

**Secretary-General's video message to Kabul Ministerial Conference
Kabul, Afghanistan, 14 June 2012**

Your Excellency President Karzai, Minister Rassoul of Afghanistan, Minister Davutoglu of Turkey, Distinguished Ministers and Representatives, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me congratulate Afghanistan and all Heart of Asia nations on the success of the Istanbul Process.

I regret that the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development prevents me from attending. But my Special Representative, Jan Kubis, is there with you and I look forward to his report. I have also asked Assistant-Secretary-General for Field Support, Anthony Banbury, to represent me from headquarters.

This initiative is truly Afghan-led ... regionally owned ... and internationally supported.

Clearly, Afghanistan and its neighbours face many common threats.

But you have made real progress on the path to security and broad-based development. .

Combating violent extremism, drug production and trafficking will remain essential.

So will meeting humanitarian needs.

Left unaddressed, these challenges will grow.

But I am confident that Afghanistan and its neighbours can meet them by working together.

I am encouraged by the work of the Heart of Asia nations under the Istanbul Process – as well as the many bilateral, tri-lateral and multi-lateral initiatives underway.

It is imperative that the international community support this effort.

United Nations agencies and programmes will participate in each of the Istanbul Process confidence-building measures.

I also look forward to attending next month's Tokyo conference. It should deliver tangible and predictable pledges in support of Afghanistan's sustainable development priorities based on mutual accountability.

We must do our utmost to deliver for the Afghan people.

And as I said at the NATO Summit in Chicago, let us make a special effort to do more for women and children – including girls' education and women's participation in the country's political life.

Thank you for your commitment and support. The United Nations will continue to stand with Afghanistan and the region in your search for stability, prosperity and peace.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful conference.