JEMB STATEMENT

June 5, 2005

The Preliminary List of Candidates for the 2005 Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council elections went on display Saturday June 4, marking the first day of a six-day Display and Challenge period.

Between June 4 and 9, individuals and organizations may challenge any candidate on the Preliminary List who does not meet the criteria for eligibility, according to the Electoral Law.

The Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) will consider all challenges and determine by July 2 whether candidates who are the subject of challenges should be provisionally disqualified.

Candidates who are provisionally disqualified may respond between July 2 and 7. Their responses will be considered by the ECC before an exclusion becomes final.

After ECC decisions are incorporated, a Final Candidate List will be certified by the Joint Electoral Management Body on July 12.

We would like to remind candidates that through Article 35(d) of the Electoral Law and both the Code of Conduct and Candidate Declaration signed by all candidates, they are prohibited from participating in the electoral process if they have links to non-official military forces or armed groups.

The ECC has requested the Joint Secretariat of the Disarmament and Reintegration Commission – constituted by the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, the National Security Directorate, the United Nations, and the International Military Forces – to ascertain whether there are links between any candidates and non-official military forces or armed groups.

The Joint Secretariat of the Disarmament and Reintegration Commission will inform the ECC by July 2 whether such candidates have complied through disarmament and severed their links with non-official military forces or armed groups, so that the ECC can adjudicate accordingly on this issue.

The Joint Secretariat of the Disarmament and Reintegration Commission has decided to provide to those candidates, who are willing to completely disarm and sever links with non-official military forces or armed groups, the necessary weapons collection facilities to do so before a final deadline of July 1.

Operational details of the criteria and modalities for the collection of weapons will be conveyed by the Joint Secretariat of the Disarmament and Reintegration Commission.

It is hoped that this process will lead to peace and stability in Afghanistan's new democracy.

For more information please contact:

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