

**UAE**

**HH Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan's Speech**

**Bonn 2 Conference**

**December 5<sup>th</sup> 2011**

Your Excellency Chancellor Angela Merkel,

Your Excellency President Hamid Karzai,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentleman,

First and foremost I would like to thank the government of the Federal Republic of Germany for graciously hosting this monumental conference in the beautiful city of Bonn.

Today's conference marks not only a major milestone for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, but the international community. Only a decade ago, the first Bonn conference convened under the auspices of the United Nations to set forth a future vision for the people and government of Afghanistan. Today, I take great pride in acknowledging that the Afghanistan of today is living proof of that future vision, and today's conference under the theme of "from Transition to Transformation", is under Afghan chairmanship.

To that end, the United Arab Emirates remains committed towards the transition process that will witness the transfer of security to Afghan forces and the consolidation of Afghanistan's sovereignty by the end of 2014.

Mr. President,

The past ten years have proven the resilience of the Afghan people against the 30 years of war that have ravaged their country, and although there have been significant advances on the social, economic and military levels; imminent and existing obstacles "such as cross border terrorism/drug production and trafficking" remain.

Afghanistan is an essential organ to the regional body, therefore ensuring its peace and stability simultaneously ensures regional peace and security. Today's conference is an opportunity to reconfirm previous commitments, such as the "Kabul Conference/London Conference" commitments and work towards ensuring the progression of recent commitments such as those of the "Istanbul Conference on Afghanistan".

Moreover, ten years on we have all agreed that the solution for Afghanistan is indeed political, not military. Accordingly, as the gradual drawdown of ISAF troops continues, international efforts must synchronize towards civilian aspects of transition and social/economic development.

The United Arab Emirates firmly believes in an Afghan led and owned "Reintegration and Reconciliation Process

I am also delighted to see the representation on behalf of Afghan Civil society here today, in order to address social issues such as women's and children's rights. The United Arab Emirates believes that all Afghan citizens must be guaranteed equality and social justice under the Afghan constitution, as well as a continued dialogue between the government of Afghanistan and civil society.

A sustainable and prosperous Afghan economy can only be achieved through combating corruption and adopting transparency/accountability measures. Afghanistan's current dependency on foreign aid must be replaced with the building of self sufficient Afghan institutions to coordinate with the international community beyond 2014. The representation of international institutions such as the World Bank, here today demonstrates the need for coordinating international development assistance.

An Afghanistan free of illegal activities such as terrorism and drug trafficking will induce an environment rich in foreign and domestic investment, job creation, private sector investment, and access to Afghan goods.

Above all, the long term engagement of the international community in Afghanistan must be ensured. The working group on IC long-term engagement in Afghanistan, chaired by the UAE, European Union, and the Afghan finance minister, has come to the conclusion that the international community shall support Afghanistan in the long run through: maintaining, training and equipping the Afghan National Security Forces, normalized bilateral and multilateral development assistance, meeting the Kabul Conference commitments, and encouraging private sector investment.