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#### 'I' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2)
Subject:	2020 Afghanistan Conference - Political Communiqué and Afghanistan Partnership Framework: - Approval - Decision to use the written procedure for the adoption

#### **DOCUMENT PARTIALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (30.07.2021)**

1. On 23 and 24 November 2020, the United Nations, Afghanistan and Finland will host the 2020 Afghanistan Conference, held in hybrid format in Geneva and via videoconference. This will be the sixth international conference on Afghanistan. During the conference, participants will be expected to deliver pledges of financial support to Afghanistan, as well as issue a joint political communiqué and a new aid architecture for Afghanistan.
2. The 27 May 2020 Council conclusions on Afghanistan (ST 8223/2020 INIT) stated: "The EU stands ready to provide political and financial support for the people of Afghanistan, notably by: (1) supporting the Geneva Ministerial Pledging Conference". Moreover, the non-binding instrument "Key elements for sustained international support to Peace and Development in Afghanistan" (WK 2340/2020 REV 6), approved by the Council on 21 September 2020, already outlined the key elements to be taken into account by international donors in their development and budgetary support to Afghanistan.

3. On 10 November 2020, Finland and the EEAS shared with the Asia-Oceania Working Party the drafts of the two outcome documents of the conference: the Political Communiqué (WK 12565/2020 INIT) and the Afghanistan Partnership Framework (WK 12562/2020 INIT). Member States were invited to submit comments in writing on the two drafts. On 12 November 2020, during its informal meeting, the Asia-Oceania Working Party (Capitals) discussed preparations for the 2020 Afghanistan Conference. Member States stressed that the elements contained in the non-binding instrument “Key elements for sustained international support to Peace and Development in Afghanistan” should be the basis of the outcome documents, and that the two documents should contain references to:
- The preservation of progress made in the last 19 years on human rights, democracy and rule of law;
  - The Afghan government's commitment to fight terrorism, irregular migration and human trafficking as well as corruption;
  - The respect of women's rights and their meaningful participation in the peace process;
  - The link between the future of international support to Afghanistan and the outcome of the peace process.
4. As mentioned in the note for the two outcome documents of the 2020 Afghanistan Conference (WK 12932/2020 INIT), negotiations on these documents are still ongoing in Geneva and in Kabul, including with other less like-minded participants of the conference. **DELETED**. EEAS took good note of the comments made by the Member States, recalled in paragraph 3, and will take them on board during the final stage of the negotiations. Negotiations may be finalised only during the Conference.
5. The two outcome documents do not, nor are they intended to, create any legal obligations on either side under domestic or international law.
6. In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited:
- to confirm its approval, subject to the negotiators respecting the concerns indicated by the Member States in paragraph 3, to the Political Communiqué (WK 12655/2020 INIT) and the Afghanistan Partnership Framework (WK 12652/2020 INIT), and
  - to decide, in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 12(1) of the Council's Rules of Procedure and Article 1 of Council Decision 2020/430, and extended by

Decisions (EU) 2020/556, (EU) 2020/702, (EU) 2020/970 and (EU) 2020/1253, that the Council uses the written procedure for the approval of the above-mentioned texts.

Due to the urgency of the matter, the written procedure would be launched immediately after the Committee's agreement, with the deadline for replying set at Friday 20 November 12.00 (Brussels time).

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