



# UNAMA

## press statement

20 June 2005

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### STATEMENT ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE SPOKESPERSON OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN

UNAMA welcomes the news that, throughout the country, a number of candidates are answering the call of the electoral authorities and handing over their weapons in order to secure their qualification for the *Wolesi Jirga* and provincial council elections.

This new phase in the disarmament campaign, launched on 11 June by the Government of Afghanistan with the support of the UN and international forces, is aimed at ensuring that the electoral law is fully observed by all those who wish to participate in the upcoming elections. The electoral law forbids people who command or belong to armed groups from running for public office.

This legislation responds to the deep conviction, reiterated time and again by the overwhelming majority of the Afghan population, that broad disarmament is needed to ensure the fairness of the election and to prevent a return to violence in the country.

UNAMA therefore joins the government and the electoral authorities in appealing to all those candidates that are still in possession of weapons and ammunitions to cooperate with the security agencies by voluntarily handing over their weapons at the designated collection point in each province.

This is not only a pre-condition to taking part in the election. It is also a major contribution to restoring peace in Afghanistan. The population is right to expect nothing less from the future members of its elected National Assembly and provincial councils.

Kabul, 20 June 2005