



## Afghanistan Conference 24 November 2020

24-11-2020 | Edited News

### Shotlist

1. Exterior wide shot, garden and UN flag flying, Palais des Nations.
2. Wide shot, podium with speakers in a near-empty Room XIV in line with COVID-19 distancing measures, Palais des Nations.
3. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Deborah Lyons, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA): “Today, I believe, is a good day for Afghanistan, and for the people of Afghanistan. The world has come together today, both the international donors community, and a number of regional countries, and a large number of international organizations have come together to express emphatic support to the people of Afghanistan. What is the message? We stand with you.”**
4. Medium shot, cameras and UN staff members, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
5. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Deborah Lyons, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA): “It's also important to note that in spite of the fact that we are seeing very strong pledging on the part of the many countries that have already spoken, this money does not come freely. It comes with conditions that the money will be well spent, and the Government will be held accountable for the spending of the money.”**
6. Wide shot, cameras and UN staff members in foreground and podium to rear, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
7. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Pekka Haavisto, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland: “We are doing it in a COVID-19 circumstance, most of the participants are online, or even recorded messages, but we have been able to gather 66 governments to this pledging conference and**

**conference for Afghanistan and we have more than 30 international organizations at place here.”**

8. Wide shot, cameras and UN staff members in foreground and podium to rear, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
9. **SOUNDBITE (English) —Abdul Habib Zadran, Deputy Minister of Finance, Government of Afghanistan: “All eyes in Afghanistan are towards Geneva. They are expecting a lot from the international community. And there is millions of hopes from this conference today. But the good thing is that we are receiving very positive messages so far from the international community, our friends and our development partners.”**
10. Medium shot, cameras and UN staff members, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
11. **SOUNDBITE (English) — António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations: “The Afghan people have suffered for far too long. I urge the redoubling of efforts towards an immediate, unconditional ceasefire, in order to save lives and prevent the further spread of COVID-19.”**
12. Wide shot, Conference room with podium to rear, Palais des Nations.
13. **SOUNDBITE (English) — António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations: “Progress toward peace will contribute to the development of the entire region and is a vital step towards the safe, orderly and dignified return of millions of displaced Afghans. The United Nations stands with the people of Afghanistan on the path toward peace, development and self-reliance.”**
14. Wide shot, Conference room with podium to rear, Palais des Nations.
15. **Ashraf Ghani, President of Afghanistan: “What is the main priority of the Afghan people? A demand for peace. Today, we the Afghan people, government, and international community, share a vision of a sovereign unified democratic Afghanistan in peace with itself, the region and the world, capable of preserving and expanding the gains of the past two decades.”**
16. Various shots, Participants to the conference stepping out of cars, Palais des Nations.
17. Various shots, Participants to the conference being photographed, Palais des Nations.
18. Medium shot, Participants to the conference walking in the Palais des Nations.
19. Various shots, Participants in the conference room, Palais des Nations.
20. Close-up, 2020 Afghanistan Conference poster, Palais des Nations.

## Story

### **“A good day for Afghanistan” as donors pledge support, anticipating peace**

International donors pledged financial and political backing for Afghanistan’s peace process at the 2020 Afghanistan Conference in Geneva on Tuesday, anticipating a sustainable ceasefire that will help the country rebuild and heal after decades of conflict.

“Today, I believe, is a good day for Afghanistan, and for the people of Afghanistan. The world has come together today, both the international donors community, and a number of regional countries, and a large number of international organizations have come together to express emphatic support to the people of Afghanistan. What is the message? We stand with you”, Deborah Lyons, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA), told a news conference during a break from the pledging event.

“It’s also important to note that in spite of the fact that we are seeing very strong pledging on the part of the many countries that have already spoken, this money does not come freely. It comes with conditions that the money will be well spent, and the government will be held accountable for the spending of the money.”

The conference was co-hosted by the government of Finland, whose Minister of Foreign Affairs Pekka Haavisto said the conference participants felt the youth of Afghanistan deserved better than what Afghan youth had suffered in the past. The conference had attracted dozens of donor governments, he said.

“We are doing it in a COVID-19 circumstance, most of the participants are online, or even recorded messages, but we have been able to gather 66 governments to this pledging conference and conference for Afghanistan and we have more than 30 international organizations at place here”, Mr. Haavisto said.

Afghan Deputy Minister of Finance Abdul Habib Zadran said donor governments had expressed strong backing for a sustainable peace, and their support was not going unnoticed.

“All eyes in Afghanistan are towards Geneva. They are expecting a lot from the international community. And there is millions of hopes from this conference today. But the good thing is that we are receiving very positive messages so far from the international community, our friends and our development partners”, he told the news conference.

Earlier, UN Secretary-General António Guterres addressed the conference in a video message.

“The Afghan people have suffered for far too long. I urge the redoubling of efforts towards an immediate, unconditional ceasefire, in order to save lives and prevent the further spread of COVID-19“, Mr Guterres said.

“Progress toward peace will contribute to the development of the entire region and is a vital step towards the safe, orderly and dignified return of millions of displaced Afghans. The United Nations stands with the people of Afghanistan on the path toward peace, development and self-reliance.”

Mr. Guterres’ remarks were followed by a keynote speech from Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, delivered via video link.

“What is the main priority of the Afghan people? A demand for peace. Today, we the Afghan people, government, and international community, share a vision of a sovereign unified democratic Afghanistan in peace with itself, the region and the world, capable of preserving and expanding the gains of the past two decades”, President Ghani said.