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Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to articulate a common Afghan-U.S. vision for 2015, which will serve as a common aim point to align our efforts in the near term, and as the preamble for our Strategic Partnership Declaration to be agreed by May 2011 that will specify details of our multi-dimensional long-term relationship.

Vision 2015

By 2015 – more than 10 years after the Bonn conference and the creation of the Afghan constitution – Afghanistan has established a foundation for full and responsible sovereignty and is on a path toward sustainable self-reliance in security, governance, economic and social development, and regional relations. The United States and Afghanistan have established a strong and enduring bilateral partnership which provides the foundation for securing common interests and sustaining Afghanistan's security and continued economic growth beyond 2015.

Afghanistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity are assured and sustained by Afghan security forces in the lead across the country, capable of quelling internal threats, supported by a strong and enduring bilateral partnership with the United States and an enduring NATO-Afghanistan partnership. As a result of international and Afghan efforts since 2001, by 2015, there is no significant presence of al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan capable of conducting major attacks within Afghanistan or externally beyond Afghanistan's borders. The Taliban insurgency is substantially degraded by the combination of military and political means, and does not threaten the overthrow of the government. Afghanistan may face residual elements of an armed insurgency, but these are diminishing and manageable by Afghan security forces. United States forces remain at the invitation of the Afghan government in reduced numbers with the missions of supporting Afghan security forces and conducting counter-terrorism operations, and their presence is governed by a status of forces agreement.

Politically, in 2015 Afghanistan's political system remains founded on the Afghan constitution and reflects its pluralistic society. Afghanistan's democratic institutions continue to develop. Significant factions are no longer contesting the government through armed insurgency, and insurgents have reentered the Afghan political process through a combination of reintegration at local levels and reconciliation at senior levels. Afghan governmental institutions at all levels increase their responsiveness to the civil and economic needs of the Afghan people and deliver key services to them. These efforts are bolstered by sustained capacity-building efforts undertaken by the United Nations, bilateral partners, and Afghan public and private entities. Afghan institutions actively seek to protect and respect the rights of all its citizens, including women and minorities, consistent with Afghanistan's Constitution and laws and its international human rights obligations. The United States and Afghanistan have a conventional bilateral diplomatic relationship, including American diplomatic presence in Kabul and in major urban centers.

Economically, in 2015 Afghanistan is increasingly on the path toward sustainable and equitable growth and improved standards of living. The economy continues to grow at a steady pace, employment opportunities continue to expand, the financial sector is healthy, and government revenue is increasing. Afghanistan's agricultural growth continues and the country is on a path

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to food security. Afghanistan has established a transparent and accountable regulatory regime, consistent with international norms and basic rule of law concepts, for collecting and managing public resources, including those generated by its natural resource base, which holds the promise of fiscal sustainability and increased economic growth. The United States shares Afghan goals to achieve self-reliance and prosperity through developing its human and resource potential beyond 2015. United States and international assistance has transitioned from stabilization to long-term development.

Regionally, Afghanistan in 2015 has improved strategic relationships with its neighbors including Pakistan. Sustained bilateral and multilateral diplomatic engagement of Afghanistan's neighbors have built support for our common vision, and are helping mitigate external interference, reinforcing the principles of non-interference and sovereignty, and facilitating Afghanistan's political and economic integration into the region. Reconciliation led by the Government of Afghanistan is supported in the region and among the international community states.

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