

**Address**  
**by H.E. Kostyantyn Gryshchenko**  
**Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine**  
**at the International Conference on Afghanistan**

*(Bonn, 5 December 2011)*

President Karzai,  
Minister Westerwelle,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Afghanistan is a key nerve of today's international politics and will play this role for years to come. It's the crossroads between civilizations that can either invigorate their dialogue or escalate it.

There are good reasons why efforts of so many countries have been focused on bringing peace and predictability to this region. Yet, helping Afghanistan is not only about the ultimate success of the war on terror. Neither containing international terrorism nor enhancing stability throughout the entire Eurasian region can be reached without Afghanistan's full and positive engagement.

The last ten years have been marked, among other things, by a coordinated international effort to bring Afghanistan back in play as a positive regional factor. Despite the magnitude of this task and inevitable setbacks in its implementation, the international community is on a good track to substantially improve the stability of the Afghan state and the security situation in the country.

We should particularly owe the United States a great debt of appreciation for taking the lead in this process. America has been (and hopefully will remain) instrumental in building up and sustaining the effort targeted at helping the Afghan people to find a new, more prosperous and democratic future.

Ukraine takes pride in being part of this. Overall 22 Ukrainian military personnel participate in ISAF today – as doctors, field engineers, and military instructors.

We welcome the Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> statement by President Karzai regarding the second group of Afghanistan's areas in which the Afghan Government will take over responsibility for security from ISAF.

Indeed, whether ISAF is or is not massively present on the ground – the whole forthcoming development in Afghanistan will depend, first and foremost, on the ability of the Afghan government to reach out to the opposition forces and sustain a constructive dialogue with them.

The second major precondition will be Afghanistan's readiness to stand on its own feet economically. Ukraine will take active part in the international efforts aimed at the economic recovery of Afghanistan's economy. We fully support the New Silk Road Initiative and look forward to contributing to its successful implementation.

At the same time, it is of great importance that the international community continues to train the Afghan security and police forces and provide them with necessary equipment. This too is a field where Ukraine is ready to apply itself.

We also stand ready to support the recovery process through:

- supply weapons and military equipment to the Afghan army;
- construction of hydro- and wind power plants, modernization of power generating units and turbines;
- construction of roads, bridges, water supply systems, airports, power transmission lines, industrial facilities etc.;
- increase in civil air transport services; and

- delivery of repair parts for “Antonov” aircrafts; engines, repair parts for Mi-8/17 and Mi-24/35 helicopters, currently used by the Afghan armed forces as well as local and international companies.

Summing up, the transition in Afghanistan will be a make-or-break moment for the region and, in many ways, for today’s international politics. The most important being – no matter how tough it gets on the ground, never cut and run. We, the international community, got in this effort together. And together we have to get things right.

Thank you.