

FINAL

NOTES FOR A STATEMENT

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Growing civilian engagement...

- Thank you, Michel, and good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I appreciate this opportunity to speak about the dedicated group of Canadian civilians that are working in Afghanistan alongside our brave men and women in uniform.

- Canada's growing civilian engagement in Afghanistan reflects our commitment to bring the best that Canada has to offer to address the interdependent pillars of the Afghanistan Compact: security, socio-economic development, and governance.
- More than 150 civilian officials work on Afghanistan, both here in Ottawa and abroad. This includes a number of officials working on Afghanistan-related issues at our missions overseas, such as those at the UN or NATO.

- En Afghanistan seulement, plus de 50 civils canadiens travaillent actuellement à Kaboul et à Kandahar.
- This group of committed civilians includes diplomats, who are directly engaged in helping to build accountable Afghan institutions, coordinating government activity and promoting democratic progress.

- It also includes civilian police and corrections experts, who are training and mentoring their Afghan counterparts to build a capable, self-sustaining police force and corrections system.
- And finally, it includes a growing complement of development specialists, who work with NGO partners and UN agencies on both long-term and quick-action projects focussing on growth, governance, vulnerable groups and community development.

- Avant d'aller plus loin, il est important de ne pas sous-estimer les difficultés et les incertitudes entourant la sécurité de l'environnement dans lequel ces civils canadiens travaillent. Ces gens savent qu'ils ne peuvent pas accomplir leurs tâches en toute liberté. Leurs activités et leurs déplacements sont soigneusement étudiés et coordonnés par leurs collègues des Forces armées.

- It's not easy. But going forward, we will do even more to intensify our civilian presence and efforts. Further increases in our advisory, reporting, and programming capacities will help to ensure that we can build further on hard-won gains.
- The recent appointment of Elissa Golberg as the new Representative of Canada in Kandahar will help to coordinate and build on civilian-led achievements to date.

- As Canada's senior civilian representative in Kandahar, Ms. Golberg will work under the leadership of our Ambassador, serving as Canada's top point of contact for the Commander of the Joint Task Force Afghanistan as well as provincial government representatives and institutions with respect to all civilian matters.

...Integrated within a whole-of-government effort

- Success means **team** success – and Afghanistan is a prime example of what it means to get this right. Working together, DFAIT, DND, CIDA, CSC and the RCMP are each playing a supporting role to make Canada's mission in Afghanistan work. Our whole-of-government approach demonstrates what people can achieve when they join their expertise to get the job done.

- Canada's leadership of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team – or PRT – is the very embodiment of the combined strengths Canada is bringing to Afghanistan and of what can be achieved when people work closely together.
- Our PRT – one of 25 that have been established throughout Afghanistan – is a team of more than 300 people including Canadian diplomats, development experts, civilian police and the military – all of whom work together almost 24/7.

- Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) were introduced to Afghanistan in late 2001, and were the first step towards recognizing that military and civilian actors can be more effective when they work together.
- Good teamwork brings good results – we are finding, for example, that it is a false paradox that CIMIC cannot move towards providing long-term sustainable development projects and that aid agencies cannot provide quick and visible impact projects.

- Through creativity, improved training and cooperation, and a willingness to accept a certain increased risk, we can demand more from both spheres of reconstruction, having them move closer to each other's inherent expertise, until the security-development gap is replaced by a seamless response.

- We are directly involved in joint planning to ensure there is no security-development gap. Representatives from Foreign Affairs and CIDA form part of the Joint Task Force Afghanistan Command Cell, just as military officers play a partner role in the reconstruction and development work of the PRT.

- By working to harmonize security and development in this way, we're seeing visible payoffs. Rapid-response humanitarian tools, which we have put in place, are one example. Another is the Kandahar Local Initiatives Program. These initiatives are having a visible impact on people's lives.

Civilian contributions

- Beyond this, let me touch briefly on just a few ways that Canada's civilian engagement – integrated within our whole-of-government framework – is making a difference in the lives of ordinary Afghans.

- On the **development** front, we've seen major advances in areas such as education, economic development and health – advances Canada is playing a major role in bringing about, as one of the world's leading development donors to Afghanistan. Consider these figures:
 - Cette année, près de six millions d'enfants (dont le tiers sont des filles) fréquentent l'école, comparativement à 700 000 en 2001 (tous des garçons).
 - Le revenu per capita a doublé en trois ans;

- More than 418,000 people (mostly women) are accessing small loans and financial services to rebuild their lives and support their families;
- Today more than eight in ten of the population has access to basic health services, up from less than one in ten just a few years ago; and,
- The World Health Organization reports that tuberculosis deaths have been cut in half annually.

- The Canadian civilian contribution is also making a difference in the area of **governance**, helping to strengthen Afghanistan's institutions so that Afghans themselves can assume full responsibility for their own country's stability and security.

- This is why areas such as **policing** are a priority for Canada – because a credible, professional Afghan National Police is key to fostering stability and enhancing the rule of law in Afghanistan. More than 600 members of the Afghan National Police have received training through the Kandahar PRT. And Canadian **Correction Services** officers are training and mentoring Afghan prison staff and administrators to build a professional corrections system.

- In the **justice** sector, as part of our efforts to enhance access to justice and protect and promote human rights, Canada has helped train more than 200 judges in criminal, civil and commercial law and procedure, and more than 70 prosecutors in financial and juvenile crime.

- All of this is unfolding in the broader context of Afghanistan's path to **democratic reform** and our efforts to support this transition as part of the international community. Although much more remains to be done, the Afghan government has made considerable progress since 2002 in laying the basic foundation for democratic governance:

- Le pays s'est doté d'une nouvelle constitution;

- Les toutes premières élections présidentielles ont été tenues;
- A functioning, democratically elected Parliament has been established; and
- More than 10 million Afghans registered to vote in the last Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

- We've also increased our focus on securing Afghanistan's place in its region, working to support the Afghan-Pakistani Peace Jirga as the basis for improved relations between those two countries.
- We're increasing our aid on both sides of the border, and we're improving the capacity of each country to manage its shared border, which includes initiatives to bring together officials from both countries in common workshops.

- We're also looking at ways to increase the economic integration of Afghanistan with its neighbours – an essential goal for the long-term stability of the country.

Conclusion

- In sum, I think there can be no doubt that the civilian aspect of Canada's role in Afghanistan is critically important, and will remain so going forward. And I think we can be justifiably proud of what our civilians are helping to accomplish within our whole-of-government framework.

- Ceci dit, il nous reste encore beaucoup de chemin à parcourir et nous allons continuer à faire face à des défis considérables dans les années à venir. Après tout, il ne s'agit pas ici d'une mission d'aide typique – l'Afghanistan constitue le plus important programme d'aide bilatérale de l'histoire canadienne et l'implantation de programmes dans ce pays présente des défis uniques.

- What is more, we are helping to rebuild a country that is poorer than poor. A country devastated by 30 years of war and destruction. A country that continues to be under attack by insurgents - as we saw in the brutal suicide bombings earlier this week - continues to thrive on the narcotics trade, and where corruption and weak institutional capacity remain serious problems.

- All of these factors make Afghanistan one of the most difficult operating environments ever faced by Canadian civilians abroad.
- But we are on the right track. Canada is breaking new ground in linking governance, development and security. And while doing business in a new way comes with its challenges, our approach is exactly right. It is only by combining our expertise across the mutually reinforcing areas of security, governance and development that we can tackle the various challenges facing Afghanistan.

- And it is through this whole-of-government approach that we can bring clarity of purpose to our efforts.
- If we stay the course, if we continue to intensify our support, we will keep seeing positive change in Afghanistan. I'm convinced of it.
- Merci. Il me fera plaisir de répondre à vos questions.
- Thank you, and I welcome your questions and comments.