

**Permanent Mission of India
Geneva**

Statement by India

Mr. Chairperson,

We express appreciation to the organizers including the Governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, the co-hosts the UNHCR and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, the Federal Government of Switzerland on facilitating the International Conference on Solution Strategy for Afghan Refugees, to Support Voluntary Repatriation, Sustainable Reintegration and Assistance to Host Countries.

2. After the ouster of Taliban, India has played a significant role in the reconstruction and redevelopment of Afghanistan since 2002. This is based on the understanding that democracy and development are key instruments in ensuring that Afghanistan becomes a source of regional stability. This has been further manifested through its Extensive Developmental Assistance Programme. The present level of our assistance stands at around US\$ 750 million. All the projects are undertaken in partnership with the Afghan Government in alignment with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy with focus on ownership of assets. Some of the major projects include construction of transmission line from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul, humanitarian food assistance of 1 million tonnes of wheat in the form of high-protein biscuits to 1.4 million school-kids daily administered through the World Food Programme, construction of 218 kms. of road, development projects in the power, education and health sectors, construction of the Afghan Parliament, etc. Skills development and capacity-building are also ongoing in both university and administrative sectors and vocational sectors. India is also implementing

community-based Small Development Projects in health, education and community welfare. India's endeavour has been to act in conformity with the best aid effective principles taking into account the local Government's priorities with miniscule proportions of budget being spent on security and salaries.

3. As a neighbour, we believe in constructive engagement in ensuring durable solutions to the issue of protracted refugees, best identified by the Governments concerned in the institutional framework established by them. We reiterate the need for International Organizations and other stakeholders to closely engage and cooperate with the Governments concerned in accordance with established international norms.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

2 May 2012