



# PRESS RELEASE

## Canada spreads the wealth to reduce poverty and strengthen security

**29 March 2005; Kabul, Afghanistan:** The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signed four funding agreements in support of the development process in Afghanistan.

The Canadian contribution totals CAD15.7 million (nearly US\$13 million) and extends over the following programmes and areas:

The **National Area Based Programme:** With a Governmental counterpart in the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, this programme has worldwide recognition as one of the most efficient and innovative programmes, said Mr Frederick Lyons, Country Director of UNDP Afghanistan. The funding will be used for strengthening government capacities, especially in the provinces; addressing the needs of vulnerable groups; and reducing poverty.

Two agreements were signed to support **Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme**, which is UNDP's implementing programme for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. The main focus of the new influx of funds will be reintegration and training of former combatants. The funding also allows the programme to extend its demobilization and disarmament activities to groups that have yet to be reached by the DDR process. Additional allocations will be used for Ammunitions Survey and Transport and Destruction of Most Dangerous Weapons.

H.E. Christopher Alexander, Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan, stated that the financial contribution is supported by a continuing strong political commitment by the Canadian Government to the continuation of the DDR process in Afghanistan.

The funding agreement with the **Law and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA)** is yet another sign of support given to the UNDP by the Canadian Government to establish a secure and stable environment in the country. The funding will be used for capacity development and support of the Afghan police force.

H.E. Christopher Alexander and Mr Frederick Lyons expressed their appreciation for the successful partnership with the Government of Afghanistan.

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