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Today date: **Dec 26, 2007**

European Parliament Joint Declaration

Date : Dec 26, 2007
Category : General
Sources : BNA

We, Members of the European Parliament Delegation for relations with Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Lower House -Wolesi Jirga- of the National Assembly , held our first interparliamentary meeting in Brussels on 26-30 November 2007. We are committed to a secure, stable , free , prosperous and democratic Afghanistan , playing its full part in the community of Nations. We recognize that a major support and commitment by the international community is necessary to assist the efforts being made by the people of Afghanistan to build their future We stress the importance of regular dialogue, which affords an opportunity to achieve a better understanding on political social and economic issues. We agree to report back to our parent bodies on the content of our discussions , particularly in the areas where joint efforts are likely to result in positive. We examined a wide range of issues dealing with the concerns of Afghanistan. including the security situation, the fight against drugs, the economic situation and assistance, good governance, as well as the relations between central government and the regions. We recognize that some progress, albeit far from sufficient, has been made in Afghanistan since 2001 especially in the areas of infrastructure and education. We regret that despite the major amount of international assistance, the impact on the Afghan economy and local population has not been as noticeable as it should , mainly because of the way in which this aid has not been fairly distributed and because of the national and international corruption and lack of coordination. We reaffirm the necessity to reinforce in Afghanistan the policies which encourage economic growth and poverty reduction and we will work together for the reconstruction of the country and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Afghanistan . We believe that the international assistance can be used for poverty reduction and for investment in long-term economic and social and fairly development , in particular for education, public health, energy, water and agriculture. We would like to suggest to our parliamentary bodies to consider creating a joint body with the participation of the European Commission to provide us a report on the management of the EU's financial assistance to Afghanistan from 2001 to date , on the basis of an independent external study. We express our concerns regarding the security situation , which is a priority in Afghanistan , reaffirming the need to continue to fight terrorism and to reestablish peace. We consider that strong security forces can protect the Afghan borders and this will allow a more secure environment inside the country , by improved equipment and training of the Afghan national army and police forces. We express deep concerns about drug production , as highlighted by the recent Afghan Opium Survey carried out by the UN office on Drugs and crime. We agree that increasing opium production represents a significant threat to Afghanistan's security and economic development and needs a major involvement of the international community to fight against supply and demand , in this way to help for efficient drugs eradication. We underline the importance of supporting democratic good governance and the promotion of political pluralism. We consider necessary to emphasize the need to respect

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human rights, freedom of speech and media , the improvement of women condiation and the development of civi
 l society based on the rule of law. We agree to work jointly to develop a programme aiming as t political and
 administrative coopeation between our parliaments . We believe particulary that , by exchanging best
 parliamentary practices and historical experiences in fighting totalitarianism MEPs can help their Afghan
 colleagues. We agree it is appopraite to establish , within the Afghan parliament, a counterpart delegation for
 relations with the European Parlaiment , in order to ensure a permanent contact, to familitate the cooperation
 between our two democratisation process in Afghanistan.Finally , we expres our pragmatic will to strengthen
 political dialogue between the Afghan Parliament and the European Parliament by holding regular
 Interparliamentary meetings on a yearly basis , alternately in Afghanistan and in one of the European
 Parliaments place of work.

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