



December 2011



Afghan News

Latest News

Select areas of Japanese cooperation in December

The building of 45-meter Shirdarwaza Bridge in Kabul and the creation of the road leading to it.

The opening of a new power station Charikar, Parwan, benefitting more than 2,000 families who previously had no electricity or less than reliable power.

A pledge to provide an additional \$9.3 million to the efforts to end the spread of polio in Afghanistan. The funds will be used to accelerate routine immunizations in communities in need of additional healthcare coverage.



Bonn Conference unifies local, international efforts on next stage of Afghan development and peace process

Around 1,000 delegates from 85 countries gathered in Bonn, Germany to help usher in the next stage of Afghanistan's peace and development processes. Pledges from the international participants of sustained economic, political and military support through 2024 showed the world's continued dedication to partnering with Afghans in these spheres.

Afghan people, the constitution and a Transitional Authority that governed until the first elections.

Afghanistan pledged at this new Bonn Conference to prioritize the further strengthening of systems that bring more transparent electoral systems and anti-corruption reform, both efforts to continue to increase the efficacy of its democracy.

Bonn was also the site of the December 2001 meeting which served as the platform for establishing, under a newly freed

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In H.E. President Hamid Karzai's address to the participants, he detailed the progress that has been made in Afghanistan through the combined local and international efforts: "Today is the culmination of a decade of joint struggle, shared efforts and many sacrifices on both sides. As we gather in Bonn today, we have reasons to celebrate ten years of partnership between Afghanistan and the international community, the truly significant achievements we have had together, and the difference they have made to the lives of the Afghan people."

Pointing to these successes as evidence for the potential for positive results from renewed cooperation, H.E. the President mentioned in particular future areas of cooperation as including security, under an increasingly Afghan-led arrangement, peace building, and the strengthening of the economic sector, including working on infrastructure projects, and developing productive sectors, particularly agriculture, energy and mining.

H.E. President Karzai announced that the 2011 Bonn Conference will be followed by a conference next year in Tokyo focusing on Afghanistan's future economic agenda. H.E. the President expressed gratitude to the Government of Japan, referring to the nation as a "friend and steadfast supporter of Afghanistan."

The international participants reasserted their continuing partnership through comments such as British Foreign Secretary William Hague's, who stated "We will not abandon Afghanistan – the sacrifices made over the last 10 years have not been made in vain."

Investors sought for Copper, gold deposits

Afghanistan is seeking investors for four mineral deposits containing

copper and gold. Tenders will close in March, with licenses to be awarded in July.

The government is starting a tender process for deposits in the provinces of Badakhshan, Ghazni, Herat, and Sar-I-Pul, and Balkh. The Badakhshan gold site comprises four license areas of 250 square kilometers (62,000 acres) each, while the Zarkashan copper-gold project in Ghazni province hosts two licenses of 242 square kilometers each. The Balkhab copper project in Sar-I-Pul and Balkh provinces has two exploration license areas of 210 square kilometers and 247 square kilometers. The Shaida copper project in the Adrasikan District of Herat province comprises one exploration license of 250 square kilometers.

Afghanistan will tender deposits of molybdenum, lithium, and other rare earths in the future.

A consortium led by the Steel Authority of India this month won the rights to develop three blocks of the large Hajigak iron ore concession. Iron ore production is expected to start in 2016, and steel production will reach 3.6 million tonnes per year in the first phase of the project, which will start in 2019, and will increase to 6.5 million tonnes per

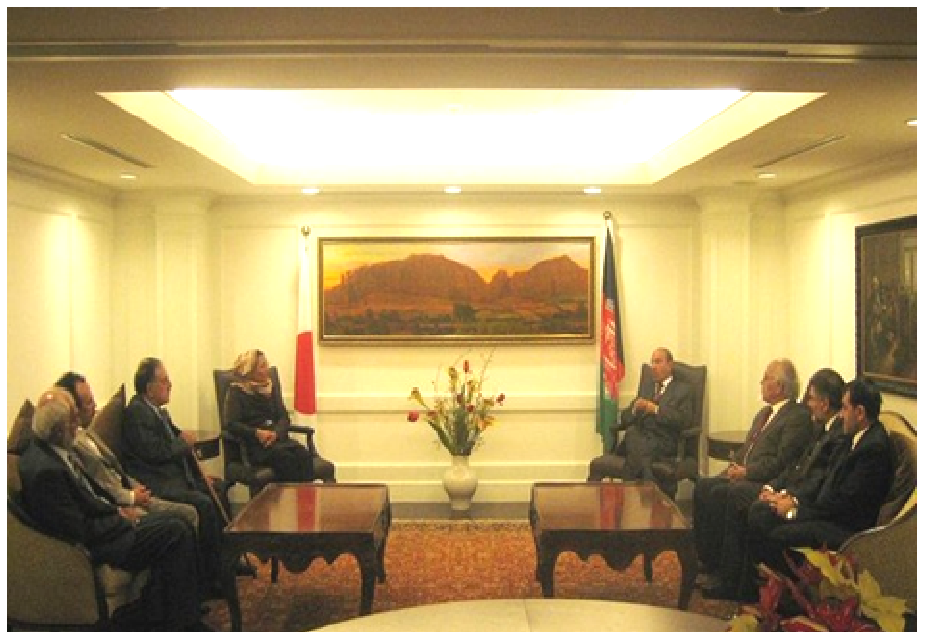
year in the second phase, which will start in 2021.

Decisions on mining rights are made based on technical capabilities and enrichment opportunities for the country. Investors are encouraged to focus on the processing of minerals and on developing infrastructure, which would create jobs, benefit the population, and help to enrich Afghanistan.

H.E. Minister of Mines Wahidullah Shahrani said earlier this month that "by 2016 the revenue of the government from oil and gas and mineral commodity production will be at least \$1.5 billion per year, and by 2024 that will go up to \$4 billion per year, but these estimates are very conservative." According to H.E. the Minister, this would by 2024 mean that the mining sector would contribute 42-45% of the national GDP.

Ambassador Fatimie welcomes H.E. Minister Raheen, H.E. Deputy Minister Sultan, H.E. Governor Sarabi, accompanying delegation

On December 5th, Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie welcomed warmly to Tokyo H.E. Minister Saiyed Makhdom Raheen and



H.E. Deputy Minister Sultan of the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, as well as Hon. Governor Habiba Sarabi of Bamiyan, and members of Their delegation.

This important visit underscored the deep cultural relations and heritage shared between Japan and Afghanistan. As such, the delegation took part in the 10th Expert Working Group Meeting for the Preservation of the Safeguarding of the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley World Heritage Property, in connection with the Japan International Cooperation Agency, Tokyo's National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo National University of the Arts, Tokyo National Museum, UENSCO, and a number of other international partners. In his speech at the opening ceremony, Ambassador Fatimie spoke on the significance of Bamiyan as a symbol of the deep ties between Afghans and Japanese, and wished the participants success in this important session.

The group also visited a number of Japanese cultural sites.

Ambassador Fatimie welcomes H.E. Dr. Ahmadzai to Japan

Ambassador H.E. Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie and the staff of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Tokyo welcomed to Japan H.E. Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, Chairman of the Transition Coordination Commission, to Japan.



H.E. Dr. Ghani arrived in Japan on the evening of December 20th at the invitation of the Japan International Cooperation Agency. During his stay he met with a number of important Japanese officials, including Madame Sadako Ogata of JICA, H.E. Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan Tadamichi Yamamoto, and H.E. State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Tetsuro Fukuyama, among other key partners.

As part of his activities, H.E. Dr. Ahmadzai on the afternoon of the 21st gave a talk entitled "Transforming Afghanistan Beyond 2014" at JICA's headquarters. The speech mainly discussed the successes up to this point within

Afghanistan, and the opportunities and perceived challenges in preparing for 2014, which is considered a milestone year as all security in the nation will by then be Afghanized. In relation to this topic, H.E. Dr. Ahmadzai stated that militarily, the nation is actually ahead of schedule, therefore the challenges to create a successful state lie most in regional dynamics of security and resource sharing, and domestically in creating an appropriate balance between military and policing as well as in creating increased employment opportunities. Within the final issue, H.E. the Dr. discussed the importance of Japan engaging Afghanistan's private sector. The informative and enlightening speech was well received by those in attendance.

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