

**STATEMENT BY
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**Chairman of the Board of Governors,
Fellow Governors,
President of the Islamic Development Bank,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu

Praise be to Allah, the Almighty, the most Gracious and the most Merciful who has once again enabled us to gather in this assembly in good health and high spirit.

On behalf of the government of Afghanistan let me begin by thanking the government of Indonesia for the warm welcome and generous hospitality on the occasion of the 41st Annual Meeting of the IDB Board of Governors.

Mr. Chairman,

On Behalf of the Government and people of Afghanistan, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Ahmad Mohamed Ali and the leadership of the IDB for their generous support to the reconstruction and development of my country.

Since 2004, your \$100 million in aid has helped Afghanistan with strategic investments in roads, rail network, agriculture, trade and transit, the production and distribution of electricity, and the infrastructure needed to enable our extractive industries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the National Unity Government came to power in 2014, we have been pursuing a reforms agenda to address the significant challenges that lie ahead on our path to self-reliance. Our reform policies are paying dividends. The revenue target last year was surpassed by a large margin thanks to a mix of aggressive enforcement and anti-corruption measures, system building and administrative changes as well as the introduction of new taxes.

As part of our commitment to reduce corruption, over 90% of our state officials, including the President and Chief Executive have declared their assets. We have jailed Kabul Bank's two key offenders, we have recovered \$250 million and we have averted a banking crisis. The National Procurement Authority has reviewed 900 contracts, worth \$2.5 billion; saving a total of \$208 million. Forty-five companies have already been blacklisted.

The National Unity Government has made peace and finding a political solution to the conflict a corner stone of our strategy. We have engaged in a dialogue for peace. While we know that real and lasting peace requires patience, we have an obligation to protect our people from violent

extremists who bring death and destruction to our door – who continue to attack our cities and kill our sons and daughters. Afghanistan will continue to invest in the professionalization and increased effectiveness of the armed services. I am proud to say that these investments are paying off.

As we move our country away from aid dependency towards self-reliance, our challenge is to make sure that the hard won achievements of the past 15 years endure and pay dividends for the next generations to come.

To this end, we are in the final stages of completing Afghanistan's National Development Framework, which will cover five key areas:

First, we will focus on **economic growth and jobs** by strengthening priority areas that drive economic growth, including: agriculture; extractives; energy; trade and transit. Second, we will take policy actions that **enable growth; improve economic governance; build a sound financial sector**; speed up reforms and reduce red tape. Third we will invest in building a **productive human capital**. AHSAN Khedmat will set-up a one-stop-shop to provide support and public services. Fourth, we know that well-managed, **sustainable health, education, and social services** give people hope that their children can lead better lives. Finally, we will **rebuild the trust between citizens and the state**.

Afghanistan believes in regional cooperation, in particular economic cooperation, trade and connectivity. It is an important pillar of our foreign policy. We have taken measurable steps to increase economic cooperation with our neighbors. President Ghani was in Dushanbe last week for the inauguration of the CASA-1000 project. The TAPI pipeline was launched in December 2015 and TUTAP is on-track. We invite the IDB to take a stronger interest in regional infrastructure projects such as roads, railway and energy. Afghanistan's mining sector promises high potential. In the past few years, we have finalized some of our biggest contracts; through competitive and transparent bidding. We invite the IDB to partner with us in encouraging potential investors from Islamic countries to take advantage of these investment opportunities. These initiatives will bring us closer, and provide financial, socio-economic, political and security benefits for the entire region. Regional cooperation can provide a platform for our interests to converge, build confidence and provide incentives for peace.

Excellencies,

Afghanistan is entering a new era. The shock of transition is giving way to a visionary and forward looking strategy which is underpinned by our desire to achieve self-reliance. While we are grateful for your past generous support, but we believe that the IDB can play even a bigger role over the coming years.

Afghanistan has a vision for the next step in our journey, but it is not going to be an easy road. We need your support and partnership to successfully see our vision to fruition. And success cannot be measured in years; but in decades and generations.

Our goal is to prove beyond question that Afghanistan is a good investment.

This meeting, the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July and the Brussels Conference in October will be a test of our shared mutual accountability commitment to one another and to the democratic values that have been the bedrock of our partnership. We believe that there is scope for the IDB, our neighbors in the region and Islamic countries around the globe to play a greater role in supporting Afghanistan make its vision of self-reliance a reality.

Afghanistan cannot go the distance alone and we remain grateful for your support for a stable, peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On that note, I wish the deliberation of this 41th meeting of Board of Governors all the success.