

Statement by Foreign Ministers of NATO - Resolute Support Nations and Afghanistan

Brussels, 1 December 2015

We¹ met today and jointly reaffirmed our enduring commitment to enhance security, and to promote peace, development, human rights, and the rule of law in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has taken full responsibility for its own security for almost a year. During this time the Resolute Support Mission has provided essential training, advice and assistance to the Afghan security institutions, including the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces. Afghan forces have demonstrated remarkable resilience and courage in meeting the challenges they face. They continue to make steady progress and to learn lessons, but challenges and capability gaps persist. NATO Allies and Resolute Support operational partners commend and support their efforts which need to be sustained and enhanced.

Today, NATO Allies and Resolute Support operational partners have agreed to sustain the Resolute Support presence, including in the regions of Afghanistan, during 2016. The mission, including its detailed configuration, will continue to be kept under review and, if necessary, will be adjusted to ensure its effectiveness.

With a view to NATO's summit meeting in Warsaw next July, we discussed our joint commitment to the financial sustainability of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces. We have agreed to launch further work with the wider international community to ensure that the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces can be financially sustained, including to the end of 2020.

NATO and Afghanistan are continuing to develop, strengthen and enhance our Enduring Partnership agreed at Lisbon in 2010 with a view to NATO's longer term partnership with Afghanistan, including beyond the end of the Resolute Support Mission.

In our discussions today, Afghanistan reaffirmed its solid commitments to reform and

to make improvements on a range of issues. By the time of the NATO Summit in Warsaw and with continued support by Allies, partners and the wider international community, the Afghan Government is committed to make further tangible improvements and progress in the security sector, particularly in leadership development and accountability, but also more widely in areas such as good governance, electoral reform, the promotion of gender equality and human rights, including the protection and promotion of children's rights.

We continue to support an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led inclusive peace process. We welcome efforts by all parties to further this process. Good neighbourly relations as well as regional support and cooperation will remain essential. We encourage furthering the Istanbul Process in the Heart of Asia region as an Afghan-led process and through regional ownership. We also recognise the importance of the continuation of endeavours by the International Community to support and sustain economic development.

1) the Foreign Ministers of Allied and Resolute Support operational partner nations and Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Salahuddin Rabbani of Afghanistan. Japan and the Republic of Korea were represented at the meeting.