

## **Statement of G8 Foreign Ministers on Afghanistan Presidential Elections**

We, the G8 Foreign Ministers, welcome the conclusion of Afghanistan's self managed election process - supported by the international community - with the formal decision by Afghanistan's Independent Electoral Commission. We congratulate the people of Afghanistan and President Hamid Karzai on the result and congratulate as well all the Presidential candidates for a campaign that addressed key issues and challenges for Afghanistan and its people.

The present outcome provides a new opportunity for peaceful, effective and productive cooperation among all the political and social components of the Afghan society while paving the way to a new season of common work under the United Nations' leading role, with the members of the international community, including all those relevant for the stability in the entire region.

We encourage President Karzai, in the intent to unite the country, to rapidly form an effective, qualified and credible new government. We expect that the new executive will focus on improving state and local governance, promoting rule of law – including justice, human rights and increasing accountability - and making progress on reintegration as well as security and stability for Afghanistan. To this end we reaffirm our determination to support the people and the leadership of Afghanistan in their efforts by fighting together against terrorism and illicit narcotics as well as by promoting good governance and addressing acute socio-economic problems.

As soon as the new Government will be appointed, the G8 countries look forward to developing a sustained and more advanced dialogue through the existing channels with the Afghan authorities. The G8 remains therefore committed to supporting the process aiming at a transition of responsibilities in view of the Afghan governance and to the ultimate benefit of the Afghan people.