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لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا

And cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation
(The Holly Quran Al-A`raf, 7:56) Holly Quran

لعن الله الراشى و المرتشى و الماشى بينهما

God cursed the one who pays a bribe, the one who takes it and
the mediator between the two (Hadith Baharul Anwar)

Open Letter to The Participants of Tokyo Conference

Kabul- 07 July 2012

The Tokyo conference on Afghanistan is a series of key and important international conferences, which will attract financial assistance for the security, stability, economic and social development. This conference is a unique opportunity for self-sufficient, stable and prosperous Afghanistan.

Since 2001 Afghanistan with the support of international community, particularly in the Asia with the support of Japan, has achieved tremendous amount of achievements. The successes are not limited to security. It is in every aspect of life, including, education, health, freedom of speech, governance, human and women rights. The Afghan people appreciate these joint achievements.

Despite billions of USD aids to Afghanistan, still the majority of Afghan people are living under the poverty line. Because of the widespread corruption in all levels of government, the government has not succeeded to use the huge support of international community effectively and improve the livelihoods of Afghan people.

It is a very important and vital period of time for Afghanistan. Because from one hand the country is going under the Transition process and from the other hand it should prepare for the decade of Transformation. The increased corruption can be a briar in front of the Transition and Transformation process.

There are good mutual commitments and understanding among the Afghan government and international community. But Afghanistan still lacks a comprehensive and coordinated plan for achieving those goals. Afghanistan does not need only military support, but it needs civilian and political cooperation for permanent solution. In last ten years much of the international community efforts have been focused on military aspects and solutions. But it is the time to shift the focus and efforts to civilian and development. In order to don't ruin the investments, Afghanistan and its international allies should work on a long-term strategic solutions and that is, good governance, rule of law, justice, human rights and fighting corruption.

Luckily in results of the Afghan Anti-Corruption Network (AACN) and other civil society organizations efforts against corruption, there are visible achievements, but it is not enough, the Afghan people should engage in the fight against corruption and there is need for more to be done.

Lately the government has committed to fight corruption. The AACN welcomes the latest statement of the Afghan President, H.E Hamid Karzai, addressing all the tree powers of the government and the AACN urge the President to implement the decisions he has made. Supporting the position of Afghan Civil Society for Tokyo the AACN presence its recommendation for the participants of the Tokyo conference as a follow:

1- Weak rule of law, existence of impunity circles and safe heavens of corrupt individuals and officials inside of Afghanistan and abroad, are the factors of growing mafia, violation of human rights and injustice. To provide justice the Afghan government and international community should close these save heavens, eliminate the impunity system and accusation of corruption should be audited, investigated and prosecuted under the law.

2- Lack of a strong political willing of Afghan government to fight corruption in the absence of inclusive mechanism for transparency and accountability has resulted to more corruption within the government, privet sector and NOGs. The Government should make a coordinated and comprehensive mechanism and involve all the relevant sectors, particularly the civil society and media to oversight the implementation of any strategy against corruption.

3- The low pay scale and complicated administrative procedures facilitate petty and grand corruption and slow the development process. So the Afghan government should raise the pay scale and salaries of civil servants and Afghan National Security Forces and all the salaries should be qualification and performance-based. It should also modernize and ease the administrative procedures, hair more young professionals and privates the possible sectors.

4- Afghan people and media don't have enough access to the information, which is their constitutional right. This can further provide impunity to corrupt officials and facilitate the corruption. In order to properly oversight activities of the government the vibrant Afghan media, civil society and public should have access to the information, so a comprehensive Access to Information Law should be passed as soon as possible.

5- The costs of mines in Afghanistan are estimated by trillions of USD, so the extractive industries are the guaranty for the self-sufficiency of Afghanistan. But there are concerns about the transparency of the contracts of mines in the country. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) should be supported by the government and international community which can assures transparency of investments and incomes of the mines sector.

6- Based on the Afghan constitution, in the near future Afghanistan will go under a political transition process through elections. Transparency of the elections process is very important for the better and stable future of Afghanistan. Reform in the election commission and a better electoral law and over sighting mechanism of the elections will assure the transparency of election and the Afghan government should guarantee this.

7- The main cause of insecurity, instability, poppy cultivation, drug trafficking and gap among the local people, the government and international community is the corruption. So if the Afghan government and international community put the fighting against corruption in their priorities and don't compromise the issue of corruption, then the tremendous achievements of last one decade will be secured and many issue of the country will be solved.

8- Some senior government officials and cabinet members have been accused of corruption, but due to weak judiciary system they have not been prosecuted and numerous of cases and charges which have referred by the government authorities to the judiciary system, those cases either have been ignored or nor addressed appropriately. Thus the government should establish a special court to follow the charges and cases of high ranking corrupt officials and influential individuals.

9- As a civil society organizations and activists, we are committed to use all efforts and measures for eliminating corruption and promote good governance. We also urge the Afghan government and International Community to guaranty the implementation of the Tokyo conference decisions and to recognize the role of civil society in fight against corruption and support them. Otherwise the achievements of last ten years will be wasted and Afghanistan will face a permanent crisis, the Afghan government and international community will be responsible of any consequence.

AACN Background:

Afghan Anti-Corruption Network is a group of volunteer, social, non profit, non political and non governmental organizations and activists, which has established based on article 35 of the constitution of Afghanistan and the aim of this network is to support transparency, role of law and strengthen the civil society in order to fight against corruption.

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