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**"SECURITY COUNCIL ARRIA FORMULA MEETING ON THE PEACE
PROCESS IN AFGHANISTAN"**

**Statement by H.E. Yoka Brandt
Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to
the United Nations**

NEW YORK, 20 November 2020

Thank you Mr. President,

Mr. President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands expresses gratitude for convening this timely and important Arria Formula meeting on the role of the Security Council in the Afghanistan Peace Process.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to thank Security Council members Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, and additional co-sponsors Afghanistan, Finland, Norway and Qatar for taking this initiative.

Mr. President,

The start of the Afghanistan Peace Negotiations on 12 September in Doha represents a significant step forward in the efforts to end decades of conflict.

My message to the negotiating parties in Doha is this:

Your mandate is peace. A stable, just and inclusive peace.

Not a peace that is merely a short-term victory in negotiations.

Afghanistan numbers more victims than fighters. That harsh reality is not reflected in Doha. I urge the most powerful to negotiate with the most vulnerable in mind.

It is hard to talk peace while fighting continues, and Afghan citizens continue to fall victim to violence. The Taliban must agree to an immediate ceasefire.

I urge the negotiators to put victim-centred justice at the heart of a peace agreement and its implementation. Only then can the grievances of victims of all the parties in conflict be addressed.

With negotiations seemingly at an impasse, the international community and particularly the United Nations have a responsibility to step up their support to the fragile peace process. If a different location of the negotiations helps to overcome this impasse, we should be open to alternatives.

Mr. President,

We are only a few days away from the next Geneva donor conference co-hosted by the UN and Finland. It presents a valuable opportunity for the Afghan Government and the

international community to commit to building a peaceful, stable, secure and increasingly self-reliant Afghanistan.

We welcome all the efforts made by the Government of Afghanistan in putting together a new draft Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework for 2021-2025.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is ambitious in its efforts to help the people of Afghanistan. We will continue our support at the current level and pledge a maximum of 200 million euros for this purpose until the end of 2024. To boost Afghanistan's economic growth and self-reliance, and to alleviate poverty among Afghans. But our contribution is no *carte blanche*. All parties must uphold the principles laid out in the *Afghanistan Partnership Framework*. And women and girls must not be forced back to the past.

I thank you Mr. President.