PRESS RELEASE

(Unofficial Translation)

The inaugural meeting of the Regional Cooperation Working Group established within the scope of the International Contact Group on Afghanistan will be held in Istanbul on June 3, 2011. The Working Group is co-chaired by Turkey and the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

An essential pillar of efforts towards establishing lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan is ensuring cooperation between Afghanistan and its vicinity. Cooperation that will be shaped on the basis of “regional ownership”, which aims at ensuring that the region takes charge of its future, is a necessity for peace, security, stability and welfare in Afghanistan and its vicinity.

Turkey works hard to promote cooperation between Afghanistan and its vicinity. In this context, Turkey will organize the “Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan” on November 2, 2011. The preparations for the conference were initiated with a meeting hosted by H.E. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, in Istanbul on May, 10, 2011, with the participation of the high-level representatives of relevant countries.

The Regional Cooperation Working Group meeting that will be held on the 3rd of June is envisaged to further contribute to the review of best practices derived from other international efforts towards regional cooperation, to exchange views regarding future activities in this field, and to the conceptual framework of the “Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan” that will be held on November 2, 2011.