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BACKGROUNDER: TRANSITION

TRANSITION: *INTEQAL*

In January 2010, the Conference on Afghanistan in London pledged “to develop, by the Kabul Conference, a plan for phased transition to Afghan security lead”. Within the framework of Afghan sovereignty, the objectives of the *Inteqal*¹ Framework are to strengthen Afghan ownership and leadership across all the functions of government and throughout the territory of Afghanistan.²

After consultations with the Afghan Government, NATO and ISAF Foreign Ministers endorsed in Tallinn in April 2010 the political and military criteria necessary to enable transition to begin.

At the July Kabul Conference in July 2010, the Afghan Government and the international community endorsed a plan for transition. The Government of Afghanistan and the International Community committed to provide the support and the resources necessary for Afghans gradually to take full responsibility for security, governance and development.

Principles of Transition

The following principles will guide the transition process:

Transition is a conditions-based process, not a calendar driven event. Recommendations are based on an assessment of conditions on the ground.

Transition does not signify ISAF’s withdrawal from Afghanistan but a gradual shift to a supporting role as Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) capabilities develop. Gradually, as circumstances dictate, the international community’s civilian and military representatives will shift to supporting, then mentoring, then enabling, and finally sustaining roles across the three pillars of security, governance and development.

Operationally, local transition of security responsibilities to the ANSF can take place at the district or even sub-district level in some areas. As ISAF forces thin out in some areas, some of this “transition dividend” is expected to be reinvested in other areas.

Transition will involve key Afghan institutions and functions as well as geographic areas, and it will include the evolution of ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Teams towards a mainstream developmental model. Headquarters will remain even as ISAF units thin-out.

¹ *Inteqal* is the Dari and Pashtu word for “transition”

² Kabul Conference Communiqué dated 20 July 2010

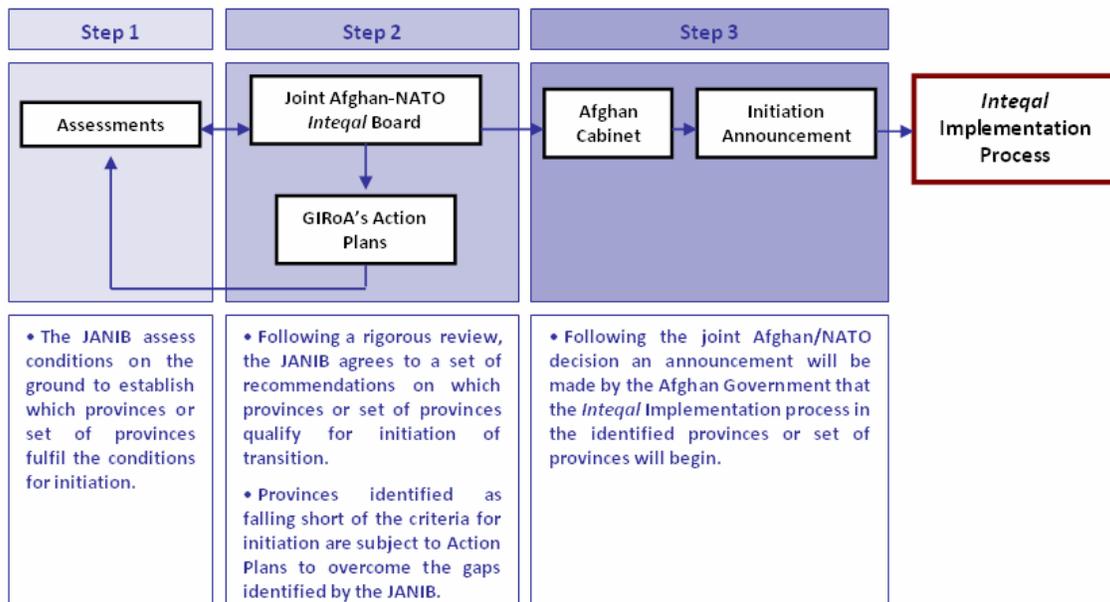
Criteria for Transition

Successful transition of security responsibility requires that Afghan National Security Forces, under effective Afghan civilian control, will be capable of tackling existing and new security challenges, with continued support from ISAF. Transition assessments will also consider the ability and authority of the Afghan Government to provide the rule of law and manage public administration at sub-national and local levels; and the capacity of an area to sustain socio-economic development. Transition must be irreversible.

Decision Making Process

Afghanistan's provinces will show varying degrees of readiness for transition, depending on the security situation but also the effectiveness of government structures and mechanisms. In the coming months, as more data from civilian experts, ISAF, the Afghan Government, UNAMA and other key stakeholders is incorporated, assessments will point where specific recommendations can be made and what are the main gaps preventing achievement of the required conditions.

Upon reviewing the assessments and recommendations, the Joint Afghan-NATO *Inteqal* Board (JANIB) will submit its conclusions to the Afghan Cabinet for approval. The process by which the decision to commence transition is taken is set out below:



The JANIB has begun a thorough joint assessment process. This will allow NATO and ISAF Heads of State and Government to announce, at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, that the transition process is underway. It is expected that implementation of transition will commence in 2011 with the shared ambition, as expressed by President Karzai, to see the Afghan National Security Forces take the lead in conducting security operations across Afghanistan by the end of 2014.