

Statement by Dr. Nasir Andisha, PR of Afghanistan to UN-Geneva on  
The Roundtable on investing in the SDGs

Excellencies, panel members, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Afternoon,

I would like to begin by thanking the co chairs and colleagues from UNCTAD for organizing this timely meeting. Also extend my appreciation to Mr. Schneider the CEO of Nestlé for sharing his company's good practices in this area with us.

Mr. Co Chair, I want to focus on situation of investment in SDG's in Afghanistan and to the extension in the LDC's in general which are still struggling in achieving the first 5 goals. Goals that are not very attractive for private investment. The progress has lagged in connecting the LDC's with regional and global best practices on financing the SDG, hence we welcome this meeting as part of addressing the issue. Of importance for Afghanistan SDGs at this juncture is fostering and making use of regional and global partnerships, including investment schemes. Role of international organizations and networks of partners for SDGs will be instrumental in helping Afghanistan realize this goal.

Notwithstanding the challenges that impede progress, Afghanistan at the wake of the crucial 2020-2030 decade is aligning and implementing national development policies, strategies and programs aimed at achieving the SDGs in Afghanistan.

We have designed the Productive Afghanistan Strategy that focuses on import substitution to promote industrial self-sufficiency in food and other targeted sectors by 2024. This objective is vital to achieving our first and crucial Goal of eradicating poverty. The Goal 1 that connects with other goals makes the eradication of poverty the most important leverage point in our strategy. However, private sector investment has been the lowest in all sectors including agriculture, simply because of its lower profit margins and unfair business practices and agricultural subsidies in the region and beyond.

The work is underway on developing models, tools and institutional frameworks to finance ASDGs. In parallel with review and assessing relevance and feasibility of global and regional best practices, as a first step, a full development finance assessment (DFA) and costing of the ASDGs is set to commence towards the end of this year and be completed by June 2020.

The Afghanistan SDG Financing Strategy will focus mostly on identifying innovative sources of financing including:

- 1) Making use of regional and global partnerships on investment schemes;
- 2) Encouraging and bringing private investment including public private partnerships (PPPs)
- 3) Islamic finance is another option that would be explored towards innovative financing.

Mr. Co Chair,

The progress made on mapping investment needs and fostering private sector investment for SDGs globally presents an opportunity to mobilize funding for our

national SDGs since it will enable us to learn from best practices and look it to the more innovative schemes.

However, it also points to the need for taking transformative initiatives to mobilize and direct resources to funding SDGs at the required pace and magnitude, although according to UN reports progress is visible in SDG-relevant sectors such as agriculture, climate change and health.

The SDGs are ambitious, the resources to meet them are limited and the situation compounded by projected decline in aid in Afghanistan. In fact, achieving the ASDGs even with the current and even past levels of aid would not be possible. This necessitates efforts to explore and make use of alternative sources of funding and finance. It is crucial that little resources available in the form of public investment and funding be leveraged to attract private sector investment and other potential financing instruments.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In conclusion, I reiterate our commitment to foster collective efforts to maximize possible support and strong collaboration to the implementation of ASDGs for leaving no one behind.

Thank You