis and could encompass such areas as counter-terrorism support and providing trainers and advisors to assist building the capacity of ANSF institutions. Beyond transition, the range of support options may expand to include a program of defence cooperation with opportunities for professional training in Australia.
12. Furthermore, the Governments reaffirm their commitment to ongoing cooperation in conducting capacity development activities and other traditional areas of law enforcement cooperation, which could include countering narcotics, terrorism, people smuggling and transnational organised crime. The specific areas of police cooperation will be decided by the governments from time to time.

Development

13. Building on their existing record of cooperation, the Governments reaffirm their shared vision to work together and with other members of the international community to achieve improved development outcomes for the people of Afghanistan.
14. The Governments underline their commitment to building the Government of Afghanistan's capacity to deliver basic services and provide economic opportunities to the Afghan people. Australia reaffirms that its support to Afghanistan will be guided by the five strategic goals of the Australian Government's aid policy, *An Effective Aid Program for Australia*: saving lives; promoting opportunities for all; sustainable economic development; effective governance; and humanitarian and disaster response.

15. Australian assistance to Afghanistan will support the development priorities and planning of the Government of Afghanistan, as set out in the proposed 2012 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Development Cooperation between the governments and consistent with commitments made by both Governments at the 2010 London and Kabul conferences.
16. Noting the unique challenges Afghanistan will face through the transition and during the Transformation Decade, the Governments note Australia's intention to make long-term, substantial and predictable commitments of development assistance to Afghanistan, in accordance with the shared responsibilities and commitments set out in the Kabul Process and the Bonn Conference. Commitments will be affirmed on an annual basis, taking into account progress against the commitments made by the Governments in the MoU on Development Cooperation.
17. Recognising that Afghanistan's long-term economic growth and fiscal sustainability will depend on the development of its productive sectors, the Governments will cooperate to build Afghanistan's capacity to develop and sustainably manage its natural resources and agriculture sectors in a transparent and effective manner.
18. Australia will support Afghanistan's efforts in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), reducing poverty, ensuring sustainable development through a private-sector-led market economy, and building human capacity through improved access to and enhanced quality of education and better access to health services.
19. As part of its capacity development support for the Afghan government, Australia will continue to provide training and expertise to Afghan public officials, including junior diplomats, in relevant Australian institutions.

Trade and investment

20. The Governments affirm the importance of an open and predictable trading environment for economic growth and development. Australia underlines its support for Afghanistan's process of accession to the World Trade Organisation as a Least Developed Country (LDC).
21. Subject to the laws and regulations and investment policies in force in their respective countries, the Governments will take such measures as may be appropriate to strengthen and diversify bilateral trade and economic relations. In this regard, as Afghanistan is an LDC, Australia, subject to its customs laws, will continue to accord duty-free, quota-free treatment to all goods originating in Afghanistan for so long as Australia applies such treatment for least developed countries. Australia will also consider, as part of Australia's broader development assistance commitment to Afghanistan, the provision of technical assistance to Afghanistan to support goods originating in Afghanistan to meet Australian requirements.
22. The Governments will work to enhance bilateral business relations and investment including through promotion and facilitation of business exchanges. Both Governments will continue to cooperate in creating a conducive environment for Australian investment in Afghanistan.

Migration and humanitarian affairs

23. The Governments will cooperate on migration and humanitarian issues, including as provided for in the MoU on Migration and Humanitarian Cooperation, signed on 17 January 2011 by the Governments and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
24. The Governments will continue efforts to address the humanitarian and livelihood needs of internally and externally displaced Afghan nationals, including those in neighbouring countries and on their return to Afghanistan.

Cultural and people-to-people links

25. The Governments recognise and commit to fostering the cultural and people-to-people links between Australia and Afghanistan. The Governments will seek to cooperate in preserving and promoting Afghanistan's cultural heritage and to promote direct ties between the people of Australia and Afghanistan, including through sporting activities and cultural exhibitions.
26. The Governments recognise the importance of higher education for Afghanistan and cooperation between their universities and institutions of higher education. Australia will continue to promote educational links including through Australian scholarships.

Implementation

27. The Governments recognise the benefits of regular bilateral meetings in building a stronger bilateral partnership, including through Ministerial visits and meetings at international fora, and will work together cooperatively to facilitate such meetings.
28. The Governments will promote high-level visits and dialogue between the two countries for the purpose of developing and enhancing bilateral cooperation on issues of mutual interest.
29. Each Government will, pursuant to its national laws, regulations and policies, ensure appropriate access to its territory for the employees, representatives or contractors of the other government required to facilitate cooperation under this Partnership.

Institutional arrangements

30. The Governments will establish a Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation to review progress in implementing this Partnership and to provide a mechanism for regular dialogue on issues of shared strategic interest. The Joint Commission will report to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of both countries.
31. The Joint Commission will be composed of representatives of both countries and will be chaired jointly by appropriate senior level officials. The Joint Commission will organise consultations on specific issues of bilateral cooperation as necessary and may establish working groups or committees.

32. Commitments made under existing arrangements that are not contrary to the content and spirit of this Partnership will be respected and may be reviewed by both Governments as necessary. Further specific subsidiary arrangements may be concluded by the Governments to give effect to this Partnership.
33. Any dispute between the governments in the interpretation or implementation of this Partnership will be resolved amicably through consultation, negotiation, or such other means as may be mutually decided.

Final provisions

34. The Governments commit to a full strategic review of this Partnership in ten years from the date of its signature.
35. This Partnership will take effect on the date of the later notification by the Governments of completion of their respective domestic procedures, and will remain in effect until terminated by either Government on six months' notice in writing to the other Government. This Partnership may be amended at any time by mutual consent of the Governments in writing.

This Partnership represents the understandings reached between the Governments of Australia and Afghanistan upon the matters referred to herein. Signed in duplicate at Chicago on 20 May 2012 in the English, Dari and Pashto languages. In case of any discrepancy in the text or difference in interpretation, the English text will prevail.

The Hon Julia Gillard MP
Prime Minister

His Excellency Hamid Karzai
President

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
AUSTRALIA

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF
AFGHANISTAN