

**Address by H.E. Halil Akıncı,
Secretary General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States,
in the Ministerial Conference of the İstanbul Process on Afghanistan,
26 April 2013, Almaty**

Distinguished Ministers,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me start by expressing my thanks to the Foreign Minister, H.E. Erlan Idrissov, for the impressive organization of this conference.

The approach of Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States, in short Turkic Council, to regional issues is based on the principle of regional ownership first and foremost.

In this connection as neighbors of Afghanistan we feel responsibility for the security and welfare of Afghanistan. We at the same time believe that any effort towards achieving security and stability of Afghanistan should be Afghan-led. Our role is limited to support Afghan endeavors to this end.

Indeed İstanbul Process, in which the Turkic Council countries have undertaken various tasks, is a reflection of this understanding.

In our Security Consultations among member states held recently (11 April 2013) in Baku, we, once more, reiterated our steadfast commitment to solidarity with Afghanistan and Afghan people; and to the common principles on ways and means to provide security and stability in Afghanistan adopted by the İstanbul Process.

In this framework, in Baku meeting, the member countries stressed their commitment to continue their efforts in a coordinated way, complementing the individual roles they assume for the implementation of the CBMs and expressed their joint stance to support aid programs of international community for Afghanistan and to realize joint projects for reconstruction of its economy.

The member countries further underlined the necessity to strengthen cooperation and coordination in the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism in all their forms and manifestations, and against such predicaments as transnational organized crime, human trafficking and illegal migration, illicit trafficking of narcotics and psychotropic substances, as well as trafficking in weapons, all of which are poisoning the stability of the regional countries including Afghanistan.

Our common view, which has already been reflected in various Summit declarations, has been voiced today by the Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan in his capacity as the Chairman-in-Office of the Turkic Council, albeit very succinctly. It is a clear indication of our commitment to the efforts of cooperation and dialogue between Afghanistan and regional countries through platforms such as Istanbul Process, not only during the transition period of pre-2014, but also during Transformation decade of 2015-2024.

The complexity of challenges requires effective mechanisms to provide security and stability in the region. Furthermore, withdrawal of NATO/ISAF from Afghanistan and full transition of power to Afghan authorities will add further complexity to the current environment.

Nobody can yet see how these new circumstances will affect the stakeholders in Eurasia. However it is clear that if security and stability cannot be completely achieved and maintained in Afghanistan, the Eurasian region will be one of the first areas paying the price.

In this connection I would like to reiterate our firm commitment to achievement and maintenance of security and stability of Afghanistan.

Thank you.