

**Speech by
Tajik Foreign Minister Hamrokhon Zarifi
at the International Conference on Afghanistan (Bonn, 5.12.2011)**

**Distinguished Chairperson,
Dear colleagues,**

At the outset, I would like to express thanks to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for such perfect arrangements made to hold our today meeting.

We hope that this meeting, which sums up the 10-years engagement of the international community in Afghanistan, will be an important stage towards recovering peace, security and stability. We are confident that the Bonn Conference as well as the recently held Istanbul Conference will be successful and will make its contribution to creating favorable environment for sustainable development in Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, time constraints do not allow me to state the position of Tajikistan on all issues that are under consideration today and therefore I would like to focus my speech on major aspects of Afghanistan's engagement in regional cooperation and support for political processes in Afghanistan.

Dear attendees,

Tajikistan believes that to fundamentally reverse the situation in Afghanistan it is required, at the outset, to focus on engaging Afghanistan in regional cooperation through implementation of infrastructural projects that ties the region up via automobile roads and railways, power transmission facilities, including realization of CASA 1000 project, gas pipelines as well as other communications.

In the second place, it is required to focus on human capacity building in Afghanistan through improving education therein. Tajikistan makes an active contribution to training personnel for law enforcement agencies and civil needs of Afghanistan. Moreover, Tajikistan initiates establishing a diversified educational vocational center in Tajikistan and calls on international community for contribution to the implementation of the aforesaid initiative.

A wide range of regional cooperation issues have been discussed at the Istanbul Conference. We also consider it critical to attract Afghan farmers to agricultural programs aimed at replacing drug cultivation by "peaceful" crops. In this regard, we propose to assist Afghanistan, namely, in overcoming water supply challenge and recovering irrigation system. We reaffirm the appropriateness of

construction of hydropower plants network in Tajikistan in the upstream of Amudarya and Panj Rivers with dams to accumulate water resources and develop new lands in Afghanistan.

Dear Colleagues,

Tajikistan, making emphasize of a need for utilizing economic opportunities and natural resources of Afghanistan, is confident that the 5th Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA 5) to be held on March 26-27, 2012 in Dushanbe will make a significant contribution to the matter.

Within Conference preparation works we coordinate with the Afghan side development of a systematized integration initiative as well as restoration of historical trade routes and strengthening trade ties therein.

It is my pleasure to mention that Germany being actively engaged in Afghan recovery has initiated PATRIP with various projects being implemented in Tajik-Afghan and Afghan-Pakistani border areas within the program. Thus, a Germany financed bridge was constructed and put in commission on August 2011 in Vanj district of Tajikistan which borders on Afghanistan and it contributes to development in the border districts and improving socio-economic situation in both countries. We welcome the PATRIP implementation and are ready to offer certain project, including infrastructural within the program and we are ready to closely cooperate with German, Afghan and Pakistani sides.

Dear participants!

There is a need for enormous efforts made by the Afghan people and government as well as transparent and constructive regional cooperation to really improve the situation in Afghanistan before 2014 and beyond that. As today's decisions will be vital for future situation in the world, we have to be guided not by regionally or nationally committed problems but by those that meet original interests of Afghanistan. We express confidence that our today work will contribute to development and implementation of a successful strategy that will lead to establishing stability, security and wide efficient regional cooperation which meets the aspirations of the noble people of Afghanistan.

I thank you for your attention!