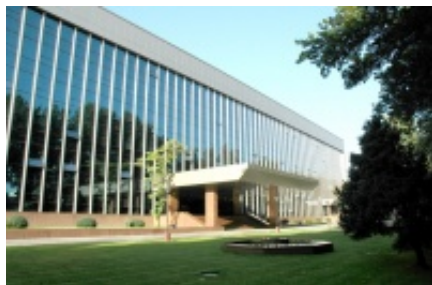


STATEMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN



The Republic of Uzbekistan continues its efforts aimed at contributing to stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan and its socio-economic development in accordance with the agreements reached at the International Conference on Afghanistan, held in Tashkent on March 27, 2018.

In this context, the Uzbek side held a series of consultative meetings and negotiations with the government of Afghanistan, representatives of the United States, China, Russia, member states of the International Contact Group, states of the Eurasian region, South Asia, the Middle and Near East.

It should be noted that the political basis for this work became the Tashkent Declaration, unanimously adopted at the forum on Afghanistan, which provides for joint actions at the regional and global levels on advancing the peace process, fighting against terrorism and illicit drug trafficking, as well as regional economic cooperation.

At the same time, the Uzbek side established appropriate contacts and held working meetings with high-ranking representatives of the Taliban movement, during which the prospects for dialogue and interaction to establish long-term peace and stability in Afghanistan and its economic development were discussed in order to realize the consolidated position of participants of Tashkent conference.

On this basis, Uzbekistan welcomes the mutual introduction of a ceasefire between the government of Afghanistan and the Taliban movement in connection with the celebration of Eid al-Fitr. The Uzbek side hopes that this armistice will become perpetual, following the announcement by the President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani of the extension of the ceasefire.

Taking into account the current situation, as well as based on the initiative of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirms its full readiness to create all necessary conditions for organization of direct negotiations between the government of Afghanistan and the Taliban movement in the territory of Uzbekistan, at any stages of the peace process.

Tashkent city, June 18, 2018

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