Australia commits to ongoing stability in Afghanistan

Australia will contribute US$100 million annually for three years from 2015 as part of international efforts to help sustain and support Afghan National Security Forces beyond the transition process.

The Prime Minister and Defence Minister Stephen Smith will take this commitment to the NATO and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) summit in Chicago on 20-21 May.

This follows Australia's commitment to the Afghan National Army Trust Fund of US$200 million over 5 years beginning in 2009-10.

Afghanistan will have responsibility for its own security by the end of 2014.

To consolidate and build on the security gains of the transition strategy, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) will need ongoing funding and training and mentoring support.

Australia has a vital national interest in supporting Afghanistan's stability and security after transition. Our commitment to ANSF funding reflects these enduring national interests.

Australia is a significant contributor to ISAF. We are committed to the transition strategy and to supporting Afghan National Security Forces through transition in Uruzgan.

In Chicago, we will also re-affirm our commitment to supporting Afghanistan after transition. In addition to ANSF funding, we will help train and mentor the Afghan National Army and police. We will consider an ongoing Special Forces presence.

Australia will maintain a substantial development assistance program beyond 2014. This will help sustain progress made in the delivery of basic services such as education and health to the people of Afghanistan.

Australia’s enduring commitment to Afghanistan will be formalised through a Long-Term Partnership which the Prime Minister will sign with President Karzai.

This Partnership will frame cooperation beyond 2014 in a range of areas, including security, trade, investment, development and cultural and people-to-people links.