



United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

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**SRSR KAI EIDE, STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL PEACE DAY,
SEPTEMBER 21st 2008**

In Afghanistan today we are witnessing a remarkable outpouring of support for peace, inspired by this year's international Peace Day. Across the country thousands of citizens in many communities are marking the day with marches, sports events, gatherings, and ceremonies.

Since Friday's peace statement of President Hamid Karzai, the national and international militaries have announced suspensions of offensive operations. The Taliban has separately pledged to refrain from attacks and to respect important peace day activities. I welcome these statements and express the hope that peace day will proceed undisturbed.

Today's events show the huge demand that exists for peace in Afghanistan. And they hold the promise of real, near-immediate results. Security conditions permitting, health workers will today be delivering polio vaccines in seven provinces across the south, east and west. Over the coming three days as many as 1.8 million children stand to benefit.

We should all take heart from today's developments. A window for peace has been opened, through which the people of Afghanistan are making themselves heard. Peace for a day is a start. Peace that is enduring must be our common goal.

21st September 2008