

**Afghanistan Delegation statement on 12<sup>th</sup> EATL Expert Group Meeting  
3-4 February 2015 Geneva**

Mr. Chair allows me first, to congratulate you on your excellent leadership of this important meeting. Secondly I would like to appreciate secretariat of Euro - Asia Transport link (EATL) for their excellent organization.

Mr. Chair,

The Afghan Government presented a reform strategy built around regional connectivity, good governance, and investment in productivity. Central to this strategy is economic cooperation between Afghanistan and the region through transit, trade, energy and investment that will contribute directly to prosperity and stability into the region and beyond. Afghanistan's rapid progress on advancing regional connectivity through mechanisms such as CAREC, SAARC, RECCA, ECO, SCO and projects like CASA 1000, TAPI and TUTAP, the economic confidence building measure of the "Heart of Asia" Istanbul Process, and the development of the Lapis Lazuli Corridor and Charbahar port.

Sustained engagement of Afghanistan's regional partners and supporters is key to addressing common challenges. Istanbul Process is important Afghan-led and regionally owned process. The outcomes of the 4th Heart Asia Ministerial Conference in Beijing during October 2014 are welcomed by the all regional member countries and Pakistan is hosting the 5th Ministerial Conference in 2015. Collaboration and coordination between the Afghan-led Istanbul and RECCA processes and all regional organizations and programmes are important for working together with other Governments in the region toward effective trade and transit agreements, streamlined border procedure and custom harmonisation, required transport infrastructure for critical interconnectivity and an effective regional energy network in Central and South Asia.

Mr. Chairman,

At the conclusion I should point out that continuing coordination and assistance role of the UN for supporting the new Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is an important element.

I thank you Mr. Chair